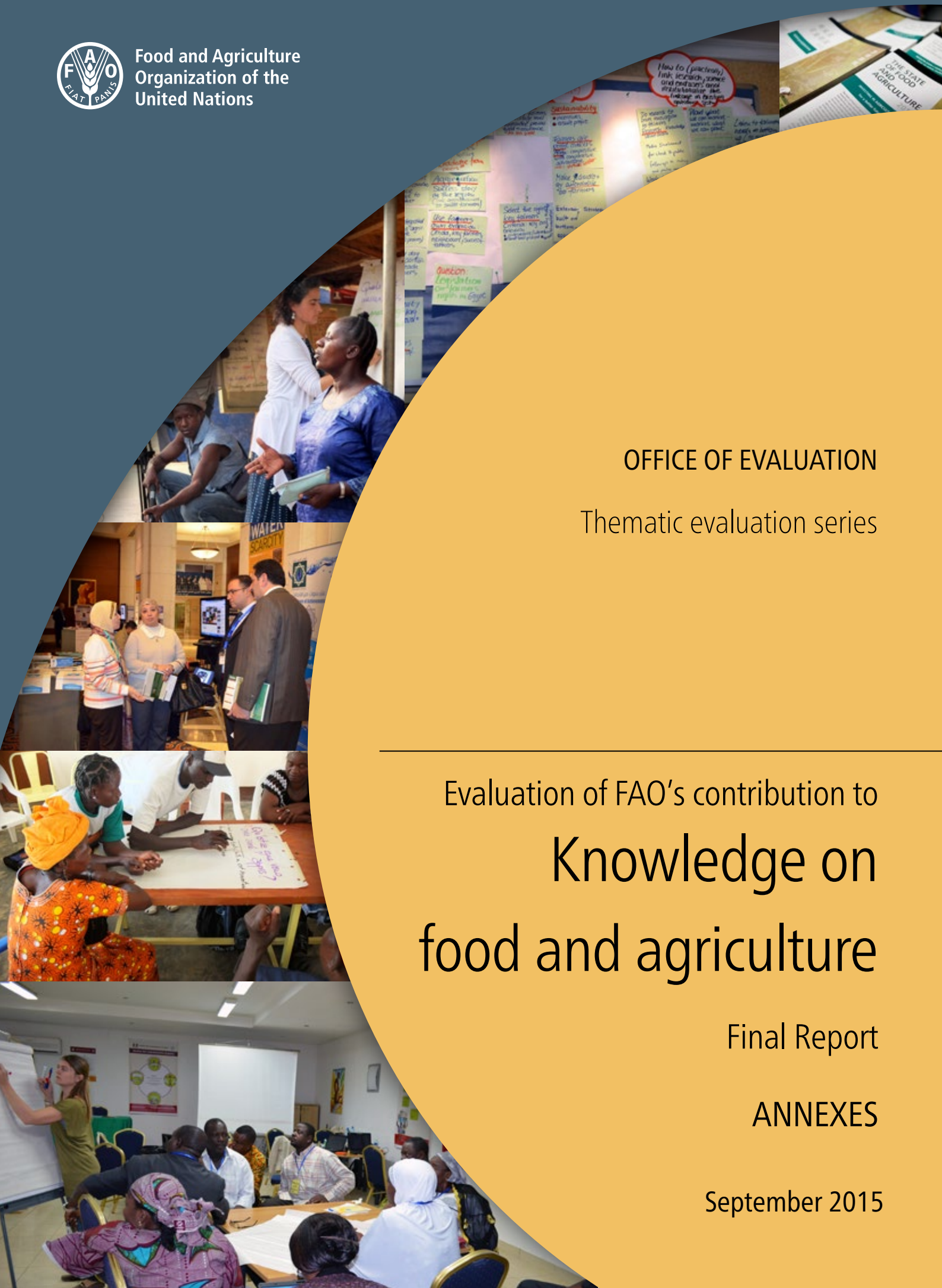
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



OFFICE OF EVALUATION

Thematic evaluation series

Evaluation of FAO's contribution to

Knowledge on food and agriculture

Final Report

ANNEXES

September 2015

Evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture

ANNEXES

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

OFFICE OF EVALUATION

October 2015

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Annex 1: Terms of Reference

I. Background and Context

Collecting, analyzing, interpreting and disseminating high-quality food, agriculture and natural resources ***knowledge*** has been a central activity of FAO since its establishment in 1945. Such work has included the collection and production of data and information often in the form of "products" (e.g. publications, databases) and "services" (e.g. networks, learning resources)[1].

In November 2011, and following the approval of FAO's Corporate Knowledge Strategy (CKS)[2] in 2010, the Office of Evaluation (OED) was requested by the Programme Committee (PC) to evaluate FAO's multiple roles in the dissemination of knowledge on food, agriculture and natural resources in 2014. The CKS noted that "There are now many centers of excellence producing high-quality information and knowledge in FAO's areas of mandate, and the Organization risks progressive irrelevance unless ***it asserts and develops its capacities to facilitate and partner in support of access to and flow of knowledge among and between all stakeholders".***

In 2013 FAO reformulated its strategic objectives (SOs)[3], and established new functional objectives on technical quality, knowledge and services (O6) and outreach (O8) that have largely superseded the CKS. Core activities and responsibility for ensuring the excellence and effective dissemination of FAO (technical) knowledge products and services are now established at corporate level as indicated in the table below.

Table 1: Ensuring excellence and access to FAO knowledge: core activities and lead units (2014-15)

Core activities	Lead Unit(s)
Ensure excellence of technical knowledge through… creation of **technical networks** (O6/60101)	Deputy Director General Office for Natural Resources (DDN) Economic and Social Development Department (ESD)
High quality and internationally comparable **data are produced and accessed by** all countries (O6/60203)	Chief Statistician
Development and promotion of corporate approaches, tools and methodologies in **knowledge dissemination** and improved management of information (F08/M0203)	Office for Corporate Communications (OCC)
Advice and support provided to SO Teams to mainstream Capacity Development, **including for knowledge sharing and learning,** in FAO's work (F08/M0103)	Office for Partnership, Advocacy and Capacity Development (OPC)

II. Purpose and Scope

In view of the changes that have taken place in FAO since 2011 (i.e. when the evaluation was

1 In 2012-13 alone FAO disseminated about one thousand knowledge products including over 700 publications, 90 databases, 60 learning resources, etc. at global level. Several thousands more were produced at regional and country levels.

2 http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/capacity_building/KM_Strategy.pdf

3 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 at local, national and international levels; SO5: Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

originally conceived), and in line with the organization's emphasis on results, the evaluation will assess the ***contribution*** of FAO's knowledge products and services towards the achievement of the Organization's strategic goals and objectives. In doing so, it will promote a better understanding of how FAO identifies knowledge needs, how effectively plans, share and ensure the quality of its knowledge products and services, and –based on such evidence- what scope exist for improving how it does so.

In setting the framework for a forward-looking, evidence-based evaluation of the contribution of knowledge products and services, it is important to focus on issues that will be more useful for ***future planning***. Following discussions between OED and the evaluation's Management counterparts, and in order to keep the scope within manageable boundaries, it was agreed that the evaluation should focus on ***the effectiveness and impact of FAO's knowledge products and services***, including the dissemination mechanisms in place.

Practically all FAO units are involved in knowledge production and dissemination. The scope of the evaluation is thus global, covering all the programmes of the organization irrespective of the source of funding or geographical presence. Due to their sheer number and the resources available, only a sample of knowledge products and services will be reviewed in depth through case studies. To compensate for this, the evaluation will make extensive use of past (and ongoing) evaluations and other secondary sources of information to gather evaluative evidence for the assessment (see methodology section for further details).

Also, issues related to knowledge production and development processes will not be addressed by the evaluation since they have been largely covered through other evaluations and studies (in particular on publications, databases and learning resources).

III. Objectives and Main Questions

The objective (and overarching question) of the evaluation is to determine the contribution of FAO's knowledge products and services (KP&S) to FAO's strategic goals and objectives. The main questions that follow are:

1. Are FAO knowledge products and services consistent with the Organization's goals and based on expressed needs or mandates from the Member Countries?

2. Are FAO knowledge products and services adequate, in view of the context, needs or problems to which they are intended to respond?

3. How well does FAO ensure the technical excellence and quality of their knowledge products and services?

4. How efficiently has FAO used its human and institutional resources in the production and dissemination of knowledge products and services?

5. Are there synergies, duplication or gaps in the knowledge products and services produced and disseminated by FAO?

6. Have FAO's knowledge products and services reached its intended uses and users?

7. What outcomes have FAO knowledge products and services achieved, or contributed to achieving?

More specific lines of enquiries, depending on the knowledge product or service being assessed, are included in the methodology section.

IV. Methodology

The evaluation will be conducted in a consultative manner using theory-based approaches (such as contribution and SWOT analyses) and following a modular design (i.e., the evaluation

is divided in four separate components). A stakeholder analysis and a theory of change were developed to inform the design of the evaluation. Guidance included in the OED Evaluation Manual and the Norms and Standards for Evaluations of the United Nations[4] was also used.

Stakeholder analysis

Given the evaluation's global coverage, FAO Governing Bodies and Management (including managers of lead units for O6 and F08) will be the main users of the evaluation. Staff in Technical Departments (TDs)[5] and Decentralized Offices (DOs) will be secondary users of the evaluation. Partners and users of FAO knowledge products and services (from the Government, academia, research organizations, civil society, private sector, farmers' organizations, UN system and FAO at large) will be the main beneficiaries.

Table 2: Key users and beneficiaries of the evaluation

Beneficiaries of the evaluation	Users of the evaluation
Primary: Government counterparts, collaborating partners	*Primary:* FAO Management, including managers of lead units for O6 and F08 (DDN, OCC, OPC, Chief Statistician, CIO) FAO Governing Bodies, including Programme Committee
Secondary: Academia and research organizations, Civil society, Private sector, Farmers organizations, UN organizations and FAO at large	*Secondary:* FAO staff in Technical Departments (TDs) and Decentralized Offices (including Regional and Country offices)

Theory of Change

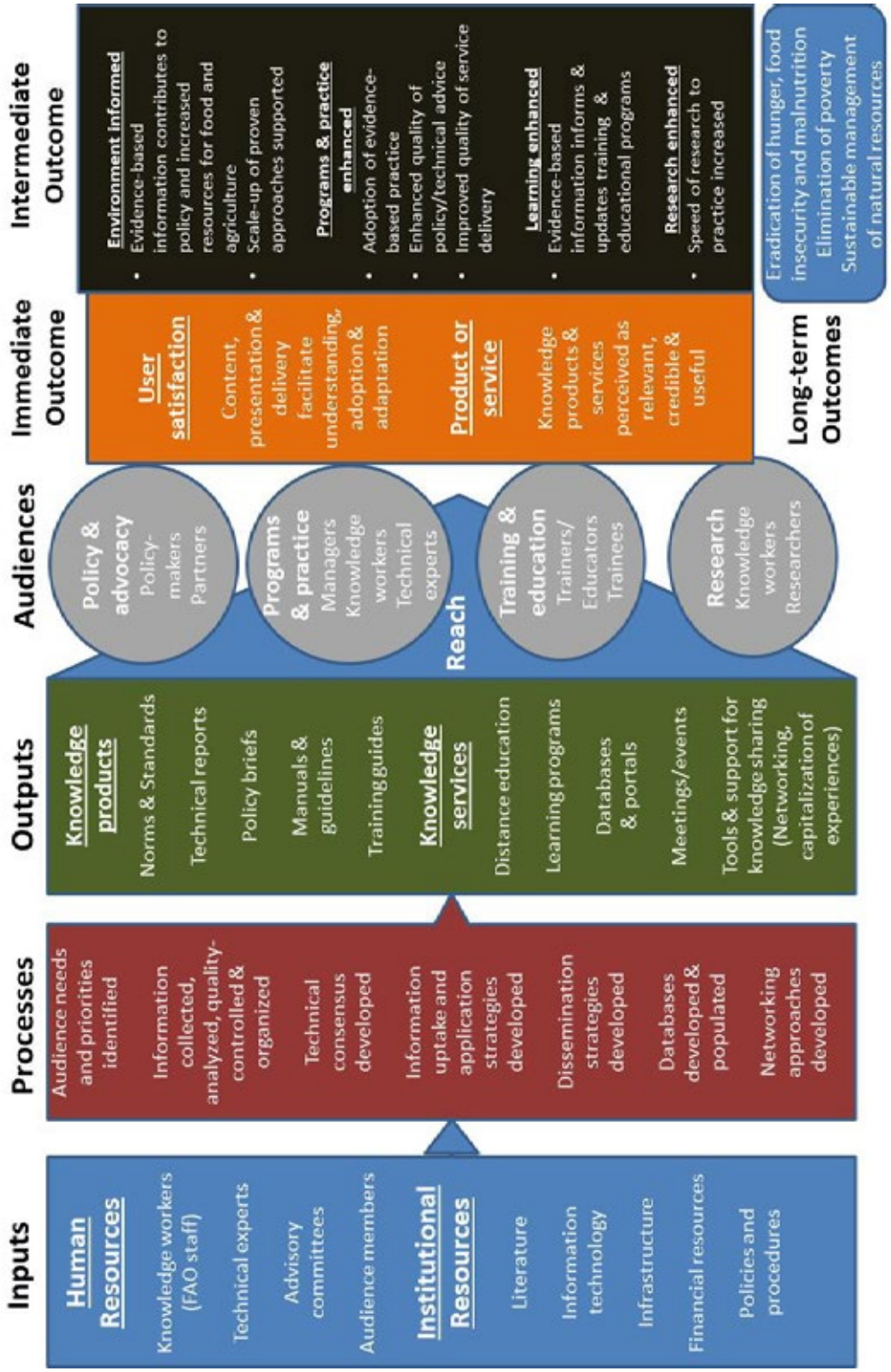
A theory of change reflecting in general terms how FAO knowledge products and services can, in the immediate, medium and long-term, contribute to sustainable food and agricultural development is presented in the next page. Based on this theory of change, an evaluation matrix has been developed including indicators, sources of information and component of the evaluation (see annex 1).

Components

The evaluation has four components. The first two will be carried out at the initial stages by OED (inception phase) with support from external consultants, whereas the third and four will be largely implemented by external consultants under OED supervision. Additional information on the evaluation team is available in the Management section.

4 www.uneval.org/document/download/562

5 Technical departments include the Departments of Agriculture and Consumer Protection (AG), Economic and Social Development (ES), Fisheries and Aquaculture (FI) and Forestry (FO).


Inputs
Human Resources
Knowledge workers (FAO staff)
Technical experts
Advisory committees
Audience members
Institutional Resources
Literature
Information technology
Infrastructure
Financial resources
Policies and procedures
Processes
Audience needs and priorities identified
Information collected, analyzed, quality-controlled & organized
Technical consensus developed
Information uptake and application strategies developed
Dissemination strategies developed
Databases developed & populated
Networking approaches developed
Outputs
Knowledge products
Norms & Standards
Technical reports
Policy briefs
Manuals & guidelines
Training guides
Knowledge services
Distance education
Learning programs
Databases & portals
Meetings/events
Tools & support for knowledge sharing (Networking, capitalization of experiences)
Audiences
Policy & advocacy
Policy-makers
Partners
Programs & practice
Managers
Knowledge workers
Technical experts
Training & education
Trainers/ Educators
Trainees
Research
Knowledge workers
Researchers
Reach
Immediate Outcome
User satisfaction
Content, presentation & delivery facilitate understanding, adoption & adaptation
Product or service
Knowledge products & services perceived as relevant, credible & useful
Intermediate Outcome
Environment informed
Evidence-based information contributes to policy and increased resources for food and agriculture
Scale-up of proven approaches supported
Programs & practice enhanced
Adoption of evidence-based practice
Enhanced quality of policy/technical advice
Improved quality of service delivery
Learning enhanced
Evidence-based information informs & updates training & educational programs
Research enhanced
Speed of research to practice increased
Long-term Outcomes
Eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition
Elimination of poverty
Sustainable management of natural resources

Box 1. Key features of the evaluation components' design

Component (1): Inventory and survey of knowledge products and services owners. As indicated earlier, FAO disseminates a sheer number of knowledge products and services, including publications, databases, learning resources, etc. to internal and external audiences. In order to determine the extent of this work, and lay the foundation for the assessment of their results, an inventory that includes detailed information on the knowledge products developed by FAO technical departments will be assembled in collaboration with OIG[6], OCC, OPC, DDN and TDs. Based on the inventory, a mapping exercise will be carried out in order to gather initial information on outcomes attributable to, and factors affecting their achievement, FAO KP&S.

Component (2): Meta-evaluation. Since 2008 OED has conducted around 25 thematic evaluations, 15 country evaluations and 90 project evaluations. All the thematic and country evaluations, and a sample of project evaluations, will be analyzed through a purposively prepared grid in order to identify past evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations relevant to the present evaluation. The 2013 Programme Evaluation Report also included a capping assessment of FAO's knowledge products and capacity development interventions. The meta-evaluation together with the inventory would serve as a key source of evaluative evidence for the Sectoral assessments.

Component (3): Sectoral assessments. The evaluation will carry out Sectoral assessments of FAO knowledge products and services, including case studies of a purposively selected sample of publications, databases, learning resources and networks. The sampling strategy for the latter will include:

- Knowledge products and services that have a global scope and have not been recently evaluated;
- Diversity in terms of types and purpose of knowledge products and services;
- Feasibility of tracing dissemination, use, and influence;
- Products developed as part of joint initiatives between FAO and partner organizations; and,
- Examples with specific focus on gender and human rights.

The case studies of a sample of datasets and publications will capture evaluative evidence on their relevance, quality and usefulness following a theory-based approach. The case studies of a sample of FAO networks and learning resources will mainly use SWOT analyses. In carrying out the case studies extensive use will be made of secondary data (collected through desk review, meta-evaluation and an inventory and mapping exercise) as well as of primary data from interviews and surveys with partners and users of FAO products. Cybermetric analyses of the FAO knowledge products and services in the sample will also be conducted as an additional input for the case studies.

Component (4): Survey of FAO member countries and clients. These surveys will be carried out in order to gather feedback on FAO's knowledge work from core users at country level, as well as evaluative information on knowledge needs. The survey of member countries will be administered to all FAO members, whereas the client surveys will be undertaken in a sample of purposively selected countries in consultation with Regional and the relevant Liaison/Country Offices[7].

6 OIG compiled an inventory of FAO publications in 2012-13 in collaboration with OCC and the relevant TDs.

7 Tentatively Albania, Belgium, Turkey and Switzerland (Europe), Zambia and Uganda (Africa), Panama, Chile, the United States (The Americas), Lebanon (Near East), Japan, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea (Asia).

V. Organizational Arrangements

Evaluation team

The evaluation will be led by the Evaluation Manager (EM), under the supervision of OED Director. Four subject matter specialists (a capacity development expert, a knowledge management specialist; a learning specialist; and an expert in monitoring and evaluation) will be recruited to carry out specific work under components three and four of the evaluation. They will be supported by two evaluation analysts, who will lead the work under components one and two, and one administrative staff, who will provide logistical and operational support. In addition, cybermetric analyses will be outsourced to a specialized company with experience in this type of studies and when required local consultants will be engaged to help with the client surveys. The client surveys will be undertaken by national consultants working under the coordination of an evaluation consultant with experience in field research. The OED Knowledge Management and Evaluation Officer will play an advisory role and participate at key stages of the evaluation process.

The EM will be responsible for consolidating and writing the evaluation report, which will be prepared on the basis of the analyses and assessments carried out under components 1-4.

Quality assurance, dissemination and follow-up

The draft evaluation report will be subject to internal peer review processes[8] to ensure it meets OED quality standards. Once cleared by OED Director[9], the final draft will be submitted to Managers of the responsible units for comments prior to its finalization.

FAO Management, under the leadership of the DDN Office, will be responsible for preparing the draft Management Response to the Evaluation. Relevant FAO managers and staff will be asked to provide inputs to the Terms of Reference (ToR) and comment on the main deliverables of the evaluation (such as the individual assessments carried out under component 3). The (internal) Evaluation Committee will review the final draft of the evaluation report and the draft Management Response and ensure it complies with corporate guidance prior to its delivery to the Programme Committee.

The report together with the Management response will be presented to the Programme Committee in November 2015, and made publicly available on the FAO website. A brief and other dissemination materials will be prepared for targeted and open distribution through a range of modalities (including newsletters, conferences and events). A follow-up report on the evaluation will be presented by FAO Management to the FAO Programme Committee in November 2017.

8 This includes subjecting the draft to the OED gender peer review process, in addition to the peer review for general quality control.

9 OED Director may decide to send the revised draft report for a review by an external expert to support the credibility of the evaluation.

1. Timetable

February to late-September 2014 (inception phase)	• Desk review including for meta-evaluation and inventory work • Meetings with internal stakeholders • Identification of reference group members, evaluation team and key stakeholders • Drafting of terms of reference, including detailed evaluation design and work-plan • Discussion of terms of reference with RG
Late-September 2014 to May 2015 (implementation phase)	• Documentation review & further briefings with stakeholders • Finalization of meta-evaluation and mapping exercise • Conduct and drafting of contribution and needs assessments (components 3 and 4) • Debriefing with relevant FAO Managers and staff
June-August 2015 (report writing phase)	• Preparation of the draft evaluation report • Discussion of revised draft report with the Evaluation Committee • Finalization of the evaluation report
August-Nov 2015	• Preparation of Management Response • Presentation of Evaluation report and Management Response to Programme Committee • Dissemination activities

Appendix 1: Indicative Evaluation Matrix

KEY EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCES	COMPONENT (TOOL)
1. Are FAO's knowledge products and services consistent with the Organization's goals and based on expressed needs or mandates from the Member Countries?	• Level of products and services with clear impact pathways/Theory of Change linked to the Organization's goals and objectives	• Documentation • Staff • Member Countries/Partners	• Inventory • Case studies
	• Number/percentage and level of knowledge products and services developed as a result of a robust needs assessment	• Documentation • Staff • Member Countries	• Inventory • Case studies
	• Range of knowledge products and services with a clear mandate/ justification	• Documentation • Staff • Member Countries	• Inventory • Case studies
	• Number/percentage and type of MCs involvement in the planning/design of FAO's knowledge products and services	• Documentation • Staff • Member Countries	• Case studies • Client survey • Member Countries survey
	• Number/percentage/level of MCs which indicate that FAO knowledge products and services address their needs	• Member Countries	• Case studies • Client survey • Member Countries survey
2. Are FAO's knowledge products and services adequate, in view of the context, needs or problems to which they are intended to respond?	• Number/percentage/level of knowledge products and services anchored in country, regional or global programs/frameworks	• Documentation • Staff • Evaluation reports • Member Countries	• Inventory • Meta-evaluation • Client survey • Member Countries Survey
	• Number/percentage/level of users who indicate that FAO's knowledge products and services are easily accessible, of good quality and with contextualized content	• Documentation • Staff • Evaluation reports • Member Countries	• Meta-evaluation • Case studies • Client survey • Member Countries Survey

KEY EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCES	COMPONENT (TOOL)
3. Are there synergies, duplications or gaps in the knowledge products and services produced and disseminated by FAO?	• Number/percentage of products and services developed in collaboration with internal and external partners	• Staff • Partners	• Inventory • Case studies
	• Range of partners involved in the production, operation and dissemination of knowledge products and services	• Documentation • Evaluation reports • Staff and Partners	• Meta-evaluation • Case studies
	• Level of Sectoral and geographic coverage of knowledge products and services	• Documentation • Staff & Partners • Member Countries	• Meta-evaluation • Sectoral assessment (Case studies)
	• Number/percentage and level of knowledge products and services that appear to overlap with other (FAO and non-FAO) knowledge products	• Documentation • Member Countries • Partners & staff • Beneficiaries	• Inventory and mapping • Sectoral assessment • User surveys (Client survey, Member Countries survey)
4. How well does FAO ensure the technical excellence and quality of its knowledge products and services?	• Number/percentage of knowledge products and services with quality assurance frameworks in place	• Documentation • Staff	• Inventory and mapping
	• Level of credibility and appreciation of FAO knowledge products and services	• Partners • Beneficiaries • Member Countries	• Sectoral assessment • User surveys (Client survey; Member Countries survey)

KEY EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCES	COMPONENT (TOOL)
5. Have FAO's knowledge products and services reached the intended users and uses?	• Number of copies of a product (re)distributed to existing lists or downloaded from the Web	• Documentation	• Sectoral assessment
	• Number of postings of products by or links from other web sites	• Documentation	• Sectoral assessment
	• Level of FAO's knowledge products that use comprehensive metadata standards and taxonomy to facilitate retrieval	• Documentation	• Inventory and mapping • Sectoral assessment
	• Level of accessibility to FAO's knowledge products and services	• Documentation • Evaluation reports • Member Countries	• Sectoral assessment • User surveys (Client survey; Member Countries Survey)
	• Number/percentage/level of knowledge products and services for which outreach/uptake levels are monitored	• Documentation • Staff	• Inventory and mapping • Sectoral assessment
	• Level of user satisfaction with a knowledge product or service	• Evaluation reports • Member Countries • Partners • Beneficiaries	• Meta-evaluation • Sectoral assessment (Case studies/user survey) • User surveys
	• Number/level of users who report knowledge gained from a product or service	• Evaluation reports • Member Countries • Partners & staff • Beneficiaries	• Inventory and mapping • Meta-evaluation • Sectoral assessment • User surveys (Client survey; Member countries survey)
	• Number/level of citations of a knowledge product in academic journals, grey literature and policy papers	• Internet	• Sectoral assessment (Cybermetric analysis)

KEY EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCES	COMPONENT (TOOL)
6. What outcomes have FAO's knowledge products and services achieved, or contributed to achieving?	• Number/percentage/level of users intending to adapt/apply knowledge from a knowledge product or service	• Evaluation reports • Staff • Beneficiaries	• Meta-evaluation • Case studies (user survey) • Client survey
	• Number/percentage/level of users using a knowledge product or service to inform policy and advocacy or to enhance programs, training, education or research	• Evaluation reports • Staff • Beneficiaries • Member Countries	• Meta-evaluation • Case studies • Client survey • Member Countries Survey
	• Number/percentage/level of users using a knowledge product or service to improve their own knowledge, practice or performance	• Evaluation reports • Staff • Member Countries • Partner	• Meta-evaluation • Case studies • Client survey • Member Countries Survey
	• Level of influence achieved on gender and human right issues through the application of FAO knowledge products and services	• Staff • Beneficiaries	• Sectoral assessments (case studies/staff survey) • User surveys (Client survey)

KEY EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCES	COMPONENT (TOOL)
7. How efficiently has FAO used its human and financial resources in the production and dissemination of knowledge products and services?	• Breadth and depth of FAO's institutional, financial and human resources for the production and dissemination of knowledge products and services	• Documentation • Staff • Member Countries	• Inventory and mapping • Sectoral assessment (case studies/staff survey)
	• Number/percentage of knowledge products and services that have a robust dissemination strategy/ plan	• Documentation • Staff • Member Countries	• Inventory and mapping • Sectoral assessment 1. (case studies)
	• Number and types of activities aimed at improving FAO Staff capacity to disseminate products and services	• Documentation • Staff	• Inventory and mapping • Case studies/Staff survey)
	• Level of gender and human rights mainstreaming in FAO knowledge products and services	• Staff • Member Countries • Beneficiaries	• Inventory/meta-evaluation • Client/Member Country surveys
	• Availability of sex disaggregated data on users of knowledge products and services	• Staff	• Inventory and mapping
	• Number and level of involvement of FAO staff (technical experts) in knowledge dissemination	• Documentation • Staff	• Inventory
	• Level of uptake of FAO knowledge products and services for individual and institutional learning within FAO	• Documentation • Staff	• Sectoral assessment (case studies)

Annex 2: Assessment of FAO publications

Report

This report presents the results of an assessment of FAO publications conducted by OED[10]. It was undertaken as part of the broader evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture.

1. Description of FAO publications

FAO publications[11] cover a broad spectrum of topics related to food and agriculture, and have a wide range of geographical coverage (global, regional, national and sub-national) and purposes (advisory, advocacy, learning, scientific and normative). Among them, the "State of the World" publications[12] are the most well-known: State of the World Food and Agriculture (SOFA), State of the World Food Insecurity (SOFI), State of the World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA), and State of the World Forestry (SOFO).

A recent audit[13] of FAO publications carried out by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) found that about 600 publications were issued during the period of January to July 2013, of which "approximately 300-400 were first language editions". The audit also noted that an unknown number of publications were produced outside corporate systems, mainly by Decentralized Offices[14] (DO). OIG made fourteen recommendations to FAO Management addressing governance, planning and funding of publications, which are under implementation.

2. Purpose and scope of the assessment

This assessment is a formative and forward-looking review of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of FAO publications, with a special focus on the FAO "State of the World" flagships. Building on the audit's analyses and recommendations, the findings of this assessment will inform the development and refinement of corporate strategies, policies and plans aimed at ensuring the excellence of FAO publications, and serve as an input to the evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture.

This assessment covers FAO publications disseminated by the Organization from 2011 to 2014. It is based on an extensive documentation review, including past evaluations and audits as well as discussions with and feedback from staff, known users and partners in the production and dissemination of FAO publications. Knowledge products are routinely assessed by OED, and recommendations for improvement have been included in past reports[15]. In order to complement the evaluative information available, a sample of FAO flagship publications were reviewed in detail as case studies: SOFI, SOFA, SOFIA and the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook.

10 The assessment was led by OED consultant Patrick Breard with the support of OED staff Natalia Acosta.

11 The official catalogue of FAO publications is available online at http://www.fao.org/publications.

12 The FAO State of the World publications can be found at: http://www.fao.org/hunger (SOFI); http://www.fao.org/publications/sofa/ (SOFA); http://www.fao.org/forestry/sofo/en/ (SOFO); http://www.fao.org/fishery/sofia (SOFIA).

13 FAO/OIG. AUD 1114. Review of FAO's Publishing Activity (April 2014)

14 OIG surveyed nine country offices and found that these alone had produced 272 publications for the period from January to July 2013, all of which are outside the corporate systems and corporate oversight.

15 E.g. page 5 of PER 2013: http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/028/mg392e.pdf

3. Questions

In line with the objectives of the evaluation, this assessment seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Are FAO publications consistent with the Organization's goals and based on the expressed needs or mandates of Member Countries (MCs)?
2. Are FAO publications adequate in view of the context, needs or problems to which they are intended to respond?
3. How well does FAO ensure the technical excellence and quality of its publications?
4. How efficiently has FAO used its human and financial resources in the production and dissemination of publications?
5. Are there synergies, duplications or gaps among the publications produced and disseminated by FAO?
6. Have FAO's publications reached the intended users and uses?
7. What outcomes have FAO publications achieved, or contributed to achieving?

4. Methodology

The assessment was guided by the evaluation questions mentioned above. The list of documents and people consulted is provided in Appendices 2.1 and 2.2, respectively. The information was collected following a tailored evaluation design available in Annex 2.1. The inventory of FAO publications collected by OIG can be found in Annex 2.2. The meta-analysis of past evaluations that focused on publications is available in Annex 2.3. Annex 2.4 shows the results of an online survey that was administered to owners of FAO publications in order to gather information on their objectives, operation, quality assurance and results monitoring systems.

Based on a desk review, interviews with key informants (38), user surveys (514 respondents) and cybermetric analysis, case studies have been produced on SOFA (Annex 2.5), SOFI (Annex 2.6), SOFIA (Annex 2.7), and the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook (Annex 2.8). The user surveys conducted for the case studies were also used to develop an overall assessment of FAO publications, as shown in Annex 2.9. Annex 2.10 presents the results of the client survey: an assessment which shows the views and feedback of 171 users of FAO knowledge products and services on their use of FAO publications. The surveyed users, from a sample of countries across all regions[16], were identified by the relevant Country or Liaison Office and included national counterparts, partners and beneficiaries of FAO programmes. Finally, Annex 2.11 provides an assessment completed by 36 Member Countries on FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture, including its flagship publications.

16 Albania, Belgium, Turkey and Switzerland (Europe), Zambia and Uganda (Africa), Panama, Chile, the United States (The Americas), Lebanon (Near East), Japan, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea (Asia).

5. Findings

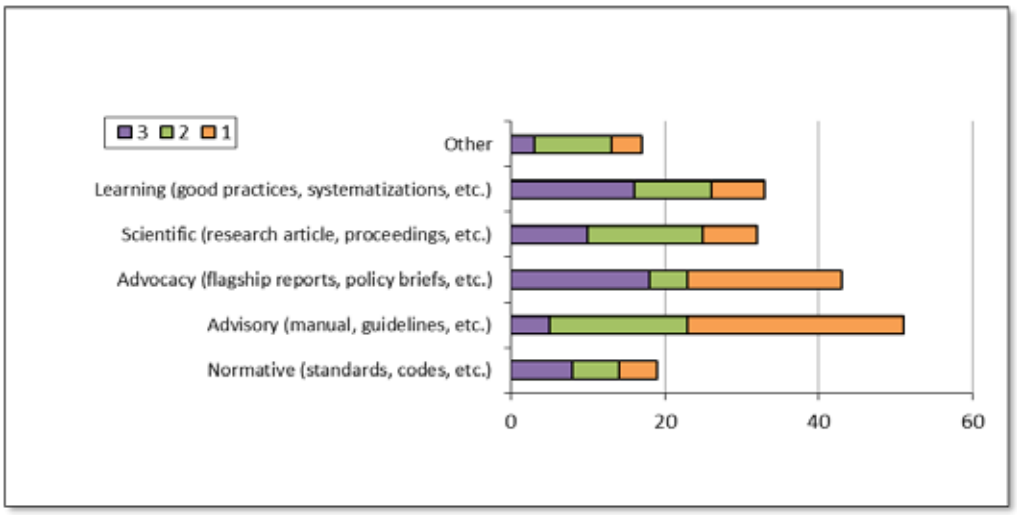
The main findings are presented below grouped by evaluation question.

5.1 Are FAO publications consistent with the Organization's goals and based on expressed needs or mandates from the Member Countries?

FAO corporate publications are generally consistent with the Organization's goals, and meet different needs and purposes. Some publications, however, are produced following a supply-driven approach.

As noted earlier, FAO does not know precisely how much and what it publishes, which poses difficulties in assessing the overall consistency of the publications produced, and whether they meet the Organization's goals. According to FAO staff, publications play mostly an advisory role (e.g. manuals and guidelines), followed by advocacy (e.g. flagship reports and policy briefs), learning (e.g. good practices and systematizations) and scientific (e.g. research articles and proceedings). Although normative publications (such as codes and standards) are less common, they are reportedly the ones most clearly linked to FAO's objectives (especially Strategic Objective 4), as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Main purpose of FAO publications (1= most frequent; 3= least frequent)



Source: Survey of FAO publication owners, 2014

According to FAO staff, publications concentrate on three Strategic Objectives: SO2 (42.5%), SO4 (21.9%) and SO1 (12.3%), while fewer publications are developed under SO3 (8.2%) and SO5 (6.8%). Field-level publications on the other hand are more context-specific and their production is mostly linked to immediate project needs. Although these needs are perceived as very relevant, they are not always aligned with corporate objectives. More importantly, one-third of the publications' owners surveyed indicate that the publication's topics were chosen on their own initiative. Although in principle it is within the remit of FAO to select key topics for publication (as in the case of "the State of the World" flagships), FAO needs clearer criteria to determine when a supply-driven approach in the production of publications is the best way forward.

5.2 Are FAO publications adequate, in view of the context, needs or problems to which they are intended to respond?

FAO publications, especially the State of the World flagships, are widely read; however, target users do not always find them adequate or easily applicable. There is room for better identification and inclusion of users' needs in the publications' development process.

Previous evaluations have noted that FAO publications are sometimes inadequate for the purposes and target audiences they intend to serve. The main target audiences of FAO publications are national governments (70%), academia and research institutions (55%), international organizations (49%), civil society (48%) and FAO itself (38%). The less important target audiences are media (20%), other UN agencies (27%) and the private sector (28%), as shown in Figure 2. Among the main weakness detected is the lack of robust needs assessments prior to the development of the publication. FAO staff identify topics and objectives for publications in the following ways: most (91%) consult with HQ staff during the planning and design stages; while less than half consult with prospective users or partners, including DO staff (47%), national governments (30%), private sector (21%) and producer organizations (15%).

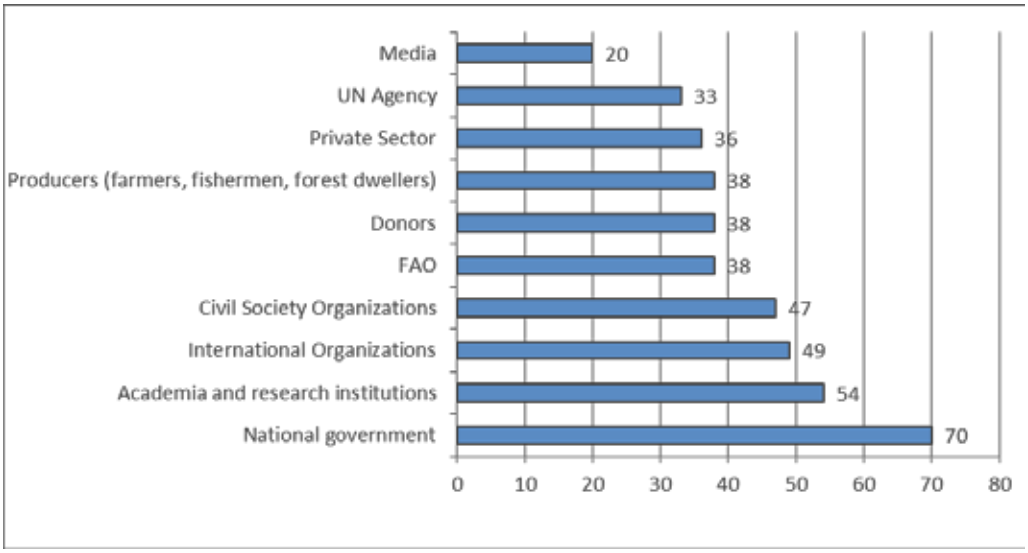


Figure 2. Main target audiences of FAO publications

Source: Survey of FAO publication owners, 2014

Some FAO publications – especially those with advisory and learning purposes (e.g. technical manuals or teaching materials) – targeted at national governments were found unsuitable for immediate use. This was due to the lack of local language versions, culturally-sensitive adaptations or ineffective dissemination. In some cases, the lack of jargon-free and purposively-adapted products made the task of using the publication more difficult. For instance, normative products such as the Codex's Antimicrobial Resistance Guidelines (AMR) are adequate for policy-makers, scientists, and researchers, but are too technical for farmers, retailers and small traders, who eventually need to be made aware of and become actors in the implementation of the AMR (see box 1).

Box 1. The Codex Guidelines for Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance

The Guidelines for Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR guidelines) were adopted by the 34th Session of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in 2011. The Guidelines provide governments with science-based guidance on processes and methodology for risk analysis and its application to foodborne antimicrobial resistance related to non-human use of antimicrobial agents. Pilot projects have served as a channel to disseminate the Guidelines at national level, including through joint FAO/World Health Organization (WHO) activities in Kenya, Cambodia, Vietnam, India and Nigeria. In Kenya specifically, dissemination activities involved referencing the Guidelines in meetings, regional workshops and a national policy stakeholders meeting. Project outputs such as brochures, leaflets, posters, or videos were also produced with simple messages targeting key stakeholders in the food production chain. Translating the technical guidelines into user-friendly documents and messages to be implemented by farmers, ministries, and other users were reportedly very effective methods of raising awareness about AMR. However, competing priorities resulted in only moderate influence on national-level policies and practices. Uptake and implementation of the Guidelines require adequate dissemination strategies that go beyond the usual set of communication tools and incorporate resource mobilization, capacity development initiatives and efforts to mainstream AMR risk analysis into national programmes.

5.3 How well does FAO ensure the technical excellence and quality of their publications?

FAO publications are generally considered to be of good technical quality. The application of quality assurance measures is variable and focuses on technical content.

Users contacted for the case studies noted that generally FAO publications were of high-quality in terms of presentation and technical content. Expert assessments of a sample of 236 FAO publications also noted that their technical quality was satisfactory (rated 4.3 out of 6). Nevertheless, other quality criteria, such as the integration of environmental and sustainability concepts, social inclusion and gender issues, appeared to be less satisfactorily addressed.

Table 1: Non-weighted average score of 236 publications assessed in past evaluations (1: very poor-6: excellent)

Assessments **Evaluation Report**	**# publications reviewed**	**Relevance (1-6)**	**Technical quality (1-6)**	**Actual or potential uptake and use (1-6)**	**Actual/ potential impact from use (1-6)**	**Integration of environmental sustainability concepts (1-6)**	**Gender mainstreaming (1-6)**	**Integration of social/equity issues (1-6)**
Country Programme in Armenia, 2013	25	5.1	4	3.6	3.3	3.2	2.4	3.5
FAO Regional and Sub-regional Offices in Europe and Central Asia, 2012	28	4.6	4.4	4.3	4	3.3	2.6	3.8
Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (technical guidelines and related code documents), 2012	39	5	4.6	4.4	3.7	4.5	2	2.5

Assessments Evaluation Report	# publications reviewed	Relevance (1-6)	Technical quality (1-6)	Actual or potential uptake and use (1-6)	Actual/ potential impact from use (1-6)	Integration of environmental sustainability concepts (1-6)	Gender mainstreaming (1-6)	Integration of social/equity issues (1-6)
Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (other publications of the Fisheries department), 2012	71	5.1	4.9	4.4	4	4.3	2.5	3.6
FAO Regional and Sub-regional Offices in Asia Pacific, 2013	73	4.8	4.3	4	3.9	3.2	2.7	3.4
Total	236	4.9	4.3	4.1	3.7	3.7	2.4	3.3

Source: Sample of FAO evaluations (2012-13)

According to FAO Publishing Policy[17], "information products must be subject to sound technical review, including external peer review… [and] receive quality assurance by a divisional/departmental review group". Of the respondents to the staff survey, 93% stated that their publications are subject to peer reviews or other forms of quality assurance. The most common quality assurance mechanisms are internal peer review (82%), followed by external peer review (63%), and reviews by a publishing committee (28%).

Key informants, clients at country-level and peers in other development partners consider that more can be done to ensure that technical excellence – understood as meeting technical standards, as well as environmental, equity and gender policies – are taken into account in FAO publications. Some suggested measures include the establishment of external advisory groups or scientific committees, especially for the "State of the World" flagships. Such committees could contribute to enhancing demand, ensuring credibility, and enlarging dissemination channels.

5.4 How efficiently has FAO used its human and financial resources in the production and dissemination of publications?

FAO publishing activities are decentralized and of variable cost-efficiency. Human and financial resources for dissemination of publications are very limited.

According to the 2014 audit, FAO publishing activities are largely decentralized. Although a corporate publishing planning tool exists, the development and funding of publishing plans is under the responsibility of technical departments (TD) and decentralized offices (DO)[18]. Several departmental review committees (FO, ES, AGA and AGS) were found by the auditors to be very efficient in publication planning and budgeting thanks in part to senior leadership. However, this decentralized arrangement meant that discussions on the need for (and funding of) publications are difficult to enforce at corporate level. Strengthening internal controls (e.g. by departmental review groups or publishing committees as already recommended by OIG[19]) might be helpful to address this weakness.

The survey of FAO publication owners showed that most of the human and financial resources assigned to publications are spent in the production phase. More importantly, about half of the survey's respondents (45%) spend only 0-5% of their time on dissemination activities. Furthermore, 30% of the authors do not have a dedicated budget for dissemination and

17 FAO. 2013. Publishing Policy. Rome.

18 Only FAO flagships classified as "Corporate Technical Area" have a dedicated budget-line.

19 FAO OIG. 2014. Op. Cit.

about half of them (43%) have a budget below USD 10 000. Given that DOs and TDs are, in the current publishing policy, responsible for "producing, clearing and arranging targeted dissemination of relevant, high-quality information products" and for "ensuring that the intended audiences receive the product"[20], the low priority given to publication's dissemination is worrisome.

Past evaluations found that partnerships with DOs, government, research organizations, academia, and civil society can have a positive influence on publications' dissemination. FAO could do more to exploit partners' interest to engage in the development of publications. The cybermetric analysis of FAO flagships shows that communities of institutions not partnered with FAO are among the most frequent users. Partnerships around FAO publications could be expanded and country partners and users contacted by this evaluation indicate that they would welcome developing publications at local level with FAO support.

5.5 Are there synergies, duplications or gaps among the publications produced and disseminated by FAO?

Synergies among publications are limited and deserve more attention in corporate planning and at the earliest stages of publication development.

In general terms, there do not appear to be major gaps in terms of the themes covered by FAO publications. According to FAO staff, most FAO publications currently address issues related to food security, food production and climate change. More specialized topics such as social protection, animal health, plant health and soils have been less frequently covered. The users surveyed provided a long list of possible topics for publication, suggesting that thematic knowledge gaps exist. They also indicated that, with some exceptions, FAO publications appear to be largely complementary to other FAO and non-FAO resources.

Past evaluations noted that FAO produces ***"far too many"*** knowledge products, some of which are of variable relevance to field work. Key informants have suggested strengthening the coordination of publication production both within and outside FAO. The former could take place at multi-disciplinary fora, such as the SO teams, in order to create synergies across themes and ensure alignment with corporate objectives. The latter could be thoroughly explored by the publication owner with relevant partners at the earlier stages of development.

5.6 Have FAO's publications reached the intended users and uses?

FAO publications appear to reach large online audiences. More should be done to improve dissemination and targeting to users in areas with low language coverage and internet connectivity.

Based on FAO web traffic, several FAO publications – in particular the "State of the World" publications - have been visited by between 50 000 and 400 000 users during the period of March 2011 to December 2014. The extent to which FAO target users, especially those in developing countries, have accessed FAO publications via online platforms is debatable. The user surveys and cybermetric analyses conducted indicate that most users of flagships are policy makers, researchers and staff from international organizations, UN Agencies and media from developed countries. Lower outreach was indeed found in developing regions with poorer internet connectivity and language coverage, such as Africa, Asia, Near East, North Africa, and the Pacific.

Previous assessments have already stressed the absence of robust targeting strategies and non-existent or poor dissemination strategies. Considering that over two-thirds of the publications simultaneously target national governments, academia and research,

20 FAO Corporate Publishing policy, 2013.

and international organizations, the use of tailored dissemination services (including by-products) could help to increase the publications' relevance and outreach to end users. Another challenge to reporting on use is that 44% of the publications' owners surveyed have no information on the number of visits to and downloads of their publications, 49% have no information on the actual readers, and 85% do not administer readership surveys.

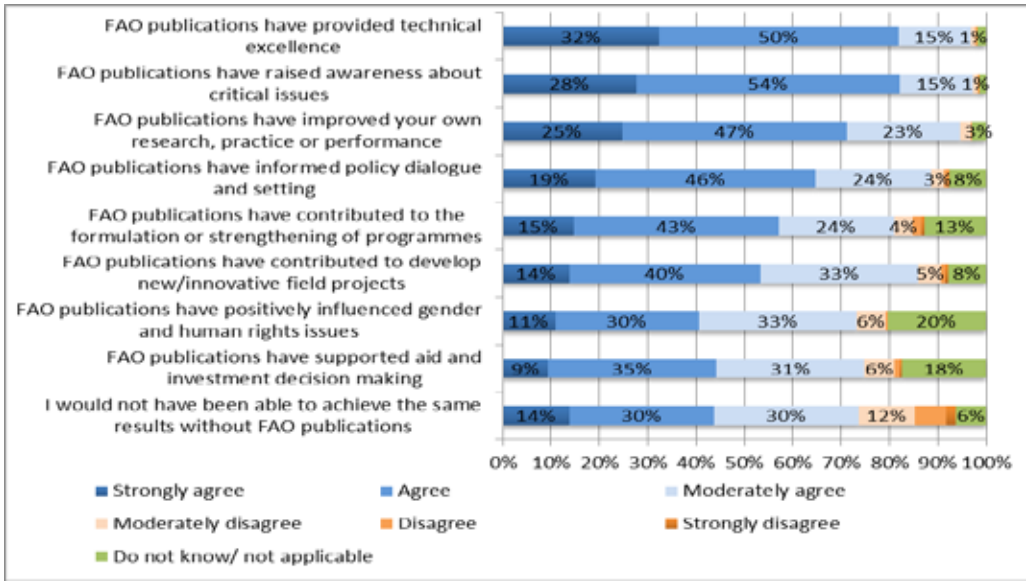
Finally, there appears to be limited awareness at country level about FAO publications. Government staff surveyed for the case studies indicate that they are most familiar with FAO manuals and guidelines (40%), followed by standards and codes (28%), and policy briefs and good practices (23%). A Member Country representative recently noted that "***If you send member countries a letter informing them about the publication of new books and uploads on the website for their convenience, it is usually ignored and only limited staff and peoples recognize that***". Users working with local communities stressed the need to receive paper copies of FAO publications, highlighting again the requirement to target dissemination.

5.7 What outcomes have FAO publications achieved, or contributed to achieving?

There is a positive contribution of FAO publications to development outcomes. Users from low and medium income countries provide a more favorable assessment of FAO publications than users from high income countries. Poorer countries find FAO publications influential, however the lack of partnerships and resources often impede the adoption of the key messages conveyed in FAO flagships.

According to user surveys, FAO publications have primarily contributed to providing technical excellence (97%), raising awareness about critical issues (97%), and improving research, practices and performance (95%) (see Figure 3). Furthermore, 74% of users indicated that they would not have been able to achieve the same results without FAO publications, suggesting that for many the FAO resources are critical to their work. The lowest rated contribution was "to influencing gender and human rights issues" (74%).

Figure 3. Outcomes of FAO publications



Source: FAO Publication Users Survey, 2015

A detailed analysis of the flagships' user surveys shows a difference between the assessments from low and medium income countries and high income countries. In general, users from low and medium income countries return a more positive assessment of FAO flagships and find a higher contribution to development outcomes, especially regarding the support and strengthening of national capacities as well as guiding the development or improvement of

sectoral strategies and programmes. A key reason for the limited uptake of the key messages conveyed in FAO's flagships is that users in these countries are especially constrained by a lack of partnerships and resources.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

Overall, the assessment found several strengths and achievements attributed to FAO publishing activities. Among the strengths, FAO is perceived as a relevant provider of information products. FAO publications have contributed to the development and improvement of a myriad of policies, strategies, and regulatory frameworks; the improvement of programmes and practices; and enhancement of users' technical knowledge. More than 70% of surveyed users felt that they would not have been able to achieve the same results without FAO publications. In particular, FAO flagships were positively rated by end-users in terms of their presentation, quality and usability, and somewhat less in terms of their ease of adaptation and use.

On the other hand, FAO publications face some shortcomings that affect their effectiveness. Those of an internal nature include infrequent needs assessments; limited participation of target users in product design; gaps in language and geographic coverage; and minimal outreach to important categories of users. The latter in particular is a key concern due to the sometimes prohibitive cost of printing publications, as many core users still prefer to receive hard copies of publications, often due to lack of reliable online access. Furthermore, FAO appears to invest significant time and effort in producing a broad range of publications, but not enough in prioritization, quality control or dissemination.

This assessment **recommends** that FAO strengthen corporate efforts to improve user-orientation, targeting and dissemination of its publications. FAO could also develop more specific guidance for publication owners, tailored to the different types and scopes of FAO publications, on how to ensure the quality of technical content and inclusion of other quality criteria including environmental, equity and social inclusion considerations.

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Appendix 2.2. List of people consulted

General

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8. **Morgan Virginija,** Communications Officer, FAO Pakistan
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13. **Ramirez Daniel,** Principal Auditor, Office of the Inspector General (OiG), FAO
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Case studies

State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) 2010-11: "Women in Agriculture – Closing the gender gap for development"

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49. **Bertrand Jacques,** Directeur Adjoint, Département Ressources Biologiques et Environnement, IFREMER

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62. **Ben Belhassen Boubaker**, Director, EST, FAO

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70. **Wensley Mitchel**, *Economist, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada*

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Annex 2.1: Design of publications assessment

This document describes the methodology for the evaluation of FAO publications' contribution to knowledge. This methodology has been developed after a preliminary review of secondary sources as well as consultations with key informants at FAO HQ (including OCC and technical divisions) and the evaluation's focal points in the Regional Offices (ROs).

1. Scope

The assessment will cover a broad range of FAO publications developed in 2011-2014 and will rely on information collected from several data sources. In order to illustrate the specific contributions made by FAO in a few selected areas, the following publications will be reviewed in detail as case studies (FAO lead unit between brackets): SOFI 2011 (FAO/IFAD/WFP), SOFA 2011 (ESA/ESS), SOFIA 2012 (FI), Joint OED/FAO Food Outlook (EST), Codex Guidelines for Antimicrobial Resistance[21] (AGD/AGA)

2. Data Sources

The data for the evaluation will be collected from general documentation (including past evaluations, audits, and reviews) and from a range of stakeholders, including:

- FAO staff as authors/owners of FAO publications.
- Member Countries as decision-makers and primary users of FAO publications.
- External Experts and Partners, as collaborators in the generation and dissemination of FAO publications.
- Other users of FAO publications, such as staff from other UN agencies and international organizations, research and academia, NGOs, private sector, media, etc.

3. Data Collection Tools

The review will capture evaluative evidence on the relevance, quality and (cost-)effectiveness of the publications through the following tools:

a) **Desk review**: review of surveys and relevant studies that FAO has already conducted to assess the usability and use of specific publications, including:

- **Usage reports**: available statistics on hits and downloads of FAO publications.
- **Assessment surveys**: review of previous studies conducted by FAO corporate or technical divisions to assess specific publications.
- **Audit of FAO's publishing activity**[22]**:** an audit conducted by the Office of the Inspector General between August and December 2013.

b) **Inventory and mapping of FAO publications:** an online survey will be administered to authors/owners of FAO publications produced in the period 2012-13 already identified in the inventory in order to gather information on their objectives, operation, dissemination, quality assurance and results monitoring systems in place. The results of the mapping survey will be analyzed and presented in statistical form (see mapping instrument in annex 2a).

c) **Meta-evaluation of FAO publications**: a synthesis of evaluation findings related to FAO publications will be prepared as part of the meta-analysis of OED evaluations being conducted for the evaluation.

21 The review of the AMR guidelines will have a more limited scope.

22 FAO Office of The Inspector General (OIG), Limited Scope Review of FAO's Publishing Activity (Aud 1114), Rome, April 2014.

d) **Case studies**: Five publications will be assessed in detail through a multi-method approach. The **individual** results will be presented as separate case studies (see outline of case studies in appendix 1). As part of the case studies, interviews with key informants, user surveys and cybermetric analyses will be conducted to gather information on usage and use of FAO publications.

- **Interviews with key informants:** about 5-10 core users of the selected publications will be identified and interviewed in order to gather feedback on the publications' use.
- **User (readership) survey**: an online survey will be administered to target users of the FAO publications selected for the case study in order to gather data on their use and utility[23]. This survey will normally take the form of a readership survey. The questionnaire is expected to contain a first section that will be generic and common to all case publications and a second section that assesses more specifically the outcomes of each publication. The user survey questionnaire will be developed in close consultation with the publications authors/owners and key informants.
- **Cybermetric analyses**: a study of the types of activity occurring on third-party websites –html pages as well as pdf and word documents-, using social scientific methods to summarize trends occurring across large datasets will be conducted for the selected publications.

e) **Client survey and workshop[24]:** A survey will be conducted to seek client views on the relevance, quality and effectiveness of FAO's knowledge products and services,[25] and on their knowledge needs in a sample of countries. Participants will be drawn from government, the private sector, research and academia, NGOs, and media. The survey might be complemented with local workshops and reviews of national policy documents.

f) **Member Country Survey:** a survey will be carried out in order to gather feedback on FAO's knowledge products and services from Member Countries, and specifically on FAO flagships.

4. Data Analysis

Data analysis will focus on identifying FAO's contributions to knowledge uptake from publications. Some possible lines of enquiry in contribution analysis are:

- What are the concrete observed changes in behavior, relations or actions ("outcomes") described in the ToC/result chain of the knowledge product?
- What are the perceived contributions of the knowledge product, and the different dissemination activities, to the observed or planned outcomes?
- Were the dissemination activities sufficient to bring about the results?
- Would results have happened without the production and/or dissemination of these publications?

5. Outputs

The main deliverables will be the following:

23 The survey will be sent to the mailing lists provided by the respective authors / owners of the selected publications.

24 24 Activity e) and f) are part of the "knowledge needs assessment" component

25 The surveys will be used to gather information not just on publications usage but also other types of knowledge products and services covered by the evaluation i.e. databases, experience capitalization, networks, and learning.

Meta-evaluation:	Synthesis report on publications
Mapping of FAO publications:	Statistical analysis
Case studies:	Individual case study reports
Report on publications	Compilation and synthesis of the above

Since they cover a wider selection of FAO knowledge products and services (not only publications), the results of the client surveys and workshops and the Member Country surveys will be presented separately.

The outline of the report on FAO publications is available in appendix 2.

6. Work plan

The work-plan for the assessment of FAO publications is provided in the following page.

Work Plan - Publications	September					October				November				December					January				February				March					April				May			
	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25
Implementation Phase																																							
DESK REVIEW																																							
Review & analysis of previous studies				E																																			
Regional Assessments				N																																			
META-EVALUATION				D																																			
Analysis and synthesis																																							
MAPPING OF FAO PUBLICATIONS				O																																			
Design survey				F																																			
Launch and analysis																																							
IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF PUBLICATIONS				S																																			
a) User Surveys				C																																			
Design & test online survey				O																																			
Launch to flagship publications				P																																			
Launch to other publications				I																																			
Interviews key informants				N																																			
Data analysis				G																																			
b) Cybermetric Analysis																																							
Design & launch																																							
Data analysis & synthesis																																							
c) Client Survey & workshops																																							
Design and test country survey																																							
Launch surveys & conduct workshops																																							
Data analysis & synthesis																																							
d) Report writing																																							
Compilation & comparative analysis																																							
Drafting of case studies and synthesis																																							
Review and finalization																																							

Appendix 1 - Outline of the individual case studies (max 5 pages each, excluding annexes)

1. Introduction
2. Background and the description of evaluand
3. Assessment (structured along the lines of the theory of change)
4. Conclusions

Annexes:

- List of persons and documentation consulted
- Results of user survey
- Results of cybermetric analysis
- Usage reports (when available)

Appendix 2 – Outline of the report on FAO publications (Max 15 pages, excluding annexes)

1. Introduction
2. Background (description of evaluand, purpose, objectives, questions and methodology)
3. Findings (structured by evaluation question)
4. Conclusions and recommendations

Annexes

- Inventory
- List of people consulted
- List of documents reviewed
- Meta-evaluation
- Case studies
- Client surveys (when relevant)
- Member Country survey (when relevant)

Annex 2.2: Inventory of FAO Publications

FAO Publications.xlsx

Annex 2.3. Meta-analysis of Past Evaluations

1. Relevance

The vast majority of previous evaluations points out the good or strong **relevance** and adequate or good **technical quality** of FAO's publications (FAO, 2009b; FAO, 2009c; FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2011a; FAO, 2011d; FAO, 2012a; FAO, 2012c; FAO, 2012d; FAO, 2012e; FAO, 2012f; FAO, 2013a; FAO, 2013c). Nevertheless this overall pattern is sometimes mitigated by the loose objectives and unclear target audiences of FAO's publications. Among the components affecting relevance is the lack of proper **needs assessments** prior to developing publications (FAO, 2011c; FAO, 2011d; FAO, 2012a; FAO, 2012c; FAO, 2012e; FAO, 2013c). From the supply side, it is furthermore noted that "the lack of complete and reliable data over publications prevents FAO from strategically managing its publishing activity" (FAO, 2014g). Another frequent issue is the absence of robust **targeting** strategy (FAO, 2012a; FAO, 2012d; FAO, 2012f; FAO, 2013a; FAO, 2014c). On a related note, some evaluations stress the lack of integration of **gender** equality and **social inclusion** concerns (FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2012c; FAO, 2012e) in FAO's publications. These results are also well evidenced by the quantitative scoring of 236 normative products assessed in five country, thematic and strategy evaluations completed in the period 2011-2013 as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 2: Non-weighted average score of 236 publications assessed in past evaluations (1: very poor-6: excellent)

Assessments / Evaluation Report	# publications reviewed	Relevance (1-6)	Technical quality (1-6)	Actual or potential uptake and use (1-6)	Actual/ potential impact from use (1-6)	Integration of environmental sustainability concepts (1-6)	Gender mainstreaming (1-6)	Integration of social/ equity issues (1-6)
Country Programme in Armenia, 2013	25	5.1	4	3.6	3.3	3.2	2.4	3.5
FAO Regional and Sub-regional Offices in Europe and Central Asia, 2012	28	4.6	4.4	4.3	4	3.3	2.6	3.8
Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (technical guidelines and related code documents), 2012	39	5	4.6	4.4	3.7	4.5	2	2.5
Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries (other publications of the Fisheries department), 2012	71	5.1	4.9	4.4	4	4.3	2.5	3.6
FAO Regional and Sub-regional Offices in Asia Pacific, 2013	73	4.8	4.3	4	3.9	3.2	2.7	3.4
Total	236	4.9	4.3	4.1	3.7	3.7	2.4	3.3

Source: Sample of FAO evaluations (2012-13)

2. Effectiveness

Previous evaluations return a mixed assessment of the effectiveness of FAO's publications. The overall effectiveness of FAO's publications appears to be frequently affected by inexistent or poor **dissemination strategies** (FAO, 2009a; FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2011b; FAO, 2011d; FAO, 2011e; FAO, 2012a; FAO, 2012b; FAO, 2014a). At project level it is further noted that high quality research deliverables deserve significant dissemination time planned into project lifetime, i.e. there needs to be a long 'lead out' time allocated for dissemination to ensure that the expected uptake is fully achieved within the **lifespan** and **funding** of the project (FAO, 2014c). A lack of proper dissemination plan and resources can leave project outcomes in-house for instance, while reaching out to the larger political world would trigger political action and upscale benefits (FAO, 2013d).

Marketing of FAO's publications is frequently seen as an area where the organization can improve (FAO, 2012a; FAO, 2012d; FAO, 2012e). It appears that FAO should better document and communicate the impact of its work and that needs to do a lot more for promoting itself and generating uptake of its knowledge products (FAO, 2012d). Previous evaluations highlight that some publications come with a **bundle** of additional tools such as brochures, guidelines, databases (FAO, 2012a; FAO, 2014g), which are an effective means to enhance dissemination. Still, a significant number of reports indicate that FAO's publications adopt neither a **style** nor a **format** that is simple, concise, and user-friendly. Knowledge outputs fall short of reaching target audiences as diverse as policy-makers and communities alike (FAO, 2011d; FAO, 2012e; FAO, 2012f). On a related note, some evaluations (FAO, 2011c; FAO, 2012e) recommend tailoring and **contextualizing** FAO's publications to a specific region by incorporating regional or national examples as positively achieved by some projects (FAO, 2014c). Another barrier to dissemination and uptake regards the lack of **translation** of FAO's publications into **local language** (FAO, 2009a; FAO, 2011b; FAO, 2011c; FAO, 2012e; FAO, 2013a). on the other hand, it is also true that piles of documents sometimes lie idle in offices, while experts contributing to publications do not receive even one copy of the final copy (FAO, 2010b). The contribution of the Russian Federation to a Multilateral Trust Fund to pay for translators and translation has been a positive step to address the language gap but this initiative does not seem to be entirely sustainable (FAO, 2012c).

Access to FAO's publications is also constrained by the increased reliance on electronic files versus **printed materials**, which remains an issue in developing countries (FAO, 2009a; FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2012e; FAO, 2012f). Furthermore, it is sometimes found difficult to trace or find certain normative products on FAO **website** for those able to download (FAO, 2011d; FAO, 2014a) or to retrieve publications across FAO's network of offices and **distributed electronic repositories**. As for **mass media channels** like radio and TV, they remain frequently untapped for taking messages to the communities (FAO, 2012e).

Some previous evaluations indicate that external **partnerships** –e.g. with government, research and academia, CSOs/NGOs- have a positive influence on knowledge dissemination (FAO, 2013a). Nevertheless these partnerships are frequently not maximized, i.e. grounded in robust strategies, supported by realistic resource envelopes, or involving the most relevant stakeholders (FAO, 2011b; FAO, 2012d; FAO, 2013c).

3. Efficiency

Previous evaluations point out the lack of sufficient planning and **coordination** of normative product development within FAO's decentralized office network (FAO, 2013c). The lack of a corporate governance structure in FAO is identified as the principal reason why longstanding issues such as defining flagship publications, increasing sales and dissemination and establishing quality assurance are still pending issues (FAO, 2014g).

As a possible consequence, evaluations can sometimes flag that there are "far too many" products, which are often repetitive, and with minimal relevance to field work (FAO, 2010b). Similarly, it found that "most of these products were not considered suitable for capacity development purposes" (FAO, 2012e). Although FAO Publishing Policy (FAO, 2013f) recognizes the importance of assessing whether there is a real need for a publication and encourages to use funds more efficiently, there is no final checkpoint to assess if the cost-effectiveness of the publications has been demonstrated (FAO, 2014g).

Development, review and clearance **processes** are not always transparent (FAO, 2012e; FAO, 2014b) while the absence of credible external reviewers limits sometimes the uptake of results by the research community (FAO, 2011c).

4. Impact

According to past evaluations, FAO's publications are **variously known** at country level. Flagship products –e.g. SOFIA, SOFI, etc.- are appreciated for the global picture they provide (FAO, 2009c; FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2011a; FAO, 2011d; FAO, 2012e; FAO, 2013c). Such publications have the potential to deliver useful information to officials (administrative and technical), civil society activists, researchers and academics (FAO, 2012f). Simultaneously some other literature ranging from flagships to 'grey documents' are often not well-known in Member countries (FAO, 2011c; FAO, 2012a) although they would be very beneficial and relevant if better disseminated (FAO, 2010b).

FAO flagships and normative products are **differently used** according to the thematic sector and region under consideration. The international reach, influence, use and durability of FAO's **international normative work** tends to be positively recognized but "FAO's work at the level of **national implementation** is generally under-recognized, but when identified, has received mixed reviews" (FAO, 2009c). Few publications -if any- are indicated to be widely used across all regions and stakeholders groups. One exception may be FAO Food Outlook and the Report on the State of World Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI), which are indicated as being "well acknowledged and used by governments, donors, UN agencies and INGOs" (FAO, 2011d). But forestry products statistics for instance are found to be rather used by the private sector as well as by academia and research institutions but little by Member countries in policy, planning and forest management (FAO, 2012a). Similarly, most of the knowledge products from the Fisheries department (code-related normative products) are not known broadly outside a limited audience and thus not used (FAO, 2012e). Altogether, a prevailing situation seems to be the rather limited use of FAO's publications at country level (FAO, 2008a; FAO, 2011a; FAO, 2011b).

Feedback loops and synergies between **normative work** and **field programmes** are often weak, limiting translation of FAO normative work into programmes and projects (FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2012a; FAO, 2012e; FAO, 2014b). Notable counter examples spotted in former evaluations include the EAF (Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries)-Nansen project which "has very significantly contributed to enhance FAO's normative contributions through its field-testing and input into the development of the EAF toolbox" (FAO, 2013e) and the development of a study on the "Value of African Fisheries" with results subsequently published in SOFIA (FAO, 2014d).

According to some stakeholders, the effectiveness of FAO's publications would increase if they were followed by some kind of **implementation** (FAO, 2012a). From a methodological

standpoint, the Organization should also develop a framework to **monitor** and **evaluate** the use of FAO's publications (FAO, 2014g).

5. Sustainability

The 2011 Circular on Roles and Responsibilities and the recent emphasis on enabling a more effective 'translation' of FAO's normative work at country level are positive steps towards improving FAO's **institutional framework** for knowledge dissemination (FAO, 2014e). Evaluations further underline the need for FAO senior management and staff to take actions to improve the distribution and uptake of FAO's publications or to follow through on such previous intentions (FAO, 2009b; FAO, 2010a; FAO, 2012e; FAO, 2013c; FAO, 2014c; FAO, 2014e). Enhancing sustainability may further imply to slightly adjust the roles and responsibilities of key staffs (FAO, 2009b; FAO, 2010a; FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2013c) and to assess the skills and capacities of staff involved in publishing activities and "the different tasks undertaken in technical departments and country offices alike" (FAO, 2014g). At national level, it may be worthwhile to set up national Publications Committees (FAO, 2008b), develop national initiatives to reach out to key partners (FAO, 2013a; FAO, 2014c), and encourage funding and operation of publications by national partners (FAO, 2009d).

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Annex 2.4: Survey of FAO Publication Owners

1. Main Findings

Based on the responses and perceptions of the publication's producers/ owners:

- The main purpose of FAO publications is to serve as an **advisory** (manual, guidelines) document, followed by **advocacy** (flagship reports, policy briefs), **learning** (good practices, systematizations) and s**cientific** (research article, proceedings) purposes. From a purely quantitative standpoint the normative role of the Organization does not seem to be well reflected by the level of production of 'Normative' publications as it comes last within the list, unless advisory and advocacy publications are primarily intended to support the dissemination of normative knowledge.

- FAO publications mainly have a **global** geographical scope (83% of respondents), followed by regional (60%) and national (35%). This appears to be consistent with the findings of the meta-evaluation / previous evaluations which indicate that FAO publications do not often address the national and sub-national levels.

- The main target audiences of FAO publications are (in order of importance):

    - national governments
    - academia and research institutes,
    - international organizations,
    - civil society organizations,
    - FAO, donors and producers.

  National governments are involved in the planning and design of less than 30% of the referred publications. Furthermore national governments contribute to the preparation and testing of less than 50% of the publications and to the dissemination and promotion of less than 50% of the publications. Donors and producers are three times more frequently referred as target audiences as they are as contributors to the planning, design, preparation, testing, or dissemination and promotion of the publications.

- The majority of the publications relate mostly to SO2 (42%), followed by SO4 (22%) and SO1 (12%). Fewer publications (8.2%) relate to reduction of rural poverty (SO3) which is still one of the three global goals of the Organization (***Elimination of poverty through economic and social progress for all***).

- The most common themes covered by FAO publications are:

    - Food security
    - Food production
    - Climate change
    - Gender
    - Fisheries

  About one third of the respondents indicate an 'Other' theme that does not appear to fit in FAO high-level taxonomy or is rather a refinement of an existing category. In both cases this suggests a large thematic span for FAO publications. The survey is not the tool though to assess if some themes are spread too thin, i.e. if there is an

adequate relationship between the strategic importance of a thematic area and the number of publications or if there is any mismatch in terms of results orientation.

- The subject of the publications are mainly decided based on:
  - Stakeholder consultations
  - The outcomes of a conference or workshop
  - A country request
  - Desk research
  - FAO staff own initiative

In spite of FAO's technical expertise and possible position as a thought leader, the fact that one third (25/75) of the referred publications are originated by FAO staff's own initiatives questions the level of demand orientation of some publications.

- **Production/development of publications:**
  - *Budget for the production/development of publications:*
    - 41% of respondents have a budget between USD 10,000 – USD 50,000, while 29% have a budget of below USD 10,000.
    - Overall, 46% of respondents were satisfied with the budget available for the production of their publications, while 45% were unsatisfied.
  - 58% of the respondents spend between 10-50% of their time in the production of the publications. On the other hand, the majority of the respondents spend very little time in the dissemination of their publications (45% spend 0-5% of their time & 35% spend 5-10% of their time).
- **Dissemination of publications:**
  - 85% of the respondents indicated that their publications have a dissemination strategy or plan, 10% that their publications had no dissemination plan, and 5% were not aware.
  - Dissemination of publications is mostly done via:
    - Participation in conferences and workshops
    - Websites/ blogs
    - Press releases
    - Policy briefs/brochures/leaflets
    - Articles in specialized press
  - Budget for the dissemination of publications:
    - 30% of the respondents have no budget available for dissemination, while 43% have a budget below USD 10,000.
    - Overall, 27% of respondents were satisfied with the budget available for promoting their publications, while 59% were unsatisfied.
  - Overall, 61% of respondents are satisfied with the dissemination of their publications, while 35% are not satisfied with the actual dissemination.

  - 69% of the respondents are satisfied with the discoverability of their publications, while 25% are unsatisfied.

- **Quality of publications:**
  - 93% of the respondents stated that their publications are subject to peer reviews or other forms of quality assurance, while 7% stated the contrary. The most common quality assurance mechanism used for publications is the **internal peer review**, followed by the **external peer review**, and a **review by the publishing committee**.
  - Overall, 80% of the respondents are satisfied with the quality of their publications, while only 2% are unsatisfied.

- **Cooperation:**
  - 87% of the respondents work with other stakeholders in the production of their publications.
  - The main partners are: FAO (HQ & DO), Academia and research institutions, and other international organizations.

- **Use of publications:**
  - Visits and downloads: 49% of respondents have information the visits and downloads of their publications, 44% have no information.
  - Actual readers: 41% of the respondents have information on the actual readers, 49% have no information.
  - Readers disaggregated by sex: Only 2% of the respondents have information of readers disaggregated by sex, while 91% have no information.
  - Readership survey: Only 10% of the respondents carry out a readership survey on a regular basis, while 85% do not carry out readership surveys.
  - M&E procedures for outcomes: 66% of respondents do not have M&E procedures in place to measure the outcomes resulting from their publications, while 15% do have M&E procedures.

Annex 2.5: Case Study – The State of the World's Food and Agriculture (SOFA)

1. Introduction

This case study presents the assessment of the uptake among key audiences of the 2010-11 SOFA issue on Women in Agriculture. This edition of SOFA was selected as it allowed for a more meaningful analysis of impact. The study is part of the evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture. The assessment identifies the main outcomes achieved by the publication, as well as success factors, gaps and unmet needs, against the expectations set in the "theory of change" of the publication26 (see figure in the next page).

2. Methodology

The study relies on information collected from primary (interviews, surveys) and secondary sources. Interviews were conducted with FAO staff and a sample of core users -Appendix 1. SOFA-related documentation was reviewed including selected procedural documents, scientific papers and guidance documents, as well as presentations and outreach materials –Appendix 2. A survey questionnaire was sent to 393 registered users of SOFA (with emphasis on 2010-11 users); in total 79 questionnaires were completed and analyzed -Appendix 3. An analysis of web and cybermetric data was performed to quantify and qualify the uptake of SOFA 2010-11 according to the activity occurring on third-party websites –Appendix 4. Finally, relevant responses from the evaluation's client survey and the Member Country survey were compiled and the findings triangulated against those emerging from the above primary and secondary data sources.

3. Description of SOFA

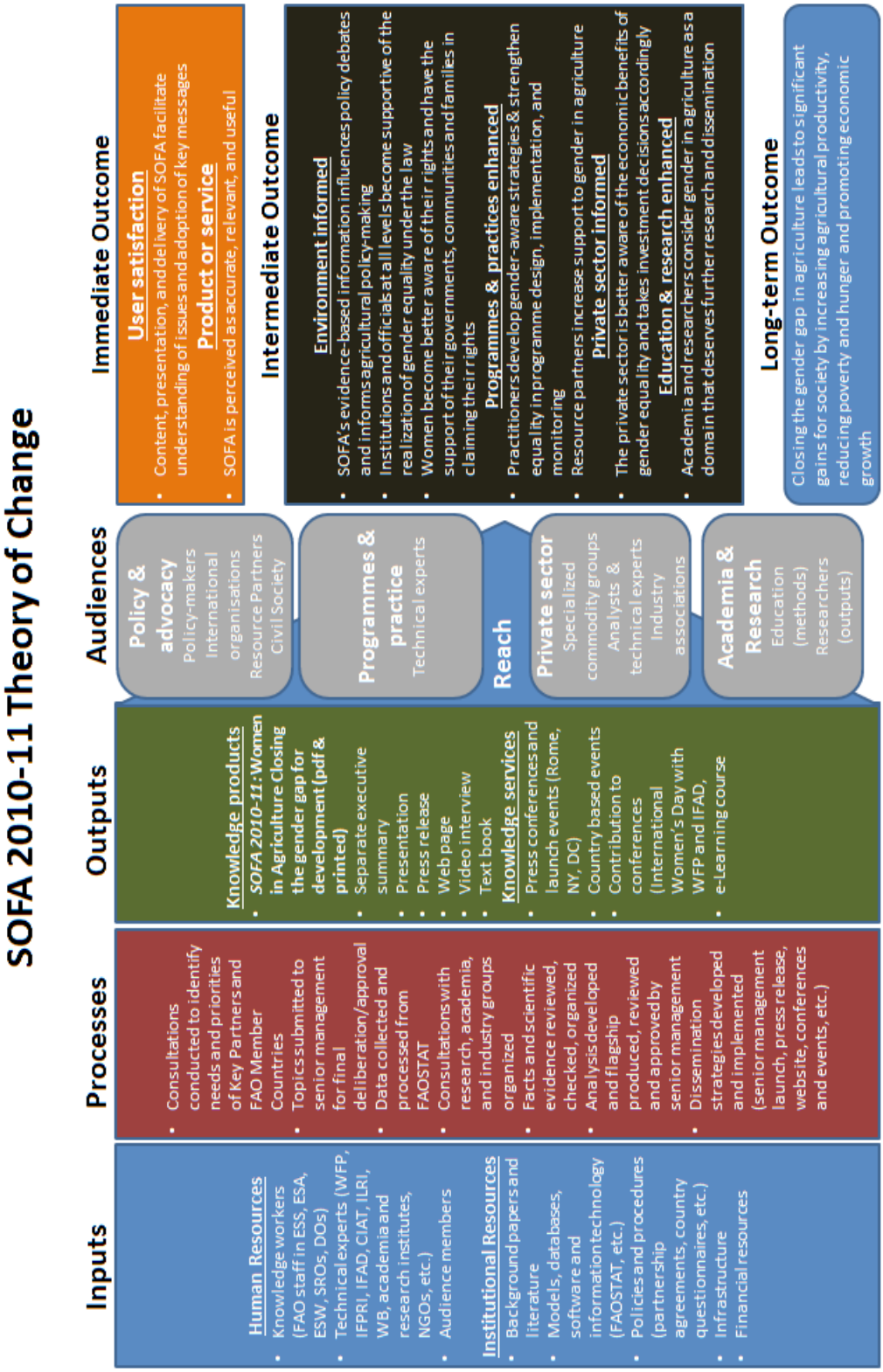
The FAO Economic and Social Development Department (ES) has produced SOFA[27] since 1947. SOFA aims to bring to a wide audience balanced science-based assessments of important issues in the field of food and agriculture. Each edition of the report contains a comprehensive, yet easily accessible, overview of a selected topic of major relevance for rural and agricultural development and for global food security. Every SOFA edition has a different theme, and often addresses specific target audiences through purposely-planned dissemination plans[28]. The development of SOFA goes through the following main steps:

Identification of potential themes: In general the identification of themes is the result of informal consultation within FAO (especially within the Economics and Social Department) and is also influenced by the international agenda. SOFA is frequently grounded in research that a FAO division has conducted and is planning to publish. SOFA then acts as a privilege vehicle to further disseminate the results of this research. This approach helps FAO selecting topics that are supported by internal knowledge and capacities. Themes that are identified as suitable but not found a priority in the international agenda are "parked" and stay in the pipeline; the SOFA's on livestock and gender are examples of themes that were selected on this basis.

26 The theory of change was formulated in cooperation with FAO staff interviewed for this case study.

27 http://www.fao.org/economic/es-home/sofa/tr/

28 E.g. SOFA 2010-11 on Gender was promoted during the International Women's Day. SOFA 2013 on Nutrition was highlighted during the World Food Day, etc.


SOFA 2010-11 Theory of Change
Inputs
Processes
Outputs
Audiences
Immediate Outcome
Intermediate Outcome
Long-term Outcome
Human Resources
Knowledge workers (FAO staff in ESS, ESA, ESW, SROs, DOs)
Technical experts (WFP, IFPRI, IFAD, CIAT, ILRI, WB, academia and research institutes, NGOs, etc.)
Audience members
Institutional Resources
Background papers and literature
Models, databases, software and information technology (FAOSTAT, etc.)
Policies and procedures (partnership agreements, country questionnaires, etc.)
Infrastructure
Financial resources
Consultations conducted to identify needs and priorities of Key Partners and FAO Member Countries
Topics submitted to senior management for final deliberation/approval
Data collected and processed from FAOSTAT
Consultations with research, academia, and industry groups organized
Facts and scientific evidence reviewed, checked, organized
Analysis developed and flagship produced, reviewed and approved by senior management
Dissemination strategies developed and implemented (senior management launch, press release, website, conferences and events, etc.)
Knowledge products
SOFA 2010-11: Women in Agriculture Closing the gender gap for development (pdf & printed)
Separate executive summary
Presentation
Press release
Web page
Video interview
Text book
Knowledge services
Press conferences and launch events (Rome, NY, DC)
Country based events
Contribution to conferences (International Women's Day with WFP and IFAD,
e-Learning course
Policy & advocacy
Policy-makers
International organisations
Resource Partners
Civil Society
Programmes & practice
Technical experts
Reach
Private sector
Specialized commodity groups
Analysts & technical experts
Industry associations
Academia & Research
Education (methods)
Researchers (outputs)
User satisfaction
Content, presentation, and delivery of SOFA facilitate understanding of issues and adoption of key messages
Product or service
SOFA is perceived as accurate, relevant, and useful
Environment informed
SOFA's evidence-based information influences policy debates and informs agricultural policy-making
Institutions and officials at all levels become supportive of the realization of gender equality under the law
Women become better aware of their rights and have the support of their governments, communities and families in claiming their rights
Programmes & practices enhanced
Practitioners develop gender-aware strategies & strengthen equality in programme design, implementation, and monitoring
Resource partners increase support to gender in agriculture
Private sector informed
The private sector is better aware of the economic benefits of gender equality and takes investment decisions accordingly
Education & research enhanced
Academia and researchers consider gender in agriculture as a domain that deserves further research and dissemination
Closing the gender gap in agriculture leads to significant gains for society by increasing agricultural productivity, reducing poverty and hunger and promoting economic growth

Selection and development process: After discussions within ES Management, a formal proposal is sent to FAO Director General who takes the final decision on the SOFA theme. Afterwards, ADGs at HQ and in RO are approached to seek their interest and willingness to contribute to the report and, if positive, assign a focal point[29]. In the case of **SOFA 2010-11**, ES Management requested to focus on specific topics in order to increase impact. Staff time and financial resources were made available including for the dissemination of the flagship. As described in the dissemination strategy (see box below), efforts were made to target the publication to policy makers, FAO itself and collaborating organizations. In addition to internal staff, external experts[30] contributed to SOFA development.

Review and final clearance: Before finalization the draft is internally reviewed and discussed to assess if the report's messages are clear and technically sound. Afterwards, the process enters into the final revision/clearance stage. This includes feedback from relevant units (Communication Division), official clearance from ES Department, and finally approval from the Director-General Office (Cabinet).

4. Assessment

This section aims to measure the extent to which the outputs and outcomes identified in the theory of change for SOFA 2010-1131 have been met from "a user point of view".

4.1. Outreach and targeting of SOFA

SOFA 2010-11 aimed at reaching out five main audiences: policy-makers, programme managers, researchers, media and CSOs/NGOs, international partners, and entrepreneurs based in different locations around the world. It was published in English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and Russian, and disseminated based on a work plan developed with OCC and included targeted events (see box 1).Web traffic information shows that the report is widely consulted online –Figure 1, and that promotion during major events (International Women's Day) did increase the number of visits to the website. Furthermore, SOFA 2010-11 has had a relatively long shelf life with an average of 4,000 monthly visits in the last three years, including a peak of 18,000 visits at the time of the Commission of Status of Women meeting in March 2014.

Box 1. SOFA 2010-11 dissemination strategy

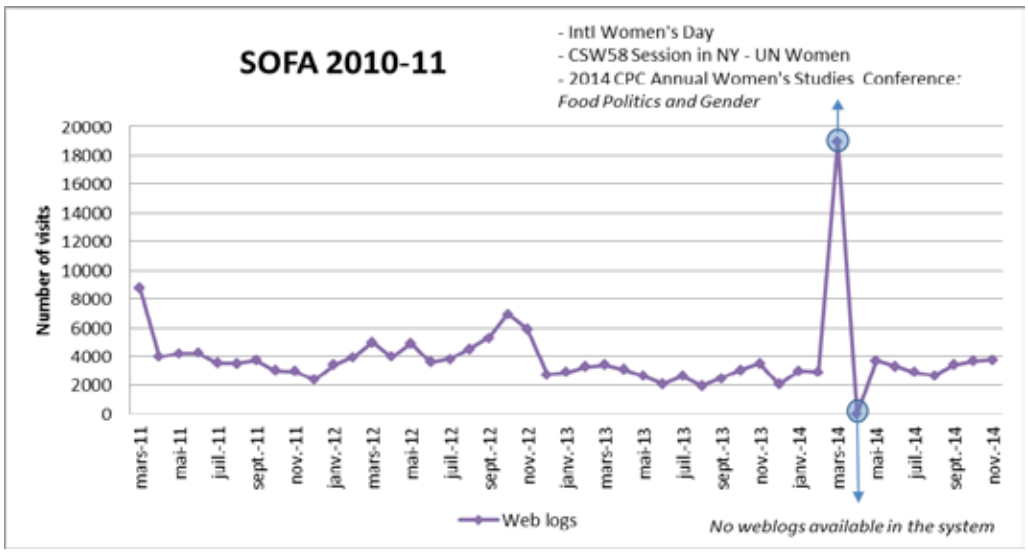
Targeted contacts were made with World Leaders and influential stakeholders at Donor (US State Department), Development partners (UN Women), and FAO Member Countries through the Decentralized Offices. FAO Gender focal points, collaborating partners and FAO staff at large were targeted through Newsletters; press conferences and events organized by FAO liaison offices at UN HQ in New York, at IFPRI, the WB and USAID in Washington, and in Brussels. Outreach activities to specific organizations -e.g. International Association of Agricultural Economist and NGOs e.g. the Hunger project were conducted. Participants to the International Women's Day (March 6), FAO Conference, the 56th UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2012, whose priority theme was on the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication were also targeted. In terms of media outreach, FAO issued two media advisories ahead of launch/press conference, contacted various news organizations and journalists regarding the report/press conference, made report & supporting material available under embargo to select journalists, organized press conference, arranged for its webcasting, produced video/audio interviews for webposting and distribution to broadcasters, send 40+ tweets via @FAOnews, and made 5 Facebook posts.

29 The development process of SOFA 2010-11 involved staff from ESS for statistical data; ESA for writing the publication; ESW for gender expertise; DOs for evidence sharing; and Member Countries for providing data.

30 External experts are usually identified and selected through a literature review. When financial resources are available, FAO commissions 5 or 6 external papers to research and to deepen the theme. These experts convene also in a workshop with FAO focal points from HQ and from SRO to kick-off the production of SOFA. In the case of SOFA 2010-11, experts from IFAD, WB, WFP and IFPRI contributed to draft SOFA 2010-11.

31 When data collected refers to SOFA in general, it is duly acknowledged in the report.

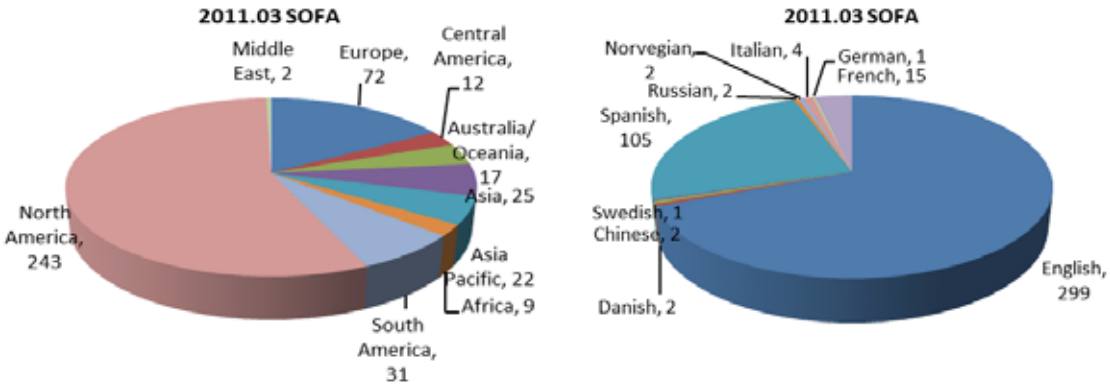
Figure 1: Number of visits to SOFA 2010-11



Source: FAO, 2015

Further to this, the SOFA media coverage report prepared by FAO in September 2011 (excluding radio and TV) found that out of 400 news stories referring to SOFA 2010-11, 30 were in "top tier" news outlets. Over 50% of the news were in North America (243) and almost 75% of them (299) in English, which suggests skewed media coverage – figure 2.

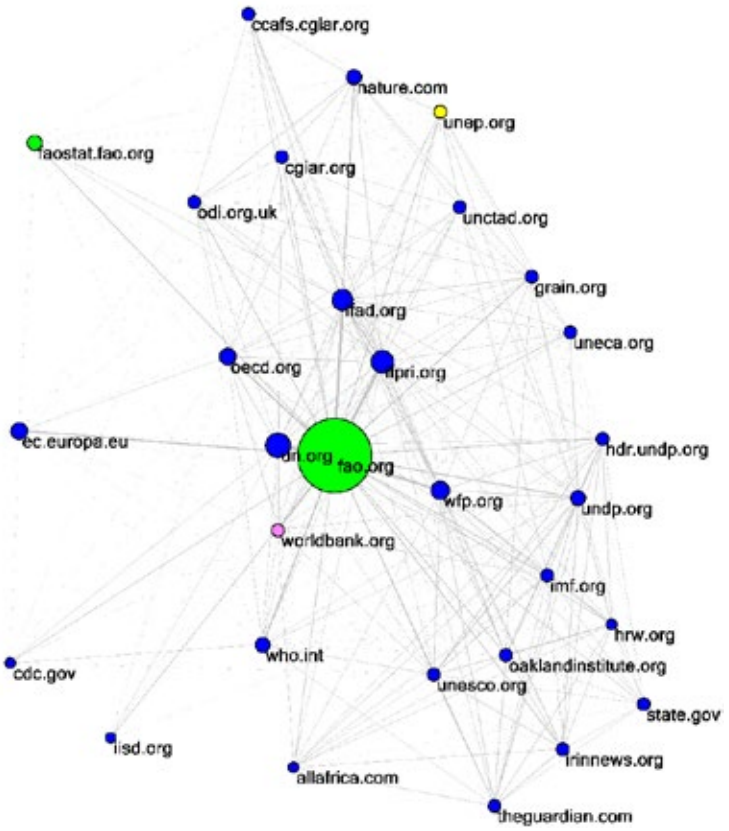
Figure 2: Regional breakdown of coverage, SOFA 2010-11



Source: FAO, 2014

In general terms, SOFA users mostly come from research institutions/academia (34%), Government (14%), and civil society organizations (14%), and learnt about SOFA after receiving an email from FAO (25%) and/or browsing the FAO web site (20%). This user profile is largely validated by the results of the mapping of the SOFA web community, which shows that most referrals to SOFA come from research institutes/think tanks (e.g. IFPRI, CGIAR, IISD, ODI, Oakland Institute), United Nations Agencies (e.g. UN, WFP, IFAD, WHO, UNDP, UNCTAD, ECA, UNEP), IFIs and other IGOs (World Bank, IMF, OECD, EC), Governments (e.g. US Department of State, CDC), and the media (e.g. allAfrica, Nature, Irin News, The Guardian) -Figure 3.

Figure 3: Web community of SOFA



Source: Cybermetric, 2014.

The cybermetric analysis also found that SOFA 2010-11's online outreach (in terms of number of web references) is slightly higher to similar publications consulted by the survey respondents, such as the World Bank (WB)'s 2012 World Development Report on Gender Equality and Development, which was published a few months later and included information from the SOFA report, and IFAD's Rural Poverty Report 2011. The WB's and the IFAD's report appears however to be more cited than SOFA 2010-11 in academic circles and in grey literature – Table 1.

Table 1: Web references and academic citations of a sample of publications

Knowledge Products	Author	Number of web references		Number of citations	
		Link Hit Est.	Site Hit Est.	Google Scholar cites	Scopus cites
SOFA 2010-11	FAO	786	353	4	20
La situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture 2010-11	FAO	110	71	-	-
El estado mundial de la agricultura y la alimentación 2010-11	FAO	279	153	-	-
World Development Report 2012 Gender Equality and Development	World Bank	938	427	19	134
Rural Poverty Report 2011	IFAD	1 104	461	2	65

Source: AlterSpark, Cybermetric Analysis Research Group, and FAO, 2014.

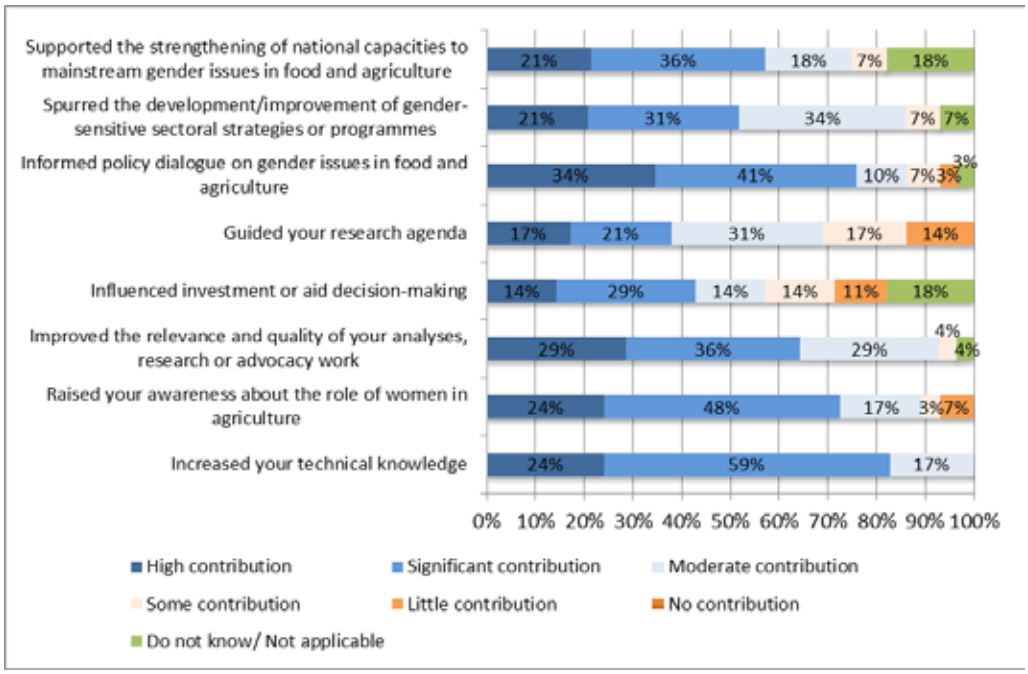
4.2. Presentation, usability and quality of SOFA

An engaging presentation is the first quality factor that readers appreciate in publications. In the case of SOFA 2010-11, this was favorably assessed by 90% of users participating in the survey. The graphic design, writing style, and clarity of SOFA were especially commended. Satisfaction is slightly lower for the length and structure of the publication, but overall still very positive. Regarding SOFA's technical quality, over 90% of the respondents found the publication to be *technically sound, accurate and credible*, and *complementary to other publications*. Lower satisfaction was noted regarding the *involvement of users and partners in the planning/design of the publication* as well as on the *easiness to adapt or use the product in regional/national contexts*, and the *adequacy of the geographic span*. Addressing the latter in future SOFA editions would be important to improve usability of the report.

4.3. Usefulness of SOFA

Survey participants highly rated SOFA 2010-11 for its contribution to *increasing technical knowledge*, *raising awareness about the role of women in agriculture*, *informing policy dialogue on gender issues in food and agriculture*, and to a lesser extent for *spurring the development/improvement of gender-sensitive sectoral strategies or programmes* – Figure 4.

Figure 4: Contribution of SOFA 2010-11 to the following areas

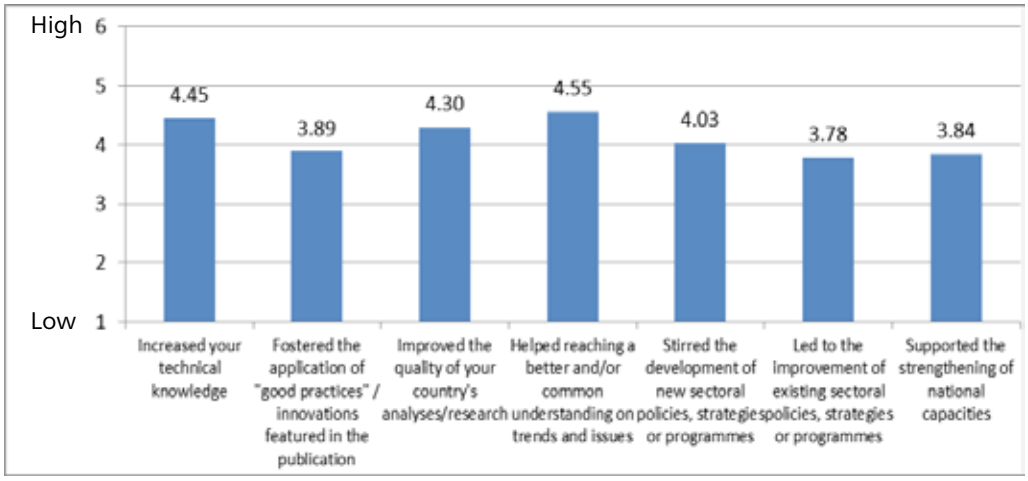


Source: User Survey of SOFA, 2015

This finding is corroborated by the feedback received from Member Countries[32], which considered SOFA – in general – to be most useful in *helping to reach a better and/or common understanding on trends and issues* – figure 5.

32 A survey was sent to FAO Member Countries requesting their views on FAO knowledge products and services, including specifically on FAO flagship publications. Thirty eight countries responded and rated their perceived contribution of SOFA to a pre-defined series of country-level outcomes from 1: No contribution to 6: High contribution.

Figure 5: Main contributions of SOFA to Member States



Source: Member Country survey – section on SOFA, 2015

A disaggregated analysis of uptake by audience type is provided below.

4.3.1. Uptake by policy-makers

SOFA 2010-11 has been described by some policy-makers as an innovative and "*very stimulating publication*". It triggered discussions on the socio-economic dimensions of women in agriculture. It has been widely cited in public addresses by senior officials, including former US Secretary of States, Heads of UN Agencies (UN Women, IFAD, WFP), Italy's Prime Minister, USAID Administrator, Senior Managers from the World Bank, etc. According to key informants, SOFA 2010-11 provided for the first time robust data on women role in agriculture which contributed to strengthening advocacy and influenced policy dialogue at senior levels. The key messages included in the report stirred the redesign of institutional and national policies (such as USAID's 2012 policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment). The cybermetric analysis found that the report has been used and/or cited by policy-makers from the German development agency, the Algerian's Ministry of Statistics, the French's Ministry of Agriculture, etc. and its analyses have been re-used/quoted in several flagships such as the WB's 2012 World Development Report.

> *The SOFA's on Women in agriculture (2010-11)… contributed to the national debate on these issues.*
>
> **Member Country Representative from Europe**
>
> FAO Member Country Survey, 2015

FAO Member Countries and SOFA users have provided specific examples of use at national level:

- *"L'utilisation des informations issues du SOFI et du SOFA nous permettent de développer nos analyses sur les sujets de l'agriculture, de l'alimentation et de l'insécurité alimentaire. Les chiffres et données présentées dans ces rapports sont utilisés comme des références pour construire nos propres analyses. A titre d'exemple, le rapport SOFA sur le rôle des femmes dans l'agriculture a permis de révéler de nouveaux chiffres et de nouvelles tendances qui ont alimenté nos réflexions et études sur cette question." – Europe*

- *"[SOFA 2010-11 has been used for] Informing policy on gender mainstreaming in poultry production and alleviating poverty" - Africa*

4.3.2. Uptake by programme managers

There is some evidence that SOFA use led to the "gendering" of developments or changes in programmes or projects; such changes however tended to happen in organizations that where already gender-sensitive prior to the publication (e.g. FAO inclusion of gender analysis in project design and USAID's efforts to develop a "women empowerment index"), and room exists to continue promoting gender mainstreaming at programme management level. The user survey returned some anecdotal evidence of additional uptake as follows:

- *"[SOFA 2010-11 was] Integrated in internal and external communications [and] Informed funding decisions for development projects" - Europe*
- *"[SOFA 2010-11 informed] How gender can be mainstreamed into apparently gender neutral field projects" - Africa*
- *"[SOFA 2010-11 a été utilisé] Lors des sessions dans les CEP [Champs Ecoles des Producteurs/Farmers Field Schools] " - Africa*

4.3.3. Uptake by academia and research

Key informants stressed that prior to SOFA release many agricultural researchers did not have much consideration for gender issues and socio-economic role of women in agriculture. Gender was more perceived as a donor oriented concern or requirement with no socio-economic implications. In their view, SOFA helped to address this lack of interest and to increase gender-sensitive research. A contributing factor was the involvement of prominent scholars in the development of SOFA. This supported the credibility and expanded its visibility on broader networks. Research published by IFPRI and academia[33] that studied the lack of control of women over assets arrived to similar conclusions.

Since it was published, over 70 online publications and over 20 articles in scientific journals have referred to SOFA 2010-11. The user survey returns anecdotal evidence of use of SOFA 2010-11 in research and teaching:

- *"The estimate of the impact of equalizing women's access to resources and agri. inputs on food production/reduction in the no of hungry - have used in various conference/ seminar presentations and papers The appendix on proportion of women in the agri. Lab"*
- *"This publication is required reading in graduate student research I supervise. It is used in training and information exchange as well as research activities"*
- *"I have referenced it many times and used it in teaching."*
- *"Major reference for gender articles."*

4.3.4. Media and civil society

According to media and civil society users SOFA 2010-11 gave FAO's endorsement to the theme and enhanced its visibility. It was, in the words of a civil society representative, a "*first giant step*" complemented the following year by the World Bank report that reused some of the statistics and findings from SOFA. It was further highlighted that before SOFA 2010-11 women movements had not focused on agriculture while agriculture had not carefully considered the gender dimension. The nexus of these two underrepresented topics was an important factor to enhance their visibility. Among NGOs, OXFAM reportedly reopened discussions on disaggregated statistics after SOFA 2010-11 while the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation reportedly changed their approach on women in agriculture after the report.

33 Doss & al. (2013)

4.3.5. International partners

The cybermetric analysis showed strong reuse of SOFA by international partners –e.g. WFP, IFAD, WHO, UNDP, UNCTAD, ECA, UNEP, World Bank, IMF, OECD, and the EC. The involvement of international partners -IFAD, WB, and WFP- in the production of SOFA 2010-11 was credited as contributing to the wide re-use and referrals of the report.

4.3.6. Private sector

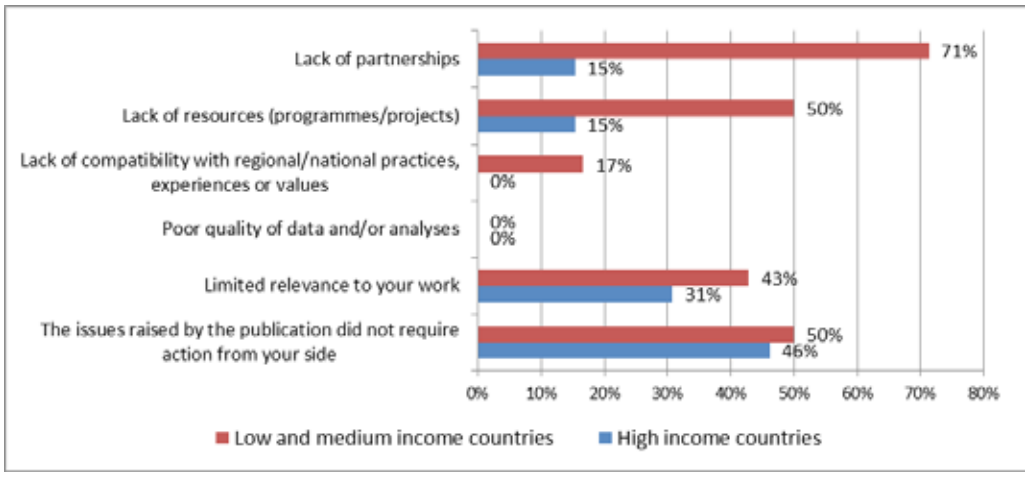
The evaluation did not find evidence of the use of SOFA 2010-11 by the private sector. Accordingly it has not been possible to assess the extent to which the private sector had become better aware of the economic benefits of gender equality and had taken investment decisions accordingly[34].

4.4. Dissemination channels and unmet needs

Some respondents (about 20) from the users' survey indicated that they did not apply the key messages put forward in the SOFA 2010-11. The reasons most cited for this lack of use were that the key messages did not require a response from their side, followed by a lack of partnerships and resources. Detailed analysis shows that these factors influence differently users from low-medium income countries and high income countries. In particular users from low-medium income countries are much more exposed to a lack of partnerships and lack of resources (programmes/projects) that prevent them from applying the key messages conveyed in SOFA –Figure 6.

34 Participation of private sector representatives in the survey and the interviews were low.

Figure 6: Reasons for not applying the key messages presented in SOFA 2010-11



Source: User Survey of SOFA, 2015

According to the survey the most efficient channels to disseminate SOFA are the website, followed by country case studies and conferences, workshops and meetings. In the case of SOFA 2010-11, collaborations between FAO and collaborating partners in the organization of events were appreciated. Involvement of DOs, e.g. through the development of country-level case studies and dissemination through local workshops and meetings could be increased in future SOFA editions. This could also include opinion articles by national leaders, press releases, and targeted email campaigns. Synergies with other FAO knowledge services such as e-Learning courses and networks could also be explored. SOFA users proposed themes or features they would like to see in future editions of the report as a means to disseminate knowledge on critical issues. Although a wide range of topics were proposed the most popular ones relate to sustainability, climate change, innovation, and capacity development.

5. Conclusion

The assessment notes a range of good practices in the development of SOFA and more specifically SOFA 2010-11, spanning across governance, results-orientation and dissemination activities, which have led to the achievement of positive results especially in terms of informing policy debates and improving evidence base for analyses on women in agriculture. While the dissemination of SOFA at global level appears to be highly effective, the cascading at national level warrant further analysis especially in view of the expressed need for country-level case studies to facilitate understanding and increase uptake of the key messages. In particular, maximizing use in countries from regions originating fewer citations/referrals of SOFA and where food and agriculture is still the back bone of the economy–e.g. Africa, Asia, Near East, North Africa, would deserve greater analysis.

Appendix 1: List of key informants consulted

1. **Arvaniti Myrto**, Communication Officer, OCC, FAO
2. **Coonrod John,** Executive Vice President, The Hunger Project
3. **Crowley Eve,** Deputy Regional Representative (former Deputy Director Gender Division), Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, FAO
4. **Goldstein Markus**, Lead Economist, Africa Region and Research Group, World Bank
5. **Grown Caren**, Senior Gender Specialist, World Bank
6. **Gustafsson Dan,** Depuy Director General, Operations (former Director, Liaison Office in the US), FAO
7. **Hartl Maria,** Senior Technical Specialist Gender and Social Equity, IFAD
8. **Kendrik Michelle,** Communication Officer, ES Department, FAO
9. **Meinzen-Dick Ruth**, Senior Research Fellow, IFPRI
10. **Raney Terri,** Senior Economist, Editor, The State of Food and Agriculture, Agricultural Development Economics Division (ESA), FAO
11. **Skoet Jakob,** Economist, ESA, FAO
12. **Stamoulis Kostas,** ESA Director, FAO
13. **Villareal Marcella**, OPC Director (former Director Gender Division), FAO

Appendix 2: List of documents reviewed

- **Beynon, P., Chapoy, C., Gaarder, M. & Masset, E**. 2012. *What Difference does a Policy Brief Make?* Brighton, IDS.
- **Doemeland, D**. & **Trevino, J**. 2014. *Which World Bank Reports Are Widely Read?* Washington, DC, World Bank.
- **Doss C., Kovarik C., Peterman A., Quisumbing A. R., van den Bold M.** 2013. *Gender inequalities in ownership and control of land in Africa: Myths versus reality*. IFPRI Discussion Paper. International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Washington D.C. http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15738coll2/id/127957/rec/19
- **FAO**. 2011. *The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) 2010-11 - Women in Agriculture - Closing the gender gap for development*. Rome.
- **FAO**. 2012. *The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) 2012 - Investing in agriculture for a better future*. Rome.
- **FAO**. 2013. *The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) 2013 - Food systems for better nutrition*. Rome.
- **FAO**. 2014. *The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) 2014 - Innovation in family farming*. Rome.
- **Hovland, I.** 2007. *Making a difference: M&E of policy research*. London, ODI.
- **Metz M**. 2005. *Monitoring Policy Impacts*. FAO. Rome.

- **Quisumbing, A., Meinzen-Dick, R., Raney, T., Croppenstedt, A., Behrman, J. & Peterman, A.** (Eds.) 2014. *Gender in agriculture and food security: Closing the knowledge gap*. Dordrecht, the Netherlands, Springer & FAO (available at http://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-94-017-8616-4)
- **UNDP.** 2010. *Measuring Capacity*. New York.
- **World Bank**. 2012. *The World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development*. Washington, DC.
- **World Bank**. 2014. *Levelling the Field: Improving Opportunities for Women Farmers in Africa*. Washington, DC.

Appendix 3: Survey results

This annex provides a summary and analysis of the online survey conducted to gather perspectives and feedback on SOFA. The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO and was opened during 4 weeks, from 3 March to 6 April 2015. It was sent to 393 users of SOFA.

The survey was anonymous. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether 79 responses were received. A detailed review did not lead to reject any response. However the sample size is too small to be representative of the entire community of SOFA users. Therefore the following results represent the responses of survey participants (confidence level 95% and confidence interval 10%).

1. Survey Demographics

Key findings:

- The highest proportion of survey respondents comes from **academia and research institutions** (circa 34%)
- CSO/NGOs form the second most represented population of the survey (circa 14%)
- Few respondents come from the private sector, the UN, International Financial Institutions, Local Government, and Farmers Organizations.
- The overall pattern of number of responses per type of organization does not allow any meaningful cross-tabulation of results
- The largest number of survey respondents holds **senior-level positions** (close to 57%)
- Close to 19% of participants are mid-level professionals
- Overall the survey sample of SOFA users concentrates on senior staff
- Survey respondents are primarily involved in **project management** activities and **scientific research**
- Almost one third of participants have **policy making** or **policy advisory** functions

a. Countries

Key findings:

- Two countries –**USA** and **Argentina**- provide higher numbers of respondents
- Overall, participation originating from developed and developing countries tends to be balanced

b. Work area

Key findings:

- The highest number of respondents (27%) works at **global** level however there is a rather close balance of participants from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and to a lesser extent Asia and the Pacific
- Near East and North Africa as well as North America are the geographic areas of focus with the fewer number of respondents

c. Thematic area of work

Key findings:

- **Food security** is the thematic area of work that is the most represented
- Finance and insurance, Plant health / protection, Fisheries, and Aquaculture and have been selected by a small number of participants

d. Gender

Key findings: Survey respondents are primarily **males**

e. Age

Key findings: Respondents are by large **experienced professionals**

2. Current Use

Key findings:

- The most common instruments to be informed about SOFA are to receive an email message from FAO or to retrieve the publication on FAO website
- Except for two cases referred as "Other", respondents did not report having learnt about the existence of SOFA through the media or social media posts, or through a FAO staff in a field office

a. Access

Key findings:

- Close to half of the respondents consult SOFA quite frequently, i.e. once a month or more, which tends to position the flagship as a reference publication

3. Assessment

a. Presentation

Survey respondents were invited to assess the presentation of SOFA according to a number of factors.

Key findings:

- The majority of survey respondents **rates favourably the presentation** of SOFA
- To a certain extent, structure and length are less positively rated than the other criteria

b. Quality

Survey respondents were invited to assess the quality of SOFA through a number of criteria.

Key findings:

- As a general pattern the quality of SOFA is positively assessed by a large majority of survey respondents.
- In particular SOFA is found to be a **technically sound, accurate and credible publication** that is **complementary to other (FAO and non-FAO) resources**.
- Ratings are less frequently positive for the **easiness to adapt/use SOFA in regional/ national contexts** and the **adequacy of the geographic span (right depth of global/ regional/local information).**

c. Familiarity

Key findings:

- According to the survey the size of SOFA's readership tends to be stable over the years
- However cross-tabulations indicate that readership is somewhat versatile. About one third of the respondents have systematically used most or all of the editions of SOFA while a majority of readers is just attracted by specific editions (i.e. annual theme)

4. Assessment of SOFA 2010-11 - Women in Agriculture - Closing the gender gap for development

Survey respondents familiar with the 2010-11 edition of the flagship were invited to provide an assessment.

a. Outcomes

Key findings:

- As a general pattern the contribution of SOFA 2010-11 to the proposed outcomes is moderate to high
- SOFA 2010-11 is especially recognized for its contribution to **informing policy dialogue on gender issues in food and agriculture**, for **increasing the technical knowledge of the readers**, and for **improving the relevance and quality of analyses, research or advocacy work**
- The outcome areas where the contribution of SOFA 2010-11 is less frequently recognized are to **influence investment or aid decision-making**, and to **guide research agendas**

b. Barriers

Key findings:

- About one third of the respondents did not find any relevant reasons to select
- The primary reason for not following-up on the key messages presented in the publication is due to the fact that these messages did not require any further action

c. Sample outcomes

Survey respondents were invited to describe specific examples where SOFA 2010-11 had helped them in their work. Examples of outcomes indicate a prevalence of re-dissemination of the findings:

- Data to support research and publications
- Dispelled the myth that "women produce over half of the world's food"

- How gender can be mainstreamed into apparently gender neutral field projects
- I am quoting it frequently in my work.
- I have referenced it many times and used it in teaching.
- Informing policy on gender mainstreaming in poultry production and alleviating poverty
- Integrated in internal and external communications Informed funding decisions for development projects
- It has raised visibility of gender issues and thus very important that a SOFA was finally dedicated to this theme.
- It is good when giving information about broad policies regarding gender in agriculture, or to give an overview about the current state of research on gender and agriculture.
- Les données statistiques sur les disparités de genre par region et dans le monde entier.
- Lors des sessions dans les CEP
- Major reference for gender articles.
- Need of statistical data and designing sample surveys
- Provide data and analyses to cite in presentations about the topic of women in agriculture.
- The estimate of the impact of equalizing women's access to resources and agri. inputs on food production/reduction in the no of hungry - have used in various conference/seminar presentations and papers The appendix on proportion of women in the agri. lab
- This publication is required reading in graduate student research I supervise. It is used in training and information exchange as well as research activities.

d. Other relevant publications

Survey respondents were invited to list other publications/resources that have influenced their decisions as much or more than SOFA 2010-11. The most cited originating organizations are the World Bank, FAO, IFAD and IFPRI:

- GFRAS publications, Journal articles, World Bank publication other FAO publications IFAD and IFPRI publications
- It's like comparing apples and oranges - SOFA provides a broad-based and carefully considered story, Other publications have been equally useful but in a much narrower area. I have found SOFA to be the most useful broad-based publication.
- le bulletin du CTA, les publications du FIDA, le bulletin Dimitra
- Le Guide Dimitra portant sur «Communiquer le genre pour le développement rural» le bulletin d'information Dimitra les publications du CTA
- Since work in this field there are many; academic articles most important to a researcher.
- SOFI, MANY FSN relevant TECHNICAL FAO DOCUMENTS

- SPORE MAGAZINE GRAIN LOGSTICS
- Too early, but SOFA 2014 very relevant.
- Trainings and workshops
- World Bank Development Report,
- World Bank Gender in Agriculture Sourcebook
- World Bank reports, particularly the one on agriculture. It depends on the topic.
- World Bank WDR on Gender - but less useful than the SOFA

A complementary question focusing on women and agriculture seconds the previous finding:

Other:

- DIMITRA CTA
- OECD
- Scientific literature; IDRC; key NGOs(regional and global such as AWID and BRIDGE)
- UNICEF, WHO

5. Future expectations

a. Language

Key findings:

- Although survey respondents were coming from 44 different countries the majority requests an English version of the publication, followed by the Spanish and French versions
- No survey respondent was based in China and Russia which is likely to have driven the lack of demand for Chinese and Russian versions
- Only 2 respondents indicated an interest for receiving the publication in other languages (Bulgarian and Portuguese)

b. Format

Key findings:

- A majority of respondents prefers to receive SOFA in electronic format
- Around 40% of survey respondents would like to receive a printed copy of the publication. Cross-tabulations indicate that 56% of those preferring a printed copy are based in a developing country but that only 37% of the respondents based in a developing country prefer a printed version.

c. Dissemination activities

Key findings:

- According to survey respondents, **Country case studies** is the second most selected activity that FAO should prioritize to foster the use of SOFA analyses and key messages at global, regional and national levels

d. Future themes

Survey respondents were proposed to indicate themes or features they would like to see in future editions of SOFA. Although a wide range of topics were proposed some themes have been cited more often than others. They relate to sustainability, climate change, innovation, and capacity development.

Which features/themes would you like to see in future SOFA editions?

- The contributions of the developing world to food security. 2. The internalization of the values and contributions of Family farmers to the world society sustainability and wellbeing.
- Agricultural extension good practices
- Agriculture in an urbanizing world
- Agriculture investment & land degradation
- Agri-environmental
- All
- barriers to agricultural commercialization, ways to measure its impact on food security at farm-household level
- Cambio climàtico en MERCOSUR Prospectiva de cambios del uso de la tierra en el MERCOSUR Prospectiva de los cambios culturales en la ruralidad de A. Latina con el recambio generacional Y, Z1
- Climate change and agriculture Income and asset inequality
- Climate smart agriculture rural institutions/coops - for equity and livelihoods
- Combating inequality with agricultural development Interventions with high Cost:Benefit ratio Update on the contributions of GM (from 2003/04 SOFA)
- Comparative regional studies e.g. MENA region, East Africa, etc..
- contemporary issues in agriculture
- Diverse diets, nutrition and health Policy orientation for mainstreaming nutrition Nutrition sensitive agriculture for healthy diets
- Food and nutritional security Climate change adaptation , CSA
- Food losses caused by food safety incompliance
- Food security and climate change
- For advisory services in agriculture and rural development
- I think there should be CD with hard copy and downloadable online ppt with clear focus on current edition and linkages with key areas covered in the recent past edition.
- Importance of training farmers in a sustained program to improve productivity. Develop quality agricultural technicians in government agencies implementing agricultural programs. Increase level of competence particularly in the Philippines.
- Important the agricultural EXTENSIO

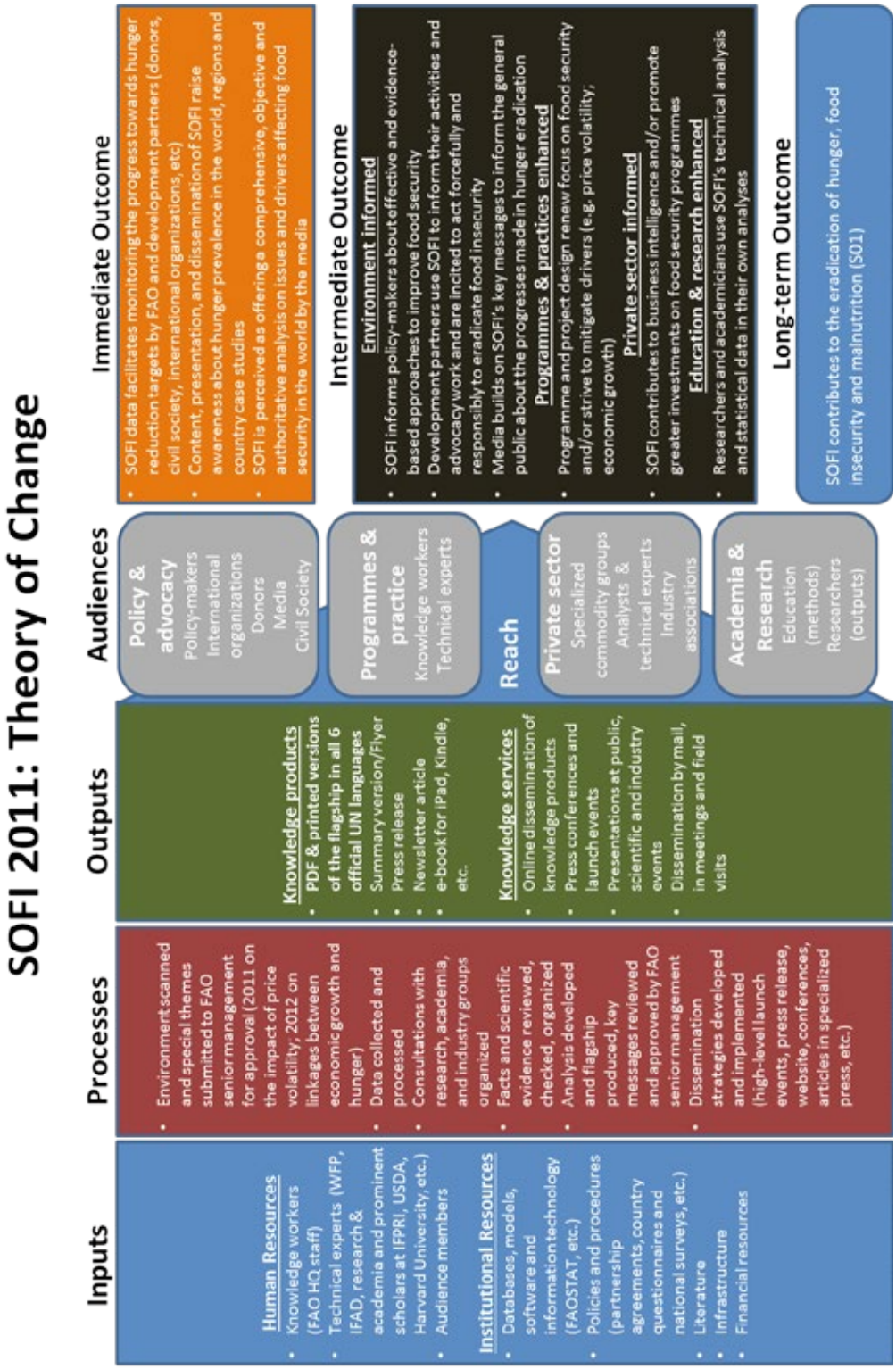
- Important topics depending on international trends. Governance in agriculture and rural development, sustainable agriculture, Climate change/action, urban agriculture, agriculture and migration, etc.
- La relación de las políticas regionales versus las politicas de estado y de gobierno
- Les changements climatiques, les ressources en eau pour l'agriculture, la main d'œuvre agricole
- Low input tecnique for rice cultivation
- NON RAIN FED FARMING IN AFRICA
- PROMISING INNOVATIONS FOR FUTURE AGRICULTURE INNOVATIONS IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FINANCING AGRICULTURE AS A BUSINESS
- Responsibilities of consumers: how their behavior affects agriculture: fair trade, food waste, food choices, organic foods, Community supported agriculture. Sustainability in farming can be achieved only if consumers understand their responsibility.
- Rural women and communication
- Sistemas de Innovación Agropecuaria
- Sustainability
- Sustainable Agriculture, agroecology, postharvest loss
- Sustainable Animal production
- Tradeoffs between economic efficiency, equity and environmental stewardship in food systems
- tropical and sub-tropical fruits
- Up to date Stunting trends and Food Safety issues more reflected.

Appendix 4: Cybermetric analysis

Knowledge Products	The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11	English	French	Spanish
Number of web references				
	Link Hit Est.	786	110	279
	Site Hit Est.	353	71	153
	Site Repost Est.	-	3	-
Number of citations				
	Google Scholar cites	4	-	-
	Scopus cites	20	-	-
Thematic focus areas				
	Agriculture	2	2	2
	Agriculture - Agroindustries			1
	Agriculture - Crops		1	1
	Agriculture - Fisheries and aquaculture			
	Agriculture - Forestry			
	Agriculture - Land and water			
	Agriculture - Livestock			1
	Economy		1	1
	Economy - Financing		1	
	Economy - Outlooks		1	
	Economy - Prices	1		1
	Economy - Trade			
	Emergency & rehabilitation			
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Disaster risk reduction (DRR)		1	
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Humanitarian response		2	
	Environment			
	Environment - Climate change			
	Environment - Sustainable management & conservation	1		
	Food	1		
	Food - Food safety (quality)			
	Food - Food security (quantity)	3	2	3
	Food - Nutrition	1		
	Human impacts	1	1	
	Human impacts - Gender	13	11	10

Knowledge Products	The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11	English	French	Spanish
	Human impacts - Human rights	1		2
	Human impacts - Social protection			1
	Other		1	
Actor type				
	Academia	1	2	2
	Government	2	7	
	Intergovernmental organization			
	International Financial Institutions			
	Media / News	4	3	3
	Multi-sector networks or platforms			
	Non-Governmental Organization	5	3	3
	Private sector / Business	1		2
	Public (Individual / blogger / online community)	4	5	7
	United Nations system	4	2	1
Content type				
	Abstract, Summary			1
	Article, News story, Press release, Books	11	9	9
	Blog, Editorial, Opinion	3	3	4
	Data tables, Statistics			
	E-commerce, Online sales	1		
	Education, Training			1
	Employment, Work related, Job description, Procurement			
	Event listing, Announcement			1
	Listing, Directory	3	1	3
	Newsletter	1		1
	Organizational information (about us section)			
	Policy, Legislation, Governmental strategy, Lobbying position paper		3	
	Portfolio, Resume, Personal profile			
	Presentation			
	Promotion, Advertising, Ads			
	Report, Research paper, Academic article	3	7	4
	Resource, Best practice, Workbook, Toolkit, How to	2		
	Social media, Discussion group			
	Speech, Discussion, Minutes		1	
	Wiki			

Knowledge Products	The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11	English	French	Spanish
Citation type				
	Cited as a publication available for purchase			
	Cited in the format of an academic citation, bibliography, footnote	16	4	3
	Cited with an article, story, newsletter, etc...		17	14
	Listed as part of a resume, or listing of self/co-authored publications			
	Listed in a search engine result page, automated list, auto-aggregated result			
	Listed resource: library or academic sources			2
	Listed resource: other	2	1	
	Promoted as featured content (Primary focus)	3		1
	Promoted as secondary content (Teasers, sidebar content, related content)	3		4
	Referenced as the original source of repurposed or spin-off content		1	1
	Referenced in a formal speech, statement, transcript		1	
	Referenced in a social media discussion, online discussion		2	
Geographic scope				
	Africa	1	2	
	Asia	1		
	Europe	4	10	7
	Global / International	4	1	3
	Latin America and the Caribbean	1	1	5
	Near East			
	North Africa		2	
	North America	7	2	
	The Pacific	1	1	


SOFI 2011: Theory of Change
Inputs
Processes
Outputs
Audiences
Immediate Outcome
Intermediate Outcome
Long-term Outcome
Human Resources
Knowledge workers (FAO HQ staff)
Technical experts (WFP, IFAD, research & academia and prominent scholars at IFPRI, USDA, Harvard University, etc.)
Audience members
Institutional Resources
Databases, models, software and information technology (FAOSTAT, etc.)
Policies and procedures (partnership agreements, country questionnaires and national surveys, etc.)
Literature
Infrastructure
Financial resources
Environment scanned and special themes submitted to FAO senior management for approval (2011 on the impact of price volatility, 2012 on linkages between economic growth and hunger)
Data collected and processed
Consultations with research, academia, and industry groups organized
Facts and scientific evidence reviewed, checked, organized
Analysis developed and flagship produced, key messages reviewed and approved by FAO senior management
Dissemination strategies developed and implemented (high-level launch events, press release, website, conferences, articles in specialized press, etc.)
Knowledge products
PDF & printed versions of the flagship in all 6 official UN languages
Summary version/Flyer
Press release
Newsletter article
e-book for iPad, Kindle, etc.
Knowledge services
Online dissemination of knowledge products
Press conferences and launch events
Presentations at public, scientific and industry events
Dissemination by mail, in meetings and field visits
Policy & advocacy
Policy-makers
International organizations
Donors
Media
Civil Society
Programmes & practice
Knowledge workers
Technical experts
Reach
Private sector
Specialized commodity groups
Analysts & technical experts
Industry associations
Academia & Research
Education (methods)
Researchers (outputs)
SOFI data facilitates monitoring the progress towards hunger reduction targets by FAO and development partners (donors, civil society, international organizations, etc)
Content, presentation, and dissemination of SOFI raise awareness about hunger prevalence in the world, regions and country case studies
SOFI is perceived as offering a comprehensive, objective and authoritative analysis on issues and drivers affecting food security in the world by the media
Environment informed
SOFI informs policy-makers about effective and evidence-based approaches to improve food security
Development partners use SOFI to inform their activities and advocacy work and are incited to act forcefully and responsibly to eradicate food insecurity
Media builds on SOFI's key messages to inform the general public about the progresses made in hunger eradication
Programmes & practices enhanced
Programme and project design renew focus on food security and/or strive to mitigate drivers (e.g. price volatility, economic growth)
Private sector informed
SOFI contributes to business intelligence and/or promote greater investments on food security programmes
Education & research enhanced
Researchers and academicians use SOFI's technical analysis and statistical data in their own analyses
SOFI contributes to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition (S01)

Annex 2.6: Case Study – The State of the World's Food Insecurity (SOFI)

1. Introduction

OED has carried out an assessment of the publication "The State of Food Insecurity in the World" (SOFI) as part of the evaluation of FAO's contributions to knowledge on food and agriculture. The assessment seeks to identify key outcomes achieved by the publication, as well as success factors, gaps and unmet needs, against the expectations set in the "theory of change" of SOFI35 (see figure 1).

2. Methodology

The study relies on information collected from primary (interviews, surveys) and secondary sources. Interviews were conducted with FAO staff and a sample of core users -Appendix 1. SOFI-related documentation was reviewed including selected procedural documents, scientific papers and guidance documents, as well as presentations and outreach materials –Appendix 2. A survey questionnaire was sent to 463 registered users of SOFI; in total 153 questionnaires were completed and analyzed -Appendix 3. An analysis of web and cybermetric data was performed to quantify and qualify the uptake of SOFI according to the activity occurring on third-party websites –Appendix 4. Finally, relevant responses from the evaluation's client survey and the Member Country survey were compiled and the findings triangulated against those emerging from the above primary and secondary data sources.

3. Description of SOFI

Since 1999 FAO has produced SOFI under the leadership of the Economic and Social Development Department (ESD). SOFI raises awareness about global hunger issues, discusses underlying causes of hunger and malnutrition and monitors progress towards hunger reduction targets established at the 1996 World Food Summit and the Millennium Summit. The publication is targeted at a wide audience, including policy-makers, international organizations, academic institutions and the general public with a general interest in linkages between food security, and human and economic development[36]. Since 2010 SOFI is produced

Box 1. Dissemination plan

Primary audiences for SOFI are policy-makers both in developed and in developing countries, and media outlets, the latter as an instrument to influence public opinion on hunger. To ensure broad coverage SOFI is published in all 6 UN official languages (English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, and Russian) and is disseminated on the FAO website with complementary materials (e.g. video and audio interviews, PowerPoint presentation, press release, technical notes, FAQ, outline of the report, etc.).

The dissemination is preceded with video briefings with the Regional Offices to prepare and support the launch. A press conference is organized on the launch day. The report is further disseminated through various official FAO channels, including all permanent representatives, FAO country and regional offices as well as selected libraries around the world.

In addition the report is disseminated by FAO's ES Department to relevant stakeholders. In the absence of a consolidated mailing list, promotional material has usually been sent to subscribers of the ES Policy Briefs and to SOFI mailing lists (circa 2300 contacts) as well as to those contacts who have indicated an interest in SOFI when signing up to the department's mailing system "EC Connect" (circa 10,000 people).

The report is widely disseminated via a range of social media channels and through relevant networks (e.g. FSN forum). Presentations of the SOFI findings are made at briefings, seminars, meetings and other events by members of the SOFI team and resources (PPT, copies, and briefing notes) are provided to FAO staff in the regions and country offices to present at locally organized events.

35 The theory of change was formulated in cooperation with FAO staff interviewed for this case study.

36 http://www.fao.org/hunger/previous-editions/en/

as part of an inter-agency initiative involving the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) since 2011. The report structure has evolved overtime. Since 2008/09 and until 2014 SOFI was articulated around two parts: the first contained a technical analysis of a given theme (e.g. effects of price volatility on hunger in 2011; multiple dimensions of food security in 2013). The second part presented relevant statistical data and analysis. Since 2015, SOFI presents key messages and updated estimates of undernourishment and progress towards the WFS and the MDG's hunger targets at global level (part one), followed by regional analyses (part two), and an assessment of the drivers of change (part three). It also contains a technical annex with relevant statistical data and separate regional reports[37]. The development of SOFI is a collaborative process, which contributes to the dissemination of the report. A team comprising staff from ESS, ESA, ESD, IFAD and WFP is formed every year. ESS provides the data and analysis of the first and second part of the report while ESA, in collaboration with IFAD and WFP, prepares the third part.

In general, SOFI topics are selected every year by the SOFI team, taking into account the key issues on the international food security policy agenda. Collaboration with Member Countries and Decentralized Offices (DO) for theme selection and development of SOFI has been on an *ad-hoc* basis e.g. in 2014 DOs were requested to lead the preparation of country case studies included in SOFI in consultation with the relevant Government authorities. In the case of SOFI 2011, the topic selected (price volatility) was not the first choice. A different theme had been originally foreseen, but quality data was not available. Given that the world was facing higher food prices and there was high volatility on international markets, and upon the G20 request for a report on the matter to OECD/FAO/WB, FAO decided that it would be a timely topic to cover in SOFI.

Quality of the report is ensured through internal and external peer review processes e.g. draft versions of the report are shared with external referees –i.e. prominent scholars- and circulated to relevant staff in FAO, WFP and IFAD. Given the advocacy role of the publication, Senior Management is heavily involved throughout the development process e.g. providing intellectual leadership and in the crafting of key messages.

SOFI is usually released in September ahead of the World Food Day Celebrations that take place on 16 October of every year[38]. Press conferences and launch events are organized at global and regional levels, which are complemented with online and e-mail-based distribution of the report (e.g. through social media, mailing lists, etc.). Sometimes after the report has been released FAO conduct country level dissemination activities (such as presentations by FAORs or visiting technical officers), but mostly rely on online dissemination mechanisms – see box 1.

4. Assessment

This section aims to measure the extent to which the outputs and outcomes identified in the SOFI theory of change have been met.

4.1. Outreach and targeting of SOFI

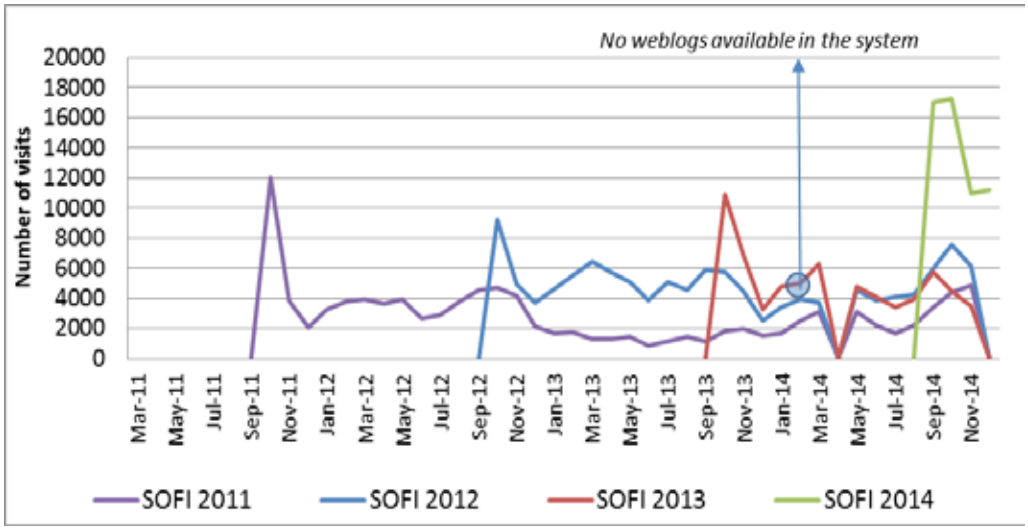
In terms of SOFI outreach, web traffic data from 2011-14 shows that the report is widely consulted online, with peaks (in terms of visits to the SOFI website) occurring at release time –Figure 1. The shelf life of the report is relatively high, especially for the 2012 and 2013 editions of SOFI with an average of 6,000 (2012) and 8,000 (2013) visits per month after a year of their initial release, not so far from the amount of visits at peak time – 8,000 and 10,000, respectively. Further to this, the SOFI media coverage report prepared by FAO in September 2014 (excluding radio and TV) found that out of 1,995 news stories referring to SOFI 2014, 686 (34%) were in

37 http://www.fao.org/hunger/key-messages/en/

38 An exception has been 2015, when the report was presented at the FAO Conference in June 2015. A major factor in determining the release date prior to 2015 has been the fact that it is presented and disseminated at CFS.

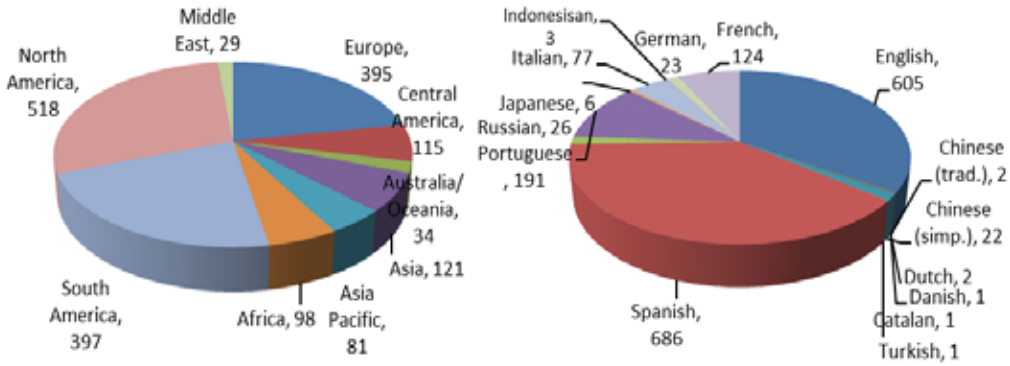
Spanish, 605 (30%) in English, 124 (6%) in French, 26 (1%) in Russian and 26 (1%) in Chinese; and that about half of the stories were published in North America, Europe and Oceania; a quarter in Latin America, and the remaining 25% in the rest of the world – figure 2. So, in terms of online outreach, SOFI has doubled the online and media visibility it enjoyed in 2011 – at times of greater attention to food security issues due to concerns with high food prices; such a growth is based in greater uptake in some languages and regions only (Spanish and English regions of OECD countries and Latin America).

Figure 1: Number of views of SOFI



Source: FAO, 2015

Figure 2: Regional and linguistic breakdowns of media coverage, SOFI 2014

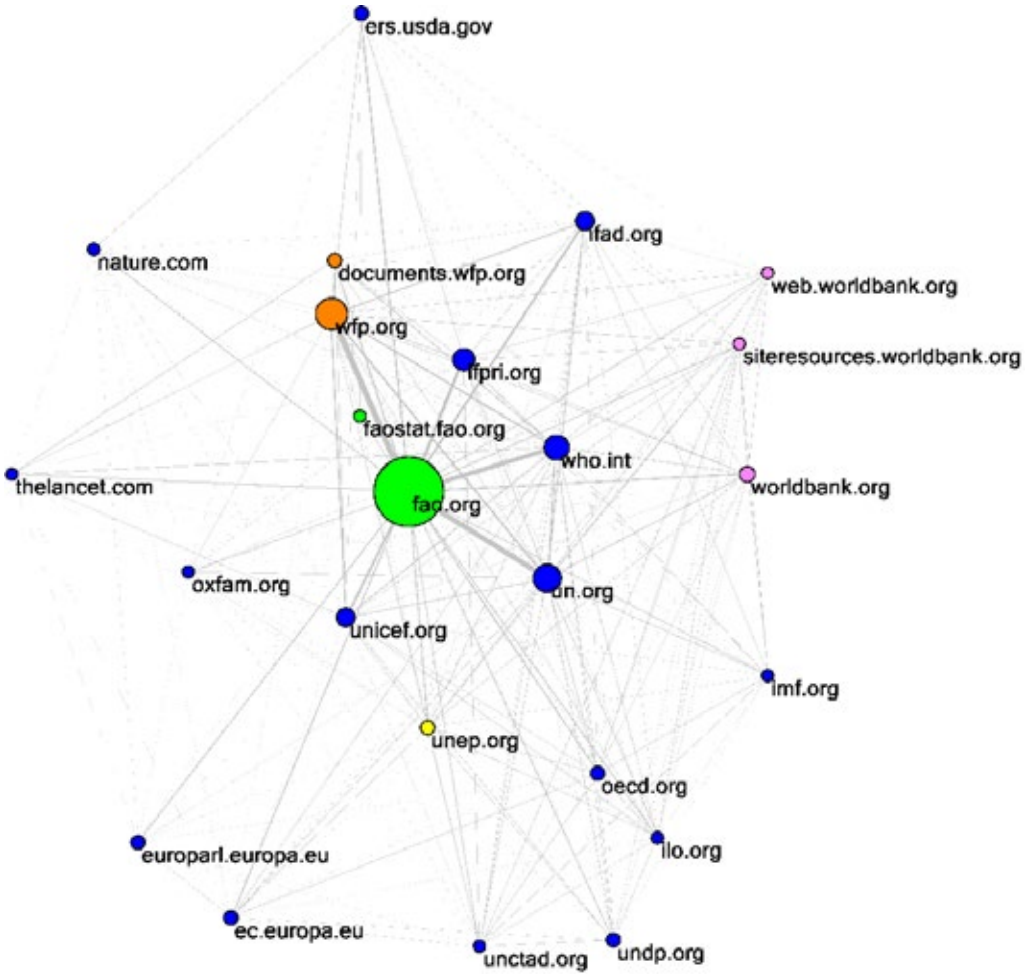


Source: FAO, 2014

Most of the SOFI users that responded to the survey come from UN organizations (25%), research institutions/academia (24%), Government (16%), and CSOs/NGOs (11%), and generally learnt about SOFI after receiving an email (30%), surfing online (18%) or getting a printed copy (9%) from FAO. This user profile is largely validated by the results of the mapping of the SOFI web community, which shows that most referrals (out of a total of 1146) come from United Nations agencies (WFP, IFAD, WHO, UN, UNEP, ILO, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNICEF)39, IGOs and IFIs (World Bank, OECD, EC, IMF), Government (USDA), research institutes (IFPRI), the media (Nature, The Lancet) and NGO (Oxfam) -Figure 3.

39 Among the UN network are WFP and IFAD, both partner institutions to FAO for the production of SOFI. But users such as UNICEF or WHO do not participate in the development of SOFI.

Figure 3: Web community of SOFI



Source: Cybermetric Analysis, 2014.

Also, the typical core user of SOFI is a senior or middle-level policy-maker/manager/academician who makes moderate use of the publication (once a month/a year) for scientific research, project management or policy advice. Such a user is however not only consulting data or analyses on hunger from FAO. About half of them also consult resources from the World Bank and IFPRI, and a quarter of them use resources and data from WFP, OECD and IFAD. A comparison of web-references and citations between relatively similar resources from FAO (SOFI) and IFPRI (The Global Hunger Index, which reuses FAO data[40]) issued in 2011 shows that SOFI is more referred to in academic and grey literature as well as on the web.

Table 1: Web references and academic citations of a sample of publications

Knowledge Products	Authors	Number of web references		Number of citations	
		Link Hit Est.	Site Hit Est.	Google Scholar	Scopus cites
The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011	FAO	849	415	11	53
L'état de l'insécurité alimentaire dans le monde 2011	FAO	41	31	-	-
El estado de la Inseguridad Alimentaria en el Mundo 2011	FAO	256	124	-	-
Global Hunger Index 2011	IFPRI	265	126	-	5

Source: Cybermetric Analysis, 2014.

40 http://www.ifpri.org/book-8018/ourwork/researcharea/global-hunger-index.

4.2. Presentation, usability and quality of SOFI

Almost all SOFI users found the presentation of the publication either satisfactory or excellent. The *graphic design, writing style,* and *clarity* of SOFI are especially commended. Satisfaction is still positive but not as highly rated for the *length* of the publication. This confirms the results of a previous satisfaction survey undertaken by FAO shortly after SOFI release –see Box 2. Users are most interested in *hunger monitoring figures and data*, and the *key messages* (part one of the publication)[41]. Some suggestions to enhance the usability of SOFI would be to the make the publication "mobile friendly", especially the first part - smart phones are now used everywhere to access information including in developing countries where they have become easier to obtain than computers. Other users would like that the online version of the report link seemliness to relevant FAO databases so that data tables can be easily retrieved and further processed.

Box 2. SOFI 2011 satisfaction survey

ESD conducted a survey one month after the launch of SOFI 2011 to gather information on the preferences and needs of SOFI users. The survey was sent to about 10,000 people and was partially responded by 775. Some of the responses obtained were:

- *How useful is the SOFI report to you?*: This question was responded by 370 people with 364 agreeing that the report was very or somewhat useful.
- *For which types of activities do you find SOFI most relevant?* Most respondents indicated that SOFI is particularly relevant for policy-related work (132 respondents), followed by academic research (104), advocacy and campaigning (58), personal interest (34), and other (15).
- *How would you rate each of the following elements related to SOFI?*: This question proposed participants to rate 6 criteria (choice of theme, comprehensiveness, relevance to my work/interest, clarity of messages, style of language, overall length) on a 5 point scale (1=poor, 2=fair, 3=neutral, 4=good, 5=excellent). The overall rating was positive with values being close to 4. The highest satisfaction (4.09) was expressed for the relevance of the report and the *lowest rate was given to its length* (3.70).

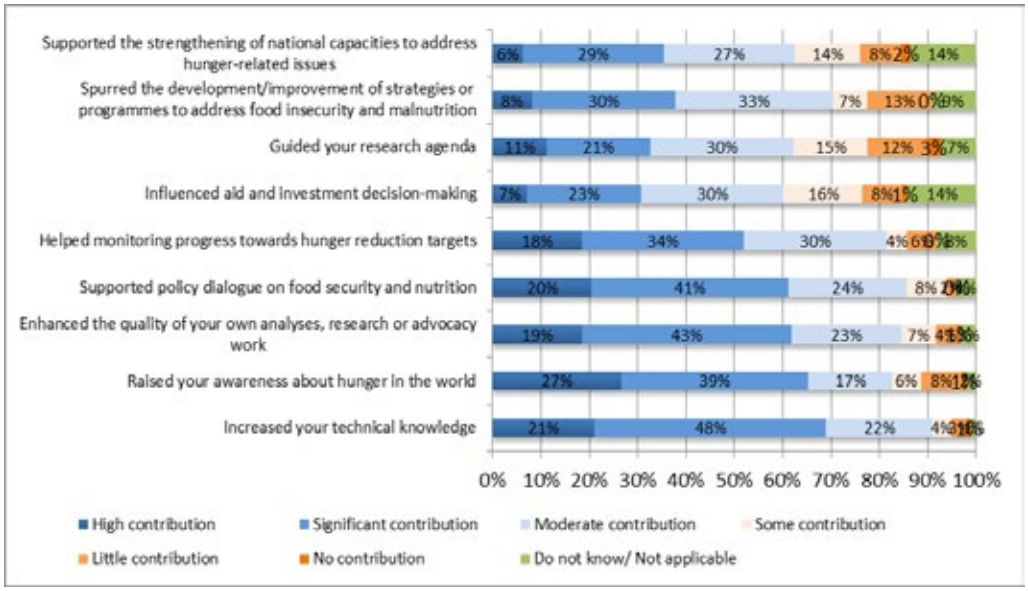
According to the survey conducted by the evaluation, most quality criteria of SOFI are assessed favorably by 90% or more of users. The publication is especially found to be *technically sound, accurate and credible, complementary to other publications, easy to locate and access,* and *providing a timely coverage of critical/emerging issues*. To a certain extent the assessment is more nuanced for what regards the *involvement of users and partners in the planning/design of the publication*. The survey returns also a favorable but lower assessment for the *easiness to adapt or use SOFI in regional/national context,* which appears aligned with the fact that SOFI is a global monitoring report therefore this is not among its objectives. Furthermore the recent development of complementing SOFI 2015 with Regional Panorama reports should mitigate this assessment. Key informants point out the need for an advisory group composed of external users that could be consulted during the development of SOFI and help to ensure that the report is end-user oriented. Although survey respondents find SOFI well complementary to other FAO and non-FAO publications, key informants suggest that greater clarity could be provided on the relationship between SOFI and other FAO initiatives such as the Voice of the Hungry and the Food Insecurity Experience Scale. However this issue is being addressed. The VoH project and the FIES have been launched last year and results have not been published yet. Despite this, boxes on the VoH project were included in the 2013 and 2014 editions of SOFI. Similarly, coordination with other publications could be more strategic, for instance with IFPRI's Global Hunger Index and the Global Nutrition Report. Stronger coordination between FAO flagships –e.g. SOFI/SOFA/SOFO/SOFIA- in order to focus on key themes every year to increase their overall visibility and strengthen their outreach was also mention as a potential improvement.

41 With some discrepancies according the profile of the users, e.g. policy makers find the key messages more useful than the hunger monitoring figures and data while this is the opposite for policy advisors and scientists.

4.3. Usefulness of SOFI

In general terms, respondents to the user survey noted a moderate to high contribution of SOFI to *increasing technical knowledge, raising the awareness about hunger in the world, enhancing the quality of analyses, research and advocacy works,* and *supporting policy dialogue on food security and nutrition*. Fewer but still a majority (i.e. over 60%) of respondents rated SOFI positively for *influencing aid and investment decision-making*, *supporting the strengthening of national capacities to address hunger-related issues*, and *guiding research agendas* –Figure 4.

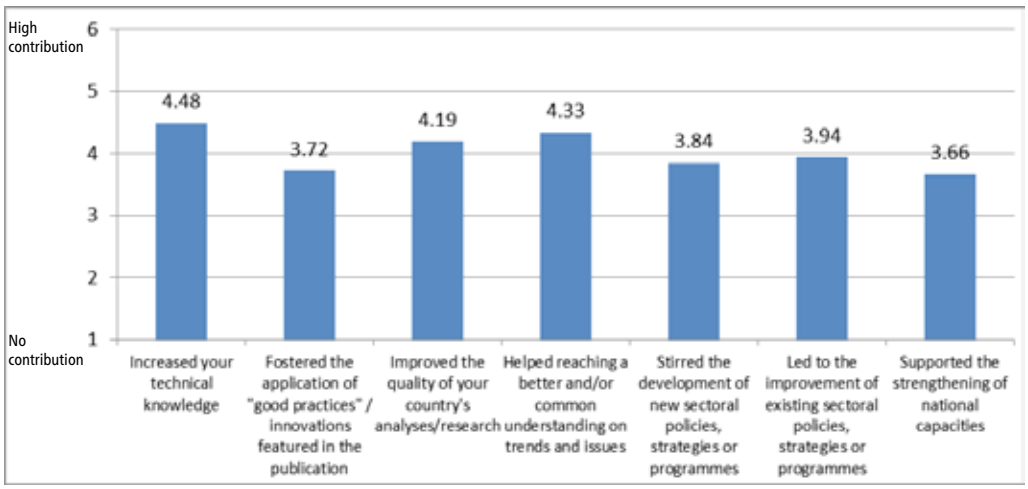
Figure 4: Contribution of SOFI to the following outcomes



Source: User Survey of SOFI, 2015

These above results coincided with the feedback received from Member Countries on SOFI, which considered SOFI's major contributions to have been in *increasing technical knowledge* and *helping to reach a better and/or common understanding on hunger trends and issues* – Figure 5.

Figure 5: Main contributions of SOFI to Member States

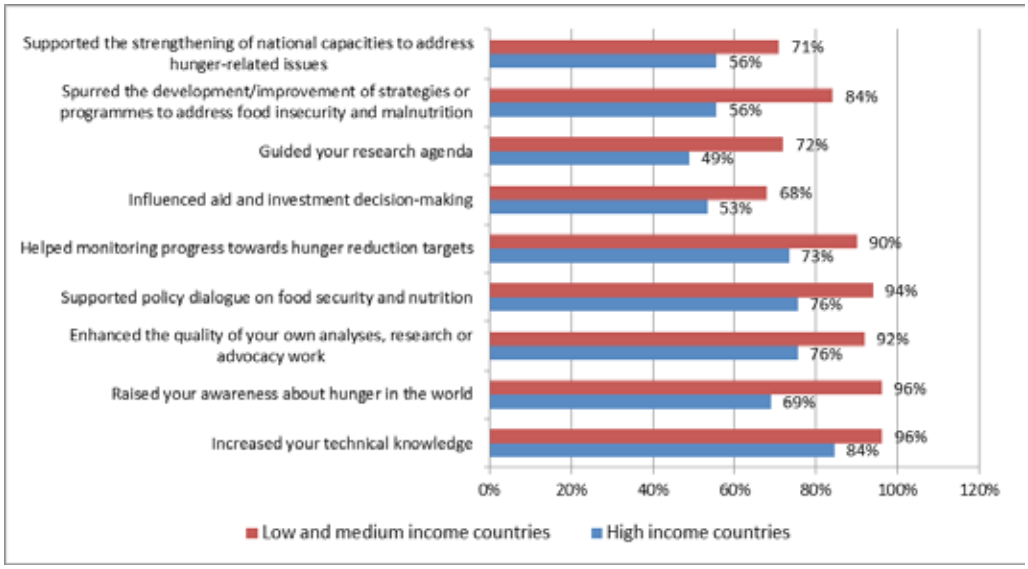


Source: Member Country survey, 2015

A detailed analysis shows that users from low and medium income countries return a more positive assessment of SOFI than users from high income countries –Figure 6. Gaps are especially important on the contribution of SOFI to spurring the development/improvement

of strategies or programme to address food insecurity and malnutrition (28 points), raising awareness about hunger in the world (27 points), and guiding research agendas (23 points).

Figure 6: Users assessment of SOFI contributions (per country income level)



Source: User Survey of SOFI, 2015

A disaggregated analysis of uptake in different audience types is provided below.

4.3.1 Uptake by policy-makers

The evaluation has collected views on and references made to SOFI from a variety of policy-actors, including High-level Officials from donor and recipient countries as well as Senior Managers from international organizations. At this level SOFI is mainly used to inform policy and strategic studies, which in turn contribute to policy dialogue on food security and nutrition. Several examples of SOFI use, particularly in Latin America and Central Asia, have been gathered through the cybermetric analysis and the Member Country survey[42]. Key informants also noted that donors[43] and Senior Management in agencies such as FAO, WFP and IFAD often quote SOFI data in global and country-level events and when making funding decisions (e.g. FAO Conference, IFAD Replenishment discussions, etc.). Many other development partners such as IFPRI and Agencies from the UN system[44] such ECA re-use data and analysis from SOFI, which in turn this contributes to raise the visibility of the flagship while improving its dissemination in the region.

> *SOFI has played a highly relevant role in disseminating information on progress achieved in the area of food security, providing an important benchmark for public policies.*
>
> **Policy-maker from Latin America**
>
> Source: FAO Member Country Survey, 2015

4.3.2. Uptake by Programme managers

There is limited evidence that SOFI data and key messages has led to major developments or changes in programmes or projects; SOFI use appear to be concentrated at programme/

42 SOFI was one of the sources informing a resolution from an official coalition of Latin-American and European parliamentarians on food security. Similarly SOFI 2009 was referred in the report on Price Volatility in Food and Agricultural Markets: Policy Responses which was requested by the G20 leaders at their summit meeting in November 2010 to FAO, IFAD, IMF, OECD, UNCTAD, WFP, the World Bank and the WTO.

43 SOFI 2012 was quoted by the Canadian Minister of International Cooperation during a speech at the Grow Canada Conference and by the UK Government in their IFAD replenishment negotiations: iati.dfid.gov.uk/iati_documents/4263677.docx

44 SOFI has been used to inform the Africa 2013 MDG Report on food security which targets policy makers, the UN system, and the general public. SOFI also served as the primary platform to develop the State of Food Insecurity in Africa which is jointly produced by ECA, FAO and WFP.

project design, either to justify/target field interventions and/or as reference material e.g. SOFI was used in a pan-African project on regional agricultural value chains implemented in 14 countries to justify funding and country selection; SOFI-related materials were used in the project's learning events targeting Senior Officials. According to key informants, the primary objective of SOFI is for policy advocacy so influencing country programmes or field projects was not necessarily the most direct use of SOFI, although room exits for FAO, and possibly also for IFAD and WFP, to increase the use of SOFI data and key messages in country programming as well as to target Government or private sector managers responsible for food security programmes.

4.3.3. Uptake in academia and research

There is ample evidence of academic uptake of SOFI. The cybermetric analysis found more than 60 references to SOFI 2010 in academic and grey literature while SOFI 2011 was featured in a dozen of research papers and academic articles. Survey respondents shared additional evidence of the use of SOFI to inform teaching and research, e.g.:

- *A lo largo de los últimos 13 años he hecho un seguimiento año a año de las cifras del hambre, y he publicado artículos, dado charlas, preparado formaciones, utilizando la información del SOFI*
- *I use the SOFI reports as examples for political correctness in the analysis of societal challenges*
- *In writing journal articles on food security In writing policy/strategic papers on food security*
- *Le rapport de SOFI a été utilisé pour étoffer la problématique d'un article sur la sécurité alimentaire*

A major outcome of SOFI has been its contribution to improve the measurement of undernourishment and malnutrition. Comments made by external researchers have been progressively incorporated in SOFI in order to present more robust and representative indicators –e.g. intra-national distribution, anthropometric data, etc. Simultaneously, building on SOFI and the discussions around the measures of undernourishment and malnutrition, IFPRI together with "Welthungerhilfe" have developed a composite index based on 3 sub-indicators including FAO's one. This is an example of how SOFI has provoked further work on food security indicators that goes beyond the initial FAO's measurement. As an additional example key informants have reported the likely influence of SOFI 2011 on setting up the EU project Ulysses[45], which studies prices volatility of food, feed and non-food commodities, in an attempt to determine the causes of markets' volatility and draw policy-relevant conclusions.

4.3.4. Media and civil society

As the media coverage report and the cybermetric analysis shows, SOFI enjoys broad media and civil society coverage and in recent years has become a reference point to monitor where the world stands in terms of fighting hunger. An example of regular use of SOFI is the uptake by the *National Geographic Future of Food* series. The series started in May 2014 and exposes readers to issues related to food security. SOFI serves as a source of data on undernourishment. The numbers retrieved in SOFI are converted into graphs and maps for the general public and global dissemination.

4.3.5. Uptake by international organizations

The cybermetric analysis showed strong reuse of SOFI by international partners –e.g. WFP, IFAD, IFPRI, WB, etc. The unique role of SOFI in providing hunger data and trends was credited as contributing to the wide re-use and referrals of the report.

45 http://www.fp7-ulysses.eu/index.html

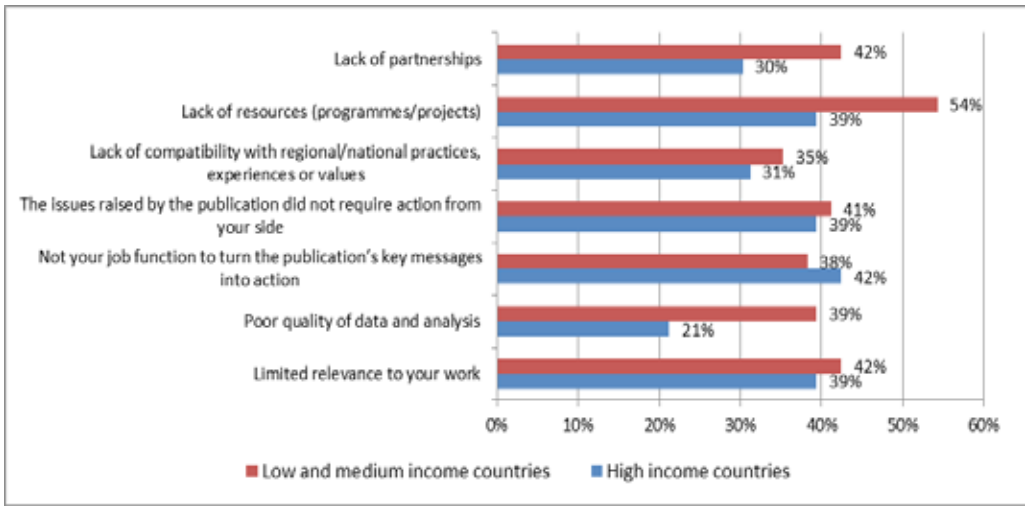
4.3.6 Uptake by private sector

There appears to be limited uptake by the private sector of SOFI messages. More in-depth discussions with industry actors are needed to understand the degree to which SOFI contributes to business intelligence and/or promote greater private investment on food security programmes.

4.4. Dissemination channels and unmet needs

On the other hand, survey respondents especially users from low and medium income countries indicate that a lack of resources was the primary reason for not using or applying the key messages presented in SOFI –Figure 7. This was particularly relevant in terms of programmes/projects or partnerships.

Figure 7: Reasons for not applying the key messages presented in SOFI per country income level



Source: User Survey of SOFI, 2015

According to the survey the most efficient channels to disseminate SOFI are conferences, workshops and meetings, followed by the website, and country case studies. In the past few years SOFI has started to include country and regional-level assessments with the hope of increasing visibility and awareness of the report's key messages. The latter has put pressure on countries that tolerate hunger and lately made SOFI more controversial since countries not highlighted as successful country cases have often responded to public criticisms for not meeting objectives in a negative way e.g. by challenging the successful stories/practices promoted by the report or demonizing the methodology used to measure undernourishment and hunger. On the positive side, such pressure has in many cases fostered dialogue and sharing of perspectives with both countries and development partners, which in turn has led to improvements on how data is collected and interpreted and discussions on what policy and programmatic actions could be taken to address food and nutrition insecurity.

Looking forward, at this particular juncture when the international community is transitioning from the MDG to the SDG agenda, it would be important to position the new SOFI report under the SDG process, either as a report focusing on Goal 2 (Eradicating hunger, achieve FS and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture) or a more comprehensive monitoring report capturing all SDGs with FAO involvement.

5. Conclusions

The outreach of SOFI among different sets of users (media, international organizations, research and academia) is significant and has increased overtime. Policy-level users are mainly interested in the trends, rather than in the raw data or the analyses. In order to enhance follow-up to the key messages, stronger dissemination strategies with IFAD and WFP and other partners, e.g. IFPRI could be considered. Given that the MDG process is coming to an end, FAO should also consider how best to position forthcoming SOFI reports under the new SDG process, for instance as a report focusing on Goal 2 (Eradicating hunger, achieve Food Security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture) or a more comprehensive monitoring report capturing all SDGs with FAO involvement. The latter approach would help building stronger coordination among FAO flagships, including opening up areas for "consolidation".

SOFI's quality and relevance would benefit from the establishment of an advisory group with participation of external experts and target users that contribute to the preparation of the flagship. The low number of citations of SOFI in some regions questions the effectiveness of the dissemination in vast parts of Africa, Asia, the Near East and North Africa, and the Pacific. Similarly the limited collection of examples of use of the Russian and Chinese versions of the series may indicate the [corporate] need to dedicate more efforts to the dissemination of the flagship in these regions. The recently-produced regional SOFIs and the development of country case studies involving national partners may address these visibility gaps, provided that measures are taken to prevent reputational risks to FAO.

Among the target recipients identified in the theory of change, the evaluation found little evidence of SOFI uptake by the private sector. In view of their major role in financing food security programmes, targeted by-products and dissemination activities might need to be developed for this audience. The user survey conducted by FAO in 2011 to assess the preferences and the needs of SOFI readers is a good practice that should be regularly undertaken and complemented with in-depth discussions with target users, in order to monitor user satisfaction and gather information on emerging needs on a timely basis.

Appendix 1: List of persons consulted

1. **Arvaniti Myrto,** Communication Officer, OCC, FAO
2. **Bahalim Ammad,** Senior Consultant, Global Health Visions
3. **Byerlee Derek,** Consultant, World Bank
4. **Conforti Piero,** Senior Statistician, ESS, FAO
5. **Dawe David,** Senior Economist, RAP, FAO
6. **de Haen Hartwig,** Unniversity of Göttingen
7. **El-Helepi Medhat,** Regional Integration and Trade Division, Food Security, Agriculture and Land Section, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
8. **Gennari Pietro,** Director, ESS, FAO
9. **Green Duncan,** Senior Strategic Adviser, Oxfam House
10. **Kendrick Michelle**, Communication and Publications Coordinator, ESD, FAO
11. **Kropiwnicka Magdalena,** Independent Consultant
12. **Nierenberg Danielle,** President, Food Tank: The Food Think Tank
13. **Rapsomanikis George,** Senior Economists, EST, FAO
14. **Schmidhuber Josef,** Deputy Director, ESS, FAO
15. **Stamoulis Kostas,** Director, ESA, FAO
16. **Sundaram Jomo,** ADG, ESD
17. **Willis Roxana,** Statistician, Editorial Research, The Economist
18. **Yarnall Kaitlin**, Deputy Creative Director, National Geographic

Appendix 2: List of documents reviewed

1. **AUC, ECA, AfDB & UNDP**. 2013. Food security in Africa: Issues, challenges and lessons. *The 2013 Africa Millennium Development Goal report*. Addis Ababa, ECA.
2. **Bennett, G. & Jessani, N**. 2011. *The Knowledge Translation Toolkit: Bridging the Know–Do Gap: A Resource for Researchers*. Ottawa, IDRC, New Dehli, India Pvt Ltd, Sage Publications.
3. **ECA**. 2012. *Status of Food Security in Africa*. Eighth Session of the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development and Regional Implementation Meeting for the Twentieth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Addis Ababa.
4. **EUROLAT**. 2014. *Résolution: Sécurité alimentaire du point de vue Union européenne - Amérique latine et Caraïbes*. Athènes.
5. **FAO, IFAD, IMF, OECD, UNCTAD, WFP, World Bank, WTO, IFPRI & UN HLTF**. 2011. *Price Volatility in Food and Agricultural Markets: Policy Responses*. Paris.
6. **FAO**. 2011. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011: How does international price volatility affect domestic economies and food insecurity*? Rome.
7. **FAO**. 2012. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2012: Economic growth is necessary but not sufficient to accelerate reduction of hunger and malnutrition*. Rome.

8. **FAO**. 2013. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2013: The multiple dimensions of food security*, Rome.

9. **FAO**. 2014. *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2014: Strengthening the enabling environment to improve food security and nutrition*. Rome.

10. **Jones, N., Datta, A. & Jones, H.** 2009. *Knowledge, policy and power: Six dimensions of the knowledge–development policy interface*. London, ODI.

11. **Oxfam**. 2012. *Sembrando Semillas*. Guatemala.

12. **Stone, D**. 2014. World Making Progress Against Hunger, Report Finds, but Large Pockets of Undernourished Persist. *National Geographic* (available at http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2014/09/140916-world-hunger-malnourishment-security-ngfood/)

Appendix 3: Survey results

This annex provides a summary and analysis of the online survey conducted to gather perspectives and feedback on SOFI. The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO and was opened during 4 weeks, from 3 March to 6 April 2015. It was sent to 463 users of SOFI.

The survey was anonymous. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether 153 responses were received. A detailed review did not lead to reject any response. The following results represent the responses of survey participants and are representative of the sample community of SOFI users with a confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of 6%.

1. Survey Demographics

a. Organizations

Key findings:

- The highest proportion of survey respondents comes from **academia and research institutions** followed by **FAO**
- Participants from **Government** organizations make slightly more than 15% of the respondents
- The **private sector** represents close to 10% of survey respondents
- No participation was received from International Financial Institutions, Media, and Resource partner/donor organizations
- A number of clusters of respondents can be used for cross-tabulations

b. Positions

Key findings:

- The largest number of survey respondents holds **senior-level positions** (48%)
- Close to 21% of participants are mid-level professionals
- Overall the survey sample of SOFI users concentrates on **senior staff**

c. Role or job function

Key findings:

- Survey respondents are primarily involved in **project management** activities and **policy advice / policy making**

d. Countries

Key findings:

- In total 66 countries are represented, with a participation originating primarily from developing countries
- Three countries –**Italy, Mexico** and **USA** - provide higher numbers of respondents

e. Work area

Key findings:

- The highest number of respondents (28.5%) works at **global** level
- There is a rather close balance between participants working on Africa or Latin America and the Caribbean
- Near East and North Africa as well as North America are the geographic areas of focus with the fewer number of respondents

f. Thematic area of work

Key findings:

- **Food security** is the thematic area of work that is most commonly represented, followed by **Policy analysis**, and **Economics**
- Finance and insurance has been selected by few participants

g. Gender

Key findings:

- Survey respondents are primarily **males**

h. Age

Key findings:

- Respondents are by large **experienced professionals,** which confirms the earlier finding about the seniority level

i. Exposure

Key findings:

- The latest editions of SOFI are more familiar to survey respondents
- Close to 17% of participants indicate not being familiar with any edition of SOFI

j. Use

Key findings:

- Close to 40% of respondents consult SOFI quite regularly, i.e. once a month or more
- Slightly more than 20% of survey participants indicate never consulting SOFI and ***were not requested to respond to the following questions*** on SOFI but to assess FAO publications as part of the last section of the survey

2. Current Use and Assessment

Survey respondents familiar with one or another edition of SOFI were invited to provide an assessment of the flagship.

a. Reach

Key findings:

- According to the survey sample –which is formed by the email list of SOFI's recipients-, the most common channel to be informed about SOFI is through **an email message from FAO** followed by retrieval on **FAO website**
- SOFI is rarely discovered through a reference made by a policy maker or senior official, or as being featured in the media or social media
- To be noted, one respondent who selected the "Other" choice specified receiving SOFI from WFP

b. Presentation

Survey respondents were invited to assess the presentation of SOFI according to a number of factors.

Key findings:

- The majority of survey respondents **rates favourably the presentation** of SOFI
- The length of the report is the criteria that returns the lower level of ratings

c. Quality

Survey respondents were invited to assess the quality of SOFI through a number of criteria.

Key findings:

- As a general pattern the quality of SOFI is positively assessed by a vast majority of survey respondents (over 80%)
- In particular, SOFI is found to be a publication that is technically sound, accurate and credible, that is easy to locate and access, and that presents timely coverage of critical/ emerging issues
- Criteria that are less highly rated regard the involvement of users' and partners' in the planning and design of the publication, the easiness to adapt/use in regional/national contexts, and the integration of gender and human rights based approaches

d. Usefulness

Key findings:

- The section that survey respondents find most useful in SOFI is **Hunger monitoring figures and data**
- Comparatively, **Country case studies** are less highly rated

e. Outcomes

Key findings:

- According to the proposed outcomes, SOFI's contribution is favourably assess but 70 to 90 % of the respondents
- SOFI is most highly rated for **increasing technical knowledge, raising awareness about hunger in the world, supporting policy dialogue on food security and nutrition**, and **enhancing the quality of your own analyses, research or advocacy work**
- Comparatively, criteria that are less highly rated regard the contribution of SOFI to influencing aid and investment decision-making, guiding research agenda, and supporting the strengthening of national capacities to address hunger-related issues

f. Barriers

Key findings:

- More than one third of the respondents did not find any relevant reasons to select among the proposed options
- The primary reason for not following-up on the key messages presented in the publication is due to the **Lack of resources (programmes/projects)**

g. Other relevant resources

Survey respondents were invited to list **other publications/resources that influence their decisions as much or more than SOFI**. The publications most cited originate from IFPRI, the World Bank, and FAO. A related question focused on other organizations that participants consulted for data or analyses on hunger. The results seconded the previous findings.

3. Future expectations

a. Language

Key findings:

- Although survey respondents came from 66 different countries, the majority requests an English version of the publication, followed by Spanish and French versions
- No survey respondent was based in China which is likely to have driven the low level of demand for a Chinese version
- Few respondents indicated an interest for receiving the publication in other languages

4. Format

Key findings:

- A majority of respondents prefers to receive SOFI in electronic format
- Preferences for printed copy versus PDF slightly differ according to the age range

5. Dissemination activities

Key findings:

According to survey respondents, **Conferences, workshops and meetings**, followed by **Website/blogs**, and **Country case studies** are the dissemination activities FAO should prioritize to foster the use of SOFI analyses and key messages at global, regional and national levels

6. Future themes

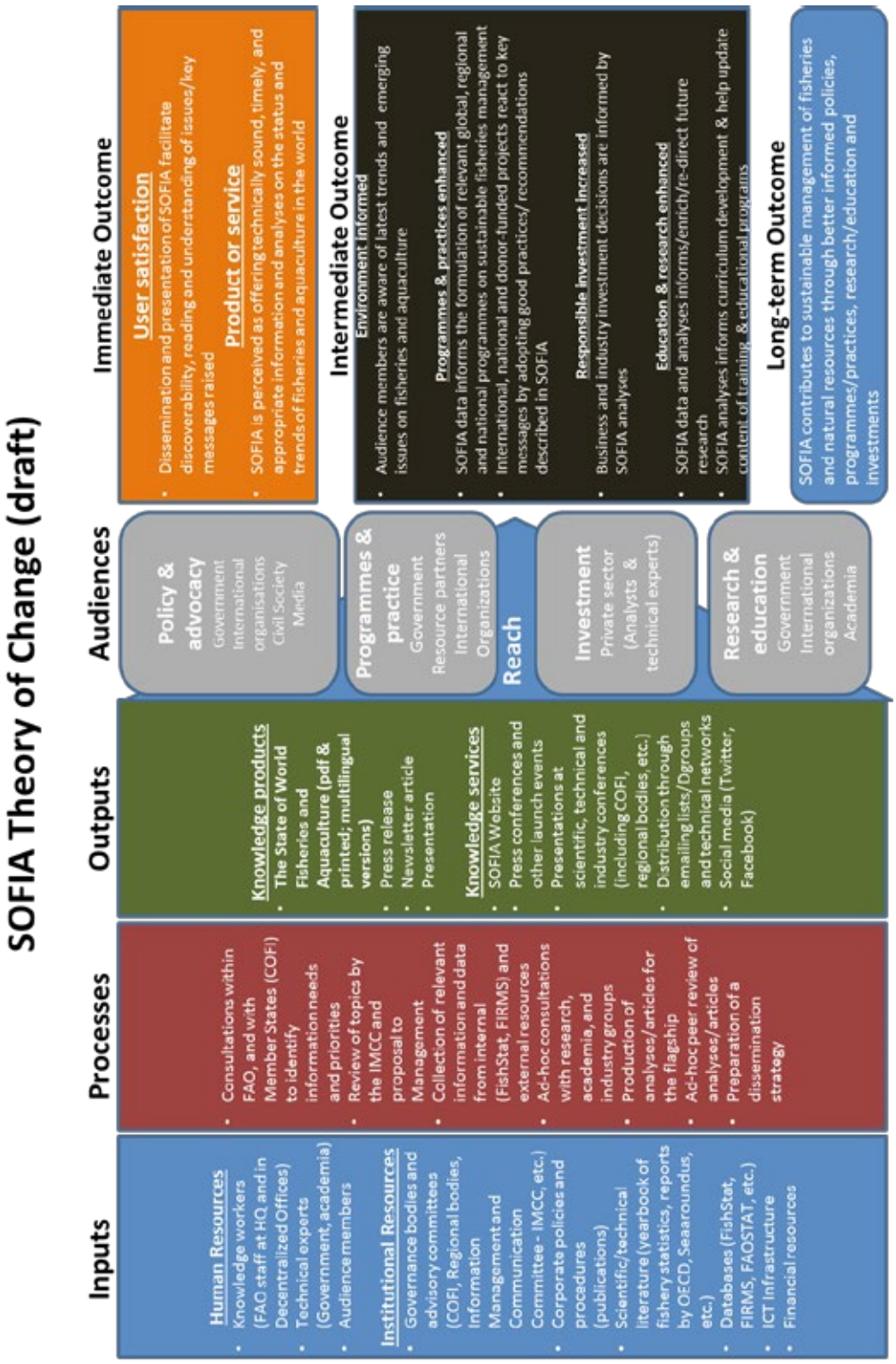
Survey respondents were proposed to indicate themes or features they would like to see in future editions of SOFI. Although a wide range of topics were proposed some themes have been cited more often than others. They relate to human rights, policy processes, country / regional focuses.

Appendix 4: Cybermetric analysis

Knowledge Products	The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011	English	French	Spanish
Number of web references				
	Link Hit Est.	849	41	256
	Site Hit Est.	415	31	124
	Site Repost Est.	-	5	-
Number of citations				
	Google Scholar cites	11	-	-
	Scopus cites	53	-	-
Thematic focus areas				
	Agriculture	1	1	
	Agriculture - Agroindustries			
	Agriculture - Crops			3
	Agriculture - Fisheries and aquaculture			
	Agriculture - Forestry			
	Agriculture - Land and water		1	
	Agriculture - Livestock			
	Economy	1	7	3
	Economy - Financing		1	
	Economy - Outlooks			
	Economy - Prices	1	2	
	Economy - Trade			
	Emergency & rehabilitation			
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Disaster risk reduction (DRR)			
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Humanitarian response			
	Environment			
	Environment - Climate change			
	Environment - Sustainable management & conservation	1		1
	Food		2	1
	Food - Food safety (quality)			
	Food - Food security (quantity)	23	9	19
	Food - Nutrition	1	1	1
	Human impacts			1
	Human impacts - Gender		1	
	Human impacts - Human rights		1	
	Human impacts - Social protection			
	Other (DISCUSS WITH TEAM):	2	2	
Actor type				

	Academia	2	1	2
Knowledge Products	**The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011**	**English**	**French**	**Spanish**
	Government		2	
	Intergovernmental organization		1	
	International Financial Institutions (IFIS)			
	Media / News	6	3	6
	Multi-sector networks or platforms		5	
	Non-Governmental Organization	6	6	4
	Private sector / Business			3
	Public (Individual / blogger / online community)	9	5	5
	United Nations system	1	3	2
Content type				
	Abstract, Summary		2	3
	Article, News story, Press release, Books	18	8	14
	Blog, Editorial, Opinion	6	3	4
	Data tables, Statistics			
	E-commerce, Online sales			
	Education, Training			
	Employment, Work related, Job description, Procurement			
	Event listing, Announcement			
	Listing, Directory	2	9	3
	Newsletter			1
	Organizational information (about us section)			
	Policy, Legislation, Governmental strategy, Lobbying position paper		3	1
	Portfolio, Resume, Personal profile			
	Presentation			1
	Promotion, Advertising, Ads			
	Report, Research paper, Academic article	1	2	2
	Resource, Best practice, Workbook, Toolkit, How to	2		1
	Social media, Discussion group	1	1	
	Speech, Discussion, Minutes			
	Wiki		1	
Citation type				
	Cited as a publication available for purchase			
	Cited in the format of an academic citation, bibliography, footnote	21	3	4
	Cited with an article, story, newsletter, etc...		10	15
	Listed as part of a resume, or listing of self/ co-authored publications			

Knowledge Products	The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011	English	French	Spanish
	Listed in a search engine result page, automated list, auto-aggregated result			
	Listed resource: library or academic sources	1	8	2
	Listed resource: other	2		3
	Promoted as featured content (Primary focus)	1	2	4
	Promoted as secondary content (Teasers, sidebar content, related content)	1	4	
	Referenced as the original source of repurposed or spin-off content	1		
	Referenced in a formal speech, statement, transcript		1	
	Referenced in a social media discussion, online discussion	3		
Geographic scope				
	Africa	1	2	
	Asia	3		
	Europe	3	15	9
	Global / International	4	3	
	Latin America and the Caribbean	1		8
	Near East			
	North Africa			
	North America	7	1	1
	The Pacific	1		


SOFIA Theory of Change (draft)
Inputs
Processes
Outputs
Audiences
Immediate Outcome
Intermediate Outcome
Long-term Outcome
Human Resources
Knowledge workers (FAO staff at HQ and in Decentralized Offices)
Technical experts (Government, academia)
Audience members
Institutional Resources
Governance bodies and advisory committees (COFI, Regional bodies, Information Management and Communication Committee - IMCC, etc.)
Corporate policies and procedures (publications)
Scientific/technical literature (yearbook of fishery statistics, reports by OECD, Seaaroundus, etc.)
Databases (FishStat, FIRMS, FAOSTAT, etc.)
ICT Infrastructure
Financial resources
Consultations within FAO, and with Member States (COFI) to identify information needs and priorities
Review of topics by the IMCC and proposal to Management
Collection of relevant information and data from internal (FishStat, FIRMS) and external resources
Ad-hoc consultations with research, academia, and industry groups
Production of analyses/articles for the flagship
Ad-hoc peer review of analyses/articles
Preparation of a dissemination strategy
Knowledge products
The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (pdf & printed; multilingual versions)
Press release
Newsletter article
Presentation
Knowledge services
SOFIA Website
Press conferences and other launch events
Presentations at scientific, technical and industry conferences (including COFI, regional bodies, etc.)
Distribution through emailing lists/Dgroups and technical networks
Social media (Twitter, Facebook)
Policy & advocacy
Government
International organisations
Civil Society
Media
Programmes & practice
Government
Resource partners
International Organizations
Reach
Investment
Private sector (Analysts & technical experts)
Research & education
Government
International organizations
Academia
User satisfaction
Dissemination and presentation of SOFIA facilitate discoverability, reading and understanding of issues/key messages raised
Product or service
SOFIA is perceived as offering technically sound, timely, and appropriate information and analyses on the status and trends of fisheries and aquaculture in the world
Environment informed
Audience members are aware of latest trends and emerging issues on fisheries and aquaculture
Programmes & practices enhanced
SOFIA data informs the formulation of relevant global, regional and national programmes on sustainable fisheries management
International, national and donor-funded projects react to key messages by adopting good practices/ recommendations described in SOFIA
Responsible investment increased
Business and industry investment decisions are informed by SOFIA analyses
Education & research enhanced
SOFIA data and analyses informs/enrich/re-direct future research
SOFIA analyses informs curriculum development & help update content of training & educational programs
SOFIA contributes to sustainable management of fisheries and natural resources through better informed policies, programmes/practices, research/education and investments

Annex 2.7: Case Study – The State of the World's Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA)

1. Introduction

This case study presents the results of the assessment of **The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA)** conducted as part of the evaluation of FAO's contributions to knowledge on food and agriculture. The assessment seeks to identify the main outcomes achieved by the publication, as well as success factors, gaps and unmet needs, against the expectations set in the "theory of change" of the publication[46] (see figure in next page).

2. Methodology

The study relies on information collected from primary (interviews, surveys) and secondary sources. Interviews were conducted with FAO staff and a sample of core users, who provided views and insights on the publication's development process and usefulness - Appendix 1. SOFIA-related documentation provided by FAO staff and key informants was reviewed including selected procedural documents, scientific papers and guidance documents, as well as presentations and outreach materials –Appendix 2. A survey questionnaire was sent to 3700 registered users of SOFIA; in total 248 questionnaires were completed and analyzed -Appendix 3. An analysis of web and cybermetric data was performed to quantify and qualify the uptake of SOFIA according to the activity occurring on third-party websites –Appendix 4. Finally, relevant responses from the evaluation's client survey and the Member Country survey[47] were compiled and the findings triangulated against those emerging from the above primary and secondary data sources.

3. Description of the evaluand (SOFIA)

The FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (FI)[48] has produced SOFIA since 1994. This flagship is "*published every two years and aims to provide policy-makers, civil society, [private sector, academia] and those whose livelihoods depend on the sector a comprehensive, objective and global view of capture fisheries and aquaculture, including associated policy issues*"[49]. Within this broad audience the primary target for SOFIA remains policy makers, followed by academia and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that seek to influence policy makers. SOFIA is structured in four parts. The first section, called "world review of fisheries and aquaculture", is based on statistics and provides an overview of the sector together with an update on fisheries sector data. The second part of the report, "selected issues in fisheries and aquaculture", deals with emerging issues that are especially sensitive or important. The third part, "highlights of selected studies", covers selected topics. The fourth part, "outlook", comprises a forward looking analysis which is produced in coordination with the OECD-FAO food outlook team.

When a new edition of SOFIA is at planning stage, a message is sent to FAO fisheries staff for ideas on SOFIA topics. Other FAO departments and Decentralized Offices (DOs) are also consulted for suggestions but few reportedly participate. Topics submitted by authors/ technical staffs must be aligned to an FAO Strategic Objective and be endorsed on behalf of a specific Division/Service. This part of the process takes up to 4 months. The Committee on Fisheries (COFI) also makes recommendations, which lead to action items for FAO. The FI Information Management and Communication Committee (IMCC), which oversees FI's publications including SOFIA, makes final recommendations on SOFIA content before it is submitted by the FI ADG to the FAO Director-General Office for approval.

46 The theory of change was formulated in cooperation with FAO staff interviewed for this case study.

47 The client survey was responded by 171 core FAO users in 13 countries selected in consultation with FAO staff. The Member Country survey was responded by 36 national authorities.

48 The Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (FI) support the strengthening of policies, programmes and capacities in the sector. The agenda of work of the department is informed by the Committee on Fisheries (COFI), a subsidiary body of the FAO Council. COFI holds biennial sessions to review FAO's programmes of work in the field of fisheries and aquaculture and their implementation, and to conduct periodic general reviews of fishery and aquaculture problems of an international character.

49 More information is available at the SOFIA website : http://www.fao.org/fishery/sofia/en

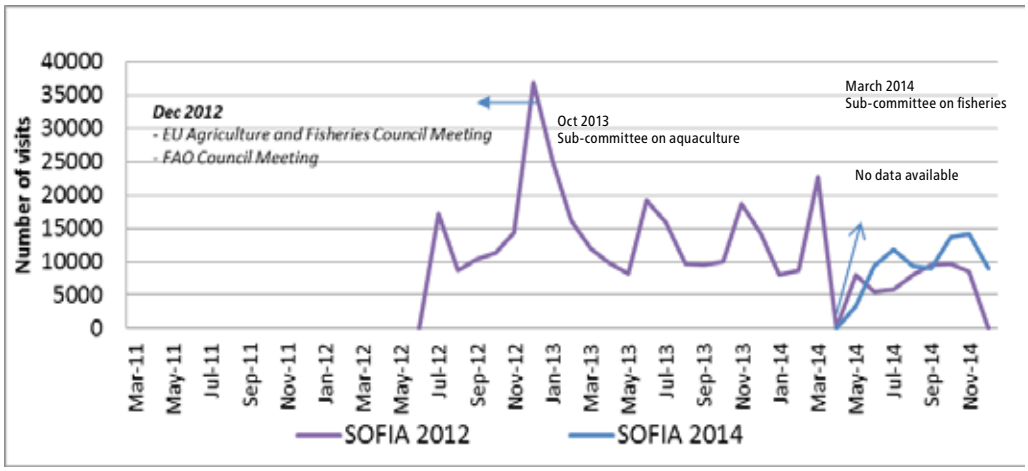
4. Assessment

This section aims to measure the extent to which the outputs and outcomes identified in the theory of change have been met from "a user point of view".

4.1 Targeting and outreach of SOFIA

SOFIA aims at reaching out five main audiences: policy-makers, advocates, programme managers, entrepreneurs and researchers based in different locations around the world. It is published in all FAO official languages[50] (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish), and made available on the website (both as a PDF and an html document) and in major conferences (COFI) and technical events (EU meetings). SOFIA is disseminated through newsletters, press releases and conferences and news articles; hard copies are also delivered to Agricultural libraries and relevant Ministries either through the DOs network or in major events.

Figure 1: Number of visits to SOFIA



Source: FAO CIO, 2015

Web traffic information shows that the report is widely consulted online –Figure 1, and that promotion during major events (such as COFI or EU meetings) does increase the number of visits to the website. Respondents to the user survey indicated to have learnt about SOFIA after surfing online (23%), receiving an email (21%) or a printed copy (17%) from FAO. The different sessions of the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) were reported to be a privileged channel for Government representatives[51] to learn about the report's key messages and analysis.

50 In 2008-10 a summary version of SOFIA was also made available in Japanese, and summary digests of SOFIA 2008 were prepared by a company (Greenfacts), but these were short-lived initiatives.

51 Member Countries have reportedly requested that SOFIA be released one month before the COFI meeting so that they have time to review it and discussed in detail during the Conference

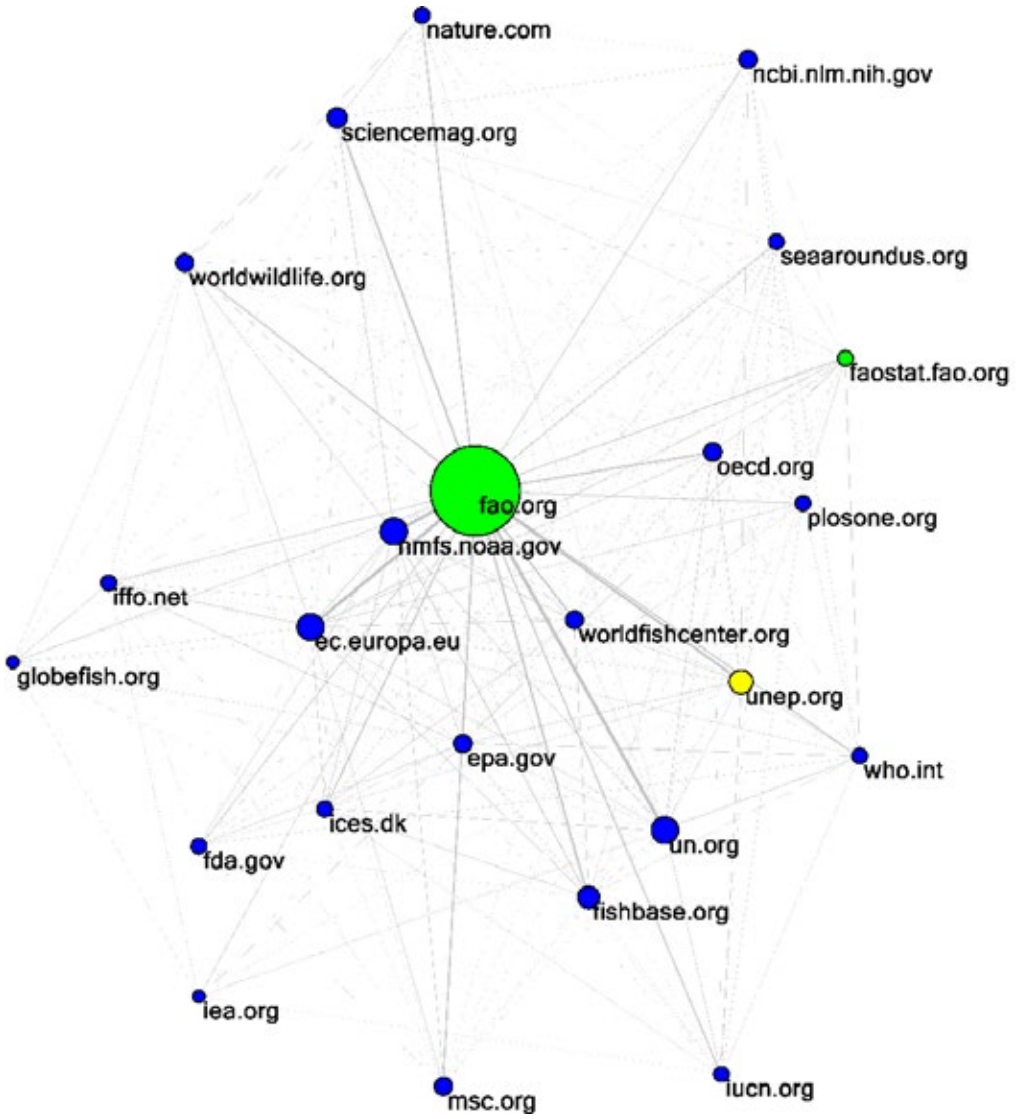


Figure 2: Web community of SOFIA

Source: Cybermetric Analysis, 2014.

Based on the user survey results, the top three user categories appear to be Government staff (31%), research institutions/academia (27%), private sector/consulting firms (15%), the UN (14%) and NGOs (5%). A mapping of the larger SOFIA web community confirms the above profiling, as the linkages registered are primarily from government (e.g. *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*), research (e.g. National Center for Biotechnology Information, British Columbia University's Sea Around Us project, etc.), the UN (e.g. WHO, UNEP, FAOSTAT, globefish), INGOs (e.g. IUCN, WWF, ICES), and some specialized media outlets (e.g. Nature, Science). Visits to SOFIA website originate from over 100 countries. This together with the broad user representation (85 countries) in the user survey confirms its global outreach. Based on an analysis of the respondents, the typical core user of SOFIA is a senior or middle-level policy-maker/manager/academician who makes moderate use of the publication (once a month/a year) for scientific research, project management or policy advice.

4.2. Presentation, quality and usability of SOFIA

SOFIA presentation and quality were favourably rated in the user survey; over 95% of the respondents found SOFIA technically sound, accurate and credible, and easy to locate and access. Criteria rated less favourably by the respondents were the ***length of the report***; involvement of users' and partners' in the planning and design of the publication, and easiness to adapt/use in regional/national contexts. The interviews with key informants confirmed the

above findings; some pointed out that although SOFIA is very relevant to policy makers, not all the readers have the level of expertise required to make full use of it. Others noted that the publication has become thick and is now too large to be read or even printed. Usability of SOFIA is thus an area where there is certainly room for improvement. Survey respondents and key informants were also asked to indicate themes or features they would like to see in future editions of SOFIA. Although a wide range of topics were proposed some themes were cited more often than others. They relate to *market trends, regional and sub-regional/national analysis, country case studies, sustainability, and ecosystem and biodiversity conservation*. Key informants conveyed a number of shortcomings or pending needs e.g. the methodology section could be expanded and describe in more detail how data collection and analysis is carried out. It is very important for users to have reliable data and rigorous analysis, especially as SOFIA is used for policy making and research and in light of emerging initiatives challenging FAO methods and/or the fisheries data collected[52]. It was suggested that a scientific review panel could be set-up to further ensure the credibility of SOFIA data among expert users.

4.3. Usefulness of SOFIA

Over 90% of survey respondents consider SOFIA to be moderate, significant or highly useful in their work. Survey respondents ranked some sections of the report higher than others. The first part (status and trends) was the most highly rated, followed by the section on outlooks, the section on selected issues, and the section on highlights[53] - see figure 3. This also resonates with comments from key informants who highlighted that SOFIA is the only reference for global statistics and outlooks on fisheries, but when it comes to technical publications (such as manuals/guidelines, research and working papers) there are other sources available, including from FAO – see table 1.

Table 1: Familiarity of Users with FAO publications

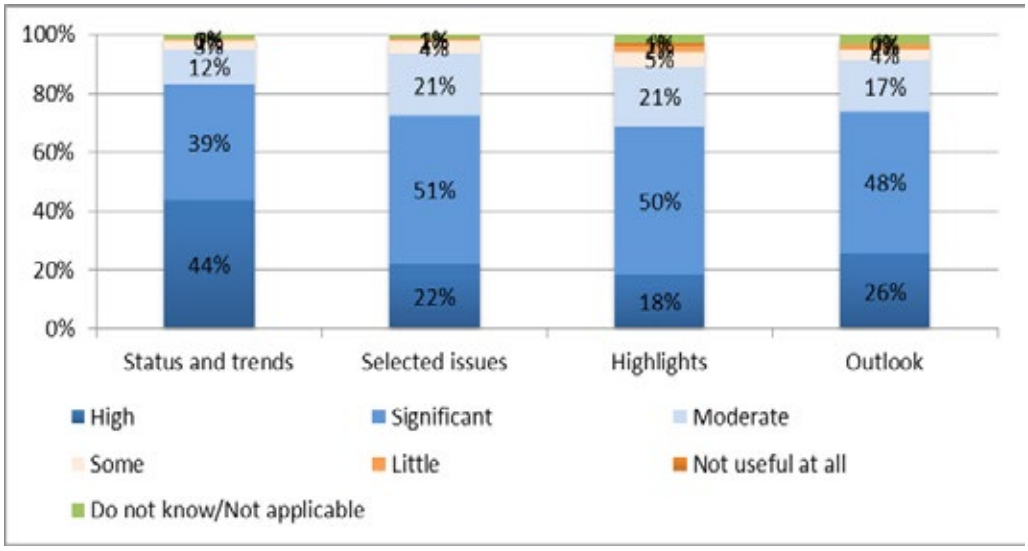
Please indicate with which types of FAO publications you are familiar with:	*No. users*	*Percentage of users*
Flagship publications (other than SOFIA)	98	40
Standards/Codes	82	33
Manuals/Guidelines	**134**	**54**
Policy briefs	54	22
Research/Working papers	**104**	**42**
Workshop proceedings	84	34
Good practices	75	30
Total		100

Source: User survey of SOFIA, 2015

52 http://www.seaaroundus.org/about/index.php/2014/08/sea-around-us-receives-2-6-million-grant-from-the-paul-g-allen-foundation-to-improve-data-on-world-fisheries/

53 Some key informants suggested uplifting the key messages of the third section as the conclusions of the highlights were not always very clear.

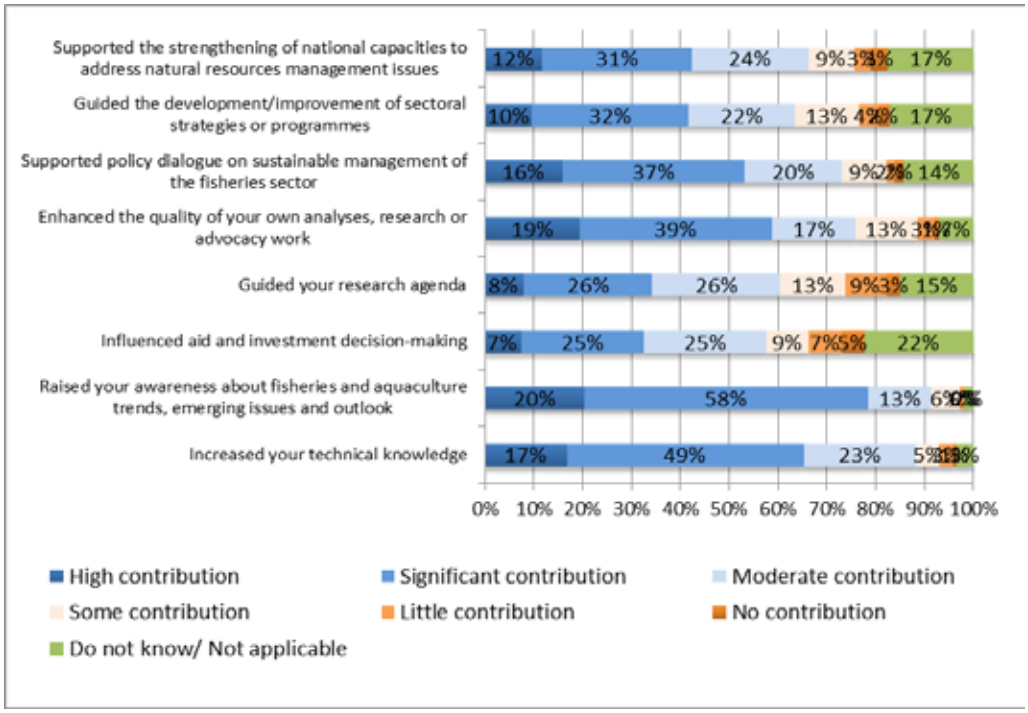
Figure 3: Usefulness of SOFIA's sections to the work of users



Source: User Survey of SOFIA, 2015

Users' appreciation of SOFIA for providing information on **status and trends** is also reflected in the assessment provided in the user survey, where "***raising awareness about fisheries and aquaculture trends"*** was the most highly rated contribution – see figure 4.

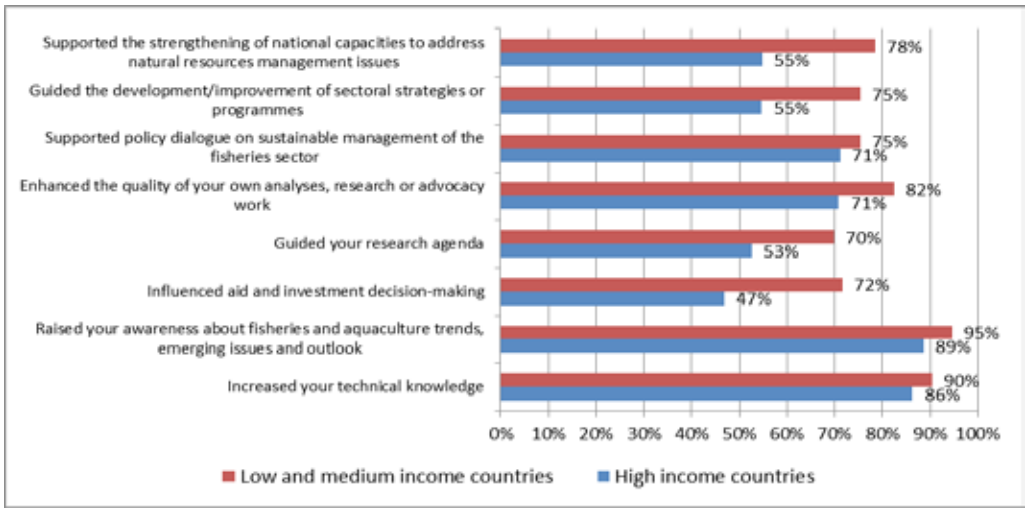
Figure 4: Contribution of SOFIA to the proposed outcomes



Source: User Survey of SOFIA, 2015

A detailed analysis shows that SOFIA is better assessed and found more influential in low/medium income countries (LMI) than in high income countries (HI). Gaps are especially high on the contribution of SOFIA to influencing aid and investment decision-making (25 points), supporting the strengthening of national capacities to address natural resources management issues (23 points), and guiding the development/improvement of sectoral strategies or programmes (20 points) –Figure 5.

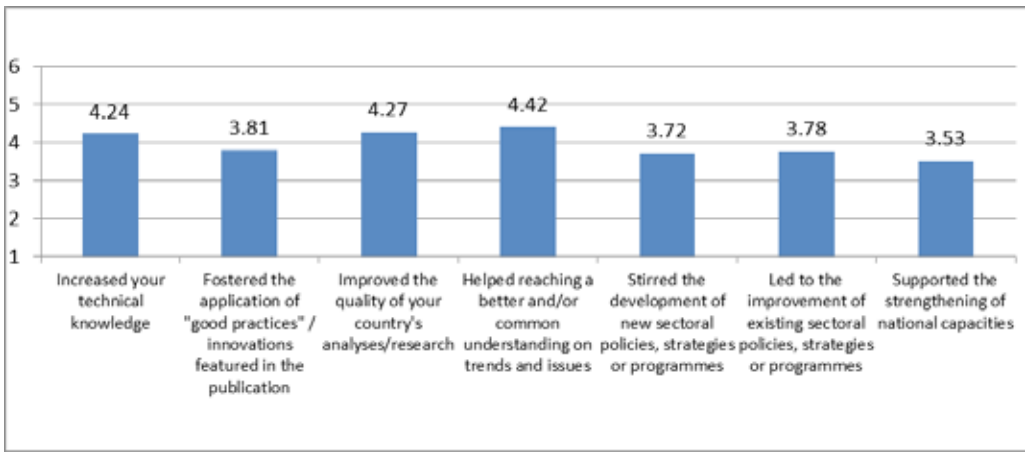
Figure 5: Users assessment of SOFIA contributions (per country income level)



Source: User Survey of SOFIA, 2015

Member Countries participating in the evaluation survey confirmed their appreciation with SOFIA for "*helping to reach a better and/or common understanding on trends and issues*", and provided additional examples of use: a number of European respondents indicated that SOFIA is "*highly relevant in the field of aquaculture*", and helps maintaining "*up to date professional cooperation with developing countries*". SOFIA was also mentioned as a reference "*for writing country papers, project proposals and regional information papers effectively*" and as "*very useful in elaborating development projects in the field of small scale aquaculture in South-East Asia*". Furthermore, it was noted that "*information on production and countries provides insight to identify partnerships for collaboration and synergies*".

Figure 6: Main contributions of SOFIA to Member States



Source: Member Country survey – section on SOFIA, 2015

4.3.1 Uptake by policy-makers

SOFIA is perceived as a critical source of global trends and statistics, and, to a lesser degree, of knowledge about fisheries in a variety of topics and contexts, which supports decision making and policy decisions[54]. For instance taking note that marine fish stocks were declining has incited countries to invest in aquaculture e.g. Cameroun, Brazil. In Brazil SOFIA findings has informed the development of guidelines about the potential of marine fish aquaculture in the country. More recently the need to reduce post-harvest losses -as pointed out in SOFIA 2014- has become an area of work for the Brazilian Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture. In

54 Only 17% of policy makers using SOFIA know about FAO's policy briefs, so there is room for improving dissemination of FI publications to this audience.

France SOFIA is reportedly used to made decisions on development aid (to countries, regions) to prevent overfishing and fight IUU fishing activities. Still in the domain of foreign aid, SOFIA is referred in Hungary as helping to maintain up to date professional cooperation with developing countries and elaborate development projects in the field of small scale aquaculture in South-East Asia. One of SOFIA's key contributions emphasized by key informants relates to the interphase between global and national statistics. In particular SOFIA has reportedly triggered the improvement of sectoral statistics in many countries[55] as well as the conduct of research on the underlying causes of changes in trends[56].

4.3.2 Uptake by Programme managers

Around 64% of survey respondents indicate that SOFIA reports have moderately or highly guided the development / improvement of sectoral strategies or programmes. This figure goes up to 78% when concentrating on responses from FAO staff in DOs.

Several examples of use of SOFIA in programmes and practices were provided to the evaluation. One area that SOFIA has specifically informed regards the sustainability dimension of fisheries and aquaculture. This includes safeguarding the environment for sustainable approaches, especially in light of the Blue Growth initiative[57]. How other countries have addressed this issue has contributed to influence programming and increase aquaculture –e.g. in Brazil- while striving to enhance environmental sustainability. In Canada, SOFIA 2014 was found to have been effective in recommending speeding up the ongoing implementation of an ecosystem approach around the world. It is also noted that information on production and countries provides insight to identify partnerships for collaboration and synergies. In Myanmar, data analysis and description of Aquaculture and fisheries information in SOFIA has informed country papers, project proposals, and regional information papers. Another example is FAO programme on Supporting Harmonisation of Aquatic Research Data (SHARD) that referred to SOFIA data on overexploited or depleted species as a rationale for projects activities.

4.3.3 Uptake in Academia and research

The citation analysis conducted by FAO and Dalhousie University as well as the Cybermetric analysis performed by the evaluation found extensive use of SOFIA in research and academia - SOFIA 2012 alone is cited by almost 200 publications on Scopus and Google Scholar [58]. The citation analysis conducted by FAO and Dalhousie University reveals that SOFIA is highly cited in the academic world (5661 citations in google scholar)[59]. The Cybermetric analysis conducted by the evaluation shows that a total of 1203 URL point to SOFIA (2012 edition) while 596 websites refer to it –Table 2.

55 For further details consult the publication "The FAO global capture production database: A six-decade effort to catch the trend" (2012). Available at http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0308597X11001928

56 SOFIA 2010 analyses prompted scientific research to verify if reduction in shark landings was due to management implementation or population decline. (see "Why have global shark and ray landings declined: improved management or overfishing?" – ISSN 1467-2979) to verify if reduction in shark landings was due to management implementation or population decline.

57 http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/sids/PDF/Blue_Growth_policy_paper.pdf

58 See full list in annex 4.

59 The Value of Global Overview Reports: A case study on the use of the SOFIA published by FAO » 2015, unpublished.

Table 2: Cybermetric analysis of SOFIA 2012

Knowledge Products	Authors	Number of web references		Number of citations	
		Link Hit Est.	Site Hit Est.	Google Scholar cites	Scopus cites
State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012	FAO	889	421	5	188
La situation mondiale des pêches et de l'aquaculture	FAO	62	46	-	1
El estado mundial de la pesca y la acuicultura 2012	FAO	252	129	1	5
Fisheries investing in natural capital	UNEP	33	19	-	5

Source: Cybermetric Analysis, 2014.

Anecdotal evidence was provided to the evaluation of a research work on the caring capacity in public reservoirs -i.e. how to increase aquaculture production while maintaining the quality of waters to other public uses- and for which SOFIA is one of the sources of data. At the institutional level, another example relates to SOFIA contributing to inform the thinking and research orientations of a specialized institute with a capacity of several hundred scientists. SOFIA supports and assists direction setting for some research works especially those at strategic level that span over a number of years.

4.3.4 Uptake in Media and civil society

SOFIA has been regularly quoted in workshops, scientific papers, and press articles by Civil Society and media outlets[60], as well as by partner International Organizations. An in-depth review of a selected sample of websites and resources citing SOFIA 2012 shows that the report has been primarily cited by the media, NGOs, the private sector and to a lesser extent by academia. Citations come primarily in the form of articles, news stories, press releases, and books, followed by reports, research papers, and academic articles –Annex 4. There is no evidence however that such citations/references resulted in greater uptake at policy-maker or programme manager level.

4.3.5 Uptake by International partners

SOFIA is widely used by other international organizations such as OECD during public conferences, in publications, or referred to by OECD when starting to work with non-member countries –e.g. India, Indonesia, South Africa, etc.-. Another example regards the recent US Department of Agriculture's Scientific Report of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, quoting SOFIA 2012 as a source of information to "address Question 4 on the worldwide capacity to produce enough nutritious seafood". In addition, a US Government Agency recently stated that "The UN FAO report on *The State of World Fisheries and Agriculture* issued in 2012 formed the basis of the DGAC's evidence review on this topic. The FAO report addresses a wide variety of issues affecting capture fisheries and aquaculture, including economics, infrastructure, and labor and government policies."[61]

4.3.6 Uptake in the Private sector

A majority of survey respondents from the private sector return a positive assessment of SOFIA for all proposed criteria but one. Around 87% of private sector users indicate that SOFIA has

60 FAO Meltwater report on SOFIA, unpublished.

61 http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015-scientific-report/PDFs/Scientific-Report-of-the-2015-Dietary-Guidelines-Advisory-Committee.pdf

had a moderate to high contribution to raising their awareness about fisheries and aquaculture trends, emerging issues and outlook. About 78% of private sector respondents SOFIA agree to a moderate to high contribution of SOFIA to increasing their technical knowledge. For 65% of private sector users SOFIA has had a moderate to high contribution to influencing aid and investment decision-making –Figure 8. Survey respondents from the private sector suggested that SOFIA could feature "More industry case studies", "Forecasts and case studies with market relevance", "Better focus of the influence of complexity on fisheries development and management", or "More market focused information/data; Consumers behavior/preferences for seafood".

4.3.7 Uptake within FAO

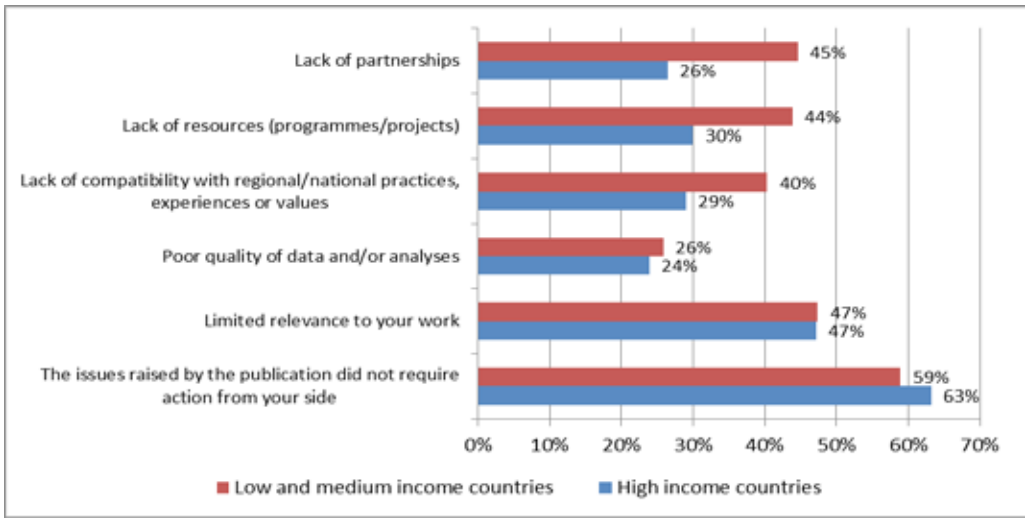
At FAO, SOFIA supports the development of a common view and consistent policy position on fisheries and aquaculture. Given its outreach and credibility, SOFIA content becomes the de facto key messages on fisheries and aquaculture for internal and external users. For instance information and statistics that form the basis of the status and trends on fisheries capture data are routinely provided to Senior Managers for briefing purposes, dissemination by other organizations including UNSD and OECD, and requests from governments, media, researchers and others. More however could be done to mainstream SOFIA messages among staff in DOs, and through them, to interested national counterparts.

4.4. Dissemination channels

As indicated earlier the primary objective of the publication is to provide policy-makers, civil society and those whose livelihoods depend on the sector a comprehensive, objective and global view of capture fisheries and aquaculture, including associated policy issues. SOFIA is to this end disseminated through several channels, including email campaigns (to over 3500 registered users) and presentations at high-level events (e.g. COFI), to such a wide audience. Based on the interviews and the users', clients and member country surveys, such dissemination has resulted in SOFIA mainly contributing *to raising awareness about fisheries and aquaculture trends and outlook*, and *increasing knowledge on emerging issues*.

However, in general terms SOFIA users indicate that there are not always able to follow-up on the key issues/trends highlighted in SOFIA, for a number of reasons including limited relevance to their work, lack of resources or partnerships – Figure 7.

Figure 7: Reasons for not using or applying the key messages presented in SOFIA

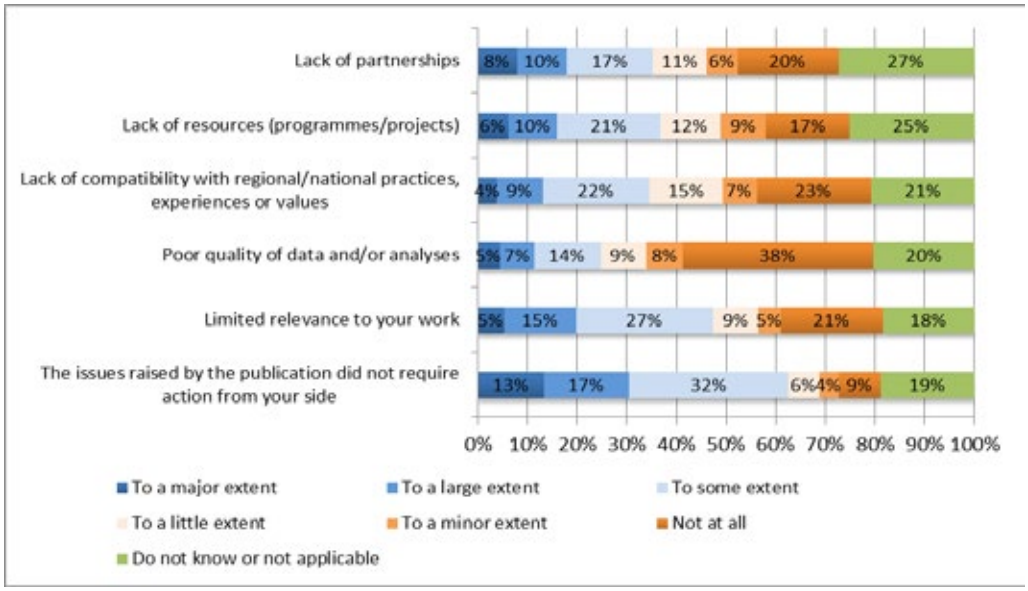


Source: User Survey of SOFIA, 2015

Detailed analysis of the reasons why the key messages conveyed in SOFIA did not lead to follow-up actions shows factors differently influential in low/medium income countries or high income countries. In particular SOFIA users from low and medium income countries are much

more exposed to a lack of partnerships and lack of resources (programmes/projects) –Figure 8.

Figure 8: Reasons for not applying the key messages presented in SOFIA



Source: User Survey of SOFIA, 2015

In order to foster the use of SOFIA analyses and key messages, FAO could make further improvements to the discoverability of the publication on the web and its dissemination in high-level conferences, workshops and meetings (especially those involving non-fisheries and aquaculture audiences); and by engaging in the production of regional and/or country-level case studies in partnership with local institutions, as this will allow for better understanding and context-specific relevance of the publication's contents.

5. Conclusions

The utility and uptake of SOFIA at sectoral level and among different sets of users appear to be significant within the fisheries and aquaculture community. This in turn is the result of several factors and good practices, such as (i) efforts made to understand needs, ideas and capacities within FI and key stakeholders; (ii) high SOFIA visibility as an agenda item of COFI meetings; (iii) participation in high-level discussions to promote publication use. Uptake at different levels was evidenced in particular with researchers and academia, policy-makers and programme managers.

Among the options suggested to make SOFIA more appealing include the development of a shorter / hyperlinked document, which will allow for better tailoring of the product to meet different purposes and audiences. A more detailed description of the methodology together with information on data collection methods and datasets would also improve the reliability of the report according to some expert users. Accuracy, client orientation, and overall quality could also be improved by forming an external scientific committee that would provide complementary oversight and credibility to the report.

A simplified version of the report, for instance targeted to people with limited internet access could also be explored since many users note that it takes a long time to download the full report. Key content could be linked to further developments. For instance there could be an interactive version of the publication with links to databases, to references, and to further resources. This would give a capability to navigate a synthetic publication providing access to a larger body of knowledge.

The level of dissemination of the flagship across some regions - Asia, Near East, North Africa, and the Pacific- would require to be further assessed as a balance and broad uptake was not strongly evidenced by the evaluation. Involvement of DOs in the dissemination process

for instance by organizing learning events, workshops, or bringing in national partners in the development of case studies could contribute to expanding the outreach. Similarly a complementary focus on the industry and private sector could increase uptake and strengthen evidence of use among such actors.

Finally, the relationship between the need for different publications on fisheries and aquaculture (flagships, codes, research papers, guidelines and manuals), and the services/ initiatives through which this knowledge base is transferred (field projects, TCP and other capacity building activities) could also be more precisely spelled out.

Appendix 1: List of key informants consulted

1. **Ababouch Lahsen,** Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Economics Division, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
2. **Belal Emma,** Directeur des Pêches, de l'Aquaculture et des Industries Halieutiques, Ministère de l'Elevage, des Pêches et des Industries Animales (MINEPIA), Yaoundé, Cameroun
3. **Bertrand Jacques,** Directeur Adjoint, Département Ressources Biologiques et Environnement, IFREMER
4. **Farmer Tina,** Editor, Communications and Publications, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
5. **Grainger Richard,** Consultant, FAO
6. **Mathiesen Arni,** Assistant Director-General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (FI)
7. **Plummer Julian,** Publications Coordinator, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
8. **Roubach Rodrigo,** Coordenador Geral de Planejamento e Ordenamento da Aquicultura, Marinha em Estabelecimentos Rurais, Secretaria de Planejamento e Ordenamento da Aquicultura – SEPOA, Ministério da Pesca e Aquicultura – MPA, Brazil
9. **Schmidt Carl-Christian,** Head of the Fisheries Policies Division, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, OECD
10. **Soesilo Indroyono,** Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use and Conservation Division, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
11. **Soomai Suzuette S.,** Intern, PhD. Candidate, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
12. **Subasinghe Rohana**, Chief, Agriculture Branch, Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use and Conservation Division, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
13. **Taconet Marc,** Chief, Fishery Statistics and Information Branch (FIPS), Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Economics Division, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
14. **Tsuji Sachiko,** Senior Fishery Statistician, FIPS, Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Economics Division, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO

Appendix 2: List of documents reviewed

<u>State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA)</u>

1. **Avdic, V., MacDonald, B., Farmer, T., Kalentsits, M. & Grainger, R**. (2014). *The Value of Global Overview Reports: A Case Study of the Use of 'The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture' Published by the Food and Agriculture Organization*. Rome, FAO & Dalhousie University.
2. **FAO**. 2008. *Supporting Harmonisation of Aquatic Research Data (SHARD): Project document*. Rome.
3. **FAO**. 2010. *The state of World Fisheries and aquaculture 2010*. Rome.
4. **FAO**. 2010. *World fisheries and aquaculture: status, issues and needs.* Rome
5. **FAO**. 2012. *The state of World Fisheries and aquaculture 2012.* Rome.

6. **FAO**. 2014. *The state of World Fisheries and aquaculture 2014*. Rome.

7. **Pauly, D. & Froese, R**. 2012. Comments on FAO's State of Fisheries and Aquaculture, or 'SOFIA 2010'. *Marine Policy*, 36: 746–752.

8. **Soomai, S., MacDonald, B. & Wells, P.** 2013. Communicating environmental information to the stakeholders in coastal and marine policy-making: Case studies from Nova Scotia and the Gulf of Maine/Bay of Fundy region. *Marine Policy*: 40, 176-186.

9. **Soomai, S.,** Wells, P. & MacDonald, B. 2011. Multi-stakeholder perspectives on the use and influence of ''grey'' scientific information in fisheries management. Marine Policy, 35: 50-62.

10. USDA. 2015. Scientific *Report of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee*. Washington, DC.

Appendix 3: Survey results

This annex provides a summary and analysis of the online survey conducted to gather perspectives and feedback on SOFIA. The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO and was opened during 4 weeks, from 3 March to 6 April 2015. It was sent to 3774 users of SOFIA. The survey was anonymous. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether 252 responses were received. A detailed review led to reject 4 questionnaires that were too incomplete to serve the analysis which left 248 valid questionnaires to study.

1. Survey Demographics

a. Organizations

Key findings:

- The highest proportion of survey respondents comes from **academia and research institutions** followed by officials from **central government organizations**
- The **private sector** represents 15% of survey respondents
- Little participants from the media, participation was received from International Financial Institutions, Media, Resource partner/donor organizations, and other UN agencies or programmes

b. Positions

Key findings:

- The largest number of survey respondents holds **senior-level positions** (52%)
- Close to 23% of participants are mid-level professionals
- SOFIA users as represented by the survey sample are in their majority experienced staff

c. Role or job function

Key findings:

- Survey respondents are primarily involved in **scientific research** activities, project management, consulting, and policy advisory
- Respondents that selected and informed the "Other" choice are in management and coordination, teaching, communications, library and publications

d. Countries

Key findings:

- In total 85 countries are represented, with a participation originating primarily from developing countries
- Four countries –**Spain**, **USA, Italy** and **France** - provide higher numbers of respondents

e. Work area

Key findings:

- The highest number of respondents (33%) works at **global** level
- There is a rather close balance between participants working on Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe and Central Asia
- Near East and North Africa as well as North America are the geographic areas of focus with the fewer number of respondents

f. Thematic area of work

Key findings:

- **Fisheries** and **aquaculture** are the thematic areas of work most frequently represented, followed by **environmental conservation**
- Some areas like Finance and insurance, or Land and soils have been selected by few participants

g. Gender

Key findings:

- Survey respondents are primarily **males**

h. Age

Key findings:

- In their majority respondents are **experienced professionals**

i. Use

Key findings:

- More than 50% of survey respondents consult SOFIA quite regularly, i.e. once a month or more
- Around 13% of participants indicate never consulting SOFIA and ***were not requested to respond to the following questions*** on SOFIA but to indicate any future expectations and assess FAO publications as part of the last sections of the survey

2. Current Use and Assessment

Survey respondents using SOFIA once a year or more were invited to provide an assessment of the flagship.

a. Reach

Key findings:

- According to the survey sample –which is based on an email list of SOFIA's recipients-, the most common channel to be informed about SOFIA is through **an email message from FAO** followed by retrieving the report on **FAO website** and **receiving a printed copy**
- SOFIA is rarely discovered due to references made by policy makers or senior officials,

or FAO staff, or in a social media post
- To be noted, half of the respondents who selected "Other" received SOFIA during a COFI meeting

b. Presentation

Survey respondents were invited to assess the presentation of SOFIA according to a number of factors.

Key findings:

- The majority of survey respondents **rates favourably the presentation** of SOFIA
- The length of the report is the criteria that returns the lower level of ratings

c. Quality

Survey respondents were invited to assess the quality of SOFIA through a number of criteria.

Key findings:

- As a general pattern the quality of SOFIA is positively assessed by a large majority of survey respondents
- In particular, SOFIA is found to be a publication that is technically sound, accurate and credible, and easy to locate and access. Criteria that are less highly rated regard the involvement of users' and partners' in the planning and design of the publication and the easiness to adapt/use in regional/national contexts

d. Usefulness

Key findings:

- The section that survey respondents find most useful in SOFIA is **Status and trends**
- Comparatively, the **highlights** are less favourably rated

e. Outcomes

Key findings:

- More than 75% of the respondents indicate a contribution of SOFIA which goes from moderate to high for **raising awareness about fisheries and aquaculture trends, emerging issues and outlook**, for **increasing technical knowledge**, and for **enhancing the quality of analyses, research or advocacy work**
- Comparatively, criteria that are less highly rated regard the contribution of SOFIA to influencing aid and investment decision-making, to guiding research agenda, and to guiding the development/improvement of sectorial strategies or programmes

f. Barriers

Key findings:

- The primary reasons for not following-up on the key messages presented in the publication are that the issues **raised by the publication did not require action from the side of the respondents**

g. Other relevant resources

Survey respondents were invited to list **other publications/resources that influence their decisions as much or more than SOFIA**. The publications most cited originate from the European Commission / European Union and from academic and scientific publishers.

3. Future expectations

a. Language

Key findings:

- Although survey respondents came from 85 countries, the majority requests an English version of the publication, followed by Spanish and French versions
- Few requests were collected for the Russian and Chinese versions
- Few respondents (2.5% in total) indicated an interest for receiving the publication in other languages

b. Format

Key findings:

- A majority of respondents prefers to receive SOFIA in electronic format

c. Dissemination activities

Key findings:

- Around half of survey respondents indicate that **Website/blogs** and **dissemination in conferences, workshops and meetings** are the dissemination activities FAO should prioritize to foster the use of SOFIA analyses and key messages at global, regional and national levels
- One third of the respondents propose to use **country case studies** and **email campaigns**

d. Future themes

Survey respondents were proposed to indicate themes or features they would like to see in future editions of SOFIA. Although a wide range of topics were proposed some themes have been cited more often than others. They relate to market trends, regional and sub-regional/ national analysis including country case studies, sustainability, and ecosystem and biodiversity conservation.

Appendix 4: Cybermetric analysis

Knowledge Products	State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012	English	French	Spanish
Number of web references				
	Link Hit Est.	889	62	252
	Site Hit Est.	421	46	129
	Site Repost Est.	-	4	-
Number of citations				
	Google Scholar cites	5	-	1
	Scopus cites	188	1	5
Thematic focus areas				
	Agriculture			1
	Agriculture - Agroindustries	1		
	Agriculture - Crops			
	Agriculture - Fisheries and aquaculture	21	23	17
	Agriculture - Forestry		1	
	Agriculture - Land and water			
	Agriculture - Livestock			
	Economy			4
	Economy - Financing			
	Economy - Outlooks			
	Economy - Prices			
	Economy - Trade			
	Emergency & rehabilitation			
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Disaster risk reduction (DRR)			
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Humanitarian response			
	Environment	1		
	Environment - Climate change			1
	Environment - Sustainable management & conservation			1
	Food			
	Food - Food safety (quality)			
	Food - Food security (quantity)			
	Food - Nutrition	1		1
	Human impacts			
	Human impacts - Gender			
	Human impacts - Human rights			
	Human impacts - Social protection			
	Other (DISCUSS WITH TEAM):	1		
Actor type				

Knowledge Products	State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012	English	French	Spanish
	Academia	4	1	2
	Government	2		1
	Intergovernmental organization		1	1
	International Financial Institutions (IFIS)			
	Media / News	2	10	1
	Multi-sector networks or platforms			
	Non-Governmental Organization	6	3	1
	Private sector / Business	3	4	3
	Public (Individual / blogger / online community)	2	1	3
	United Nations system	2		5
Content type				
	Abstract, Summary	3	1	
	Article, News story, Press release, Books	7	15	13
	Blog, Editorial, Opinion	3	1	
	Data tables, Statistics			
	E-commerce, Online sales	1		
	Education, Training			2
	Employment, Work related, Job description, Procurement			
	Event listing, Announcement			
	Listing, Directory	4	2	4
	Newsletter			1
	Organizational information (about us section)			
	Policy, Legislation, Governmental strategy, Lobbying position paper			1
	Portfolio, Resume, Personal profile			
	Presentation			
	Promotion, Advertising, Ads			1
	Report, Research paper, Academic article	4	4	3
	Resource, Best practice, Workbook, Toolkit, How to	1		
	Social media, Discussion group	1		
	Speech, Discussion, Minutes		1	
	Wiki	1	1	
Citation type				
	Cited as a publication available for purchase	3		
	Cited in the format of an academic citation, bibliography, footnote	19	3	3
	Cited with an article, story, newsletter, etc...		15	16

Knowledge Products	State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012	English	French	Spanish
	Listed as part of a resume, or listing of self/co-authored publications			
	Listed in a search engine result page, automated list, auto-aggregated result			
	Listed resource: library or academic sources	3	1	3
	Listed resource: other			1
	Promoted as featured content (Primary focus)		2	
	Promoted as secondary content (Teasers, sidebar content, related content)		3	
	Referenced as the original source of repurposed or spin-off content			1
	Referenced in a formal speech, statement, transcript		1	
	Referenced in a social media discussion, online discussion			
Geographic scope				
	Africa		6	
	Asia	2		
	Europe	4	6	8
	Global / International	4	7	1
	Latin America and the Caribbean		1	8
	Near East			
	North Africa			
	North America	7	2	
	The Pacific			

Annex 2.8: Case Study – The OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook

1. Introduction

This case study presents the results of the assessment of **The OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook** (the Outlook) conducted as part of the evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture. This assessment seeks to identify the main outcomes achieved by the publication as well as success factors, gaps and unmet needs, against the expectations set in the "theory of change" of the publication[62] (see figure in next page).

2. Methodology

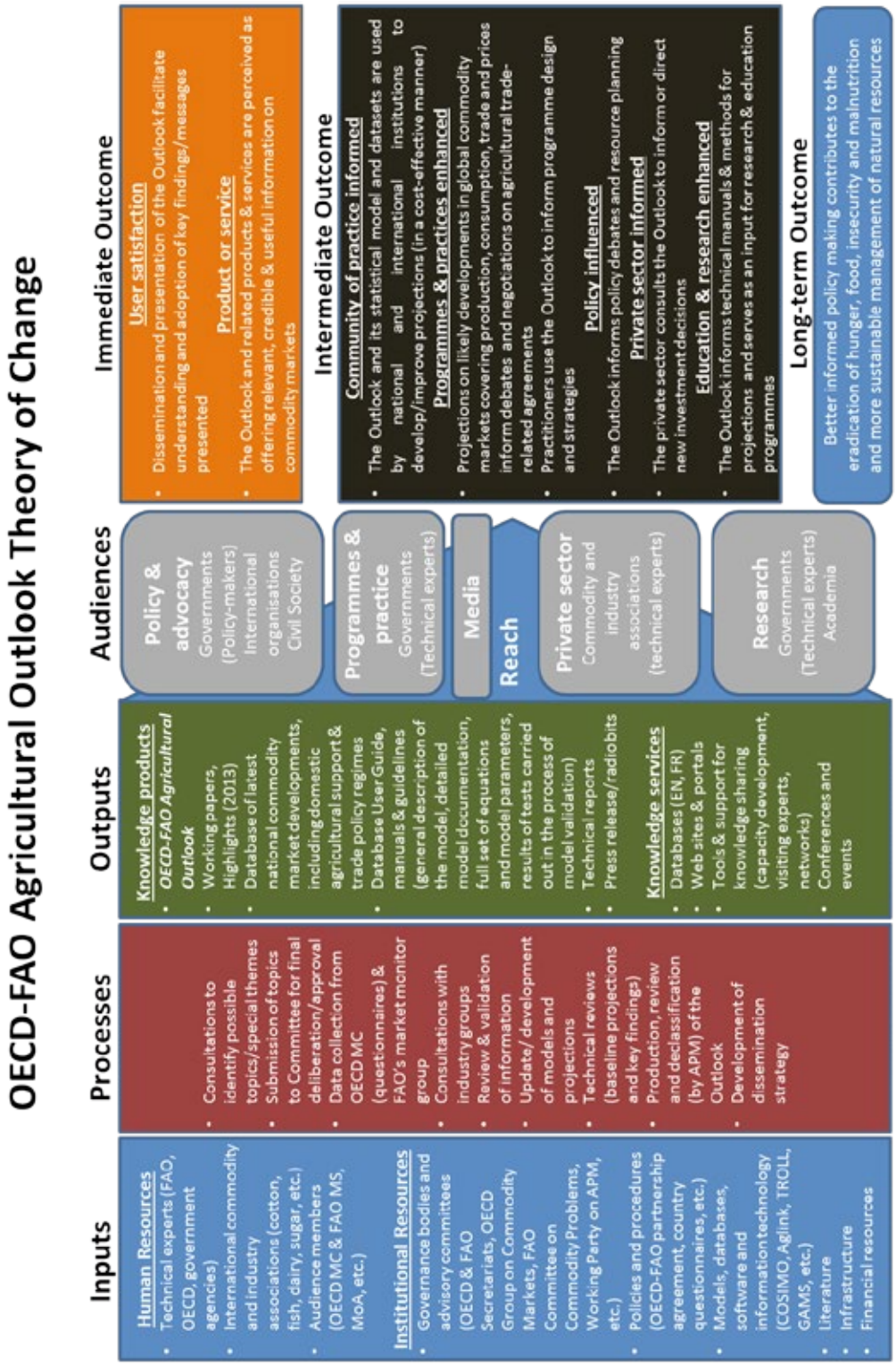
The study relies on information collected from primary (interviews, surveys) and secondary sources. Interviews were conducted with FAO staff and a sample of core users -Appendix 1. Outlook-related documentation was reviewed including selected procedural documents, scientific papers and guidance documents, as well as presentations and outreach materials –Appendix 2. A survey questionnaire was sent to 84 identified users of the Outlook; 34 valid questionnaires were analyzed -Appendix 3. A second survey was sent to 15 CCP Bureau Members and 11 questionnaires were completed and analyzed. An analysis of web and cybermetric data was performed to quantify and qualify the uptake of the Outlook according to the activity occurring on third-party websites –Appendix 4. Finally, relevant responses from the evaluation's client survey and the Member Country survey were compiled and the findings triangulated against those emerging from the above primary and secondary data sources.

3. Description of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook

Launched in 2004 as a joint OECD-FAO publication, the Agricultural Outlook builds on previous work from both organizations. Since the 1960s FAO had undertaken medium-term projections using various models and publishing the *Medium-term prospects for agricultural commodities* report, a publication that was discontinued in 2003 to produce the Outlook jointly with OECD. For its part, OECD had started the AGLINK model in the mid 1990's "as an effort to link the national models of member countries, prompted by the need to analyze the GATT Uruguay Round Agreement on Agriculture" (FAO, 2014). Historically the model was used to help evidence the benefits of liberalizing commodity markets. The joint AGLINK-COSIMO econometric model, supported by commodity experts´ input, forms the basis of the Agricultural Outlook. The model is used to generate baseline projections and to serve as a basis to analyse influencing events, for example the complex interactions that take place during policy changes or unforeseen weather conditions.

The Outlook presents a medium term assessment of production, consumption, stocks, trade and prices of major agricultural commodities, at national, regional and global levels. The first chapter provides an overview of policy and macroeconomic trends and main commodity markets developments. The second chapter focuses on a country. Remaining chapters study a range of selected commodities (e.g. biofuels, cereals, sugar, etc.). The annexes of the Outlook contain statistical data and present the methodology. The projections and analysis conveyed by the Outlook are expected to inform policy debates, negotiations, resource planning, and to be used for advocacy purpose.

62 The theory of change was formulated in cooperation with FAO staff interviewed for this case study.


OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook Theory of Change
Inputs
Human Resources
Technical experts (FAO, OECD, government agencies)
International commodity and industry associations (cotton, fish, dairy, sugar, etc.)
Audience members (OECD MC & FAO MS, MoA, etc.)
Institutional Resources
Governance bodies and advisory committees (OECD & FAO Secretariats, OECD Group on Commodity Markets, FAO Committee on Commodity Problems, Working Party on APM, etc.)
Policies and procedures (OECD-FAO partnership agreement, country questionnaires, etc.)
Models, databases, software and information technology (COSIMO, Aglink, TROLL, GAMS, etc.)
Literature
Infrastructure
Financial resources
Processes
Consultations to identify possible topics/special themes
Submission of topics to Committee for final deliberation/approval
Data collection from OECD MC (questionnaires) & FAO's market monitor group
Consultations with industry groups
Review & validation of information
Update/ development of models and projections
Technical reviews (baseline projections and key findings)
Production, review and declassification (by APM) of the Outlook
Development of dissemination strategy
Outputs
Knowledge products
OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook
Working papers, Highlights (2013)
Database of latest national commodity market developments, including domestic agricultural support & trade policy regimes
Database User Guide, manuals & guidelines (general description of the model, detailed model documentation, full set of equations and model parameters, results of tests carried out in the process of model validation)
Technical reports
Press release/radiobits
Knowledge services
Databases (EN, FR)
Web sites & portals
Tools & support for knowledge sharing (capacity development, visiting experts, networks)
Conferences and events
Audiences
Policy & advocacy
Governments (Policy-makers)
International organisations
Civil Society
Programmes & practice
Governments (Technical experts)
Media
Reach
Private sector
Commodity and industry associations (technical experts)
Research
Governments (Technical experts)
Academia
Immediate Outcome
User satisfaction
Dissemination and presentation of the Outlook facilitate understanding and adoption of key findings/messages presented
Product or service
The Outlook and related products & services are perceived as offering relevant, credible & useful information on commodity markets
Intermediate Outcome
Community of practice informed
The Outlook and its statistical model and datasets are used by national and international institutions to develop/improve projections (in a cost-effective manner)
Programmes & practices enhanced
Projections on likely developments in global commodity markets covering production, consumption, trade and prices inform debates and negotiations on agricultural trade-related agreements
Practitioners use the Outlook to inform programme design and strategies
Policy influenced
The Outlook informs policy debates and resource planning
Private sector informed
The private sector consults the Outlook to inform or direct new investment decisions
Education & research enhanced
The Outlook informs technical manuals & methods for projections and serves as an input for research & education programmes
Long-term Outcome
Better informed policy making contributes to the eradication of hunger, food, insecurity and malnutrition and more sustainable management of natural resources

4. Assessment

This section aims to measure the extent to which the outputs and outcomes identified in the theory of change for the Outlook have been met from "a user point of view".

4.1. Targeting and outreach of the Outlook

The primary target audience for the Outlook is policy makers but the publication goes into the public domain where additional users can take benefit from it. Therefore secondary target users include the private sector, industry groups, research and academia, and the media. The past editions of the Outlook have been published in English, French, Spanish and Chinese. In addition, the executive summary of the Outlook is published as a standalone hand-out in those four languages. As a one-off initiative, the 2013 edition of the Outlook was supplemented by an abbreviated version of the report: the *Highlights*. The Outlook is accessible on OECD website after registration and core statistical data referred in the Outlook can be consulted on the OECD.Stat website. Hard copies of the publication are sold €49 by OECD library but FAO receives copies for dissemination.

The Outlook is launched every year in late June-early July during a press conference held jointly by the Director-General of FAO and the Secretary-General of the OECD. After the global release of the report, regional events are organized by OECD and FAO local offices or by national partners to increase outreach –Box 1.

Web traffic information shows that the report is widely consulted online –Table 1-. The "shelf life" of each edition of the Outlook spans across several years. More than 75% of downloads originate from OECD countries –Figure 1.

Box 1. Outlook 2014 dissemination strategy

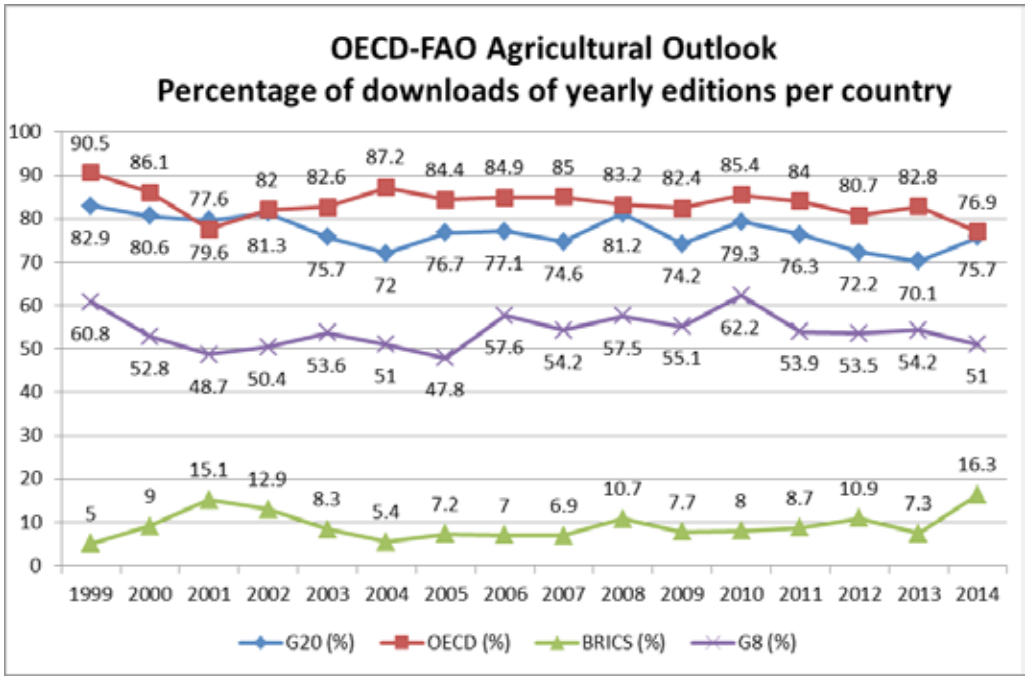
The 2014-2023 Outlook was launched on 11 July 2014 in Rome by OECD Secretary General Angel Gurría and FAO Director General José Graziano. The launch event was streamed live on the web and saw significant on-site participation by member country delegates, press and FAO staff. The announcement of the launch was sent to journals and media professionals. The 2014-2023 report had good press coverage with articles published by Reuters, AFP, Business Week, Financial Times, Fox Business, DPA (German press agency), Agerpres (Romanian press agency) as well as Polish, French and other media sources. The Spanish version launch of the 2014-2023 Outlook took place in November 2014 in Mexico and garnered significant media coverage in Spanish-language outlets. The Agricultural Outlook 2014-2023 was the feature item of the OECD agriculture newsletter that was sent on 11 July 2014. The e-mail generated an estimated 3,600 clicks, 50% of which went to the Outlook website. The Outlook was sent by FAO to every Ministry of Agriculture, with a formal cover letter from the OECD Secretary General and FAO Director General, as well as to every DO, and other institutions. Altogether there were about 600 recipients on FAO distribution list. Presentations were given by FAO and OECD staff as well as by partners during conferences on agriculture or meetings focusing on specific commodities (sugar, wheat, etc.), as well as through events organized by national commissions or industry groups. OECD staff indicates participating in 20 to 25 dissemination events per year.

Table 1: Number of downloads of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook and components

Edition[1]	Downloads 2010-2014	Downloads in 2010	Downloads in 2011	Downloads in 2012	Downloads in 2013	Downloads in 2014
Outlook 1999	279	21	40	69	78	71
Outlook 2000	211	13	42	46	53	57
Outlook 2001	243	9	38	65	68	63
Outlook 2002	428	11	70	124	134	89
Outlook 2003	871	13	172	151	263	272
Outlook 2004	1070	29	82	257	405	297
Outlook 2005	871	15	104	206	383	163
Outlook 2006	1116	18	135	251	432	280
Outlook 2007	1027	40	144	212	338	293
Outlook 2008	1324	49	195	262	449	369
Outlook 2009	4123	193	760	923	1302	945
Outlook 2010	8972	1311	2336	1530	1947	1848
Outlook 2011	8931	0	2696	2226	1942	2067
Outlook 2012	22928	0	0	8059	11522	3347
Outlook 2013	26723	0	0	0	9950	16773
Outlook 2014	15001	0	0	0	0	15001

Source: OECD, 31 October 2014

Figure 1: Percentage of downloads of the Outlook by geographic origin



Source: OECD, 31 October 2014

A mapping of the Outlook web community shows that most referrals to the publication come from the UN (UNESCO, UNEP, UN), IGOs and IFIs (EC, IEA, World Bank, IPCC), academia/research institutions/think tanks (Harvard, IFPRI), governments (USDA, NCBI), NGOs (Greenpeace, ETC), the media (Nature) –Figure 2. The cybermetric analysis, which focused on the Outlook

2013, shows that 380 links point to the publication and that more than 170 web sites make reference to that edition of the publication –Annex 4. To provide an order of magnitude, the cybermetric analysis has compared the Outlook with the European Commission's *Prospects for Agricultural Markets and Income in the EU 2012-2022*, a publication that is found to have been linked 161 times and referred on 97 web sites.

Figure 2: Web community of OCED-FAO Agricultural Outlook

Source: Cybermetric Analysis, 2014.

4.2. Presentation and quality of the Outlook

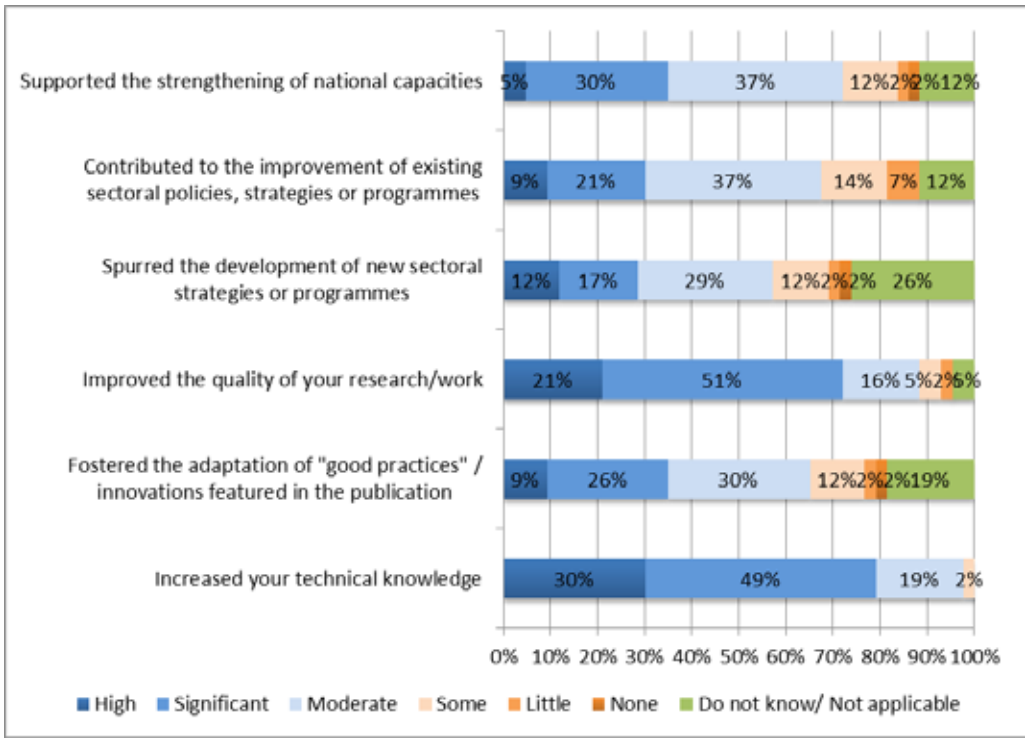
About 98% of survey participants find the presentation of Outlook to be from satisfactory to excellent. The length of the report is the criteria for which ratings are the lowest and key informants point out that readability would improve if the publication was shorter. Simultaneously demand is collected for additional datasets complemented with analysis as well as for increasing the number of national focuses. Therefore an approach suggested to the evaluation would be to expand and better articulate the online version of the Outlook while shortening the print edition.

In general the quality of the Outlook is positively assessed by survey respondents. The publication is found ***technically sound, accurate and credible***, ***complementary to other FAO and non-FAO publications***, and to offer ***adequate geographic*** and ***thematic spans***. The independence of the projections and analysis, and the cost-effectiveness of the publication for its end-users are factors also highly commended. Conversely few users find the report to be ***reflective of gender and human rights based approaches*** and ***easy to adapt/use in regional/national contexts***.

4.3. Usefulness of the Outlook

About 98% of survey respondents assess a moderate to high contribution of the report to *increasing technical knowledge* and 88% to *improving the quality of research or work*. Fewer respondents (65%) return a positive assessment of the Outlook for *fostering the adaptation of "good practices" / innovations featured in the publication* and (66%) for *spurring the development of new sectorial strategies or programmes* –Figure 3.

Figure 3: Contribution of the Outlook to the following areas



Source: User Survey of OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook, 2015

4.3.1. Uptake by policy-makers

According to key informants, the Outlook and underlying AGLINK-COSIMO model are both used to inform policy-makers. This comprises high ranking officials who participate in international negotiations, conduct meetings with industry associations, etc. As these instruments reach the most senior officials in Ministries and public agencies, they are frequently analyzed and synthesized before being disseminated. A key informant indicates for instance that when the Outlook 2013 was released it was first disseminated within the department in charge of economic studies and analyzed for a couple of weeks. A 5-pages note was then prepared to synthesize the main findings and relevant points. This note was sent as a reference document to all ministries so that Ministers, senior officials, and parliamentary committees could use it as a framework document to inform their discussions and planning in relation to national farming policies, strategies and programmes. A similar example is provided

> The [*member country*] welcomes the orientation of FAO to the sector of commodity markets which is periodically published in „State of World Agricultural Commodity Markets". At the same time we very positively appreciate the common activity of FAO with OECD on agricultural markets resulted in the annual publications of "OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook". These publications and information gives the [*country*] farmers and food producers the unique opportunity to adapt their production to the next challenges from short term period to the middle term period. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development is also actively using these publication and relevant information by the preparation of the periodical "Commodity Situation and Outlook Report", prepared for main agricultural commodities.
>
> **Member Country Representative**
>
> FAO Member Country Survey, 2015

by another country where the publication is first shared and reviewed in the ministry's Research and Analysis directorate. The Outlook and scenarios are then analyzed and key messages captured in a variety of decks and briefing materials. These elements are disseminated throughout the organization including up to the Deputy Minister. Similarly, the key points of the Outlook are reused in EU briefing materials and disseminated to policy makers such as senior managers of the DG AGRI and to Member States through the management committees. The Outlook and AGLINK-COSIMO model have proved to be an effective instrument to support political analyses and scenario making. For instance at EU level the AGLINK-COSIMO model and the CAPRI model were used to feed two ex-ante impact assessment studies on the abolition of sugar quotas that contributed to inform the EU decision making process.

Survey respondents shared a number of additional examples of use and outcomes of the publication, such as:

- *"[The Outlook is used for] Trade analysis and projections for trade negotiations; Internal discussions and analysis on export policies / on the national impacts of the end of EU milk and sugar quotas; Improved understandings of other countries' issues and positions in bilateral meetings "*
- *[The Outlook is used to] Help in strategic mid-term decision making by giving global/ regional background"*
- *"By providing a consistent baseline Outlook for global markets this has helped us to communicate emerging issues and plausible future scenarios to Ministers"*
- *"[The Outlook is used in] Ministerial Submissions, Presentation to other economists/ agronomists"*
- *"[The Outlook is used in] preparation of policy briefs"*

The cybermetric analysis has further pointed out some uptakes of the outlook across a number of government policies, strategies or analyses. For instance the Ministry of Agriculture in Chile has used the OECD-FAO report to understand global trends and to inform policies[63].

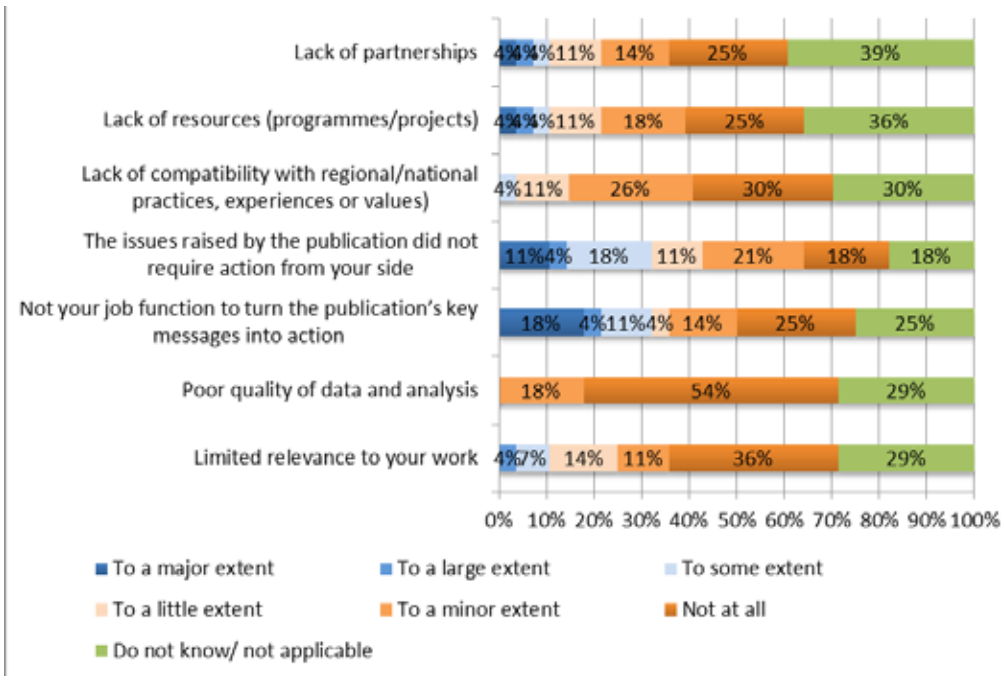
According to key informants, dissemination and uptake of the Outlook could be strengthened by expanding the scenario analysis and production of short and focused studies throughout the year.

4.3.2. Uptake by programme managers

Few outcomes of the Outlook at programme and practice levels were identified by the evaluation, except for a survey respondent mentioning to use the Outlook for "*Policy Reviews and designing support programmes for small holder farmers*". According to users of the Agricultural Outlook the primary reason for not following-up on the key messages conveyed by the publication is that it is not in their job function to do so -Figure 4.

63 Ministerio de Agricultura,, Chile. 2013. Visión, Logros y Desafíos 2010-2014. Gobierno de Chile. http://www.minagri.gob.cl/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Cadenas-Comerciales.pdf

Figure 4: Reasons for not using or applying the key messages presented in the Outlook



Source: User Survey of OECD-FAO Outlook, 2015

4.3.3. Uptake by academia and research

The cybermetric analysis retrieved 13 citations of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2013-2022 through Scopus. A number of survey respondents indicate also using the Outlook to provide background to a regional / national Outlook, to model shocks and results comparison, and for teaching. Key informants refer to the AGLINK-COSIMO model's files to calibrate their own baseline to the EU baseline[64] and use the world price developments in order to produce scientific articles and studies commissioned by the EU. For instance, JRC-IPTS has been involved in a study on sugar quotas[65]. Another example of JRC research that relied on the model is an analysis of the impact of Mercosur[66]. If we refer to Google Scholar, the AGLINK-COSIMO model is referred more than 300 hundred times (while the Outlook is referred less than 10 times).

4.3.4. Private sector

Consultations show that the Outlook is used directly by industry associations as well as by policy makers and public institutions when negotiating with the private sector. For instance milk producers and local policy makers and public officials in Normandy, France, have used Outlook data to assess if future industry prospects were positive, to analyze what they meant in terms of strategic development for milk products, and to inform investment decisions. A similar objective was the basis of a presentation of EU staff to milk producers in Poland. Another example of use of the Outlook with the private sector is the presentation to the Milk Market Observatory Economic Board[67]. The Outlook informs also EU led consultations with the full range of value chain producers, distributors, and consumers of food and agriculture commodities –pork, meat, sugar, cereals, etc.-. These so-called "civil dialogues" bring together farmers, industry groups, CSOs, NGOs, etc. Nevertheless one survey respondent notes that "*I would try to modernize this publication by involving also the private sector. Big multinationals may be using or may plan to use this publication within their market intelligence units. So it could be wise to consult them to see if there is an interest in relation to market potential analyses. It seems that at the moment the potential of this Agricultural Outlook is not yet fully exploited.*"

64 Confer https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/calibrating-capri-and-esim-models?search

65 Confer http://ftp.jrc.es/EURdoc/JRC76619.pdf

66 Confer http://ftp.jrc.es/EURdoc/Vol%201_MAIN%20RESULTS_JRC67394.pdf

67 Confer: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/milk-market-observatory/reports/mmo-board-2014-07-24_en.pdf

4.3.5. Media and civil society

An in-depth review of a sample number of websites and materials indicate that the Outlook 2013 is primarily cited by media and news companies, followed by the private sector. Sources referring to the Outlook are mostly articles, news stories and press releases. In terms of geographic scope and based on the study sample, the Outlook 2013 appears to be cited firstly in global / international fora as well as in Europe.

4.4. Dissemination channels and unmet needs

According to the survey the most efficient channels to disseminate the Agricultural Outlook are the website, followed by conferences, workshops and meetings, email campaigns and press releases.

In future editions survey respondents would be interested to find analytical data and to a quite similar extent additional datasets and commodities. Furthermore users find that the complementarity of the national and global levels is an asset. Focusing on global analyses would not meet all users' needs as for instance "*OECD-FAO Outlook projections are interesting but have less relevance in national policy planning in small countries*".

4. Conclusion

The assessment found a range of good practices in the production and dissemination of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook. The participatory and thourough development process of the Outlook, which is based on the inputs from OECD Member States and FAO Member Countries, has been highlighted both positively as an element to ensure ownership and excellence, and negatively, as a bureaucratic and unnecessary cumbersome process for a publication of a technical nature.

The extent to which dissemination is equally effective in developed and developing countries depends on national capacities to leverage the Outlook and the related AGLINK-COSIMO model, as well as an early involvement in the consultations for its development. In that regards, partnerships with national institutions and capacity development initiatives may positively influence dissemination and uptake in non-OECD countries. The AGLINK-COSIMO Users Group Meeting organized in Rome in November 2014, which offered an opportunity to train participants and to collect ideas and perspectives on how to further improve the Outlook and model is a positive example. In that regards, means to increase attendance of users from developing countries to such meetings and/or long-term capacity building initiatives should be pursued.

Appendix 1: List of persons consulted

1. **Arias Pedro**, Economist (Commodities), EST, FAO
2. **Ben Belhassen Boubaker**, Director, EST, FAO
3. **Brooks Jonathan**, Head of Agro-food Trade and Markets Division, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, OECD
4. **Charlebois Pierre**, Consultant, Canada
5. **Davies Grant**, Economic Advisor, Agricultural Outlook & Projections, International Evidence and Analysis, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, UK
6. **Hallam David,** Former Director, EST, FAO
7. **Helaine Sophie**, Unit E2 - Agricultural modelling and Outlook, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission
8. **Matthey Holger**, Economist, EST, FAO
9. **Tallard Grégoire**, Agro-economist, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, OECD
10. **Wensley Mitchel**, *Economist, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada*

Appendix 2: List of documents reviewed

- **FAO**. 2014. *Introduction to AGLINK-COSIMO Model for the measurement of Indicator 10*. GBEP Workshop. Rome.
- **FAO**. 2014. Agricultural Outlook's User Survey (internal document). Rome.
- **FAO**. 2014. *Committee on Commodity Problems: OECD-FAO Partnership on Medium-Term Projections*. CCP 14/9. Rome.
- **OECD**. 2014. *OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2014-2023 Launch statistics - Room Document 1 APM, November 18-20 2014, Item 8*. Paris.
- **OCED**-**FAO**. 2014. *Aglink-Cosimo Documentation – Draft November 2014*. Paris
- **OECD-FAO**. 2013. *OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2013-2022*. Paris.
- **OECD-FAO**. 2014. *OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2014-2023*. Paris.

Appendix 3: Survey results

This annex provides a summary and analysis of the online survey conducted to gather perspectives and feedback on the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook. Two surveys were developed to target different audiences. The first survey was opened during 6 weeks, from 5 March to 15 April 2015, and sent to a selected sample of 84 persons identified by FAO and OECD as core users of the Outlook. The second survey was sent on 31 March to 15 CCP[68] Bureau Members and remained opened until 25 April 2015.

Both surveys were anonymous. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether, the first survey compiled feedback from 37 participants. A detailed review of the responses and cleaning of data has retained 34 questionnaires as valid for analysis, which gives a response rate of 40% (confidence level 95% - confidence interval 13). The second survey received inputs from 11 CCP members or a response rate of 73% (confidence level 95% - interval 15.8). Therefore the findings analyzed below do not necessarily represent the opinion of the entire population of Outlook's users but the one of the samples (within the above confidence levels / intervals).

A. Outlook Users

This first section compiles findings from the survey sent to selected users of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook.

1. Survey Demographics

a. Organizations

Key findings:

- The highest proportion of survey respondents comes from **central government organizations**

b. Positions

Key findings:

- The largest number of survey respondents holds **mid-level positions** (53%)
- Close to 32% of participants are senior staffs
- Users represented by the survey sample are in their majority experienced staff

c. Role or job function

Key findings:

- Survey respondents are primarily in a policy advisory function
- Respondents that selected and informed the "Other" choice are in agricultural trade, economic analysis, modeling, and statistics
- management and coordination, teaching, communications, library and publications

d. Countries

Key findings:

- In total 22 countries are represented, with a participation originating primarily from developed countries

68 The Committee on Commodity Problems (**CCP**) is the **FAO** Governing Body that tracks agricultural commodity markets

e. Work area

Key findings:

- The highest number of respondents (33%) works at **global** level followed by Europe and Central Asia (38%)
- Africa, North America, and Latin America and the Caribbean are the geographic areas of focus with the fewer number of respondents
- As a geographical area of work, Near East and North Africa is not represented

f. Thematic area of work

Key findings:

- **Economics, Markets,** and **Policy Analysis** are the thematic areas of work most represented

g. Gender

Key findings:

- Survey respondents are primarily **males**

h. Age

Key findings:

- In their majority respondents are **experienced professionals**

i. Use

Key findings:

- More than 85% of survey respondents consult the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook often, i.e. once a month or more

2. Current Use and Assessment

a. Reach

Key findings:

- According to the survey sample, the most common channel to be informed about SOFIA is through **a colleague or a friend**
- Respondents who selected "Other" specified:
    - Already at the time of my University studies I learned that it was the document which contained most reliable medium term projections for agricultural commodities
    - As a delegate I participate in its discussion and declassification
    - Don't remember the first time. A long time ago. I have had access through OLIS in many years.
    - I am involved in the production
    - I'm delegate to the respective OECD working party
    - In OECD

b. Presentation

Survey respondents were invited to assess the presentation of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook according to a number of factors.

Key findings:

- The majority of survey respondents **rates favourably the presentation** of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook
- The length of the report is the criteria for which the ratings are the lowest

c. Quality

Survey respondents were invited to assess the quality of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook

Key findings:

- As a general pattern the **quality** of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook is **positively assessed** by a large majority of survey respondents
- In particular, the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook is found to be a publication that is **technically sound, accurate and credible,** that is **easy to locate and access,** and **complementary to other (FAO and non-FAO) resources**
- Criteria that are less highly rated regard the involvement of users' and partners' in the planning and design of the publication, the integration of gender and human rights based approaches, and the easiness to adapt/use in regional/national contexts

d. Outcomes

Key findings:

- Around 95% of survey respondents find a moderate to high contribution of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook to **increasing technical knowledge**
- The second criteria most positively assessed regards the contribution of the Outlook to **improving the quality of research/work**
- Only 55% of respondents find a moderate to high contribution of the report to inciting the development of new sectoral strategies or programmes

Survey participants were invited to provide specific examples where the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook had helped them in their work. Examples included informing policy reviews, economic analyses, ministerial positions, bilateral discussions, and international trade negotiations.

e. Barriers

Key findings:

- The primary reason for not following-up on the key messages presented in the publication is that it is **not in the job function of the respondents to turn the publication's key messages into action,** followed by the issues raised by the publication that did not require action from the side of the respondents

f. Other relevant resources

Survey respondents were invited to list other publications/resources that have influences their decisions as much or more than the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook. The publications most cited are the **USDA** and **FAPRI Outlooks,** followed by OECD, EU, and FAO publications. As a complement, survey participants were proposed to mention other organizations that they consult for world agricultural projections/outlooks. These included, in order of importance, the USDA, FAPRI, World Bank and IFPRI.

3. Future expectations

Survey participants were proposed to prioritize several characteristics or features that could guide future editions of the Agricultural Outlook.

a. Language

Key findings:

- Although survey respondents came from 22 countries, the majority requests an English version of the publication
- No participant requested the Arabic and Russian versions
- Only one respondent indicated an interest for receiving the publication in another language (German)

b. Format

Key findings:

- A majority of respondents prefers to receive the Outlook in electronic format

c. Content

Key findings:

- A majority of respondents would be interested to find further **analysis** closely followed by additional **datasets**

d. Geographic focus

Key findings:

- Demand for developing national focuses is closely followed by maintaining a global perspective

e. Chapter 2

Key findings:

- Demand is higher for a thematic focus of chapter 2

f. Commodity 2

Key findings:

- A slight majority of survey respondents prefers to see the commodity chapters online

g. Dissemination activities

Key findings:

- Around half of survey respondents indicate that **Website/blogs** and **conferences, workshops and meetings** are the dissemination activities FAO should prioritize to learn about future editions of the Outlook

B. CCP Members

This second section compiles findings from the survey sent to the CCP members.

1. Countries

Key findings:

- Participants represent 8 countries / bodies

2. Countries

Key findings:

- Access to the Outlook comes from direct reception or reference by close colleagues
- Mass media dissemination instruments like press releases, social media posts, search engines, etc. are not mentioned

3. Presentation

Key findings:

- The **presentation** of the Outlook is **positively assessed** by respondents
- The structure of the Outlook is the criteria most favourably rated

4. Quality

Key findings:

- As a general pattern the **quality** of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook is **positively assessed** by CCP members
- In particular, the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook is found to be a publication that is **technically sound, accurate and credible,** that is **easy to locate and access,** and **complementary to other (FAO and non-FAO) resources**
- The criteria that returns the lowest ratings regards the integration of gender and human rights based approaches in the Outlook

5. Outcomes

Key findings:

- All respondents find a moderate to high contribution of the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook to **increasing technical knowledge,** and **improving the quality of their research or work**
- The outcome that receives the lowest rating regards the contribution of the Outlook to inciting the development of new sectoral strategies or programmes

Respondents could provide specific examples where the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook has helped them in their work:

- Used as baseline for scenario analysis - Consultation of database on future development of agricultural production and trade in various third countries

- Coordination of baselines for modelling Analysis from EU to World

- Helps in strategic mid-term decision making by giving global/regional background

- Important international report for international Fora

- It has helped me understand the more general scenario and at the same time understand sectoral characteristics. It has contributed to the quality of my reports.

It is an important source of information and analysis.

- Setting the scene for policy presentations, documents, notes etc. Use of Chinese and Indian chapters for briefings

6. Limitations

Key findings:

- Survey participants did not significantly highlight reasons for not using or applying the key messages presented in the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook

g. Other relevant resources

Survey respondents were invited to list other publications/resources that have influences their decisions as much or more than the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook:

- EU medium term outlook on agricultural markets
- From FAO publications, state of... reports have been also somewhat influential, otherwise it is more about EU/national publications.
- IFPRI, USDA, OECD, WB, FAPRI studies
- Nothing directly comparable in its domain, used in conjunction with USFDA, IFPRI and (in the past) FAPRI

As a complement, CCP members were proposed to mention other organizations that they consult for world agricultural projections/outlooks:

Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI)	4
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)	7
International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)	5
World Bank	6

Appendix 4: Cybermetric analysis

Knowledge Product	OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2013-2022	English	French	Spanish
Number of web references				
	Link Hit Estimates	299	20	60
	Site Hit Estimates	127	14	33
	Site Repost Estimates	13	2	7
Number of citations				
	Google Scholar cites	0	0	0
	Scopus cites	13	0	0
Thematic focus areas				
	Agriculture	2	2	6
	Agriculture – Agro-industries		1	3
	Agriculture – Crops			
	Agriculture - Fisheries and aquaculture			
	Agriculture – Forestry			
	Agriculture - Land and water			
	Agriculture - Livestock			1
	Economy		1	1
	Economy – Financing	1		
	Economy – Outlooks	16	14	
	Economy – Prices		4	
	Economy – Trade			
	Emergency & rehabilitation			
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Disaster risk reduction (DRR)		1	
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Humanitarian response		1	
	Environment			2
	Environment - Climate change	1		1
	Environment - Sustainable management & conservation			
	Food			
	Food - Food safety (quality)			
	Food - Food security (quantity)			
	Food – Nutrition			1
	Human impacts			1
	Human impacts - Gender			
	Human impacts - Human rights			1
	Human impacts - Social protection			
Actor type				
	Academia			1

Knowledge Product	OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2013-2022	English	French	Spanish
	Government			3
	Intergovernmental organization	2		1
	International Financial Institutions (IFIS)			
	Media / News	5	10	2
	Multi-sector networks or platforms			
	Non-Governmental Organization	4	1	1
	Private sector / Business	4	4	7
	Public (Individual / blogger / online community)	1	5	2
	United Nations system		1	
Content type				
	Abstract, Summary	7	1	1
	Article, News story, Press release, Books	8	15	1
	Blog, Editorial, Opinion	1	5	1
	Data tables, Statistics			
	E-commerce, Online sales	2	1	1
	Education, Training			
	Employment, Work related, Job description, Procurement			
	Event listing, Announcement			
	Listing, Directory		2	9
	Newsletter			
	Organizational information (about us section)			
	Policy, Legislation, Governmental strategy, Lobbying position paper			
	Portfolio, Resume, Personal profile			
	Presentation			1
	Promotion, Advertising, Ads			
	Report, Research paper, Academic article	1	1	3
	Resource, Best practice, Workbook, Toolkit, How to			1
	Social media, Discussion group			
	Speech, Discussion, Minutes			
	Wiki			
Citation type				
	Cited as a publication available for purchase	2		
	Cited in the format of an academic citation, bibliography, footnote	9	1	3
	Cited with an article, story, newsletter, etc...		13	3
	Listed as part of a resume, or listing of self/ co-authored publications			

Knowledge Product	OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2013-2022	English	French	Spanish
	Listed in a search engine result page, automated list, auto-aggregated result			
	Listed resource: library or academic sources		1	5
	Listed resource: other		2	1
	Promoted as featured content (Primary focus)	7	3	1
	Promoted as secondary content (Teasers, sidebar content, related content)		3	4
	Referenced as the original source of repurposed or spin-off content	2		2
	Referenced in formal speech, statement, transcript			
	Referenced in social media, online discussion		1	
Geographic scope				
	Africa	3		
	Asia	1	1	1
	Europe	5	6	3
	Global / International	4	7	5
	Latin America and the Caribbean	2		5
	Near East			
	North Africa		3	
	North America	2	2	1
	The Pacific			

List of academic documents citing the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2013-2022
Dietary macroalgae is a natural and effective tool to fortify gilthead seabream fillets with iodine: Effects on growth, sensory quality and nutritional value
Addressing food waste reduction in Denmark
The significance of sensory appeal for reduced meat consumption
Life cycle environmental impacts of convenience food: Comparison of ready and home-made meals
Food technologies and developing countries: A processing method for making edible the highly toxic cassava roots
CHANGING SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR FISH OIL
Is Aquaculture Pro-Poor? Empirical Evidence of Impacts on Fish Consumption in Bangladesh
Challenges in ration formulation in pasture-based milk production systems
Thünen-Baseline 2013-2023: Agri-economic projections for Germany
Effect of warming on protein, glycogen and fatty acid content of native and invasive clams
Soybeans production in South Africa
Feeding more people on an increasingly fragile planet: China's food and nutrition security in a national and global context
Biochar can restrict N2O emissions and the risk of nitrogen leaching from an agricultural soil during the freeze-thaw period

Annex 2.9: Survey of FAO Publication Users

The evaluation launched 4 surveys to users of SOFA, SOFI, SOFIA and the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook. The last section of these surveys asked survey participants to assess FAO publications at large. This last section was opened to all survey participants, i.e. those who took the first sections covering each flagship and to those who indicated not using these flagships but other FAO publications. This annex is based on the responses of a total of 514 survey participants.

1. Familiarity with FAO Publications

Users' surveys assessed the familiarity of participants with FAO publications.

Figure 1: Familiarity of survey respondents with FAO publications

Source: FAO Users Surveys, 2015

Key findings:

- **Manuals and guidelines** are FAO best known publications
- Altogether, standards and codes are the type of publication users are less familiar with
- SOFIA's users rank policy briefs as the least well-known product

2. Publications most used

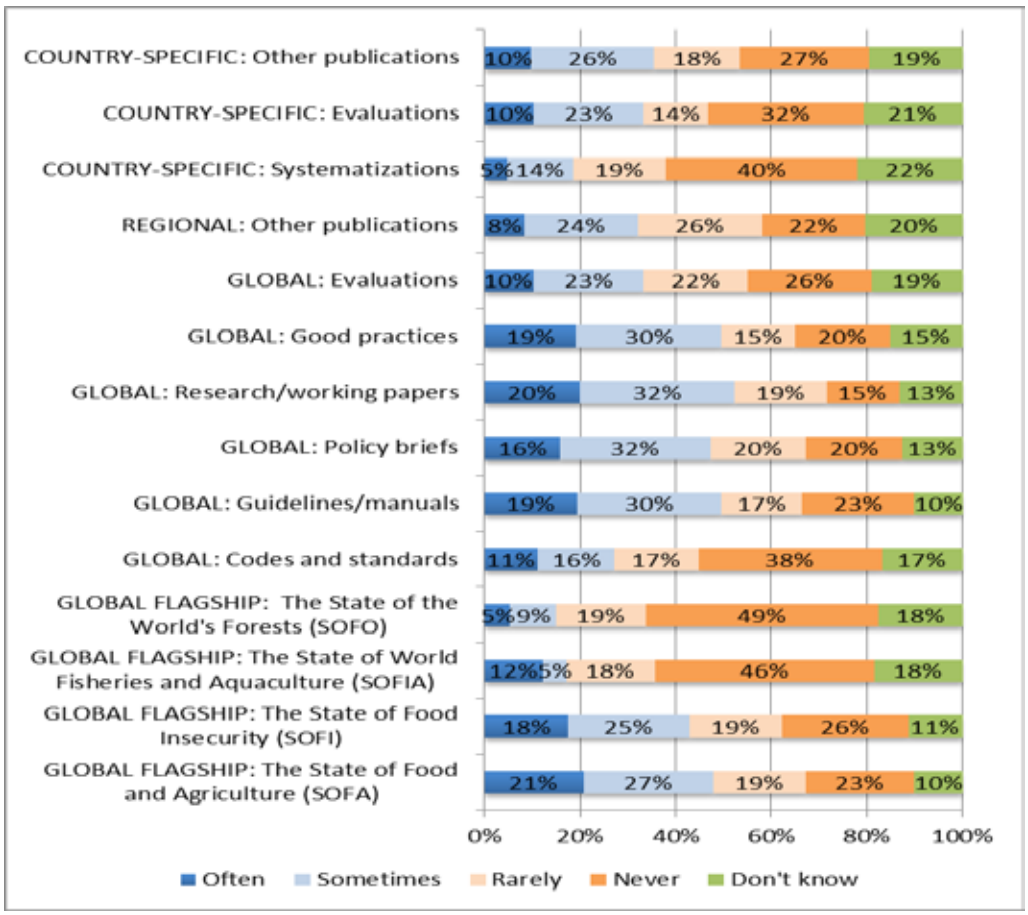
Survey respondents could indicate FAO's publications they consult most and provide examples of use. The flagship reports are FAO publications most often cited followed by specific technical or guidance manuals. Applications involve policy analysis, teaching and research, and staying up-to-date with latest trends and practices.

3. Outcomes

A number of outcome areas were assessed by survey respondents.

Key findings:

- Respondents find a positive contribution of FAO publications to all proposed outcomes
- FAO publications are found especially useful for providing **technical excellence, raising awareness about critical/emerging issues**, and **improving research, practice or performance**
- The contribution that is less favorably assessed (still by 75% of respondents) regards supporting aid and investment decision making



4. Future features

Participants were proposed to share features, themes or characteristics they would like to see in future FAO publications. A significant number of suggestions focused on topical matters. Other items include improving timeliness of data, increasing availability of national data, developing case studies and good practices, etc.:

5. Final comments

The final comments shared by survey respondents' span across a range of thematic areas and suggestions related to the production and dissemination of FAO publications. Proposals include further involving private sector actors, strengthening national focus and relevance, facilitating access to online as well as printed editions, better targeting policy makers as well as local communities through complementary by-products like policy briefs or field guidelines.

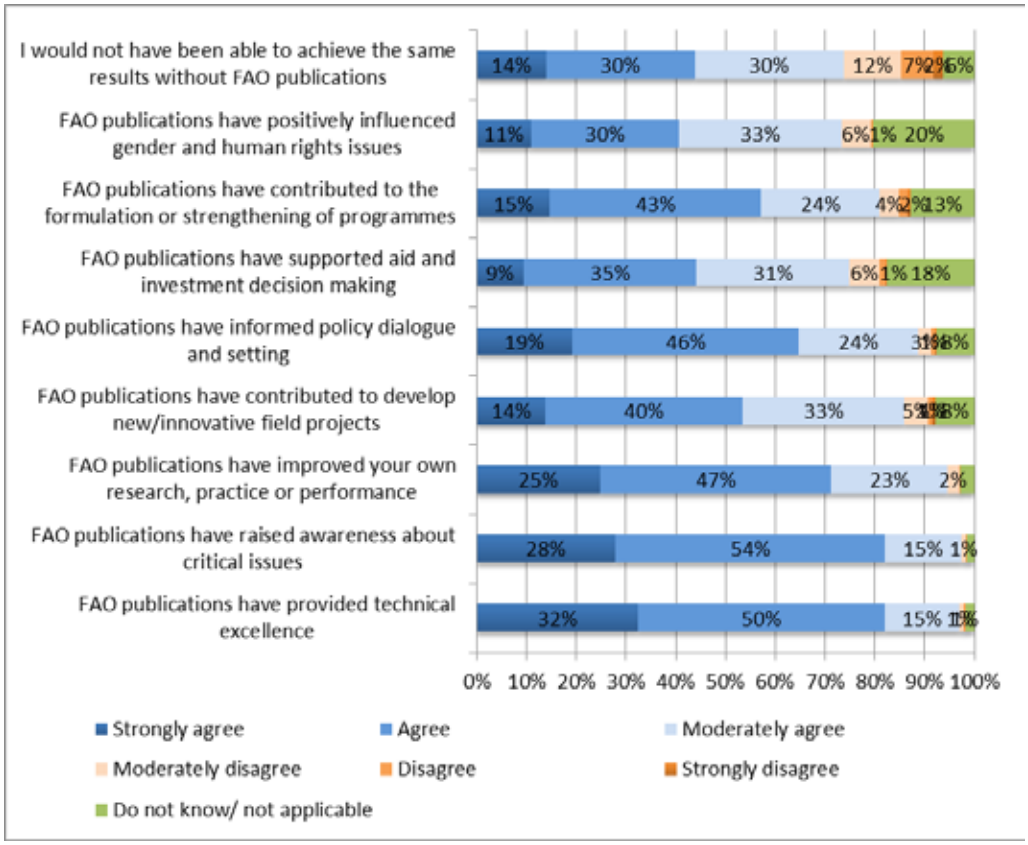
Annex 2.10: Client Surveys (publications)

This annex provides a summary and analysis of the clients' surveys conducted by the evaluation to gather perspectives and feedback on the use of FAO knowledge products and services at country level. This analysis focuses specifically on the section of FAO publications.

The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO and was opened during 3 months, from 1 December 2014 to 5 March 2015. The survey was anonymous and delivered by email and/or during workshops to selected country "clients" and national FAO partners. Participating countries included Albania, Belgium, Chile, Japan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Panamá, Papua New Guinea, Switzerland, Turkey, Uganda, United States of America, and Zambia. Altogether the survey gathered input from 171 respondents[69].

1. Frequency of use of FAO publications

Survey participants were proposed to indicate their level of use of a selected sample of FAO's global, regional and country publications.



Key findings:

- Publications which are used often or sometimes by a **majority** of survey participants concentrate on FAO global publications:
    - GLOBAL FLAGSHIP: The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA)
    - GLOBAL: Guidelines/manuals
    - GLOBAL: Policy briefs
    - GLOBAL: Research/working papers
    - GLOBAL: Good practices

69 Additional information on the profile of participants can be found in Annex.

- Global research/working papers are FAO's most used publications according to survey participants
- SOFO, SOFIA and country specific systematization publications are little used by survey participants

2. Usability and quality of local publications

The usability and quality of FAO publications were assessed by Country clients.

For those FAO publications that you RARELY or NEVER utilize please indicate why you do not use them so frequently. Select as many as applicable:	Valid N
I am not aware of their existence but I DO need this type of publication	67
They are not relevant for my work	62
I do not have time to use them	33
I do not know where/how to access them	31
I am not aware of their existence and I DO NOT need this type of publication	30
They are not based on local community experiences/traditional knowledge	10
They are not easy to adapt/apply	9
There are better resources outside FAO	9
They are too lengthy	8
They overlap with other FAO resources	7
They are of low quality	4
They are not sufficiently credible	3
They are not timely	2
They are not available in the local language	2
The language is not clear	2
Gender and human rights issues are not sufficiently mainstreamed in FAO's publications	0

Key findings:

- About one third of FAO country clients are not aware of FAO publications although they would need them in their work
- Close to one third of country clients do not use FAO publications due to the lack of relevance to their work
- The primary reasons for using FAO publications are their relevance to the work and their overall quality
- Few participants selected local contextualization and use of local knowledge as reasons for using FAO publications

3. Outcomes

FAO Country Clients provided feedback on the reasons to utilize FAO publications.

For those publications that you OFTEN or SOMETIMES utilize, please indicate the reason(s) to use them. Select as many as applicable:	Valid N
To improve my technical knowledge	94
To support evidence based policy making	67

To use/reference in my own technical publications	59
To enhance my technical skills	59
To incorporate "FAO know-how" in my projects/activities	57
To improve training, education and research activities	56
To improve my implementation capacity, practices or performance	44
To support advocacy work	35
To increase connections/collaborations with partners	33
To support resource mobilization	25
To upscale new practices/innovative field projects	24
To inform or direct new investment decisions	21

Key findings:

- Knowledge acquisition as well as incorporation of this knowledge in local activities (policy making, technical work/research, and projects) are the main reasons for using FAO publications.
- FAO publications are rarely used to inform investment decisions or to identify and upscale innovative practices.

4. Final comments

A broad range of comments on FAO publications were shared by Country Clients. They mainly addressed relationships between local needs, publications, projects, capacity development, and joint collaborations are frequently highlighted. A number of Country Clients recommended making access to FAO publications easier.

Annex 2.11: Survey of Member Countries (State of the World's publications)

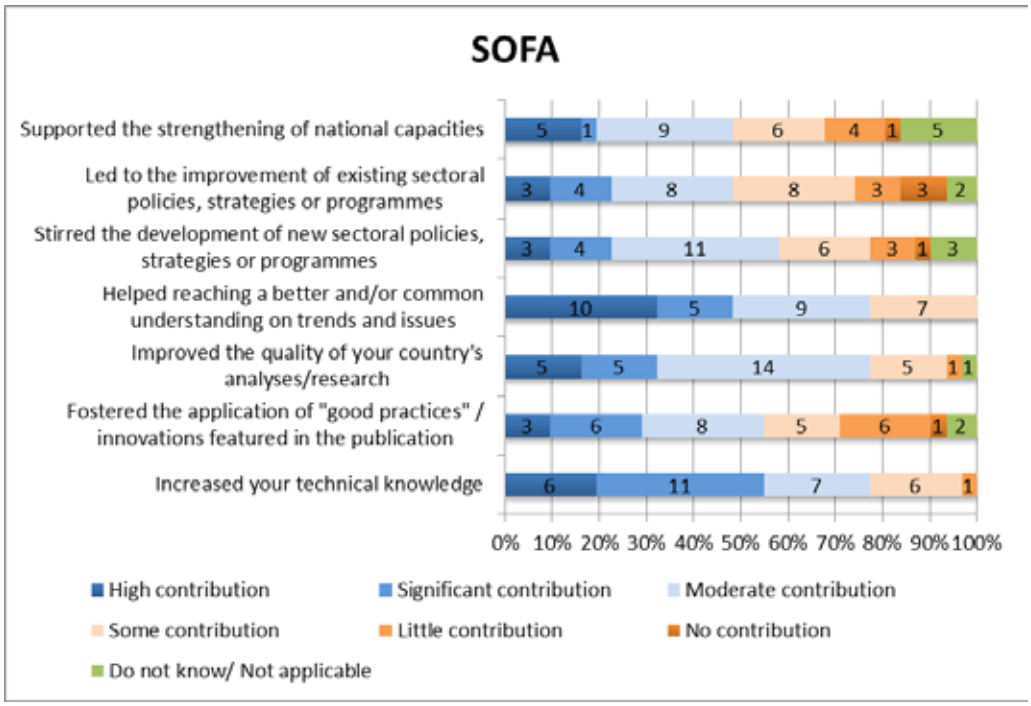
This annex provides a summary analysis of the Member Countries survey conducted by the evaluation to gather perspectives and feedback on the use of FAO knowledge instruments at country level focusing on the section covering more specifically FAO State of the World's publications.

The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO and was opened during 3 months, from 1 December 2014 to 5 March 2015. The survey was anonymous and delivered by email to MC Representatives. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether the survey gathered input from 36 countries: Armenia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Colombia, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Korea, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Republic of the Congo, Seychelles, Republic of, Slovakia, State of Kuwait, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Turkey, USA, and Vietnam.

1. Assessment of the contribution of FAO's "State of the World" publications (SOFA, SOFI, SOFIA and SOFO)

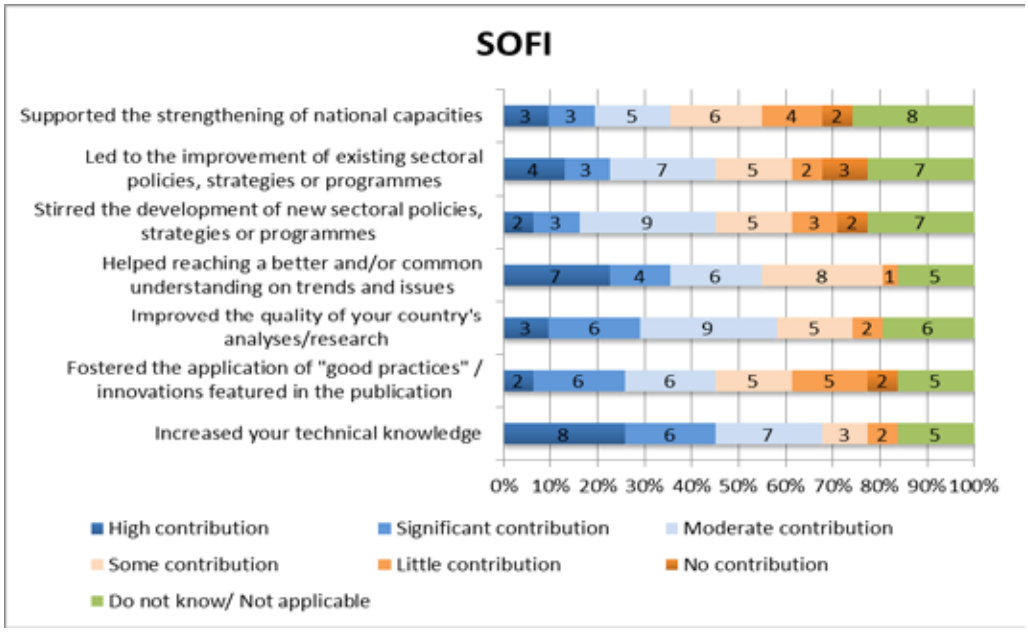
FAO Member Countries were proposed to assess the contribution of FAO flagships to a number of outcomes at country level.

Figure 1: Assessment of the contribution of SOFA to proposed outcomes at country level



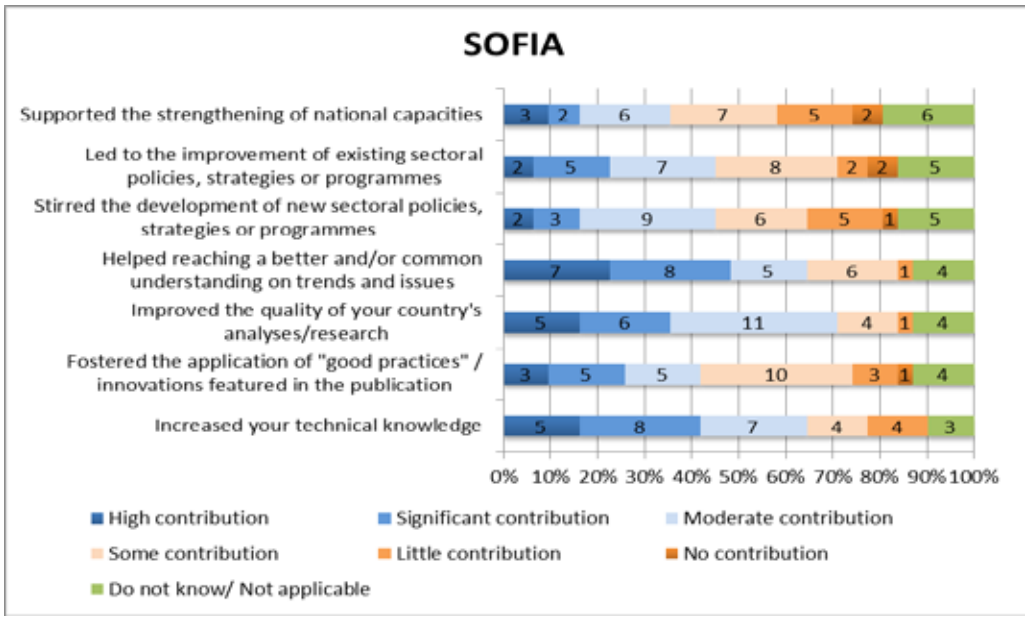
Source: FAO Member Countries Survey, 2015

Figure 2: Assessment of the contribution of SOFI to proposed outcomes at country level



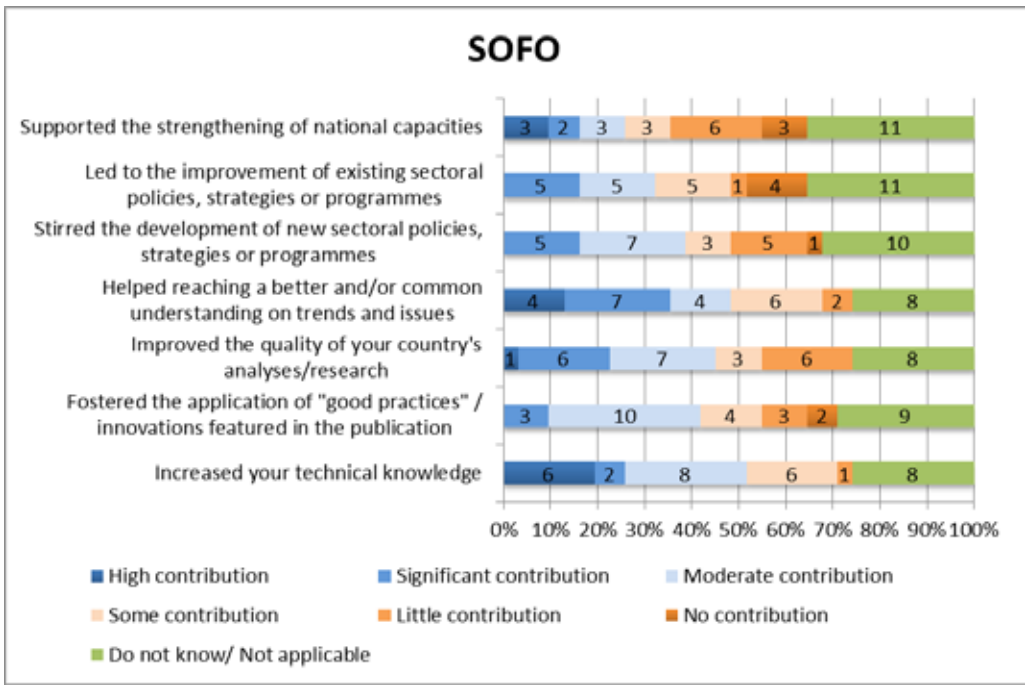
Source: FAO Member Countries Survey, 2015

Figure 3: Assessment of the contribution of SOFIA toproposed outcomes at country level



Source: FAO Member Countries Survey, 2015

Figure 4: Assessment of the contribution of SOFO toproposed outcomes at country level



Source: FAO Member Countries Survey, 2015

Key findings:

- Knowledge about the different flagship varies among the respondents with SOFA receiving the highest number of contributing assessments
- The outcomes to which contribution has been the highest vary from one flagship to another but concentrate on increasing technical knowledge and helping to reaching a better and/or common understanding on trends and issues
- Supporting the strengthening of national capacities is the area where contribution of the flagships is perceived to be the lowest

2. Examples of outcomes

Members provided several specific examples where use of SOFA, SOFI, SOFIA or SOFO information led to positive outcomes in their country. They also shared additional comments on FAO knowledge products and perspectives. Most related to FAO publications and dissemination activities.

Annex 3. Assessment of FAO databases

Report

This report presents the results of an assessment of FAO databases conducted by OED[70] as part of the broader evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture.

1. Description of FAO databases

FAO databases[71] cover a broad spectrum of topics related to food and agriculture, with a wide range of geographical coverage (global, regional, national and sub-national) and formats (statistical, analytic, geospatial and text). An inventory of FAO databases conducted as part of this assessment identified 76 depositories, including statistics, maps, texts and photographs. This non-exhaustive list was collected with support from Technical Departments and Regional Offices in late 2014, and was based on the data collection and dissemination activities identified by the Inter-Departmental Working Group (IDWG) on FAO statistics.

2. Purpose and scope of the assessment

This assessment is a formative and forward-looking review of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of databases at FAO, with a special focus on global databases. The findings of the assessment will inform the development and refinement of corporate strategies, policies and plans aimed at ensuring the quality and integrity of the data produced and analysed by the Organization. In addition, the findings will serve as an input to the evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture.

The assessment covers FAO databases disseminated by the Organization between 2011 and 2014, and builds on evaluative evidence collected in past evaluations and reviews. Knowledge products are routinely assessed by OED, and recommendations for improvement have been included in several reports[72]. In order to identify good practices and lessons learned, and to illustrate the specific contributions made by FAO in selected areas, a sample of databases was reviewed in detail as case studies. The following selected databases have been in use for several years and represent the diversity of databases within FAO: FAOSTAT (statistical database); GIEWS Food Price Data and Analysis Tool (analytical database); and GAEZ Data Portal (geospatial database).

3. Questions

In line with the objectives of the evaluation, this assessment seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Are FAO databases consistent with the Organization's objectives and based on expressed needs or mandates from the Member Countries (MCs)?

2. Are FAO databases adequate in view of the context, needs or problems to which they are intended to respond?

3. How efficiently has FAO used its human and institutional resources in the production and dissemination of databases?

4. Are there synergies, duplications or gaps among the databases produced and disseminated by FAO?

5. Have FAO's databases reached the intended uses and users?

6. What outcomes have FAO databases achieved, or contributed to achieving?

70 The assessment was led by OED consultant Patrick Breard with the support of OED staff Natalia Acosta.

71 http://www.fao.org/statistics/en/

72 E.g. page 5 of PER 2013: http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/028/mg392e.pdf

In addition, the assessment has sought to understand how databases factored into quality assurance, an important aspect of ensuring satisfactory performance over time.

4. Methodology

The assessment was guided by the evaluation questions mentioned above. In order to answer these questions, information was collected through primary (interviews and surveys) and secondary sources (desk reviews, meta-evaluation and cybermetric analysis). The list of documents reviewed[73] and people interviewed (database managers and key informants) are available in Appendices 3.1 and 3.2, respectively. The design of this assessment is available in Annex 3.1, and the inventory of 76 databases (consisting of 31 statistical, 10 geospatial, 3 analytic, 5 multimedia and 27 texts or mixed datasets) is available in Annex 3.2. A meta-analysis of past evaluations relating to FAO databases was conducted and is available in Annex 3.3. In Annex 3.4, data is provided from an online survey administered to owners of FAO databases in order to gather information on their objectives, operation, quality assurance and results monitoring systems. The results of the case studies are available in Annex 3.5 (FAOSTAT), 3.6 (GIEWS/FPMA Tool) and 3.7 (GAEZ), respectively. Finally, Annex 3.8 presents the results of the client survey: an assessment which shows the views and feedback of 171 users of FAO knowledge products and services (including databases) in thirteen countries from all regions[74]. The surveyed users were identified by the relevant Country or Liaison Office and included national counterparts, partners and beneficiaries.

Limitations: Consultations with database managers and users as well as data on database achievements were relatively limited. Many databases did not have information on the use of the information and data made available online. In addition, most of the primary data collected relates to the work of HQ-based databases, which comprise the majority of datasets produced by the Organization.

5. Findings

The main findings are presented below grouped by evaluation question.

1. *Are FAO databases consistent with the Organization's objectives and based on expressed needs or mandates from Member Countries?*

FAO databases are largely consistent with the Organization's mandate and objectives, and generally respond to the needs expressed by Member Countries. Higher involvement of users at the design stage would be desirable.

FAO's Constitution states in its first article that "The Organization shall collect, analyse, interpret, and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture"[75]. Previous evaluations, such as the 2008 evaluation of FAO's role and work in statistics, have acknowledged that FAO is uniquely positioned to collect and disseminate agricultural statistics as a global public good. This assessment found that most databases are progressively linked to corporate organizational objectives, including 0bjective 6[76]. Nevertheless, about one-third of the databases surveyed were reportedly designed without user consultation and instead originated from FAO staff's own initiative; as noted in the following sections, this method does increase outreach and actual use.

73 A review of documentation related to FAO databases, as well as relevant reports, was conducted as part of the assessment. Relevant citations/quotes are included in this report.

74 Albania, Belgium, Turkey and Switzerland (Europe), Zambia and Uganda (Africa), Panama, Chile, the United States (The Americas), Lebanon (Near East), Japan, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea (Asia).

75 FAO. 1945. Constitution of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).Quebec.

76 As found in the case studies FAO data-related activities are aligned to, or being progressively planned under, corporate Strategic Objectives (SO1 to SO5) and/or under Objective 6 (06) on "Technical quality, knowledge and services". The 2015-16 planning process under 06 will put emphasis on strengthening such linkages.

2. Are FAO databases adequate in view of the context, needs or problems to which they are intended to respond?

Although most FAO databases are frequently accessed, some need to increase their visibility and accessibility. Areas such as language coverage, user support and portal usability remain unsatisfactory to a significant number of users.

The highly positive feedback received from over 3 000 users on the adequacy of FAO databases underlines the relevance of FAO databases to the work of many FAO target audiences, especially from academia, research and international organizations. This is also expressed in terms of the number of visits to FAO databases. FAOSTAT, for example, had more than 1 000 000 visits in 2014 alone. However, knowing that data is available and downloaded does not necessarily equate with it being readily accessible. A sizable percentage of the users interviewed in the client survey from producer organizations (43%), central government (30%) and the private sector (33%) did not appear to know about FAO databases.

Despite their discoverability, user-friendliness and in some cases design (such as for analytic and geospatial databases), the data portals are reportedly inadequate. Areas such as user support, language and participation[77] consistently received lower rankings in the user surveys conducted for the case studies. FAO needs to make data more easily discoverable and improve the way data and information are presented, especially among key target users who are not familiar with FAO databases or cannot spare the time required to gain familiarity.

3. How well does FAO ensure the quality of their databases?

FAO has developed a sound Quality Assurance Framework for its statistical databases which is being implemented progressively due to a lack of resources. The positive assessment given by end-users to the quality of FAO databases should serve as an incentive to speed up its implementation.

FAO has developed a robust Statistics Quality Assurance Framework78 (SQAF) which covers inter alia (i) self-assessment of existing data collection and dissemination activities; (ii) external audit of major statistical activities; and (iii) need assessments for new statistical activities. However, the framework has not been implemented yet due to financial constraints. Furthermore, it concentrates on activities under FAO's responsibility only, without addressing quality checks on "input" data. In spite of this, 62% of the databases surveyed already apply quality assurance mechanisms, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of quality assurance processes undertaken by FAO databases

Answer options	Percentage of databases
Completeness and precision checks (at the point of entry)	62%
Consistency checks (for validation purposes)	62%
Accuracy checks (of third party data)	57%
Conformity and integrity checks	52%
Peer review	29%
Other	10%

Source: Survey of database owners, 2014.

77 User support in particular is found to be weak when compared to other international organizations (e.g. World Bank). Language is a barrier to utilisation, for instance in Latin America for those databases not yet available in Spanish (e.g. GIEWS FPMA Tool, GAEZ Data Portal).

78 FAO. 2014. The FAO Statistics Quality Assurance Framework. Rome.

The case studies show that users have a high regard (and expectations) of the quality of FAO databases. More than 75% of the end-users surveyed had a very favourable opinion of every quality criteria proposed. This positive feedback should serve as an incentive to improve the punctuality, timeliness, reliability and accuracy of the data produced. In this regard, the most recurring requests made by the users have been the following:

- Providing more regularly updated data (e.g. IPCC scenarios and early warning);
- Reconciling discrepancies between FAO's own databases (e.g. price data) and other databases (e.g. EUROSTAT, USDA, IFPRI, FAO-OECD and WHO);
- Increasing consistency (e.g. metadata, taxonomy and sectors);
- Enhancing the comprehensiveness of datasets (e.g. species and sub-species, methods of production and exchange, socio-economic data and sub-national data);
- Reconciling discrepancies between FAO databases and national data (e.g. through field visits, or capacity development);
- Enhancing user interface (e.g. GUI, bulk downloads and multivariate analysis).

These findings corroborate previous evaluations that noted FAO should strive to enlarge the scope, standardization, and integration of its datasets. Timeliness of data has also been raised as an issue, especially when early warning is at stake. Dissemination of information is often delayed by long analysis and editing processes and multiple layers of approval, including by governments. This may lead for instance to warnings that are not released early enough to allow for crisis prevention or risk reduction. Nevertheless, the meta-analysis recognizes also that FAO has become more focused, proactive and diplomatic in helping countries to improve their national statistics. This leads to better global statistics, as FAO and partners change to an active from a passive method that relied only on data submitted. While the evaluation did not focus on the quality of data as thoroughly as the previous assessment[79], end users report an improvement from the 2008 evaluation.

4. How efficiently has FAO used its human and institutional resources in the production and dissemination of databases?

FAO databases are operated with limited funds. Resources are particularly low for database dissemination, which affects their outreach. Cooperation with external partners has helped to cope with the lack of resources and should be pursued together with stronger internal coordination, including information technology systems.

As a result of FAO's decentralized data system[80], not every database has a specific budget line in the regular programme. The inventory and the case studies undertaken as part of this assessment indicate that most FAO databases are operated on a minimal budget, with two-thirds of database owners operating on budgets of less than USD 50 000 per year. Over half of the database owners surveyed were hence unsatisfied with the budget, and a full 35% lacked a separate budget for the operation, maintenance and promotion of their databases. Moreover, about one-third of database owners do not have an outreach strategy to promote their database, and dedicate on average less than 5% of their time to promotional activities. There also appears to be limited collaboration with communications or knowledge management specialists who could assist technical teams with data dissemination. Moreover, as found in each case study as well as the client survey, the limited promotion and data dissemination of FAO databases has affected their discoverability among important target users.

79 FAO. 2008. Independent evaluation of FAO's role and work in Statistics. Rome.

80 The Technical Department with most databases is the Economic and Social Department with 31 databases, followed by the Agriculture and Consumer Protection (23), Natural Resources (12), Fisheries and Aquaculture (4), and Forestry (4) Departments.

As a partial response to the lack of resources, most database owners (90%) work with other stakeholders on the development, operation and dissemination of their databases. While this is a laudable method, a more granular review shows uneven levels of cooperation, as shown in Table 2. Less than half of the databases involve FAO Decentralized Offices in dissemination and promotion activities. As for external stakeholders, the involvement of producers, academia, research organizations and the private sector appears to be small or non-existent.

Table 2. FAO database owners' cooperation with stakeholders

Answer options	Production and maintenance of your database	Dissemination and promotion of your database
FAO HQ	67%	48%
FAO Decentralized Offices	19%	33%
National government	24%	43%
UN Agency	19%	29%
International Organizations	24%	38%
Donors	0%	14%
Academia & Research	14%	10%
Private Sector	5%	14%
Civil Society Organization	0%	19%
Media	5%	19%
Producers	0%	0%
Other	0%	0%

Source: Survey of FAO database owners, 2014.

Finally, with the exception of FAOSTAT, there appears to be limited pooling of resources and sharing of advice among database owners. Common areas of concern – such as the duplication of IT platforms, poor end-user experience, limited dissemination and inadequate user feedback – are not conveyed or discussed in a common forum. As already indicated in the 2014-15 Statistical Programme of Work (SPW), FAO should progressively reduce the amount of resources spent in data collection from developed countries and, in cooperation with development partners and other stakeholders, consider abandoning data domains for which there is no longer a demand or that are administered by other organizations.

5. *Are there synergies, duplications or gaps among the databases produced and disseminated by FAO?*

The FAO Statistical Programme of Work 2014-2015 already emphasizes the need to improve synergies and to address duplications between internal and external databases. This evaluation seconds the recommendations made in the SPW, as it found inconsistencies and overlaps between internal as well as external databases.

The report of the first FAO Conference states that "*Provision should be made for consultation and coordination of work with other international bodies collecting statistics so as to avoid overlapping and get data of maximum usefulness.*" Although the user surveys do not indicate major overlaps, some discrepancies have been highlighted between FAO's own databases (such as price data in FAOSTAT, FPMA and the Food Price Index), as well as with external databases (e.g. EUROSTAT, USDA, IFPRI, FAO-OECD and WHO). The 2014/15 SPW has already noted that "*duplications are results of the fact that FAO datasets are constructed as independent "silos" each being self-contained… Besides duplication of FAOSTAT variables, there are also duplications in the download of reference variables, such as GDP, GDP/capita, population, exchange rates etc. In the worst case, data for one and the same variable is downloaded from different organizations and might therefore differ because of differences in update frequency, coverage etc.*"

This evaluation seconds the recommendation made in the SPW to strengthen internal collaborations as well as external partnerships with international organizations, and to place greater priority on leveraging synergies. Previous evaluations have noted that this is a demanding but achievable task. For instance, FAO has made progress integrating information from several monitoring and early warning systems. The recent "Review of Global Food Price Databases" produced by FSIN[81], a global community of practice jointly established by FAO, IFPRI and WFP, appears to be an appropriate way to identify and minimize discrepancies.

6. How have databases planned for medium- to long-term sustainability?

Reliance on short-term or limited funding is a major challenge to the sustainability of results.

The case studies show that the medium-term sustainability of some highly appreciated databases is far from ensured. Many databases, including GAEZ and GIEWS FPMA Tool, are developed using a combination of project funding (or other forms of short-term funding) and staff time. Strengthening database linkages to FAO corporate objectives and establishing partnerships with interested stakeholders such as donors, national governments, the private sector, research institutions, and other international organizations are possible ways to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes. In this regard, it was noted that private sector actors have shown interest in having privileged access to FAO data (e.g. price data in GIEWS/FPMA).

7. Have FAO's databases reached their intended uses and users?

This section assesses the extent to which prospective user groups are effectively reached by FAO databases and make effective use of the various databases. Research and academia, international organizations and national governments appears to benefit most from FAO data. More can be done to reach users, especially at country level, and to facilitate access to data and related analyses produced by the Organization and its partners.

According to FAO's SPW, FAO statistical activities primarily target users from other international organizations (104), policy-makers (96), and universities and research centres (79). The user survey conducted by the evaluation confirmed that users from national governments, academia and research institutions, international organizations and FAO itself are the main target users of the databases, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Who are the main target users of your database(s)?

Answer options	Target audience
National government	90%
Academia and research Institutions	86%
FAO	81%
International organizations	76%
Private Sector	71%
Civil Society organization	67%
UN Agency	57%
Media	48%
Donors	43%
Producers	33%
Other	14%

Source: Survey of FAO database owners, 2014.

81 http://www.fsincop.net/fileadmin/user_upload/fsin/docs/resources/GMDpaperFSIN_WEB11feb.pdf

The extent to which each target user is effectively reached by FAO databases varies. Only two-thirds of database owners have information on their actual users, and less than 15% have this information disaggregated by gender[82]. In general, researchers, consultants and students appear to be the heaviest users of FAO data. Social network analysis undertaken for the case studies also showed that personnel from international organizations and national governments (especially from developed countries) are regular users of FAO data. Nevertheless, from the client survey it appears that many users of FAO's knowledge products and services at country level are not aware of FAO databases in spite of the relevance to their work. The extent to which data is being effectively used is more difficult to assess. Heavy use of FAO data is made for research and analysis (i.e. over 44 400 citations of FAOSTAT can be found in Google Scholar); this is about twice the amount of citations to the World Bank or the UN data gateways, as shown in Table 5.

Table 4. Cybermetric analysis of FAOSTAT

Knowledge product	Owners	Number of web references		Number of citations	
		Link hit estimate	Site hit estimate	Google Scholar	Scopus cites
FAOSTAT	FAO	3 612	1 377	44 400	12 967
data.fao.org	FAO	72	34	49	8
data.worldbank.org	The World Bank	353	191	21 400	4 752
data.un.org	United Nations (UN)	861	445	2 720	585

Source: Cybermetric Analysis, 2014.

Based on user feedback, a good deal of these analyses appears to feed into national policy debates as well as the design of programmes and projects (as discussed in the following section). Nevertheless, in an era of data overload and major advances in Information Technology, users expect not just easy access to (raw) data but also to related analyses.

8. What outcomes have FAO databases achieved, or contributed to achieving?

FAO databases have contributed to enhancing technical knowledge and analyses, as well as strengthening the evidence base for policies, programmes and projects. Greater attention to collecting and addressing user feedback would improve database effectiveness.

As found in past thematic evaluations and the case studies conducted for this evaluation, FAO data is used in a range of analyses and studies on food and agriculture. In the view of the FAO users surveyed at country level and many of the stakeholders interviewed, FAO statistical data is the most valuable product offered by the Organization. According to database owners, the main use of the data appears to be enhancing technical knowledge. However, it is difficult to ascertain how this additional knowledge translates into better analyses and evidence bases for policies or programmes. Moreover, only one-quarter of FAO database owners regularly gather user feedback, making it difficult to accurately assess user data and needs.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

The assessment confirms the high relevance of and demand for FAO data that exists among several user groups. Data mainly helps to improve the relevance or quality of research and analyses, and support evidence-based decision making in governments and organizations. Some gaps and challenges identified in the assessment relate to how best to **increase the value-added of FAO data and analyses**. This assessment **recommends** that, building on the ongoing work carried out by the Chief Statistician, FAO develops a corporate vision for its

82 According to FAO's strategic framework, "in the area of assembly and provision of information, knowledge and statistics, all major FAO statistical databases should incorporate gender-disaggregated data, where relevant and as available".

databases outlining how the organization intends to position itself in an era of data overload, and to ensure that it continuously meets emerging and changing user needs and expectations. Some elements that may be discussed in the process of developing and implementing such a vision include:

- **User interface** – users are interested in multilingual, open and free access to data and related information and analyses. FAO should explore using the FAOSTAT brand name to develop a revamped data portal to provide users with links to relevant FAO and non-FAO information.
- **Coordinate** among FAO and non-FAO database owners to resolve inconsistencies, address overlaps and explore synergies.
- Implement the **quality assurance framework.**
- **Promote** FAO databases and related **analyses** among potential users, including how to **develop users' capacities** and skills to use more complex (e.g. analytic and geospatial) databases.

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Appendix 3.2. List of people consulted

Databases - general

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Databases - case studies

FAOSTAT

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GAEZ

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GIEWS

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44. **Kornher Lukas**, Researcher, Center for Development Research, University of Bonn

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49. **Pineda Iram**, Responsible Officer – Market Information, Ministry of Agriculture, Guatemala

50. **Racionzer Paul**, Agricultural Economist, FAO

Annex 3.1: Design of the database assessment

The following sections describe the methodology for the evaluation of FAO databases. This methodology has been developed after a preliminary review of secondary sources as well as consultations with key informants at FAO HQ (Chief Statistician, IDWG, ESS Dissemination team, CIO, and technical divisions) and with external partners (Cybermetric team).

1. Scope

The assessment will cover a broad range of FAO databases currently under operation and will rely on information collected from several data sources. In order to illustrate the specific contributions made by FAO in a few selected areas, the following databases will be reviewed in detail as case studies:

- **Statistical database:** FAOSTAT
- **Analytical database:** GIEWS Food Price Data and Analysis Tool
- **Spatial database:** GAEZ

2. Data Sources

The data for the evaluation will be collected from general documentation (including past evaluations, audits, and reviews) and from a range of stakeholders, including:

- FAO staff as owners of FAO databases.
- Member Countries as decision-makers and primary users of FAO databases.
- External Experts and Partners, as collaborators in the generation and dissemination of FAO data.
- Other users of FAO databases, such as staff from UN agencies and international organizations, research and academia, NGOs, private sector, media, etc.

3. Data Collection Tools

The review will capture evaluative evidence on the relevance, quality and cost-effectiveness of the databases through the following tools:

a) **Desk review**: a review of surveys and studies already conducted by FAO to assess the usability and use of specific databases, including:

- **Usage reports**: review of available statistics on visits and use of FAO databases.
- **Assessment surveys**: a review of previous studies conducted by FAO corporate or technical divisions to assess specific databases.

b) **Inventory and mapping of FAO databases:** an online survey will be administered to owners of FAO databases already identified in the inventory in order to gather information on their objectives, operation, quality assurance and results monitoring systems in place. The survey will not duplicate but complement the one already conducted by ESS in 2014[83]. The results of the mapping survey will be analyzed quantitatively and presented in a statistical form (see mapping instrument in annex 2a).

c) **Meta-evaluation**: a synthesis of evaluation findings related to FAO publications will be prepared as part of the meta-analysis of OED evaluations being conducted for the evaluation (see outline of the synthesis in annex 2b).

d) **Case studies**: Three databases will be assessed in detail through a multi-method approach. The **individual** results will be presented as separate case studies (see outline

83 FAO, Statistical Programme of Work 2014-15, Rome, 2014.

of case studies in annex 3). As part of the case studies, interviews with key informants, user surveys and cybermetric analyses will be conducted to gather information on usage and use of FAO databases. A theory of change will be developed for each KP&S to guide its assessment.

- **Interviews with key informants:** about 5-10 core users of the selected databases will be identified and interviewed in order to gather detailed feedback on the databases use.

- **User survey**: online surveys[84] will be administered to target users of the FAO databases selected for the case study in order to gather data on their use and utility[85]. The surveys will normally take the form of a user satisfaction survey. The user survey questionnaire will be developed in close consultation with the databases owners and key informants.

- **Cybermetric analyses**: a study of the types of activity occurring on third-party websites –html pages as well as pdf and word documents-, using social scientific methods to summarize trends occurring across large datasets will be conducted.

e) Client survey and workshop[86]: Country-level surveys will be conducted to seek user's views on the relevance, quality and effectiveness of FAO's knowledge products[87] and on their knowledge needs in a sample of countries. Participants will be drawn from government, the private sector, research and academia, NGOs, and media. The survey might be complemented with local workshops and reviews of national policy documents in order to gather additional information on databases use and uptake.

f) Member Country Survey: a survey will be carried out in order to gather feedback on FAO's knowledge products and services from Member Countries, as well as evaluative information on knowledge needs and dissemination mechanisms.

4. Data Analysis

As indicated earlier, the assessment will be undertaken following a theory-based approach and will focus on identifying FAO's contributions to knowledge. Some possible lines of enquiry in contribution analysis are:

a) What are the concrete observed changes in behavior, relations or actions described in the ToC?

b) What are the observed contributions to the planned outcomes?

c) Were the dissemination channels sufficient to bring about the results?

d) Would results have happened without the dissemination of the database?

84 Other knowledge products and services evaluated will use specific surveys such as a tracer survey in the case of learning resources, a readership survey in the case of publications, etc.

85 The survey will be sent to the mailing lists and/or contact lists provided by the respective owners of the selected databases.

86 Activity e) and f) are part of the "knowledge needs assessment" component.

87 The surveys will be used to gather information not just on databases usage but also other types of knowledge products and services covered by the evaluation i.e. publications, experience capitalization, networks, and learning.

e) Outputs

The following deliverables will be produced:

a)	Meta-evaluation:	Synthesis report on databases
b)	Mapping of FAO databases:	Statistical analysis
c)	Case studies:	Individual case study reports
d)	Report on FAO databases**:**	Compilation and synthesis of the above

Since they cover a wider selection of FAO knowledge products and services (not only databases), the results of the client and the Member Country surveys will be presented separately.

5. Work plan

The projected work-plan for the evaluation of FAO databases is provided in the following page.

Work Plan – Databases	September					October				November				December					January				February				March					April				May			
	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25
Implementation Phase																																							
DESK REVIEW				E																																			
Review & analysis previous studies				N																																			
META-EVALUATION				D																																			
Analysis and synthesis																																							
MAPPING OF FAO DATABASES				S																																			
Launch survey				C																																			
Analysis & synthesis				O																																			
IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF 3 DATABASES				P																																			
a) User Surveys				I																																			
Design & test online survey				N																																			
Launch				G																																			
Interviews key informants																																							
Data analysis				P																																			
b) Cybermetric Analysis				H																																			
Design				A																																			
Launch				S																																			
Data analysis & synthesis				E																																			
c) Client Survey & workshops																																							
Design and test country survey																																							
Launch surveys & conduct workshops																																							
Policy review in selected countries																																							
Data analysis & synthesis																																							
d) Report writing																																							
Compilation & comparative analysis																																							
Drafting of case studies and synthesis																																							
Review and finalization																																							

Appendix 1 - Outline of the individual case studies (max 5 pages each, excluding annexes)

1. Introduction
1. Background and description of evaluand
1. Assessment (structured along the lines of the theory of change)
1. Conclusions

Annexes:

- List of persons and documents consulted
- Results of user survey
- Results of cybermetric analysis
- Usage reports (when available)

Appendix 2 – Outline of the report on FAO databases (Max 15 pages, excluding annexes)

1. Introduction
2. Background (description of evaluand, purpose, objectives, questions and methodology)
3. Findings (structured by evaluation question)
4. Conclusions and recommendations

Annexes

- Inventory
- List of people consulted
- List of documents reviewed
- Meta-evaluation
- Case studies
- Client surveys (when relevant)
- Member Country survey (when relevant)

Annex 3.2: Inventory of FAO databases

Type	Name	Description	Link
Analytical	Rural Income Generating Activities (RIGA)	The RIGA database is composed by two subsets, the household-level income aggregate or RIGA-H, and the individual wage employment dataset or RIGA-L. RIGA-H includes a comprehensive measure of household income presenting aggregated and disaggregated data on income from different sources such as crop and livestock production, household enterprises, wage employment, transfers, and non-labour earnings. The RIGA-L database includes only one component of income, wage employment, which can be analyzed at both individual and job levels.	http://www.fao.org/economic/riga/riga-database/it/
Analytical	Giews Food Price Data and Analysis Tool	On-line database and tool on domestic prices of major foods consumed, covering 83 countries (over 1100 series) and 43 international food price series .	http://www.fao.org/giews/pricetool/
Analytical	GlobAllomeTree tool	The GlobAllomeTree tool is the web-based platform designed to improve global access to tree allometric equations and support forest and climate-change project developers, researchers, scientists and foresters to assess forest volume and biomass, and carbon stocks.	http://www.globallometree.org/
Geospatial	Crop Calendar	The Crop Calendar is a tool that provides timely information about seeds to promote local crop production. It contains information on planting, sowing and harvesting periods of locally adapted crops in specific agro-ecological zones. It also provides information on the sowing rates of seed and planting material and the main agricultural practices.	http://www.fao.org/agriculture/seed/cropcalendar/welcome.do
Geospatial	GAEZ	Global Agro-Ecological Zones (GAEZ) modelling framework for crop potential assessment uses detailed agronomic-based knowledge to assess land suitability, potential attainable yields and potential production of crops for specified management assumptions and input levels, both for rain-fed and irrigated conditions.	http://gaez.fao.org

Type	Name	Description	Link
Geospatial	FAO GeoNetwork	The FAO GeoNetwork provides Internet access to interactive maps, satellite imagery and related spatial databases maintained by FAO and its partners. It's purpose is to improve access to and integrated use of spatial data and information. Through this website FAO facilitates multidisciplinary approaches to sustainable development and supports decision making in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food security. Maps, including those derived from satellite imagery, are effective communicational tools and play an important role in the work of various types of users: 1) Decision Makers: e.g. Sustainable development planners and humanitarian and emergency managers in need of quick, reliable and up to date user-friendly cartographic products as a basis for action and better plan and monitor their activities. 2) GIS Experts in need of exchanging consistent and updated geographical data. 3) Spatial Analysts in need of multidisciplinary data to perform preliminary geographical analysis and reliable forecasts to better set up appropriate interventions in vulnerable areas.	http://www.fao.org/geonetwork/srv/en/main.home
Geospatial	FAO GLCN	The GLCN initiative is the result of a common effort of partners and sponsors to answer the need, expressed by the international community, for a standardized global land cover database. It includes, freerly downlodable, land cover and form databases, software, statistics and publications.	http://www.glcn.org/index_en.jsp
Geospatial	FAO	Global Land Cover database	http://www.glcn.org/databases/lc_glcshare_en.jsp http://www.fao.org/uploads/media/glc-share-doc.pdf
Geospatial	Food Insecurity, Poverty and Environment Global GIS Database (FGGD)	AQUASTAT is FAO's global water information system, developed by the Land and Water Division. The main mandate of the programme is to collect, analyze and disseminate information on water resources, water uses, and agricultural water management.	http://geonetwork3.fao.org/fggd/
Geospatial	GFIMS (Global Fire Information Management System)	Integrates Remote Sensing and GIS technologies to deliver MODIS hotspot/fire locations to natural resource managers and other stakeholders around the world.	http://www.fao.org/nr/gfims/gf-home/en/ [website TYPO3 BASED + applications ON APPLE SERVER]
Geospatial	CLIMAFRICA	Qualification, understanding and prediction of carbon cycle and other GHG gases in sub-Saharan Africa	http://www.climafrica.net/
Geospatial	Pakistan	Agricultural Information System- Building provincial capacity in Pakistan for Crop Estimation, Forecasting, and Reporting based on the integral use of Remotely Sensed data; GCP/PAK/125/USA	http://dwms.fao.org/~test

Type	Name	Description	Link
Geospatial	Afghanistan	Strenghening Agricultural Economics, Market Information and Statistics Services in Afghanistan (GCP/AFG/063/EC)	http://dwms.fao.org/~draft/home_en.asp
Maps	GLiPHA	GLiPHA is a highly interactive electronic atlas that provides a scalable overview of spatial and temporal variation in quantitative information related to animal production and health. Against a back-drop of selected maps of livestock densities, land-use or elevation, sub-national statistics relating to the livestock sector can be mapped, or displayed as tables and charts. The objective of the GLiPHA is to facilitate access to livestock sector information for analysis and informed decision making and to increase awareness of socio-economic, human and animal demographic and health related issues.	
Photographic	Conservation Agriculture	Photos on conservation agriculture	http://data.fao.org/database?entryId=69a1ff0a-ffb6-4f5e-be7b-5836f412a596
Photographic	Grassland Species	Grassland Species photo library of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (Plant Production and Protection Division) publishes the photographs of grassland species.	http://www.fao.org/ag/agp/AGPC/doc/Gallery/pic.htm
Photographic	FAO Aquaculture photo library	FAO Aquaculture photo library of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (Fisheries and Aquaculture Department) publishes the photographs taken by FAO aquaculture officers and consultants working in the field are stored. The main goal of the photo library is to make available to internal and external users photos focusing on global practices of aquaculture. This online photo library is especially addressed to extension services, aquaculture research centres and educational institutes that can use the photo library to learn more on aquaculture by means of a visual approach.	http://www.fao.org/fishery/photolibrary/home/en/
Photographic	Forestry Mediabase	Photo database on Forestry	http://www.fao.org/mediabase/forestry/
Statistical	FertiStat	Database with statistics on fertilizer use by crop for selected key years in selected countries	http://www.fao.org/ag/agp/fertistat/index_en.htm
Statistical	Trade data	Crops, crops processed, live animals, livestock primary, livestock processed, production indices and value of agricultural production	
Statistical	Production data	Crops primary equivalent, livestock and fish primary equivalent	
Statistical	Food supply data	Food Balance Sheets, Commodity Balances, Crops Primary Equivalent, Livestock and Fish Primary	
Statistical	SUA/FBS	Prices, consumer price indices, and consumer food price indices	

Type	Name	Description	Link
Statistical	PriceSTAT (producer prices and producer price indices)	Fertilizers and Fertilizer trade values	
Statistical	Fertilizers data	Pesticides trade and consumption	
Statistical	Pesticides data	Land use and irrigation	
Statistical	Land data	Total, rural/urban, economically active, and economically active in agriculture	
Statistical	Population data	Forestry production and trade	
Statistical	Forestry data		
Statistical	Machinery data		
Statistical	Capital stock data		
Statistical	Government expenditure in agriculture data		
Statistical	External assistance to agriculture data	Database	
Statistical	FFPI Price Series	The FAO Food Price Index is a measure of the monthly change in international prices of a basket of food commodities. It consists of the average of five commodity group price indices, weighted with the average export shares of each of the groups for 2002-2004.	http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/
Statistical	International commodity prices	Benchmark quotations for the major traded agricultural commodities (weekly / monthly data, plus monthly and annual averages)	http://www.fao.org/economic/est/statistical-data/est-cpd/en/
Statistical	CCBS: Country Cereal Balance Sheets -	For cereal commodities - wheat, coarse grains - Tool to monitor new estimates or forecasts on supply and demand of individual commodities at country, regional and global levels.	
Statistical	Cereal supply/demand balances for Sub-Saharan Africa	On-line cereal balances for 47 sub-saharan countries on marketing year basis, quartely updated	http://www.fao.org/giews/english/ewi/cerealbs/3.pdf
Statistical	Cereal imports of Low-Income Food-Decit Conutries	On-line database on import requirements of LIFDCs in current marketing years, import position on commercial and food aid b asis	http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3899e.pdf#page=38
Statistical	XCBS: Commodity Balance Sheets -	For each basic commodity group - wheat, coarse grains (by crop), rice, Oilseeds/Oils/Meals (by product), meat (by meat category); Dairy products - Tool to monitor new estimates or forecasts on supply and demand of individual commodities at country, regional and global levels.	
Statistical	AMIS statistical databases	For wheat, maize, rice and soybeans, supply and demand balances for AMIS countries	http://statistics.amis-outlook.org/data/index.html

Type	Name	Description	Link
Statistical	OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook	Detailed supply and use balances are available, as well as domestic and international commodity prices. The database also includes the detailed commodity and trade policy information where this was used in preparing the projections.	http://www.oecd.org/site/oecd-faoagriculturaloutlook/database.htm
Statistical	XCBS database	Database for storing and updating information on raw materials, horticulture and tropical (RAMHOT) products	
Statistical	CIWP	International commodity price database	http://www.fao.org/economic/est/statistical-data/est-cpd/en/
Statistical	FISHstat	The FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department provides advice and objective information to Members to help promote responsible aquaculture and fisheries. To fulfil this role, the Department compiles, analyses and disseminates fishery data, structured within data collections.	http://www.fao.org/fishery/statistics/en
Statistical	Fishery Commodities Global Production and Trade (online query)	This database contains statistics on the annual production of fishery commodities and imports and exports (including re-exports) of fishery commodities by country and commodities in terms of volume and value from 1976.	http://www.fao.org/fishery/statistics/global-commodities-production/query/en
Statistical	Global Capture Production 1950-2012	Contains the volume of fish catches landed by country or territory of capture, by species or a higher taxonomic level, by FAO major fishing areas, and year for all commercial, industrial, recreational and subsistence purpose.	http://www.fao.org/fishery/statistics/global-capture-production/query/en
Statistical	Global Forest Resources Assessments (FRA)	The Global Forest Resources Assessments (FRA) are now produced every five years in an attempt to provide a consistent approach to describing the world's forests and how they are changing. The Assessment is based on two primary sources of data: Country Reports prepared by National Correspondents and remote sensing that is conducted by FAO together with national focal points and regional partners. The scope of the FRA has changed regularly since the first assessment published in 1948. These assessments make an interesting history of global forest interests, both in terms of their substantive content, but also in their changing scope.	http://www.fao.org/forestry/fra/en/

Type	Name	Description	Link
Statistical	Aquastat	AQUASTAT is FAO's global water information system, developed by the Land and Water Division. The main mandate of the programme is to collect, analyze and disseminate information on water resources, water uses, and agricultural water management, with an emphasis on countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. This allows interested users to find comprehensive and regularly updated information at global, regional, and national levels.	http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/main/index.stm
Statistical	AGRO-Maps	Agro-MAPS is an interactive web-based information system on land use which contains statistics on primary food crops aggregated by sub-national administrative districts on crop production area harvested and crop yields.	http://kids.fao.org/agromaps/
Text	EMPRES-I	EMPRES Global Animal Disease Information System (EMPRES-i) is a web-based application that has been designed to support veterinary services by facilitating the organization and access to regional and global disease information. Timely and reliable disease information enhances early warning and response to transboundary and high impact animal diseases, including emergent zoonoses, and supports prevention, improved management and progressive approach to control.	
Text	Feedipedia	It covers nutritional quality of feed resources,w ith guideilines for their safe use in the diets of both ruminant and monogastric animal species. The information will contribute to enhancing resource use effciency	
Text	Commercially available organic fertilizers and water-retaining products	Continued depletion of plant nutrients and organic matter in the soil and inadequate availability of soil moisture for crop growth, especially under dryland conditions, are major problems affecting sustainable crop production in many countries. The use of organic fertilizers and water-retaining products, if economically viable, may contribute to overcome these constraints and improve land productivity. This database contains information on various products as submitted by manufacturers and/or dealers.	
Text	Country Pasture Profiles	On-line database of pasture/forage resources in more than 80 countries	http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPC/doc/Counprof/regions/index.htm

Type	Name	Description	Link
Text	Facilitating Mechanism of the Global Plan of Action	A tool with the aim to foster the implementation of the Global Plan of Action by providing access to a wide range of information, including funding sources, regarding activities in the field of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA). The portal offers a set of databases with information on funding programmes, projects, institutions and networks, germplasm databases and sources of information.	http://www.globalplanofaction.org/
Text	Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building (GIPB)	The Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building (GIPB) is a multi-party initiative of knowledge institutions around the world that have a track record in supporting agricultural research and development, working in partnership with country programmes committed to developing stronger and effective plant breeding capacity	http://km.fao.org/gipb/
Text	Glossary on Integrated Plant Nutrient Management	This trilingual on-line glossary, based on the publication "Integrated Nutrient Management-A Glossary of Terms" is intended to extend the access to a wider number of beneficiaries. The various terms and phrases included in this glossary are related directly or indirectly to INM. These cover various aspects of plant nutrition, mineral fertilizers, organic manures, recyclable wastes and biofertilizers. The coverage encompasses the broad disciplines of agronomy, soil science, resource management, plant physiology, microbiology, trade, economics and extension.	
Text	Grassland Index	Allows searches of more than 600 grass and forage legume species by genus, Latin name and common name	http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPC/doc/GBASE/Default.htm
Text	Hortivar	Hortivar is FAO´s database on performances of horticulture cultivars in relation to agro-ecological conditions, cultivation practices, the occurrence of pests and diseases and timing of the production. It covers six categories of horticultural crops: fruits, vegetables, roots and tubers, ornamentals, mushrooms, herbs and condiments.	http://www.fao.org/hortivar/
Text	Information Sharing Mechanism on GPA Implementation	The site featuring a country-driven and flexible process to share information on the implementation of the Global Plan of Action among a wide range of national stakeholders, aiming to improve the efficiency of resource utilization. It includes a list of indicators for monitoring the implementation of GPA at country level, a questionnaire based on such indicators, and a computer application aimed to facilitate and simplify data recording, processing, analysis and sharing of the information addressed by the questionnaire	http://www.pgrfa.org/gpa/selectcountry.jspx

Type	Name	Description	Link
Text	International Phytosanitary Portal	The website for the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) contains information that is relevant to the movement of plants and plant products across international boundaries i.e. this is partly relevant to trade, aid and the movement of germplasm. This website contains all information that is relevant to the work programme of the IPPC such as the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs), the glossary for phytosanitary terms, meeting documents and reports. In addition, it contains the official national information on IPPC contact points, phytosanitary legislation & regulations, pest reports, lists of regulated pests, ports of entry with restrictions and emergency actions. Relevant information related to the Regional Plant Protection Organizations (RPPOs) is also available. The website is available in most FAO languages.	https://www.ippc.int/
Text	IPNIS - Integrated Plant Nutritition Information System	Database providing information for a number of countries on crop-wise plant nutrients management at administrative (district) level, supported by relevant data on soil and soil management, agro-ecological zones, and crop production constraints.	http://www.fao.org/ag/agp/ipnis/
Text	Locust Watch	A service provided by the Desert Locust Information Service (AGP) to monitor the world-wide Desert Locust situation and keep affected countries and donors informed of expected developments.	http://www.fao.org/ag/locusts/en/info/info/index.html
Text	Nutrient Response Database	Database allowing for the extraction of yield data per agro-ecological zone for the main food crops in a specific country. The extracted data enable the estimation of fertilizer input- and crop output ratios for projection of future fertilizer application to support increased crop yield targets.	http://www.fao.org/ag/agl/agll/nrdb/
Text	RustSPORE	A global monitoring system for wheat rust diseases, currently focused on the Ug99 lineage of stem rust. Rust SPORE provides up to date information on disease incidence and the current status of stem rust pathotypes. The site is available in English, Arabic and Russian.	http://www.fao.org/agriculture/crops/rust/stem/en/
Text	World Information and Early Warning System (WIEWS)	The World Information and Early Warning System (WIEWS) on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA), has been established by FAO as a world-wide dynamic mechanism to foster information exchange among Member Countries, by gathering and disseminating information on PGRFA, and as an instrument for the periodic assessment of the state of the world's PGRFA.	http://apps3.fao.org/wiews/wiews.jsp

Type	Name	Description	Link
Text	Information on the role of customs in the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention	This section of the Rotterdam Convention website is aimed to strenghten the collaboation between DNAs and customs in the implementation of the Convention at national level	http://www.pic.int/Implementation/Customs/DocumentsLinks/tabid/1614/language/en-US/Default.aspx
Text	FAO Pesticide Registration Toolkit	The FAO Pesticide Registration Toolkit is designed to help developing country regulators to access guidance and existing data that will help them to evaluate pesticide for registration purposes. The FAO Pesticide Registration Toolkit is a decision support system for pesticide registrars in developing countries. It will assist registrars in the evaluation and authorization of pesticides. The Toolkit can best considered as a web-based registration handbook intended for day-to-day use by pesticide registrars. The Toolkit is not an automated system for the evaluation of pesticides. It supports and facilitates informed decision-making by registrars, but does not take decisions for registrars.	
Text	Gender and Land Rights Database		http://www.fao.org/gender/landrights/home/it/
Text	Dimitra Database	The Dimitra database contains profiles of organisations based in Africawhich have projects, programmes or activities involving or concerningrural women and development and/or using a gender approach. The database is not exhaustive, but shows existing trends at a given moment in different countries. All the information, including the project descriptions, was provided by the organisations themselves. Most data are available in both English and French and the database is freely accessible to everyone. The database is up to date until December 2012. Its encoding is no longer continued at present.	English: http://www.fao.org/dimitra/dimitra-database/en/ French: http://www.fao.org/dimitra/base-de-donnees-dimitra/fr/
Text	Basic food policy developments	Records basic food policy developments by commodity, country and type of measures	http://www.fao.org/economic/est/est-commodities/commodity-policy-archive/en/
Text	Publications on agricultural investments	Information and material on trends and impacts of agricultural investment in developing countries and responsible agricultural investment	http://www.fao.org/economic/est/publications/investments/en/
Text	REFORGEN	FAO Forestry Database on forest genetic resources where you can search for information on forest tree species and their genetic management	http://foris.fao.org/reforgen/index.jsp
Text	Climate Impact on Agriculture	Climpag is aimed at bringing together the various aspects and interactions between weather, climate and agriculture in the general context of food security.	http://www.fao.org/nr/climpag/

Type	Name	Description	Link
Text	Monitoring and Analysing Food and Agriculture Policies	The Monitoring and Analysing Food and Agricultural Policies Project (MAFAP) Database aims at providing access to data on: market incentives and disincentives for key commodities; and public expenditure on food, agriculture and rural development.	http://www.fao.org/mafap/database/en/
Text	Legislative Database on the Right to Food	The Legislative Database on the Right to Food covers national legislation referred to and analysed in the Guide on Legislating for the Right to Food. It includes all constitutions, laws and subsidiary legislation which have been referred to in the Guide. Some links to the source websites included in the Companion CD to the Guide on Legislating for the Right to Food have been modified in the meantime, whereas the data in the legislative database refers to the work done for the Guide on Legislating for the Right to Food, which was published in 2009 as a part of the Right to Food Methodological Toolbox.	http://www.fao.org/righttofood/knowledge-centre/legislative-database-on-the-right-to-food/en/#.U7azYvmSyVM
Text	Dimitra Database (CD-ROM)	Following the 2004 and 2008 editions, Dimitra has produced a new CD-ROM which contains all of the information to be found on the Dimitra website and on-line databaseas of 31 December 2011, in English and French. The Dimitra on-line database lists detailed information on organisations based in Africa together with descriptions of those development projects and initiatives they are involved in which actively concern rural populations – and more particularly women – and use a gender or women-specific approach. The aim of the database is to provide a set of best practices and firsthand experiences that may give inspiration to others working in the same field and strengthen possibilities for mutual exchange and cooperation.	English: http://www.fao.org/dimitra/dimitra-publications/multimedia/en/ French: http://www.fao.org/dimitra/publications-dimitra/multimedia/fr/

Annex 3.3. Meta-analysis of Past Evaluations

1. Relevance

Previous evaluations acknowledge that FAO is uniquely placed to collect and disseminate agriculture, food and nutrition statistics and information as a public good (FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2011b; FAO, 2012a; FAO, 2012d). In general the Organization conducts highly **relevant** work, well aligned and quite responsive to the statistical needs of governments, UN agencies, INGOs, and donors (FAO, 2009b, FAO, 2013c). But there are still cases where evaluations point out that FAO should inject **stronger user perspective** in the design, development, and operation of FAO data management and dissemination systems (FAO, 2008). This would contribute to enhance the **quality** and **scope** of the statistics and the **reach** of the statistics in terms of target audiences (FAO, 2009a; FAO, 2012a).

2. Effectiveness

Stakeholders consulted during previous evaluations appear familiar with FAO's work in statistics (FAO, 2012a; FAO, 2013c), although knowing that data is available does not necessarily equate with being readily accessible (FAO, 2008; FAO, 2012c; FAO, 2012d). FAO would need to make data **more easily discoverable** and offer more concise presentation of the information (FAO, 2008; FAO, 2011b). Furthermore, the Organization should strive to enlarge the scope, **standardization**, and integration of the datasets (FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2011a). **Timeliness** of data is also an issue sometimes, especially when early warning is at stake. Data on food security should better focus on prevention but **dissemination** of information is often delayed by long analysis and editing processes and multiple layers of approval, including by governments. This may lead for instance to the finding that warnings are not early enough to allow for crisis prevention or risk reduction (FAO, 2009b; FAO, 2012a).

Still, it is recognized that FAO's work in statistics at the global, regional and country levels has been providing **crucial information** for policy makers, national industry associations, as well as academic and research organizations for decades (FAO, 2012a). Among the most notable findings throughout the evaluations is the assessment that FAO has been focused, proactive and diplomatic in helping countries improve their statistics and thus gain better global statistics, moving from a passive mode that relied only on data submitted, to an active modality of work (FAO, 2012c; FAO, 2013c).

3. Efficiency

In spite of punctual improvements, the contribution of FAO's information systems to knowledge dissemination remains unsatisfactory. FAO has made some progress to integrate information from several monitoring and early warning systems (FAO, 2013b), but there still needs to be a centralized mechanism, such as a **data warehouse**, to integrate databases and monitor the quality of the statistics disseminated (FAO, 2008). Similarly for text-based content, FAO **search engine** has limited capacity to link different Departments, Divisions, and countries, making it impossible to obtain a comprehensive overview of the intellectual production of the organization on any theme (FAO, 2014a). An interesting innovation but not scaled up in terms of knowledge dissemination is referred by the FAO Representation in Cambodia where the office has used a software to better **target** the distribution of FAO publications to specific audience and to monitor whether the emails have been opened (FAO, 2014c).

A different issue highlighted by some evaluations regards FAO's **organizational set up** that is not always most conducive to efficient knowledge dissemination. Overstretched human resources, limited financial capacities, and uneven leverage of the sub-regional offices appear to be the main constraints (FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2013c).

4. Impact

It is recognized that FAO's data and information serves as a baseline and is the basis for **decisions**

in major international natural resources management initiatives and feeds into international conventions (UNCCD, UNFCCC, CBD) in which the Organization is active and provides knowledge and expertise (FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2012d). Systems such as the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) and products such as FAOSTAT, Food Outlook and the Report on the State of World Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI) are well acknowledged and used by governments, donors, UN agencies and INGOs (FAO, 2011b).

However, at national level the impact of FAO statistics remains sometimes limited (FAO, 2011a). This is partly due to inadequate exploitation and dissemination of FAO work (FAO, 2010c). More fundamentally, data collection may be missing in national legislation and not used if collected (Fisheries). In addition to lacking laws requiring data, and although some FAO projects seek to strengthen information systems, Member Countries (MCs) often lack procedures or decision-making processes to demand or use this data. Information capacity and information systems in MCs are often weak and work is needed on a country-by-country basis (FAO, 2012c). Therefore previous evaluations point out the necessary link between impact of statistics and FAO's work on **capacity development**. On that matter, capacity improvements at the individual, organizational and institutional levels are intermediate outcomes FAO has already helped to realize (FAO, 2011a; FAO, 2013a) or planned and launched (FAO, 2013c).

5. Sustainability

Building on **national capacities** and engaging all stakeholders including the private sector in improving statistical quality is a positive outcome of FAO's work that must be furthered (FAO, 2009a; FAO, 2012a). In addition, the sustainability of FAO's work could be improved by increasing resource mobilization for statistics as well as by having FAO be a louder advocate at country level with central planning and finance offices for budgetary allocations to strengthen national statistics (FAO, 2011b; FAO, 2012c; FAO, 2013c). Strengthening and systematizing **partnerships** with the enlarged network of stakeholders including research institutions, the UN, and regional organizations would also prove beneficial (FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2012a; FAO, 2013c).

While some initiatives have improved the quantity and quality of sex-disaggregated data in the corporate statistics databases (FAO, 2011c; FAO, 2012b), efforts are still needed before substantive advances are available to end users and for gender analysis to inform policy and programme formulation (FAO, 2010b; FAO, 2011b; FAO, 2011c; FAO, 2013c).

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9. **FAO**. 2011c. *Evaluation of FAO's role and work related to gender and development*. Rome.
10. **FAO**. 2012a. *Evaluation of FAO's role and work in forestry*. Rome.
11. **FAO**. 2012b. *Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Europe and Central Asia*. Rome.
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13. **FAO**. 2012d. *Evaluation of FAO's work on tenure, rights and access to land and other natural resources*. Rome.
14. **FAO**. 2013a. *Country evaluation of FAO's cooperation with Armenia*. Rome.
15. **FAO**. 2013b. *Evaluation of FAO's work in Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean*. Rome.
16. **FAO**. 2013c. *Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Africa*. Rome.
17. **FAO**. 2014a. *Evaluation of FAO's work in sustainable intensification of crops*. Rome.
18. **FAO**. 2014b. *Evaluation report: Climate Smart Agriculture: Capturing the Synergies between Mitigation, Adaptation and Food Security*. GCP /INT/139/EC. Rome.
19. **FAO**. 2014c. *Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Asia and Pacific.* Rome.

Annex 3.4: Survey of FAO database owners

1. Main Findings

Based on the responses and perceptions of the database owners:

- FAO databases mainly have a **global** geographical scope (all respondents), followed by national (52% of respondents), and regional (48% of respondents).
- The majority of the databases relate mostly to SO2 (33%), followed by SO4 (24%), and SO3 (10%). In addition, another 10% of the databases relate to Objective 6, and are directly linked to all SOs (10%). Only one database (4.5%) is refers to increasing the resilience of livelihoods to disasters (SO5).
- The most common themes covered by FAO databases are:
  - Agricultural trade
  - Food production
  - Climate change
  - Food security
- About one third of the respondents indicate an 'Other' theme that does not appear to fit in FAO high-level taxonomy or is rather a refinement of an existing category. In both cases this suggests a large thematic span for FAO databases. The survey is not the tool though to assess if some themes are spread too thin, i.e. if there is an adequate relationship between the strategic importance of a thematic area and the number of databases or if there is any mismatch in terms of results orientation.
- 52% of the databases were designed based on a needs assessment, while 38% were not. The main reasons for not conducting a needs assessment were: because it was not requested or in the project's mandate, because the need from a FAO division was already identified, and because it was already part of FAO's mandate. The needs assessments were conducted mostly through:
- Stakeholder consultations and workshops
- Desk reviews
- The fact that more than one third (8/21) of the referred databases are originated by FAO staff's own initiatives questions the level of demand orientation of some databases.
- **Origin:** Of the referred databases, 76% were created based on FAO's own initiative, while 52% were requested by a national government.
- The main **target audience** for the referred databases include (in order of importance):
  - National government (90% of the databases),
  - Academia and research institutions (86% of databases),
  - FAO (80% of databases), and
  - Other International Organizations (76% of databases).
- Simultaneously national governments are involved in the planning and design of less than 50% of the referred databases. Furthermore national governments contribute to the testing of less than 30% of the databases and to the dissemination and promotion of 42% of the databases.

- Similarly, academia and research institutions are three times more frequently referred as target audiences as they are as contributors to the planning, design, development, and testing of the databases and are twice more rarely involved in the production dissemination, and promotion of the databases.

- 76% of the referred databases are tested in the development and/or intermediate stage, while 19% (4/21) of the respondents were not sure if the database was tested. The most common procedures for testing databases include:

  - Feedback and testing by users
  - Internal FAO testing
  - Peer review
  - Cross data validation

- **Quality assurance:** 62% of the referred databases undergo a formal quality assurance process. The most common processes include:

  - Completeness and precision checks (at entry point) – 59% referred databases
  - Consistency checks (for validation purposes) – 59%
  - Accuracy checks (of third party data) – 55%
  - Conformity and integrity checks – 50%

- **Dissemination plan/strategy:** 62% of referred databases have an outreach strategy or dissemination plan, while 33% of the referred databases do not count with any dissemination strategy. The main dissemination channels used for the databases include:

  - participation in conferences and workshops
  - policy brief/ brochure/ leaflet
  - websites and blogs
  - one on one meetings/ lobbying
  - email campaigns

- Overall, 76% of the respondents were satisfied with the dissemination of their databases, even though the majority of the respondents spend very little time promoting their database (62% spend 0-5% of their time while 29% spend 5-10% of their time). 15% of the databases use 5 or less dissemination instruments among the 19 ones proposed in the questionnaire while 31.5% of the databases surveyed use half or more of the proposed instruments for their dissemination.

- **Production/development of databases:**

- *Budget for the production/development of databases:*

- 35% of the referred databases do not have an assigned budget for the operation, maintenance and promotion, while 15% have below USD 10,000/year, between USD 10,000 to USD 50,000/year, and more than USD 200,000 per year, respectively.

- Overall, 57% of respondents were unsatisfied with the budget available for the developing their databases, while only 29% were satisfied.

- **Cooperation:**

o 90% of the respondents work with other stakeholders in the development, operation and dissemination of their databases.

o Overall, the main partners are other FAO divisions in HQ. The main partners for the specific phases include:

- For the planning, design and development phase: FAO HQ, national government, and other International Organizations.

- For the testing phase: FAO HQ, academia & research institutions

- For the production and maintenance phase: FAO HQ and national government.

- For the dissemination and promotion phase: FAO HQ, national governments, other international organizations, and FAO Decentralized offices.

- **Use of databases:**

o Visitors and web access: 80% of respondents have information the database visitors and web access, while 20% have no information.

o Actual users: 68% of the respondents have information on the actual users, while 32% have no information.

o Users disaggregated by sex: Only 11% of the respondents have information of the users disaggregated by sex, while 89% have no information.

o User manuals/guidelines: 65% of the referred databases have user manuals/ guidelines, while 35% do not have any user manuals or guidelines.

o User surveys: 21% of the respondents carry out user surveys on a regular basis, while 79% do not conduct user surveys.

o M&E procedures: 75% of respondents do not have M&E procedures in place to gather information on the user satisfaction, while 15% do have M&E procedures.

- **Outcomes:** The main outcomes identified by the respondents include:

o Improve evidence based policy making (75% of referred databases)

o Contribute to improve policy making, programmes, training, education, research, or monitoring systems (75% of referred databases)

o Improve technical knowledge of users (70% of referred databases)

o Improve policy and normative capacities (55% of referred databases)

o Contribute to increase national capacities (human, financial) for food and agriculture (55% of referred databases)

Annex 3.5: Case Study – The Food and Agriculture Organization Corporate Statistical Database (FAOSTAT)

1. Introduction

This case study presents the results of the assessment of the *FAOSTAT* conducted as part of the evaluation of FAO's contributions to knowledge on food and agriculture. The assessment seeks to identify the main outcomes achieved by the database, as well as success factors, gaps and unmet needs, against the expectations set in the "theory of change" of the database[88] (see next page).

2. Methodology

The study relies on information collected from primary (interviews, surveys) and secondary sources. Interviews were conducted with FAO staff and a sample of core users -Annex 1. FAOSTAT-related documentation was reviewed including selected procedural documents, scientific papers and guidance documents, as well as presentations and outreach materials – Annex 2. A survey questionnaire was sent to a selected sample of registered users of FAOSTAT; in total 2756 questionnaires were completed and analyzed -Annex 3. An analysis of web and cybermetric data was performed to quantify and qualify the uptake of FAOSTAT according to the activity occurring on third-party websites –Annex 4. Visits to FAOSTAT and data downloads were reviewed –Annex 5. Finally, relevant responses from the evaluation's client survey89 and the Member Country survey90 were compiled and the findings triangulated against those emerging from the above primary and secondary data sources.

3. Description of the evaluand (FAOSTAT)

The FAOSTAT[91] is a database that offers free and easy access to over **3 million** time-series and cross-sectional data for 245 countries and 35 regional areas from 1961. It includes official statistical data on agriculture (production, consumption, trade, prices and resources), nutrition, fisheries, forestry, food aid, land use and population, collected in partnership with other international organizations. The database is maintained by the FAO Statistics Division (ESS) and was recently upgraded with enhanced features that include "browsing and analysis of data, an advanced interactive data download and enhanced data exchange through web services".

FAOSTAT data is meant for use by policy-makers, researchers, private sector, international agencies, civil society and media from the world over in projections, outlooks and other analyses. FAOSTAT is subject to quality checks at different levels with the view of providing robust and transparent data[92]. FAOSTAT is a major component of the FAO Website and is also included in the FAO data warehouse platform[93].

88 The theory of change was formulated in cooperation with FAO staff interviewed for this case study.

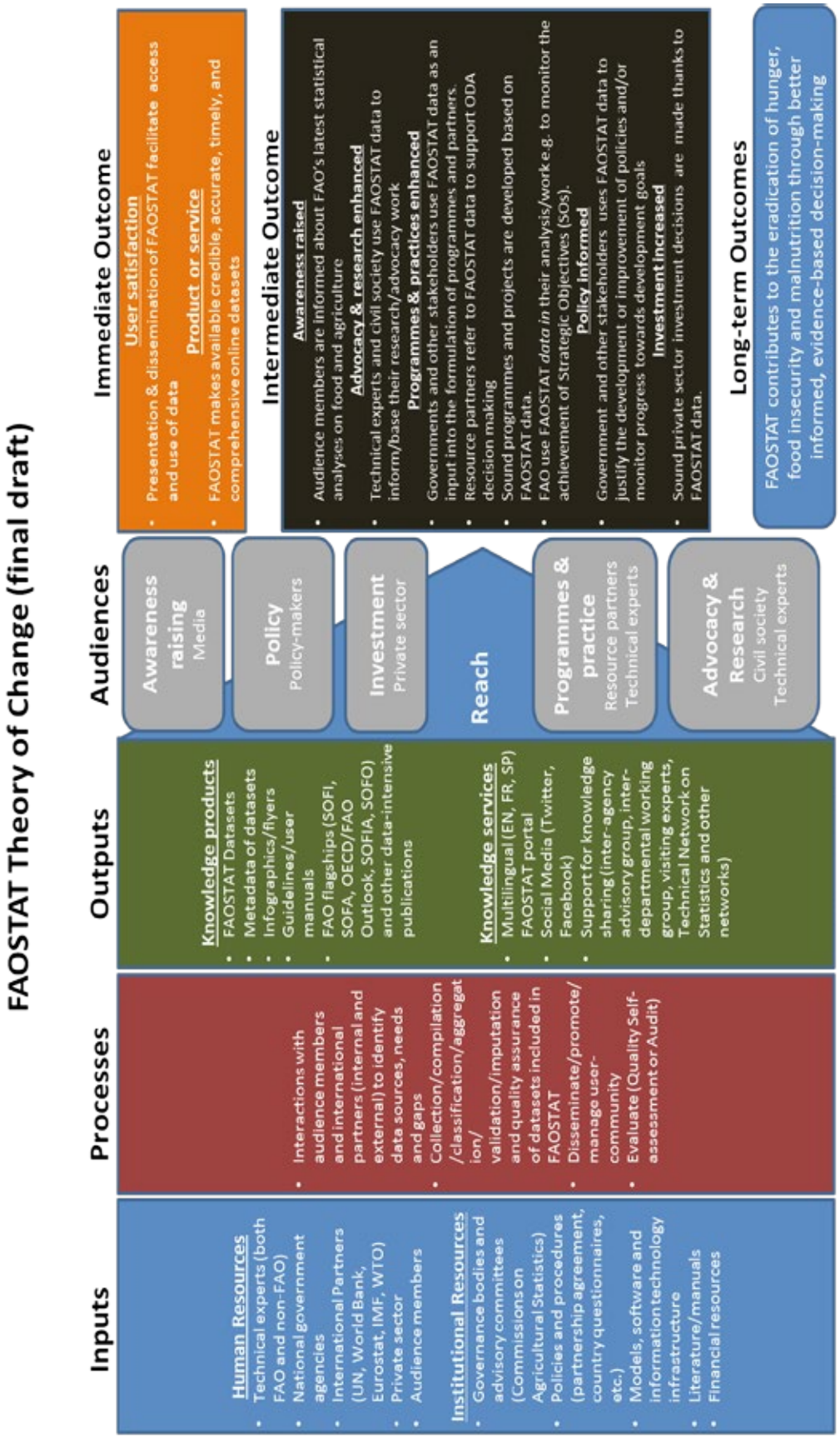
89 The survey was administered to 180 core FAO users in thirteen countries: Belgium, Switzerland, Japan, US, Canada, Albania, Chile, Lebanon, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Turkey, Uganda, and Zambia.

90 The Member Country survey was completed by thirty eight countries.

91 http://faostat.fao.org

92 FAO Statistical Programme of Work 2014-15

93 htttp://data.fao.org


FAOSTAT Theory of Change (final draft)
Inputs
Processes
Outputs
Audiences
Immediate Outcome
Intermediate Outcome
Long-term Outcomes
Human Resources
Technical experts (both FAO and non-FAO)
National government agencies
International Partners (UN, World Bank, Eurostat, IMF, WTO)
Private sector
Audience members
Institutional Resources
Governance bodies and advisory committees (Commissions on Agricultural Statistics)
Policies and procedures (partnership agreement, country questionnaires, etc.)
Models, software and information technology infrastructure
Literature/manuals
Financial resources
Interactions with audience members and international partners (internal and external) to identify data sources, needs and gaps
Collection/compilation /classification/aggregation/ validation/imputation and quality assurance of datasets included in FAOSTAT
Disseminate/promote/ manage user-community
Evaluate (Quality Self-assessment or Audit)
Knowledge products
FAOSTAT Datasets
Metadata of datasets
Infographics/flyers
Guidelines/user manuals
FAO flagships (SOFI, SOFA, OECD/FAO Outlook, SOFIA, SOFO) and other data-intensive publications
Knowledge services
Multilingual (EN, FR, SP) FAOSTAT portal
Social Media (Twitter, Facebook)
Support for knowledge sharing (inter-agency advisory group, inter-departmental working group, visiting experts, Technical Network on Statistics and other networks)
Awareness raising
Media
Policy
Policy-makers
Investment
Private sector
Reach
Programmes & practice
Resource partners
Technical experts
Advocacy & Research
Civil society
Technical experts
User satisfaction
Presentation & dissemination of FAOSTAT facilitate access and use of data
Product or service
FAOSTAT makes available credible, accurate, timely, and comprehensive online datasets
Awareness raised
Audience members are informed about FAO's latest statistical analyses on food and agriculture
Advocacy & research enhanced
Technical experts and civil society use FAOSTAT data to inform/base their research/advocacy work
Programmes & practices enhanced
Governments and other stakeholders use FAOSTAT data as an input into the formulation of programmes and partners.
Resource partners refer to FAOSTAT data to support ODA decision making
Sound programmes and projects are developed based on FAOSTAT data.
FAO use FAOSTAT data in their analysis/work e.g. to monitor the achievement of Strategic Objectives (SOs).
Policy informed
Government and other stakeholders uses FAOSTAT data to justify the development or improvement of policies and/or monitor progress towards development goals
Investment increased
Sound private sector investment decisions are made thanks to FAOSTAT data.
FAOSTAT contributes to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition through better informed, evidence-based decision-making

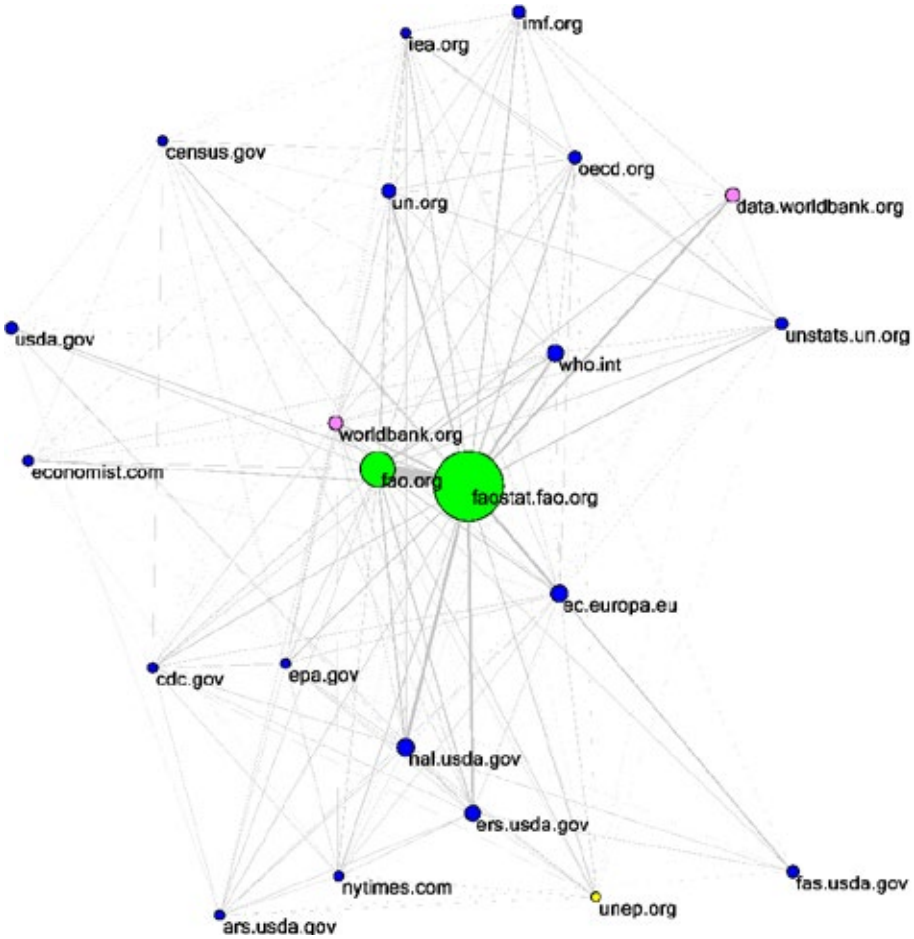
4. Assessment

This section aims to measure the extent to which the outputs and outcomes identified in the theory of change have been met from "a user point of view".

4.1. Targeting and outreach of FAOSTAT

In 2014, FAOSTAT[94] was accessed between 150,000 and 240,000 times per month. Countries that use FAOSTAT the most include the United States, China, Japan, Germany, Brazil, Mexico, Italy, France, Spain, India, and the UK. Visits to FAOSTAT originate from over 100 countries. This together with the broad geographic representation of the survey respondents (from 152 countries) confirms its global outreach. An analysis of the profile of the survey respondents also show that FAOSTAT is primarily used by academia/research institutions (42%) followed by the private sector (19%) and Governments (11%). A mapping of the larger FAOSTAT web community highlights linkages from Governments (USDA, CDC, EPA, Census, etc.), international organizations (OECD, World Bank, EC, IMF, and IEA), the UN (UNSTATS, UN, WHO, UNEP) and media outlets (NY Times, The Economist) – see figure 1.

Figure 1: Web community of FAOSTAT



Source: Cybermetric Analysis, 2014.

4.2. Presentation, quality and usability of FAOSTAT

In general terms the usability of FAOSTAT is positively assessed by survey respondents. More than 80% of the users have a favorable opinion of the cost, comprehensiveness, coverage, uniqueness, presentation, navigation, performance, and languages of the database. ***User support and the degree of involvement of end users*** in the development of the database are

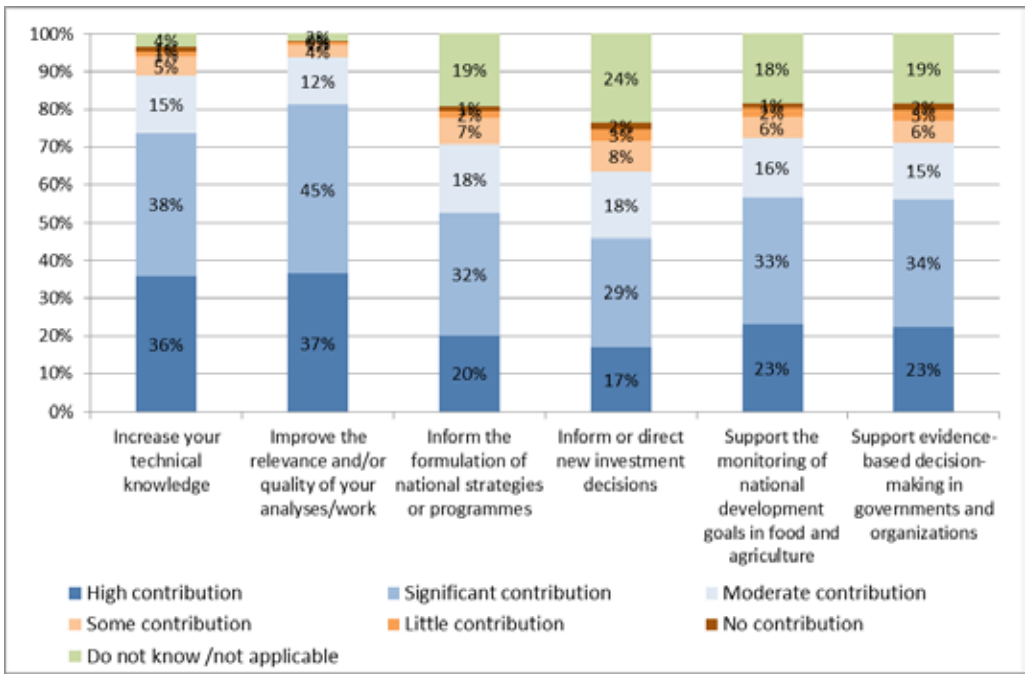
94 This includes visits to both "FAOSTAT 2" and "FAOSTAT 3"; the latter was released in May 2012 and replaced the FAOSTAT 2 database in October 2014.

the factors that receive the lowest ratings. The lack of implication of end users in planning/designing FAOSTAT's statistics is primarily criticized by users from Inter-Governmental Organizations (19 %) and CSOs/NGOs (16%). Country clients[95] further indicate that stronger involvement of Central Government and the National Offices of Statistics in the collection and use of statistics should be pursued by FAO. Users find the database particularly *relevant*, *complete*, *accessible* and *clear*. Conversely ***timeliness* of data and *punctuality*** of releases are less favorably assessed. Users from the *private sector* make the most negative assessment of the timeliness of data (18% rank timeliness from very to moderately poor).

4.3. Usefulness of FAOSTAT

The users' survey shows a positive assessment of the contribution of FAOSTAT to increasing technical knowledge and to improving the relevance and / or the quality of their analyses and work –Figure 2. FAOSTAT is less commended for its contribution to informing or directing new investment decisions, the formulation of national strategies or programmes or support evidence-based decision making. This is coherent with the profile of the typical core user of FAOSTAT, who is a senior or middle-level policy-maker/manager/academician that makes moderate use of the database (from every month to a couple of times per year) for scientific research, general economic analysis, econometric model building and forecasting, or agribusiness development/marketing.

Figure 2: How do you assess the contribution of FAOSTAT to the following outcomes?



Source: User Survey of FAOSTAT, 2015

When compared to alternative data sources referred to by respondents to the user survey (such as the UN, the World Bank or FAO data warehouse), FAOSTAT appears as the most linked and referred to on the Web and in two of the most important abstract and citation databases of peer-reviewed and grey literature, among these four resources –Table 1.

95 See client surveys.

Table 1: Cybermetric analysis of FAOSTAT and related databases

Knowledge Product	Owners	Number of web references		Number of citations	
		Link Hit Estimate	Site Hit Estimate	Google Scholar	Scopus cites
FAOSTAT	FAO	3 612	1 377	44 400	12 967
data.fao.org	FAO	72	34	49	8
data.worldbank.org	The World Bank	353	191	21 400	4 752
data.un.org	United Nations (UN)	861	445	2 720	585

Source: Cybermetric Analysis, 2014.

Although not directly related to the assessment of FAOSTAT, an area of concern is the low number of web references and citations to FAO's data warehouse – a system that was born to increase the accessibility of FAO data by creating a one-stop-shop for all of FAO's data products – see box 1.

Box 1: Data.fao.org – The Statistical Data Warehouse (SDW)

FAO started to develop a SDW in 2011. The initiative followed a recommendation by the "Independent Evaluation of FAO's Role and Works in Statistics" of 2008, suggesting (FAO, 2008, recommendation 4.3) that "*the Organization, under the Chief Statistician should develop an IT and ICT strategy for a data warehouse system for integrating FAO statistics systems.*" Following this recommendation, a Capital Expenditure (CapEx) project, led by CIO division, was approved in September 2010 to develop an SDW including the relevant Information Technology (IT) and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) strategy. The project aimed to address the growing demand for an advanced data dissemination platform and a common data repository at FAO. It also followed the recognition that significant benefits could be reaped from consolidating a growing number of FAO databases into a common platform. Benefits were also expected from creating greater comparability of FAO data, improving access to and search-ability of data ("master search engine"), and in de-duplicating efforts of keeping data in different systems/on different platforms.

The results of this study suggest that the project has not fully achieved the above objectives. Uptake of the new SDW in academic circles and on the web is rather limited. Compared to FAOSTAT, the SDW has merely 2% of the link hits, 2.5% of the site hits, 0.1% of the Google scholar citations, and 0.06% of the Scopus citations, respectively. Although the SDW is a new product, higher uptake was expected given the use of modern dissemination technology and its broad coverage. On the other hand, over 250 survey respondents indicated that "FAO data" [SDW] meets better their needs than FAOSTAT; the highest number among the datasets benchmarked (GIEWS, GeoNetwork, UN data and the World Bank data).Some possible reasons affecting the usefulness of "data.fao.org" include: a) limited user-friendliness/usability of the SDW products (as this study was being conducted a user survey on SDW was being conducted); b) low timeliness of the data provided by the platform, reflecting the fact that databases are not fully integrated into the SDW, and c) low name recognition of the data warehouse brand, when compared to more established databases such as FAOSTAT.

4.3.1. Uptake by policy-makers

Among Central Government staff, 80% of those surveyed noted that FAOSTAT makes a moderate to high contribution to *informing the formulation of national strategies and programmes*. An almost similar rating is returned for the contribution of FAOSTAT to *supporting evidence-based decision in governments and organizations*. Anecdotal evidence collected from policy-makers returns a large spectrum of contributions of FAOSTAT to policy processes as various as informing the formulation of policy decisions on forestry, agriculture and trade of bio based products; informing global policy related processes such as linked to the IPCC; informing governments about the cost effectiveness and efficiency of agricultural policies; contributing to the development of Situational Analyses for policy development; contributing to national policy simulation and their impact on world agricultural markets (i.e. biofuels and land use changes, trade policy); helping to compare a country status with other countries across seasons and to plan for future actions through a National Dairy Plan; informing agricultural production, marketing for trade policy, and strategy design at national level and during negotiations at regional meetings and multilateral fora; influencing decisions on policies of prices and production issues in food categories; contributing to evidence based policy formulation in design of Agricultural statistical programmes for Southern African countries; contributing to the development of the national greenhouse gas inventories for the agricultural sector in Lebanon; informing green growth indicators to assist governments in monitoring progress towards the sustainable use of natural resources; & assisting in meeting the requirement of International bodies.

4.3.2. Uptake by programme managers

In general terms programme managers in central and local Governments make a positive assessment of FAOSTAT especially with regards to its contribution to *monitoring of national development goals in food and agriculture* and to *informing the formulation of national strategies and programmes*. Anecdotal evidence of outcomes has been shared through the user survey, such as using production, productivity, and area related information from FAOSTAT on various crops to analyse needs and formulate project proposals that received funds from various agencies including the public sector. FAOSTAT data was also used in the development of investment projects in pork production in southern Mexico; for building analytical databases life cycle assessment projects -e.g. carbon footprint of milk production.

4.3.3. Uptake by academia and research

Researchers are the major users of FAOSTAT data. The cybermetric analysis identified about 100 academic documents citing FAOSTAT on the web, and more than 44,400 articles citing FAOSTAT in Google scholar. The evaluation also collected evidence on the use of FAOSTAT for education purposes through qualitative inputs from users. Respondents in research and academia have provided more than 700 examples of use of FAOSTAT, such as providing data on production, area, yield, seed production and per capita consumption of cereals and legumes used in developing classes and research carried out at the Faculty of Agronomy of the Central University of Venezuela; contributing to IUCN evaluations of species vulnerability; or informing the comparative analysis of food security policy in developing countries.

4.3.4 Uptake by private sector

Users from the private sector make up about 20% of the respondents to the survey, which highlights the heavy use made by this audience of FAOSTAT data to *informing or directing new investment decisions*. Anecdotal evidence of results was provided by survey respondents such as FAOSTAT helping seed breeders and seed companies understand where to focus investments and resources; helping to understand production and import/export volume of specific crops and livestock in order to make investment decisions on whether to purchase farmland in specific countries; helping to segment a company's market and to focus on specific crops to target new product development for small farmers; advising a country to develop exports based on figures from neighboring countries; contributing to the formulation and

evaluation of projects; or supporting the analysis of agricultural production and marketing for trade.

4.3.5 Uptake by media and civil society

Civil Society Organizations, NGOs, and the media return a positive assessment of FAOSTAT. Examples of use of the database relate to advocacy activities or decision making for instance helping an INGO to prioritize international areas of work; or to contribute assessing supply and demand of ecological resources across nations and inform media articles.

4.3.6 Uptake by international organizations

The cybermetric analysis showed strong reuse of FAOSTAT data by international partners –e.g. WFP, IFAD, IFPRI, WB, etc. Respondents to the user survey highlighted that the unique role of FAOSTAT as the world's most comprehensive database on food and agriculture statistics was credited as contributing to the wide re-use and referrals of the database. FAOSTAT is also heavily used within FAO e.g. to provide the basis for or validate the analyses in flagship publications (SOFI, SOFA), etc.

4.4. Dissemination opportunities

In order to foster the use of FAOSTAT, users have suggested that FAO enlarges the scope of the database by adding data on species and sub-species (e.g. rice, passion fruit, tropical fruits, Africa yam bean, etc.), data on methods of production and exchange (e.g. organic, GMO, pesticides, etc.), socio-economic data (e.g. changes to the farming system, small farmers & markets, consumer prices, farm machinery, waste management, etc.). Users are also interested in finding links to projections and forecasts as well as to qualitative and analytical data in a more accessible way. Integration or reconciling discrepancies between FAOSTAT and other databases (e.g. EUROSTAT, USDA, FAO-OECD, IFPRI, WHO, etc.) would also improve the usability of FAOSTAT and its subsequent dissemination.

5. Conclusion

There is a high level of use, especially among the research and private sector community, of FAOSTAT data. The recently released version of FAOSTAT has been well received by the user community and appears to have improved user experience with the system. Users trust FAOSTAT as a provider of quality-checked data; such appreciation should be translated in continuous efforts to implement a comprehensive quality assurance framework that safeguards this hardly-won trust.

There is also room for enhancing the usability and accessibility of the databases by improving user support and increasing the involvement of end-users in further developments of FAOSTAT. In relation to user requests for broadening the scope of FAOSTAT, a process to prioritize demands for new datasets or additional features should be established, taking into account the role of SDW in such discussions.

Appendix 1: List of persons consulted

1. **Avina Cervantes Francisco Luis**, SEMARNAT INECC, Mexico
2. *Diakosavvas Dimitris*, Senior Agricultural Policy Analyst, *TAD/EP*, OECD, France
3. **Eshragh-Tabary Mahyar**, Statistical Officer, Development Economics, The World Bank
4. **Gennari Pietro,** Director of the Statistics Division (ESS) and Chief Statistician, FAO
5. **Grylle Magnus,** Information Systems Officer, FAO
6. **Heyman Amy,** Statistician & Team Leader Dissemination Team (ESS), FAO
7. **Katz Steve,** Senior Coordinator for Statistics Governance (ESS), FAO
8. **Lebedys Arvydas,** Forestry Officer, FAO
9. **Mertens Esther**, GHG Inventory Officer CD-REDD, Coalition for Rainforest Nations, Italy
10. **Schmidhuber Josef**, Deputy Director Statistics Division (ESS), FAO
11. **Tabbara Hadi**, Consultant, Agriculture, Climate Change and Water Resources, Lebanon

Appendix 2: List of documents reviewed

- **Castaño, J**. 2011. *Integration of Agriculture into the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) in Lao PDR*. FAO. Bangkok (available at: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/ess/documents/meetings_and_workshops/ICAS5/PDF/ICASV_6.1_098_Paper_Castano.pdf).
- **Dunmore, J. & Karlsson, J**. 2008. Independent Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Statistics. FAO. Rome.
- **FAO**. 2007. *FAOSTAT User's Guide – Revision 1. ESS/FAOSTAT/WP A51/version 0.9*. Rome.
- **FAO**. 2014. *Usage Report – ESS Web Applications* (Internal document). Rome. April 2014.
- **Karlsson, J**. 2012. *Consolidated Inventory for 2012 (Excel file)*. FAO. Rome.
- **Karlsson, J**. 2012. *Structure of Data Flows in FAO Datasets – Final for 2012 (Excel file)*. FAO. Rome.
- **Poulsen, L., Stay, R., Bell, L. & Range, S. K.** 2009. *Joint Thematic Evaluation of FAO and WFP Support to Information Systems for Food Security*. FAO & WFP. Rome.
- **Ramasawmy, S. (Ed.).** 2012. *Integrating Food Security Information in National Statistical Systems: Experiences, Achievements, Challenges*. FAO. Rome.

Appendix 3: Survey results

This annex provides a summary and analysis of the online survey conducted to gather perspectives and feedback on FAOSTAT. The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO and was opened during 5.5 weeks, from 17 December 2014 to 24 January 2015. It was sent to circa 20 000 registered users of the database. In addition, an invitation to take the survey was displayed as a pop-up message on FAOSTAT website.

The survey was anonymous. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether the survey was accessed by 3 267 FAOSTAT users. Detailed reviews of the responses lead to remove questionnaires that were entirely empty, or that did not respond to any assessment question –i.e. drop out after the first section on the respondents' profile-, or that did not provide coherent or credible inputs. This left 2 756 questionnaires valid for the analysis which offers a sample size well representative of FAOSTAT users.

1. Survey Demographics

a. Organizations

In which type of organization do you work?	Valid N	%
FAO	103	3,76%
Central Government	221	8,07%
Local Government	73	2,67%
Academia/research institution	1162	42,46%
International Financial Institutions (IFIs)	14	0,51%
Private sector	523	19,11%
Civil Society Organization/Non-Governmental Organization	94	3,43%
Farmers Organization	56	2,05%
Inter-Governmental Organization	49	1,79%
Resource partner / donor	11	0,40%
United Nations (non-FAO)	18	0,66%
Media	35	1,28%
Not currently employed	175	6,39%
Other (please specify)	203	7,42%
Total	**2737**	**100%**

Key findings:

- The highest proportion of survey respondents comes from **academia and research** institutions (circa 42%)
- The private sector is the second most represented population of the survey (circa 20%)
- Few respondents come from International Financial Institutions, the UN, media, IGOs, and farmer organizations

b. Positions

What is your position?	Valid N	%
Senior official/ expert / researcher	799	29,46%
Mid-level official / expert / researcher	555	20,46%
Junior official / expert / researcher	357	13,16%
Technicians (or associated professionals)	209	7,71%
I am a student/ retiree	599	22,09%
Other (please specify)	193	7,12%
Total	**2712**	**100%**

Key findings:

- The largest number of survey respondents holds **senior positions** (circa 30% of senior official/expert/researcher)
- Officials, experts and researchers make close to 62% of survey respondents
- Close to 22% of participants are students or retirees

c. Countries

In what country are you based?							
Country	N	Country	N	Country	N	Country	N
Afghanistan	2	Denmark	17	Lithuania	3	Serbia	12
Albania	1	Dominican Republic	2	Luxembourg	2	Sierra Leone	2
Algeria	25	Ecuador	26	Madagascar	2	Singapore	5
Angola	1	Egypt	22	Mali	5	Slovakia	1
Argentina	50	El Salvador	6	Malta	1	Slovenia	2
Australia	34	Estonia	2	Mauritania	1	Solomon Islands	2
Austria	13	Ethiopia	21	Mauritius	2	Somalia	1
Bahrain	1	Finland	4	Mexico	140	South Africa	15
Bangladesh	7	France	82	Moldova	1	South Sudan	1
Barbados	1	Gabon	4	Monaco	1	Spain	86
Belarus	1	Gambia	1	Montenegro	1	Sri Lanka	9
Belgium	19	Georgia	1	Morocco	14	Sudan	8
Benin	9	Germany	76	Mozambique	4	Suriname	1
Bhutan	1	Ghana	6	Myanmar	3	Swaziland	1
Bolivia	12	Greece	12	Nepal	12	Sweden	19
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	Guatemala	3	Netherlands	37	Switzerland	28
Botswana	1	Haiti	2	New Zealand	4	Syrian Arab Republic	3
Brazil	90	Honduras	5	Nicaragua	8	Tajikistan	1
Bulgaria	6	Hungary	8	Niger	2	Thailand	12
Burkina Faso	10	Iceland	3	Nigeria	29	FYR Macedonia	2
Burundi	3	India	156	Norway	5	Timor-Leste	1

In what country are you based?							
Country	N	Country	N	Country	N	Country	N
Cambodia	3	Indonesia	39	Oman	1	Togo	2
Cameroon	11	Iran	44	Pakistan	24	Trinidad and Tobago	5
Canada	36	Iraq	4	Panama	3	Tunisia	11
Central African Republic	3	Ireland	6	Papua New Guinea	1	Turkey	57
Chad	1	Israel	4	Paraguay	4	Tuvalu	1
Chile	29	Italy	101	Peru	51	Uganda	8
China	131	Jamaica	3	Philippines	15	Ukraine	22
Colombia	51	Japan	108	Poland	19	United Kingdom	79
Comoros	1	Jordan	2	Malawi	5	United Republic of Tanzania	8
Congo	1	Kazakhstan	4	Malaysia	9	United States of America	175
Costa Rica	11	Kenya	11	Portugal	23	Uruguay	3
Côte d'Ivoire	14	Kuwait	2	Qatar	1	Venezuela	36
Croatia	7	Kyrgyzstan	2	Republic of Korea	15	Viet Nam	18
Cuba	6	Lao	1	Romania	15	Yemen	1
Cyprus	2	Latvia	3	Russian Federation	30	Zambia	7
Czech Republic	14	Lebanon	1	Rwanda	2	Zimbabwe	10
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	1	Lesotho	2	Saudi Arabia	12		
Democratic Republic of the Congo	7	Libya	1	Senegal	13		
Total							**2590**

Key findings:

- Six countries –**USA, India, Mexico, China, Japan, and Italy**- originate more than one hundred responses to the questionnaire, accounting for 31% of the total number of respondents
- Some regions are little represented in particular North Africa and The Pacific

d. Work area

What is your main geographical area of work?	Valid N	%
Africa	316	11,66%
Asia and the Pacific	480	17,72%
Europe and Central Asia	378	13,95%
Global	771	28,46%
Latin America and the Caribbean	474	17,50%
Near East and North Africa	68	2,51%
Other (please specify)	222	8,19%
Total	**2709**	**100%**

Key findings:

- The highest number of respondents (28.5%) works at the **global** level
- Near East and North Africa is the geographic with the smallest representation

e. Thematic area of work

Which is your primary thematic area of work? *Select as many as applicable*	**Valid N**
Animal health	215
Animal production	568
Aquaculture	276
Biodiversity	409
Climate change	531
Crop production	1197
Economics	877
Environmental conservation	471
Finance and Insurance	169
Fisheries	216
Food safety	514
Food security	845
Forestry	284
Emergencies	61
Gender and human rights	117
Investment in agriculture	494
Land/ Soils	427
Nutrition	410
Markets	546
Plant Health/ Protection	307
Policy Analysis	404
Social protection	147
Trade	592
Water	310

Key findings:

- **Crop production** is the most widespread thematic area of work
- Emergencies as well as Gender and human rights are selected by few respondents

f. Gender

Key findings:

- Survey respondents are primarily **males (1891 out of 2713)**

g. Age

Key findings:

- Respondents were **experienced** professionals with a majority of them (57%) being 36 or older

1. Current Use

a. Purpose

Key findings:

- The main reason for using FAOSTAT is for **Research on specific issues,** except for a few categories of respondents:
- 26.92% of IFIs use FAOSTAT for General economic analysis, econometric model building and forecasting
- 29.86% of Private sector respondents use FAOSTAT for Agribusiness development / marketing
- 31.03% of United Nations (non-FAO) respondents use FAOSTAT for General economic analysis, econometric model building and forecasting
- Survey respondents indicate that FAOSTAT is not frequently used for Donor funding decision making, including by Resource partners/ donors (15.79%)

b. Frequency

Key findings:

- Survey respondents are almost evenly split between regular users who access the database every month or more frequently, and those who rarely use it
- The largest single group of users access FAOSTAT only a couple of times per year which could imply that the database needs to be easy to navigate and user friendly

c. Datasets use

The survey assessed which of the FAOSTAT datasets were used the most.

Key findings:

- Survey respondents indicate a large discrepancy between datasets with **Production** being almost as equally used as all the other datasets together

2. Assessment

a. Quality

Survey respondents were invited to assess the quality of FAOSTAT.

Key findings:

- As a general pattern the quality of FAOSTAT is positively assessed by survey respondents
- The criteria of Relevance, Completeness, Accessibility, and Clarity are the ones which receive the most favorable assessments
- Timeliness, Punctuality, and Accuracy are the criteria that survey respondents rank the less favorably as also illustrated by quotes such as:
    - *Need to be updating the data regularly, we are now in 2015 but most of your data stops at 2011 and some 2013*
    - *Should be more up to date. We are entering 2015 in a few weeks but we still can see 2011 data in crop production and not 2012 or 2013.*

- *Updates for trade through 2013 would be very welcome*
- *Very useful data. However, would be better to have access sooner to more updated data.*

b. Usability

Survey respondents were invited to assess the usability of FAOSTAT through a number of criteria.

Key findings:

- As a general pattern the usability of FAOSTAT is positively assessed by survey respondents
- The criteria of Cost, Comprehensiveness, Performance, and Coverage are those that collect the most positive assessments
- User support, Participation, and Navigation are the usability criteria that are the most badly rated by survey respondents as also illustrated by quotes such as:
  - *Current support system is very unsatisfactory. Some data have major issues (See prodstat crop "Pumpkins for fodder", code 645 as an example). That said, I certainly appreciate the service being provided*.
  - *I wish there was a helpline to call. I have sent emails but they take a long time to respond & I am usually working on time-sensitive projects. Thank you!*
  - *Thank you for all the wonderful work you do! I could only beg for better user support. I asked for help and was never responded to. Thankfully, your online help is fairly good and I could make guesses towards my questions.*
  - *Support from FAOSTAT in case of any questions was also commendable.*

c. Outcomes

The survey assessed the contribution of FAOSTAT to a select number of outcomes.

Key findings:

- As a general pattern survey respondents assess positively the contribution of FAOSTAT to the proposed outcomes
- FAOSTAT is particularly valued for its contribution to Improve the relevance and/or quality of the analyses/work , and to Increase technical knowledge of respondents
- Survey respondents as whole indicate a lower contribution of FAOSTAT to Inform or direct new investment decisions and to Inform the formulation of national strategies
- Cross-tabulations of survey results nuance overall patterns, for instance with 64% of respondents from Central Government organizations indicating that FAOSTAT has a high or significant contribution to Inform the formulation of national strategies, or 58% of survey respondents from Local Government organizations indicating a high to significant contribution of FAOSTAT to Inform or direct new investment decisions

Survey respondents were proposed to share specific examples where FAOSTAT had contributed to their work. More than 1000 examples of intermediate **outcomes** in the form of brief narratives, short stories, or references to academic articles were collected.

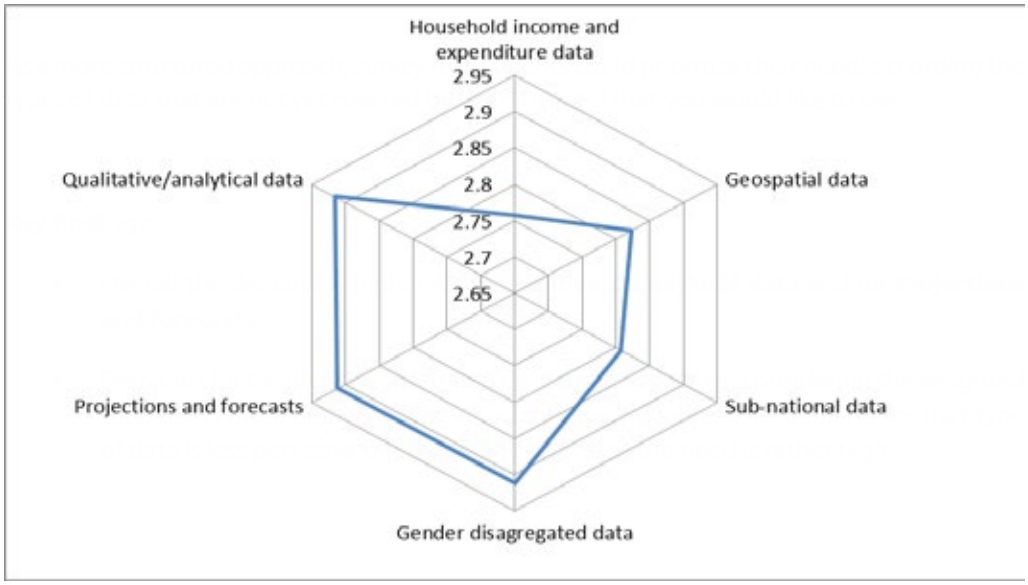
3. Pending needs

a. Topics

Survey participants were proposed to indicate if there would be any food and agriculture related topics that are not currently covered by FAOSTAT that they would like to see. Close to 500 responses were received that convey quite often very specific needs. Any attempt to accurately reflect all inputs may prove impossible. However some of the areas where needs have been conveyed include:

- **Data on species and sub-species**, such as: rice, passion fruit, tropical fruits, Africa yam bean, asparagus, Brussels sprouts, cassava flour, cotton, Muscovy ducks, Irish potato, blackberry, kava piper, millets in different subspecies, mushrooms, pepper pickle, cocoa, banana, shrimp, olive oil, cassava, beans, soybean, snail, sugar, cactus, castor bean (Ricunus communis), apples, etc.
- **Data on methods of production and exchange**, such as: organic, MGO, pesticides, food additives, IFP, fair trade, etc.
- **Socio-economic data**, e.g.: fundamental changes to the farming system, small farmers and agricultural markets, consumer prices, investments in agriculture, farm machinery, food consumption (household or per capita), land distribution, per capita historical data, urban agriculture, energy & water consumption, greenhouse emissions, waste management, disaggregated trade data, etc.
- **Data types and quality**: GIS, atmospheric/space data, more recent data, sub-national data, reconcile with other databases (FAO, FAO-OECD, WHO, IFPRI, UN Stats, EU Stats, etc.), change geographic projection of maps displayed in FAOSTAT to equal-area projections as recommended by UN cartographic guidelines, FAOSTAT standard decimals should contain 3 or 0 digits (except for prices: 2 digits), add Chinese version, etc.

b. Data types



c. Other databases

A number of other databases were offered for survey respondents to compare and indicate their level of use.

Key findings:

- FAO Data and World Bank Data are frequently used by respondents to complement FAOSTAT.

Appendix 4: Cybermetric analysis

Knowledge Products	FAOSTAT	data.fao.org	data.worldbank.org	data.un.org	Fisheries investing in natural capital
Number of web references					
Link Hit Estimates	3 612	72	353	861	33
Site Hit Estimates	1 377	34	191	445	19
Number of citations					
Google Scholar cites	44 400	49	21400	2720	-
Scopus cites	12 967	8	4752	-	5

Knowledge Products		FAOSTAT	data.fao.org
Thematic focus areas			
	Agriculture	6	1
	Agriculture - Agroindustries		1
	Agriculture - Crops	3	
	Agriculture - Fisheries and aquaculture		
	Agriculture - Forestry		
	Agriculture - Land and water		1
	Agriculture - Livestock	1	1
	Economy	4	
	Economy - Financing		
	Economy - Outlooks		
	Economy - Prices	2	
	Economy - Trade	1	
	Emergency & rehabilitation		
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Disaster risk reduction (DRR)		
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Humanitarian response		
	Environment		
	Environment - Climate change		
	Environment - Sustainable management & conservation	2	
	Food	1	
	Food - Food safety (quality)		
	Food - Food security (quantity)	2	
	Food - Nutrition	2	
	Human impacts		
	Human impacts - Gender		
	Human impacts - Human rights		
	Human impacts - Social protection		
	Other (DISCUSS WITH TEAM):		14

Actor type			
Knowledge Products		**FAOSTAT**	**data.fao.org**
	Academia	5	
	Government		
	Intergovernmental organization		1
	International Financial Institutions (IFIS)		
	Media / News	2	
	Multi-sector networks or platforms	4	
	Non-Governmental Organization	2	3
	Private sector / Business	2	2
	Public (Individual / blogger / online community)	5	9
	United Nations system	1	4
Content type			
	Abstract, Summary	2	
	Article, News story, Press release, Books	5	3
	Blog, Editorial, Opinion	2	1
	Data tables, Statistics		3
	E-commerce, Online sales		
	Education, Training		
	Employment, Work related, Job description, Procurement		
	Event listing, Announcement		1
	Listing, Directory	5	1
	Newsletter		
	Organizational information (about us section)		
	Policy, Legislation, Governmental strategy, Lobbying position paper	1	
	Portfolio, Resume, Personal profile		2
	Presentation	2	1
	Promotion, Advertising, Ads		
	Report, Research paper, Academic article	5	
	Resource, Best practice, Workbook, Toolkit, How to		1
	Social media, Discussion group	2	5
	Speech, Discussion, Minutes		
	Wiki	1	1
Citation type			
	Cited as a publication available for purchase		
	Cited in the format of an academic citation, bibliography, footnote	12	
	Cited with an article, story, newsletter, etc...	3	7
	Listed as part of a resume, or listing of self/co-authored publications		1
	Listed in a search engine result page, automated list, auto-aggregated result		

	Listed resource: library or academic sources		
Knowledge Products		**FAOSTAT**	**data.fao.org**
	Listed resource: other	5	4
	Promoted as featured content (Primary focus)		4
	Promoted as secondary content (Teasers, sidebar content, related content)	1	1
	Referenced as the original source of repurposed or spin-off content		2
	Referenced in a formal speech, statement, transcript	1	
	Referenced in a social media discussion, online discussion	2	1
Geographic scope			
	Africa		
	Asia		
	Europe	10	8
	Global / International	6	
	Latin America and the Caribbean		
	Near East		
	North Africa		
	North America	2	2
	The Pacific	1	

Appendix 5: Usage report

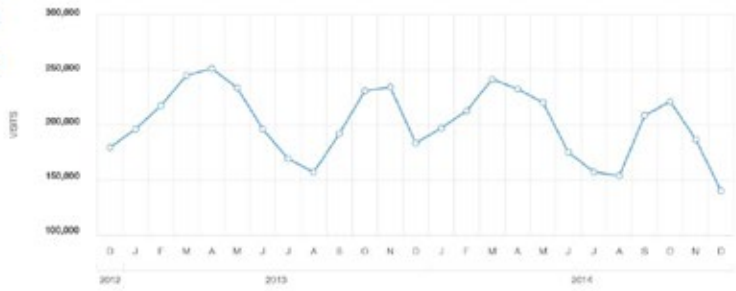
2014 Annual Report / Ess Web Applications

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Statistics Division - ESS

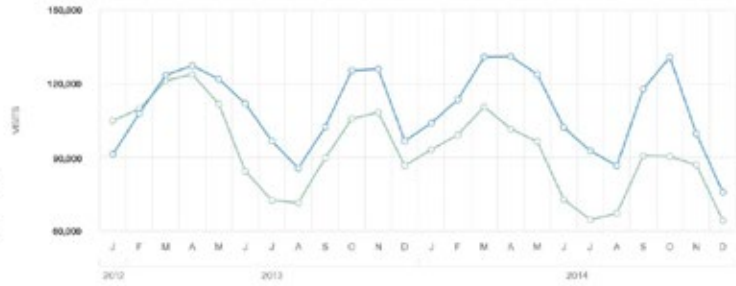
Faostat

This section highlights trends in FAOSTAT2, the traditional interface, and FAOSTAT3, which was launched in May, 2012. It compares the usage of both, together and separately, over time and by region.

FAOSTAT 2
+
FAOSTAT 3
Faostat 2 plus Faostat 3



FAOSTAT 2
and
FAOSTAT 3
Compares Faostat 2 and Faostat 3



FAOSTAT 2
FAOSTAT 3

4

2014 Annual Report / Ess Web Applications

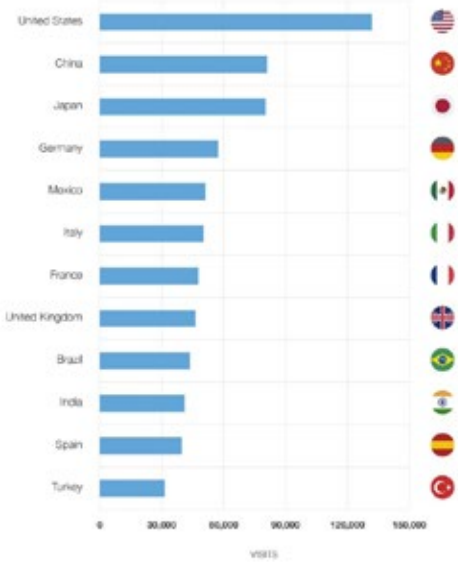
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Statistics Division - ESS

FAOSTAT 3
TOTAL VISITS BY COUNTRY

- 1
- 2 - 500
- 501 - 2,000
- 2,001 - 5,000
- > 5,000

FAOSTAT 3
TOP COUNTRIES
Top countries for the 2014

COUNTRY	VISITS
United States	131,921
China	81,009
Japan	80,275
Germany	57,286
Mexico	51,100
Italy	50,116
France	47,273
United Kingdom	46,345
Brazil	43,571
India	41,027
Spain	39,640
Turkey	31,340



5

2014 Annual Report / Ess Web Applications

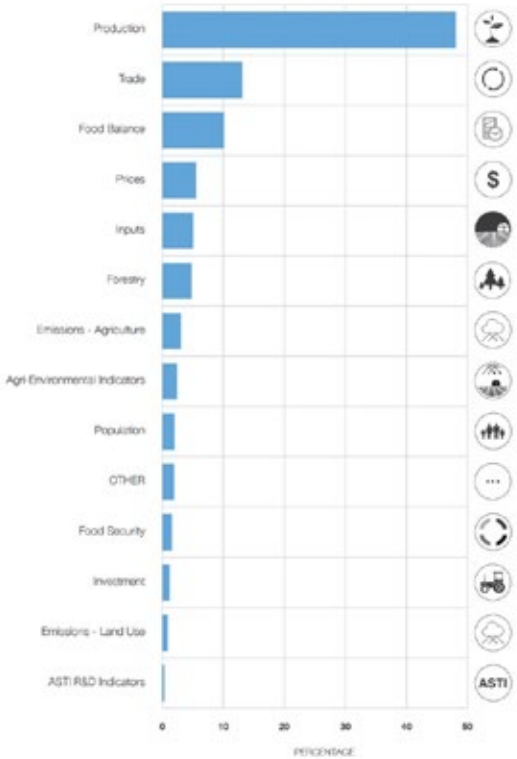
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Statistics Division - ESS

FAOSTAT 3
TOP DOMAINS

Top domains for the 2014

2014

DOMAIN	PERCENTAGE
Production	40.5
Trade	13.5
Food Balance	9.5
Prices	5.4
Forestry	5.4
Inputs	3.7
Population	3.5
Food Security	2.6
Emissions - Agriculture	2.0
Agri-Environmental Indicators	2.0
Emissions - Land Use	1.2
Investment	1.0
ASTI R&D Indicators	0.4
OTHER	0.1



6

Annex 3.6: Case Study – Global Information and Early Warning System's Food Price Monitoring and Analysis Tool (GIEWS FPMA Tool)

1. Introduction

This case study presents the results of the assessment of the **Global Information and Early Warning System** *Food Price Monitoring and Analysis Tool*[96] (GIEWS FPMA Tool) conducted as part of the evaluation of FAO's contributions to knowledge on food and agriculture. The assessment seeks to identify the main outcomes achieved by the database, as well as success factors, gaps and unmet needs, against the expectations set in the "theory of change" of the database[97] (see figure next page).

2. Methodology

The study relies on information collected from primary (interviews, surveys) and secondary sources. Interviews were conducted with FAO staff and a sample of core users -Annex 1. GIEWS and FPMA-related documentation was reviewed including selected procedural documents, scientific papers and guidance documents, as well as presentations and outreach materials – Annex 2. A survey questionnaire was sent to known users of the GIEWS FPMA Tool; in total 50 questionnaires were completed and analyzed -Annex 3. An analysis of web and cybermetric data was performed to quantify and qualify the uptake of the GIEWS FPMA Tool according to the activity occurring on third-party websites –Annex 4. Finally, relevant responses from the evaluation's client survey98 and the Member Country survey99 were compiled and the findings triangulated against those emerging from the above primary and secondary data sources.

3. Description of the evaluand (GIEWS FPMA Tool)

The *Global Information and Early Warning System* (GIEWS) was launched in 1975 with the objective to offer information on food production and food security for every country in the world. The System has grown over the years and is composed of different datasets and information types such as supply/demand time series, price data, indicators, regional bulletins, country briefs, ad hoc reports and alerts. To update the database the System relies on information from UN organizations, governments, regional organizations, NGOs, as well as international research institutes, news services, private sector organizations, and specialized government agencies. In 2008-2009 GIEWS started to develop the *Food Price Data and Analysis Tool* (the FPMA Tool), a database of basic food prices. The Tool has been conceived to allow users quick and user-friendly access to the price data in the GIEWS Food Price Database. The Tool currently includes over 1300 monthly domestic retail and/or wholesale price series of major foods consumed in 93 countries and 69 international food price series covering a total of 20 different food commodity categories. It offers the possibility to make comparisons between different markets and commodities within a country, as well as international and domestic prices or different countries. This allows the analysis of latest basic food price trends and price anomalies as part of GIEWS food security monitoring and early warning activities. Time series span from 1990 to current month, but the start date and depth of local data vary greatly according to the country/commodity.

96 http://www.fao.org/giews/pricetool/

97 The theory of change was formulated in cooperation with FAO staff interviewed for this case study.

98 The survey was administered to 180 core FAO users in thirteen countries: Belgium, Switzerland, Japan, US, Canada, Albania, Chile, Lebanon, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Turkey, Uganda, and Zambia.

99 The Member Country survey was completed by thirty eight countries.

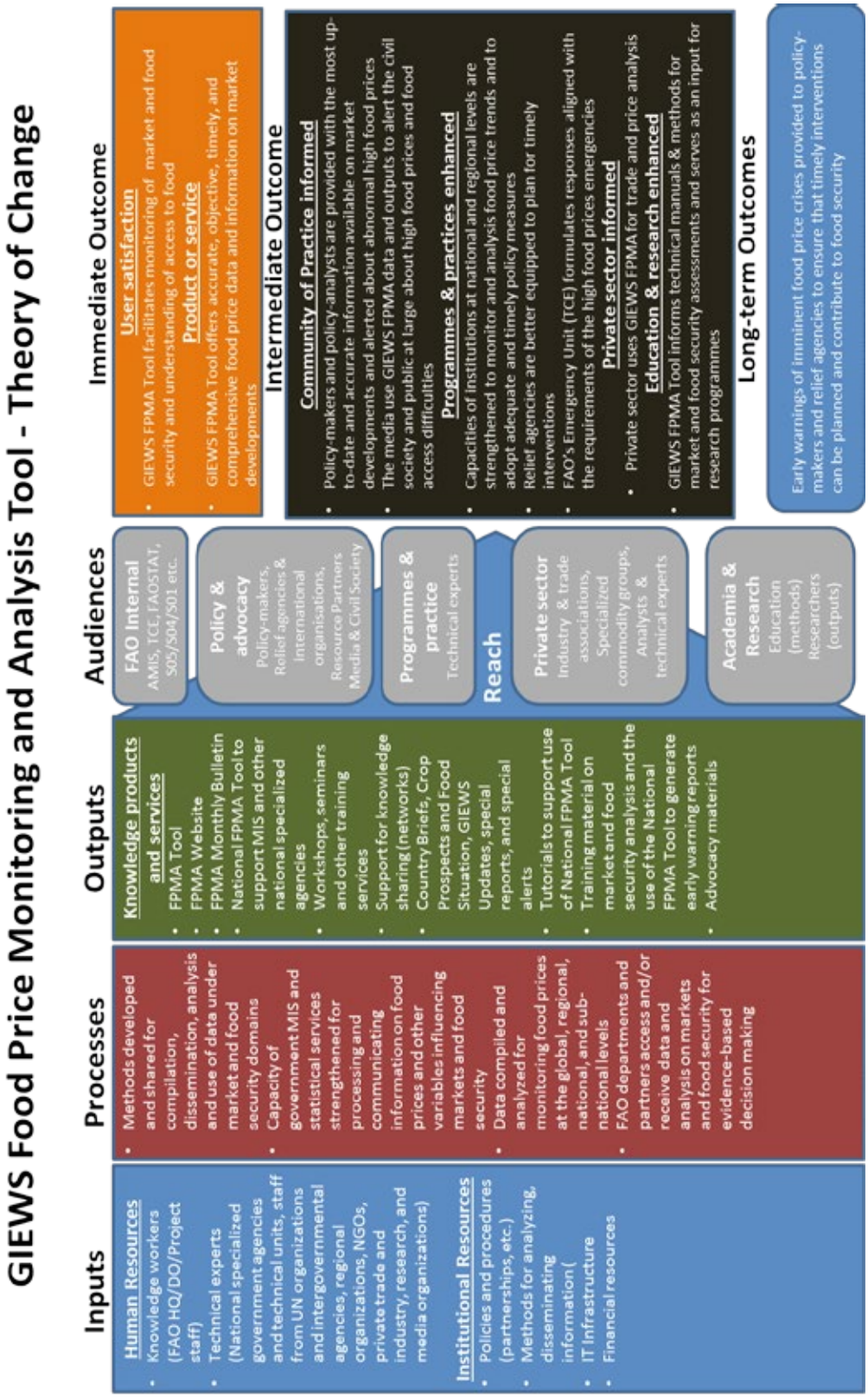
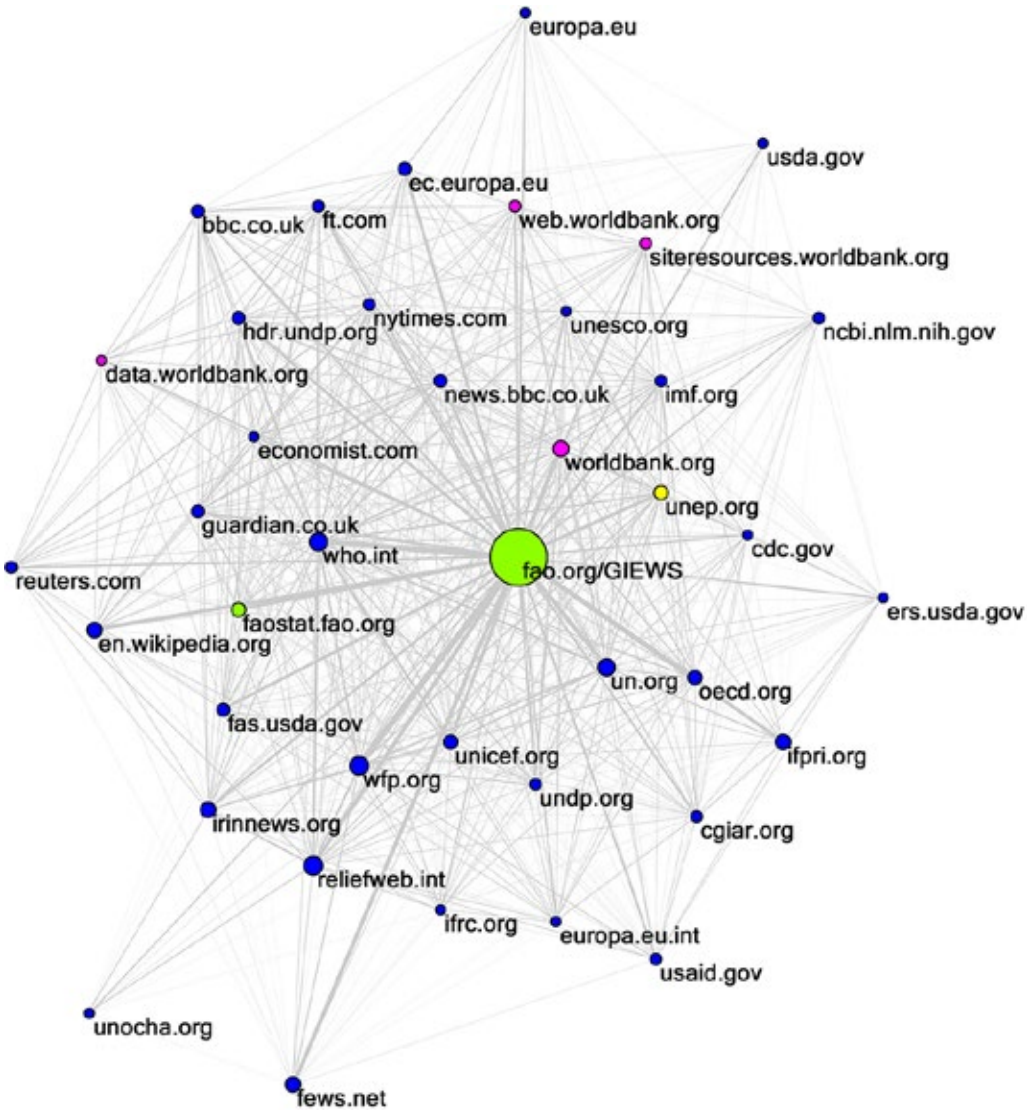

GIEWS Food Price Monitoring and Analysis Tool - Theory of Change
Inputs
Processes
Outputs
Audiences
Immediate Outcome
Human Resources
Knowledge workers (FAO HQ/DO/Project staff)
Technical experts (National specialized government agencies and technical units, staff from UN organizations and intergovernmental agencies, regional organizations, NGOs, private trade and industry, research, and media organizations)
Institutional Resources
Policies and procedures (partnerships, etc.)
Methods for analyzing, disseminating information(
IT Infrastructure
Financial resources
Methods developed and shared for compilation, dissemination, analysis and use of data under market and food security domains
Capacity of government MIS and statistical services strengthened for processing and communicating information on food prices and other variables influencing markets and food security
Data compiled and analyzed for monitoring food prices at the global, regional, national, and sub-national levels
FAO departments and partners access and/or receive data and analysis on markets and food security for evidence-based decision making
Knowledge products and services
FPMA Tool
FPMA Website
FPMA Monthly Bulletin
National FPMA Tool to support MIS and other national specialized agencies
Workshops, seminars and other training services
Support for knowledge sharing (networks)
Country Briefs, Crop Prospects and Food Situation, GIEWS Updates, special reports, and special alerts
Tutorials to support use of National FPMA Tool
Training material on market and food security analysis and the use of the National FPMA Tool to generate early warning reports
Advocacy materials
FAO Internal
AMIS, TCE, FAOSTAT, SOS/SO4/SO1 etc.
Policy & advocacy
Policy-makers, Relief agencies & International organisations, Resource Partners Media & Civil Society
Programmes & practice
Technical experts
Reach
Private sector
Industry & trade associations, Specialized commodity groups, Analysts & technical experts
Academia & Research
Education (methods) Researchers (outputs)
User satisfaction
GIEWS FPMA Tool facilitates monitoring of market and food security and understanding of access to food
Product or service
GIEWS FPMA Tool offers accurate, objective, timely, and comprehensive food price data and information on market developments
Intermediate Outcome
Community of Practice informed
Policy-makers and policy-analysts are provided with the most up-to-date and accurate information available on market developments and alerted about abnormal high food prices
The media use GIEWS FPMA data and outputs to alert the civil society and public at large about high food prices and food access difficulties
Programmes & practices enhanced
Capacities of institutions at national and regional levels are strengthened to monitor and analysis food price trends and to adopt adequate and timely policy measures
Relief agencies are better equipped to plan for timely interventions
FAO's Emergency Unit (TCE) formulates responses aligned with the requirements of the high food prices emergencies
Private sector informed
Private sector uses GIEWS FPMA for trade and price analysis
Education & research enhanced
GIEWS FPMA Tool informs technical manuals & methods for market and food security assessments and serves as an input for research programmes
Long-term Outcomes
Early warnings of imminent food price crises provided to policy-makers and relief agencies to ensure that timely interventions can be planned and contribute to food security

Figure 3: Web community of GIEWS



Source: Cybermetric Analysis, 2014.

4.2. Presentation, quality and usability of the GIEWS FPMA Tool

Most survey participants found that the usability of GIEWS FPMA Tool is satisfactory. The fact that the database is freely accessible is the criterion that is most positively assessed, followed by its navigation, presentation, comprehensiveness and uniqueness[1]. These criteria return more than 80% favorable responses –i.e. from moderately to very good. The areas were responses are more mixed are *User support, Participation, and Language*, suggesting that there is room for improvement user participation and partnerships in the development/design of the FPMA tool as well as language coverage. Similarly, survey respondents return a positive assessment of the quality of GIEWS FPMA Tool. Accessibility, Clarity, Relevance, Punctuality are the factors which are the most positively assessed. *Completeness and Coherence* (with other price data published elsewhere, including within FAO) are the attributes that survey respondents criticize the most.

Overall, the FPMA Tool is qualified as a critical source of information that delivers the most comprehensive dataset and longer time series on commodity prices. Users find particularly convenient to have easy access to different currencies, real and nominal prices, graphs and

1 The recently published Review of Global Food Price Databases (FSIN, 2015) points out overlaps but also complementarities between GIEWS FPMA, WFP VAM price tool, and FEWS NET. Indeed characteristics such as country coverage and timeliness of data validate survey respondents' perspectives about the uniqueness of the GIEWS FPMA tool.

metadata. Comparatively, other organizations that provide price data on commodities do not appear to have a system as sound as the one deployed by FAO or to have the country coverage and timeliness of GIEWS. This is ultimately expressed in the number of citations in academic and grey literature, where GIEWS is more linked and referred to than the FEWS NET Data Portal. Also, FAO's monthly publication Global Food Price Monitor is linked 155 times and referred 66 times. Comparatively WFP's Market Monitor, which is a quarterly newsletter, receives fewer links and website references.

4.3. Usefulness of GIEWS FPMA Tool

The contribution of GIEWS and FPMA Tool to knowledge dissemination is mixed according to survey respondents. Outcomes that are favorably assessed by a clear majority of respondents include *improving the relevance and/or quality of the analyses/work* and *increasing technical knowledge of users*. As a stand-alone input, it is found relatively less useful to *inform or direct new investment decisions*, and *to inform the formulation of national strategies or programmes* –Figure 4.

Figure 4: Contribution of GIEWS FPMA Tool to the proposed outcomes

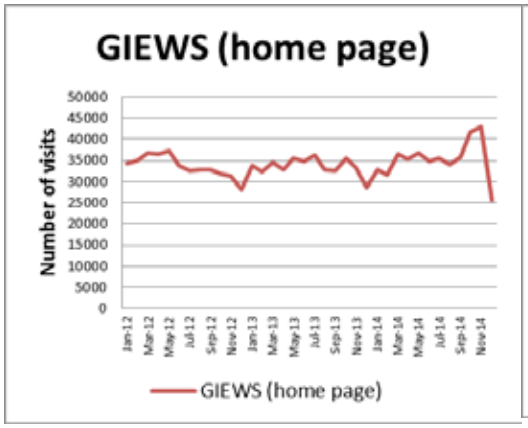


Figure 1: Monthly visits to GIEWS
Source: FAO, 2015

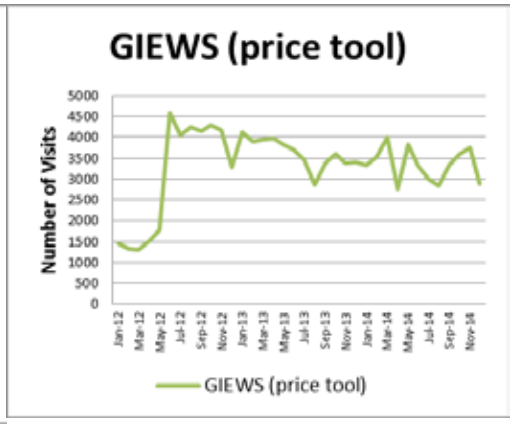


Figure 2: Monthly accesses to GIEWS Data Portal
Source: FAO, 2015

Source: User Survey of GIEWS FPMA, 2015

4.3.1 Uptake by policy-makers

Survey respondents from Government institutions mention using the FPMA tool to track changes in commodity prices at international level and their linkages with the national level, or to monitor how the climate is affecting prices. Other reported use by policy-makers regards the case of the "*October 2014 report on the food security situation in 36 countries [that] was helpful in alerting the Government on food security constraints*" or that GIEWS is used "*mainly by sharing with local institutions for forecast of eventual shortfalls*". The Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Production of El Salvador[2] for instance uses the FPMA Tool in a monthly Price Bulletin that disseminates information and analysis on the prices of the main commodities. Consultations with key informants return the case of a research project conducted at the University of Bonn for the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development. This research that relies on FPMA Tool data aims to analyze the causes of price volatility at global level and in West Africa in particular in order to assess the level of efficiency of national mitigation policies. This work will inform the Ministry in order to support the formulation of evidence-based policy options when engaging in international discussions. Another research work conducted by Oxfam and using data from the FPMA Tool is expected to inform policy-makers (see section below on uptake by civil society).

2 Boletín Mensual de precios mayoristas de los principales productos agropecuarios a nivel nacional. Marzo 2015. Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería Dirección General de Economía Agropecuaria.

4.3.2. Uptake by programme managers

The evaluation has found some evidence of FPMA Tool informing the formulation of global, regional and national strategies, programmes and projects on food security. A survey respondent working in Sudan on an international technical cooperation project mentioned to be "*using the food price data and Global Food Price Monitoring report to cross check data and to inform market analysis and reports".*

4.3.3. Uptake in international organisations

Inter-governmental organizations such as the World Bank and WFP have indicated making frequent use of price data. The World Bank relies on the FPMA Tool to inform the domestic section of the *Food Price Watch* (FPW) and their research. Published every 3 months the FPW follows global food prices, domestic trends, and features a specific topic in every edition. The FPW targets primarily practitioners but is also consulted by the general public. It is disseminated through a mailing list to about 5000-6000 people and is accessible on the World Bank's website. The FPMA tool is also used by WFP's *Market Monitor*, a quarterly publication that provides information and analysis about food price developments and their impact on the cost of the minimum food basket at country level. The primary data source is WFP's internal price database, which is informed through internal procedures by partner governments, statistical offices, and WFP country offices. However when WFP data is missing the FPMA Tool (or GIEWS in general) is used to provide country level information such as data on a specific commodity, price types, etc. The audience of the *Market Monitor* is mixed and includes WFP senior management, WFP staff in the field -i.e. country directors and technical staff-, as well as external organizations –e.g. FAO, WB, AMIS Technical Secretariat, USAID/ FEWSNET, donors, governments and academia-. The *Market Monitor* is sent by email to about 300+ recipients and disseminated through social media and the web.

The FPMA Tool is also used by FAO staff in analyses/research work. For instance the FPMA Tool -along with other sources of data- informs analytical reports provided to countries by FAO Price and Market team to support policy formulation and decision making. Such requests from governments for policy analysis and advisory support have come from Ethiopia, Tanzania, etc. Some studies have been published as research papers and sample reports are used during trainings. Such analyses have reportedly informed policy improvements at country level as well as FAO projects formulation and implementation (MAFAP II and formulation of TCP in Ecuador and Peru). Several FAO staff who responded to the survey further mentioned using GIEWS for project formulation such as "*in response to drought, for emergency project elaboration*" or by indicating that "*GIEWS updates and alerts (and maps) are useful for preparing emergency responses and appeals*".

4.3.4. Uptake in academia and research

The evaluation has collected evidence of the use of GIEWS by the research community. The value of GIEWS/FPMA tool resides in offering local data; such a use has not been however translated in academic/scientific citations which remain relatively low and less than those gather by similar resources (such as FEWSNET and WFP's market monitor) – see table 1.

Table 1: Cybermetric analysis of GIEWS and FPMA Tool

Knowledge Products	Number of web references		Number of citations	
	Link Hit Est.	Site Hit Est.	Google Scholar cites	Scopus cites
GIEWS "FAO"	2 710	1 091	613	208
GIEWS FPMA Tool	98	41	80	6
FEWSNET	2 238	777	1 260	32

Global Food Price Monitor "GIEWS"	155	66	37	3
Seguimiento de los precios de los alimentos en el mundo "SMIA"	3	1	1	-
wfp.org/content/market-monitor	97	46	4	1

Source: Cybermetric Analysis, 2014.

There are however anecdotal evidence that FPMA tool provides data for non-scientific research. Oxfam for instance indicated that GIEWS price data informs a collaborative research project[3] between Oxfam and IDS that studies how people adapt to food price volatility. The research aims to monitor the impacts of, and responses to, volatile food prices in 10 developing countries. The objective of this research is to inform policy-makers and to provide them with evidence and analysis to design social protection policies. The research will be disseminated across the 10 countries of the study as well as globally. As part of this research project, GIEWS FPMA tool is used to provide background information on prices both at retail and wholesale levels. In that regards and considering its timeliness it is found that the FPMA Tool is the best database compared to other alternatives. As noted earlier, another research conducted at the University of Bonn has also produced a number of articles and presentations based on FPMA price data series.

4.3.5 Uptake in the private sector

The evaluation could not find strong evidence of the use of GIEWS for trade and price analysis by private sector actors. The online survey received only 2 contributions from the private sector. Nevertheless one of them referred relying on GIEWS price data to assess "*Third Party Countries Situation where the markets is not very present*" while the other participant mentioned "*researching prices in Africa to try to understand what inhibits supply response at the farm gate level*".

4.3.6. Uptake in the media

The cybermetric analysis found a number of first tier media sites referring to GIEWS (BBC, The Economist, Reuters, Financial Times, IrinNews, NY Times). Specific use of the FPMA Tool was referred by a key informant's in a news and research article on maize prices[4].

4.4. Dissemination prospects

Key informants have provided suggestions to improve the dissemination of GIEWS price data. For instance some users find FAO main website complex to navigate and the FPMA Tool difficult to locate. According to key informants, GIEWS/FPMA tool should be more clearly flagged on FAO's website and easier to search and retrieve. In terms of usability, users indicate that the FPMA Tool is convenient to run simple queries but weak at processing elaborated ones. In the case of complex calculations or cross-tabulations, users prefer to download data series and to rely on different software for manipulation. The graphical presentation proposed by the Tool is found also to be of little use when performing multivariable calculus and complex analysis. Heavy users indicate that it would be better to have a "Data Management Application Programming Interface" (DMAPI) to enable richer data management.

Private sector users pointed out that data extraction could be facilitated with a bulk download function. Such service has been developed by FAO but is accessible on a case by case basis and on request only. This modality aims to avoid that private companies take profit of the FPMA Tool to sell its data while resources available to FAO and partners to operate it are very tight. As an alternative, collaborative agreements with private sector actors could be explored to increase data dissemination and raise resources. Government partners pointed out an

3 http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/our-work/food-livelihoods/food-price-volatility-research?cid=rdt_foodprices

4 http://www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/view/politicsweb/en/page71619?oid=754259&sn=Detail

additional constraint to data dissemination with the fact that information is not available in Spanish or French, while many government employees in developing countries do not speak English. Even the FPMA user guides are available only in English. Civil servants are reportedly seeing numbers and graphs but cannot take advantage of the vast majority of the information available. As a result the tool is not used to its fullest and other sources are referred to inform public studies and work. Finally users find that FAO tends to approach GIEWS and by-products as economists or food sector experts would do, i.e. as technical staff, but not as communication specialists. Outreach could be improved by targeting specific audiences, in particular policy-makers. Dissemination could go beyond the website and feature more frequent field visits to Member Countries and partner institutions, presentations to target users groups, focused media campaigns, and overall improvement in the visibility of the Tool's unique features.

In terms of data quality, users regret that there are gaps in the time series included in the FPMA as price data are sometimes updated only after 8 to 10 months. This is partly because of discontinued price series; a technical solution to put them in an archive is being implemented. There are also some inconsistencies in the datasets between retail and wholesale prices. Timeliness and depth of data would also benefit from more frequent country visits. However this requires resources that have not been made available resulting in fewer field missions. Furthermore not all countries are covered in the GIEWS price data base. Gaining a global coverage through the addition of domestic prices in the missing countries –i.e. developed countries- would certainly be a plus. In this scenario, coordination with other FAO initiatives that provide price information (FAOSTAT, AMIS, etc.) would be required. The expansion, enhancement and dissemination of the FPMA Tool products is constrained by limited financial and human resources as the tool is not yet a FAO corporative activity.

1. Conclusion

The evaluation has collected narratives illustrating the outcomes of the *GIEWS FPMA Tool* in relation to the provision of data and early warnings to policy makers and relief agencies that have contributed to trigger timely interventions that have improved food security. Survey participants and key informants returned a positive assessment of the tool. There is room for improving the targeting of the FPMA tool to meet the specific needs of intended core users, such as policy-makers e.g. by implementing ad-hoc outreach activities, improving language coverage and building analytical capacity in countries to use the FPMA tool.

On a related note the provision of FPMA data to heavy users –such as through bulk download- and the overall business model of such collaboration could deserve further investigations. Collaborative agreements with heavy users could prove mutually beneficial, for instance for FAO by expanding outreach, visibility, and outcomes of the FPMA tool and by opening a window to additional funding resources and services. Targeting may also have to account for the intrinsic nature of the FPMA tool which makes it more likely to be used when food prices fluctuate and is thus less accessed the rest of the time. This aspect seem to be part of the range of issues being addressed in a recent inter-agency study to review global food price databases[5] with the aim to identify opportunities to reduce overlaps and gaps and to improve harmonization. This research comes with a sound agenda of work and promising objectives both for the end-users in terms of seamless and integrated access to information and for all involved institutions in terms of maximizing efficiencies and overall capacities.

Finally the theory of change elaborated with the FPMA team for this case study could become a guiding and living instrument. It may deserve to be translated into a results-based monitoring framework where indicators and targets that support the prioritization of upcoming activities.

5 FSIN, 2015 – see footnote 6.

Appendix 1: List of persons consulted

1. **Ahmed Shukri,** Senior Economist, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
2. **Alderighi Cristina,** Consultant, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
3. **Balbil Liliana,** Senior Economist, Team Leader Trade and Markets Division, FAO
4. **Baquedano Felix,** Economist, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
5. **Ben Belhassen Boubaker**, Director, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
6. **Calpe Concepcion,** Senior Commodity Specialist, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
7. **Contreras Shirly**, Agricultural & Commercial Information Assistant, Ministry of Agriculture, Guatemala
8. **Cuesta Leiva Jose Antonio**, Senior Economist, Poverty Practice, World Bank
9. **Flaemig Tobias**, Market Analyst, Economic & Market Analysis Unit, Analysis and Nutrition Service (OSZAF), WFP Rome
10. **King Richard**, Policy Research Adviser, Oxfam GB
11. **Kornher Lukas**, Researcher, Center for Development Research, University of Bonn
12. **Li Yanyun**, Data management Specialist, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
13. **Morales Cristian**, Economist, Agricultural Development Economics Division, FAO
14. **Myburgh James, Editor & Publisher, Politicsweb.co.za**
15. **Pérez Nery, Agricultural Policies Officer, Ministry of Agriculture, Guatemala**
16. **Pineda Iram, Responsible Officer – Market Information, Ministry of Agriculture, Guatemala**
17. **Racionzer Paul, Agricultural Economist, FAO**

Appendix 2: List of documents reviewed

- **FAO**. 2012. *GIEWS: The Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture*. Rome.
- **FAO**. 2012. *GIEWS - Food Price Data and Analysis Tool, Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture*. Rome.
- **FAO. 2014. GIEWS Tools and Methods. Rome (available at: http://www.fao.org/giews/English/tools.htm).**
- **FAO. 2014. Crop Prospects and Food Evaluation. Rome (available at: http://www.fao.org/giews/English/cpfs/index.htm).**
- **FAO. 2014. Food Outlook. Rome (available at: http://www.fao.org/giews/English/fo/index.htm).**
- **FAO. 2014. Global Food Price Monitor. Rome (available at: http://www.fao.org/giews/english/gfpm/index.htm).**
- **FAO. 2014. Republic of Tajikistan, Food Price Monitoring and Analysis Tool. (Presentation).**

- **FAO. 2014. FPMA. (Brochure). Rome.**
- **FSIN. 2015. Review of Global Food Price Databases: Overlaps, Gaps and Opportunities to Improve Harmonization. WFP. Rome.**
- **Kalkuhl, M. 2014. How strong do global commodity prices influence domestic food prices in developing countries? A global price transmission and vulnerability mapping analysis. ZEF Discussion Papers on Development Policy No. 191.**
- **Kornher, L. 2014. Recent trends in food price volatility in developing countries. Conference Paper at 2nd Bordeaux Workshop in International Economics and Finance: Price risk management of agricultural commodities in developing countries. Bordeaux.**
- **Kornher, L. & Kalkuhl, M. 2013. Food price volatility in developing countries and its determinants. Quarterly Journal of International Agriculture, 52(4), 277-308.**
- **Myburgh, J. 2014. Is Oxfam crying wolf on hunger? Politicsweb (available at: http://www.politicsweb.co.za/politicsweb/view/politicsweb/en/page71619?oid=754259&sn=Detail).**
- **World Bank. 2014. Food Price Watch. Washington (available at: http://newsletters.worldbank.org/newsletters/listnl.htm?nl=fpw).**
- **WFP. 2014. The Market Monitor. Rome (available at: https://www.wfp.org/content/market-monitor).**

Appendix 3: Survey results

This annex provides a summary and analysis of the online survey conducted to gather perspectives and feedback on GIEWS and the FPMA tool. The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO and was opened during 5.5 weeks, from 16 December 2014 to 24 January 2015. It was sent to 156 target users of the system including to aliases of mailing lists which makes the exact number of recipients unknown. More than two third of the email addresses used were part of the FAO domain. The survey was anonymous. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether 50 responses were received. A detailed review did not lead to reject any response. However the sample size is too small to be representative of the entire community of GIEWS users. Therefore the following results represent only the responses of survey participants (confidence level 95% and confidence interval 10%).

1. Survey Demographics

a. Organizations

Key findings:

- The highest proportion of survey respondents comes from **FAO** (68%)
- No contribution was received from CSO/NGOs and from Farmers Organizations
- The number of responses per type of organization does not allow any discrete cross-tabulation of results

b. Positions

Key findings:

- Survey respondents are experienced professionals (70% senior or mid-level officials/ experts/ researchers)

c. Countries

Key findings:

- Italy originates 38% of the responses
- Survey respondents are primarily from developing countries

d. Work area

Key findings:

- The highest number of respondents (36%) works at the **global** level followed by Africa (32%)
- Near East and North Africa and Europe and Central Asia are the geographic areas of focus with the fewer number of respondents

e. Thematic area of work

Key findings:

- **Food security** is the thematic area of work that is the most represented
- Finance and insurance has been selected by only 2 participants

f. Gender

Key findings:

- Survey respondents are primarily **males**

g. Age

Key findings:

- Respondents are experienced professionals with 82% being more than 35 years old

2. Current Use

a. Purpose

Key findings:

- The main reasons for using GIEWS are for **Research on specific issues** and **General economic analysis, econometric model building and forecasting**
- Very respondents report using GIEWS for Investment feasibility studies

b. Frequency

Key findings:

- **GIEWS Country briefs, the Food Price Monitoring and Analysis webpage, and the Food Price Data and Analysis Tool** are accessed more frequently than other GIEWS products

- From one third to half of the respondents access the products a couple of times per year or less which may have implications in terms of making data easily retrievable and accessible

c. Examples of use

Survey participants were invited to share some specific examples of how GIEWS products have supported their work. The following input was collected:

Academia/research institution

- Reviewing long-term trends to understand the impact of emergencies, especially protracted conflict, on production and market systems. To keep track of where shortages and vulnerabilities to emergencies may be emerging.

Central Government

- **Precios internacionales y sus efectos en los precios nacionales. Comportamiento del clima y sus efectos en precios Informes de situación**

FAO

- Domestic price volatility analysis price support policy analysis

- downloaded price data for volatility/price transmission analysis

- Estimates crops calendar

- FAO food index, analysis on prices, alerts

- GIEWS updates and alerts (and maps) are useful for preparing emergency responses and appeals

- I used it before as data for the monthly FAO-WFP Food Security bulletin

- Input for research on food price volatility. Input for research on food price transmission. Commodity value chain analysis. Input for impact evaluation of buffer stock programme on national food markets.

- Mainly by sharing with local institutions for forecast of eventual shortfalls
- October 2014 report on the food security situation in 36 countries was helpful in alerting the Government on food security constraints.
- Para ver estadísticas y proyecciones del país
- Pour l'élaboration des budgets des projets/programmes
- Preparation of Project Documents.
- response to drought, emergency Project elaboration
- Revise previews country briefs Update of the country briefs
- Valuable source of information, especially to gather data on food security in African countries.
- Visualizando la información a nivel de región centroamericana

International Financial Institutions (IFIs)

- Presentations

Local Government

- Changes in commodities prices

Private sector

- I'm researching prices in Africa to try to understand what inhibits supply response at the farm gate level.
- Third Party Countries Situation where the markets is not very present

United Nations (non-FAO)

- For me is a benchmark for early warning for food security. I guide my analysis after reading GIEWS products

Other (please specify)

- Preparing seminar/lecture on food security Assessment of the global food price datasets
- Using the food price data and Global Food Price Monitoring report to cross check or data and to inform or market analysis and reports

3. Assessment

a. Quality

Survey respondents were invited to assess the quality of GIEWS according to a number of factors.

Key findings:

- The vast majority of survey respondents finds that GIEWS is from **moderately good to very good**
- Survey respondents rated more favorably Relevance, Accessibility, Clarity, and Punctuality
- A significant number of survey participants did not assess Accuracy

- Coherence is the criteria that is the less favourably assessed

b. Usability

Survey respondents were invited to assess the usability of GIEWS through a number of criteria.

Key findings:

- As a general pattern the **usability of GIEWS is positively assessed** by survey respondents
- Cost, Navigation, Presentation, Comprehensiveness and Uniqueness are the criteria that return the highest proportion of favourable responses with more than 80% of moderately good to very good assessments
- User support, Participation, Language and Performance are the criteria which are the most poorly assessed by survey respondents
- A significant number of survey participants did not rate the criteria of User support, Participation, and Language

c. Outcomes

The survey assessed the contribution of GIEWS FPMA to a selected number of outcomes.

Key findings:

- The outcomes that are best assessed by survey respondents regard the contribution of GIEWS to Improve the relevance and/or quality of the work and analyses, and to Support evidence-based decision-making in governments and organizations
- Close to 68% of survey respondents indicate that GIEWS moderate to high contribution to Support the planning of timely interventions to food crises
- The contribution of GIEWS is less favourably rated when it comes to Inform or direct new investment options, Inform the formulation of national strategies and programmes, and Support the monitoring of national development goals in food and agriculture
- A cross-tabulation of results for FAO versus non-FAO respondents indicate that the former tend to assess GIEWS slightly more positively than the latter

4. Pending needs

a. Features

Survey participants were proposed to indicate if there would be any features not provided by GIEWS that they would like to see. There was no clear pattern of priorities from the responses collected as needs are dispersed and sometimes opposed.

b. Areas of work

Survey participants were invited to indicate the main research areas/projects they were currently working on/preparing for.

Key findings:

- Food security assessments is the most prevalent area of work of survey respondents
- Few respondents work on Investment flows and financing

c. Other products

A number of other products providing data, information and analyses on food security and early warnings are available.

Key findings:

- FEWSNET and WFP Food Security Monitoring System are also used by more than half of the respondents.

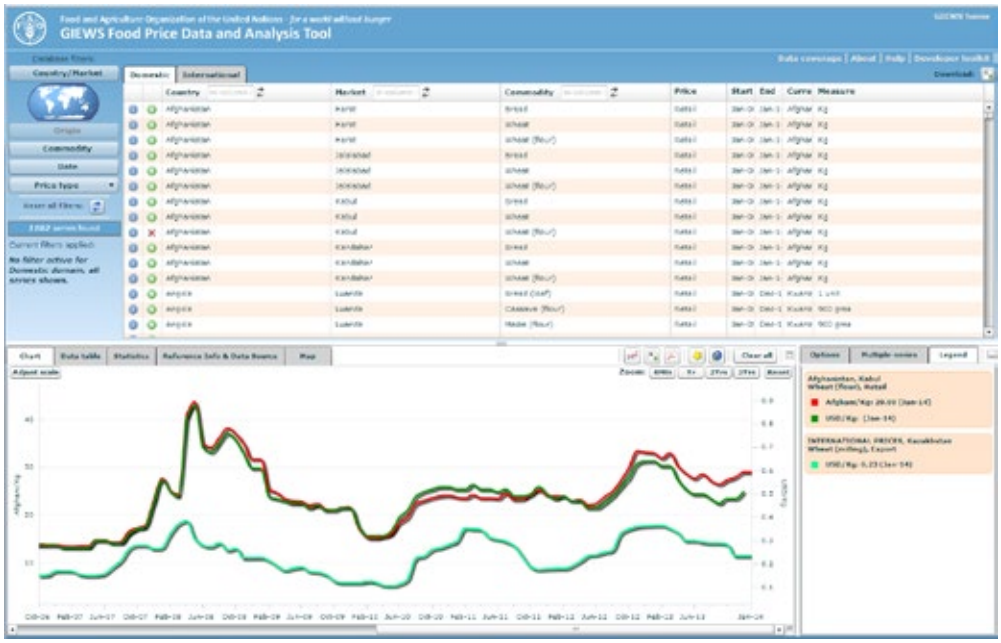
Appendix 4: Cybermetric analysis

Knowledge Products		GIEWS "FAO"	GIEWS food price data and analysis tool	Global Food Price Monitor "GIEWS"	Seguimiento de los precios de los alimentos en el mundo "SMIA"
Language		English	English	English	Spanish
Number of web references					
	Link Hit Est.	2 710	98	155	3
	Site Hit Est.	1 091	41	66	1
	Site Repost Est.	-	-	7	2
Number of citations					
	Google Scholar cites	613	80	37	1
	Scopus cites	208	6	3	-
Thematic focus areas					
	Agriculture	2	2	1	
	Agriculture – Agroindustries		1		
	Agriculture - Crops				
	Agriculture - Fisheries and aquaculture				
	Agriculture - Forestry				
	Agriculture - Land and water				
	Agriculture - Livestock				
	Economy	2	2	1	
	Economy - Financing				
	Economy - Outlooks	1		1	
	Economy – Prices	3	4	10	1
	Economy – Trade				
	Emergency & rehabilitation	1			
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Disaster risk reduction (DRR)				
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Humanitarian response	1			
	Environment	1			
	Environment - Climate change		1		
	Environment - Sustainable management & conservation				
	Food				
	Food - Food safety (quality)				
	Food - Food security (quantity)	7	7	4	
	Food – Nutrition				
	Human impacts	2	2	1	
	Human impacts - Gender				
	Human impacts - Human rights				

Knowledge Products		GIEWS "FAO"	GIEWS food price data and analysis tool	Global Food Price Monitor "GIEWS"	Seguimiento de los precios de los alimentos en el mundo "SMIA"
	Human impacts - Social protection				
Actor type					
	Academia		3	2	
	Government	1			
	Intergovernmental organization		1	1	
	International Financial Institutions (IFIS)		1	1	1
	Media / News	4			
	Multi-sector networks or platforms	1			
	Non-Governmental Organization	2	1	4	
	Private sector / Business			1	
	Public (Individual / blogger / online community)	6	4	4	
	United Nations system	2	3	2	
Content type					
	Abstract, Summary			1	
	Article, News story, Press release, Books	8	4	2	
	Blog, Editorial, Opinion	2	3	3	
	Data tables, Statistics				
	E-commerce, Online sales		1		
	Education, Training				
	Employment, Work related, Job description, Procurement	1			
	Event listing, Announcement				
	Listing, Directory	2	4	1	
	Newsletter			2	
	Organizational information (about us section)				
	Policy, Legislation, Governmental strategy, Lobbying position paper	1			
	Portfolio, Resume, Personal profile	1		1	
	Presentation	1	1		
	Promotion, Advertising, Ads				
	Report, Research paper, Academic article	4	6	7	1
	Resource, Best practice, Workbook, Toolkit, How to			2	

Knowledge Products		GIEWS "FAO"	GIEWS food price data and analysis tool	Global Food Price Monitor "GIEWS"	Seguimiento de los precios de los alimentos en el mundo "SMIA"
	Social media, Discussion group			1	
	Speech, Discussion, Minutes		1		
	Wiki				
Citation type					
	Cited as a publication available for purchase				
	Cited in the format of an academic citation, bibliography, footnote	8	8	13	
	Cited with an article, story, newsletter, etc...	7	3		
	Listed as part of a resume, or listing of self/co-authored publications	2		1	
	Listed in a search engine result page, automated list, auto-aggregated result			1	
	Listed resource: library or academic sources		1		
	Listed resource: other	2	6		
	Promoted as featured content (Primary focus)			2	
	Promoted as secondary content (Teasers, sidebar content, related content)	1		2	
	Referenced as the original source of repurposed or spin-off content				
	Referenced in a formal speech, statement, transcript				
	Referenced in a social media discussion, online discussion		1	1	
Geographic scope					
	Africa	1	1	1	
	Asia	2	2	1	
	Europe	4	5	2	
	Global / International	5	2	1	
	Latin America and the Caribbean			1	
	Near East				
	North Africa				
	North America	2	3	7	1
	The Pacific				

Appendix 5: Key facts about the GIEWS FPMA Tool



Date created: First version of the Tool released in 2009 and a second one in 2011. Since then, several improvements have been incorporated, notably in revised second version released 2012.

Human resources for the FPMA Tool: Development and maintenance–comprising the database (currently 92 countries and 69 international price series) webpage and new developments, including the adaption of the price tool for use at country level - are at present:

- 1 full time Price data analysis Project post (until end of March 2015), and subsequently a long-term consultant,
- 1 full-time Junior consultant
- 1 full time Regular Programme (RP) clerk for data entry,
- 4 full-time IT consultants (until June/November 2015),
- Short-term consultants for ad-hoc tasks,Half-time for supervisory and technical oversight by 2 RP GIEWS officers (70% of P5 and 60% of P4) and partial time of other GIEWS staff (45% P3 Economist, 30% P3 Data Management, 10% other GIEWS Country Officers) .

Financial resources for <u>all FPMA activities</u> (the FPMA Tool, FPMA Webpage, FPMA monthly Bulletin, FPMA National Tool on-going or about to be started in 6 countries):

- **Bill & Melinda Gates foundation** project MTF/GLO/359/BMG "Strengthening Agriculture Market Information Systems globally and in selected countries using innovative methods and digital technology" has provided USD 530,000.00 for four years,
- **Regular programme** financial resources under SO1, including staff savings amount to about USD300,000.00 for the biennium 2014/2015,

Project funds were mostly spent by early 2015 and RP financial resources are currently covering the activities.

List of the partners that contribute/support the development/maintenance of the database:
Over 100 national partners

http://www.fao.org/giews/food-prices/data-partners/en/

List of FAO strategic objectives/outputs that the database (or related by-products) supports:
SO1, SO4, SO5

Annex 3.7: Case Study – Global Agro-Ecological Zones Data Portal (GAEZ)

1. Introduction

This case study presents the results of the assessment of the Global Agro-Ecological Zones Data Portal[6] (GAEZ) conducted as part of the evaluation of FAO's contributions to knowledge on food and agriculture. The assessment seeks to identify the main outcomes achieved by the database, as well as success factors, gaps and unmet needs, against the expectations set in the "theory of change" of the database[7] (see figure next page).

2. Methodology

The study relies on information collected from primary (interviews, surveys) and secondary sources. Interviews were conducted with FAO staff and a sample of core users -Annex 1. GAEZ-related documentation was reviewed including selected procedural documents, scientific papers and guidance documents, as well as presentations and outreach materials –Annex 2. A survey questionnaire was sent to a selected sample of registered users of GAEZ; in total 213 questionnaires were completed and analyzed -Annex 3. An analysis of web and cybermetric data was performed to quantify and qualify the uptake of GAEZ according to the activity occurring on third-party websites –Annex 4. Finally, relevant responses from the evaluation's client survey8 and the Member Country survey9 were compiled and the findings triangulated against those emerging from the above primary and secondary data sources.

3. Description of the evaluand (GAEZ)

The AEZ approach is a GIS-based modelling framework that combines land evaluation methods with socioeconomic and multi-criteria analysis to evaluate spatial and dynamic aspects of agriculture. FAO and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) have developed the Agro-Ecological Zones (AEZ) methodology over the past 30 years for assessing agricultural resources and potential. Since 2000 global AEZ assessments have been performed covering five thematic areas: (i) land and water resources, (ii) agro-climatic resources, (iii) suitability and potential yields for up to 280 crops/land utilization types, (iv) downscaled actual yields and production of main crop commodities, and (v) yield and production gaps. Data from the global AEZ assessments is stored and made available in the Global AEZ (GAEZ) database, which was launched in 2012 and includes thousands of spatial datasets and tabular information.

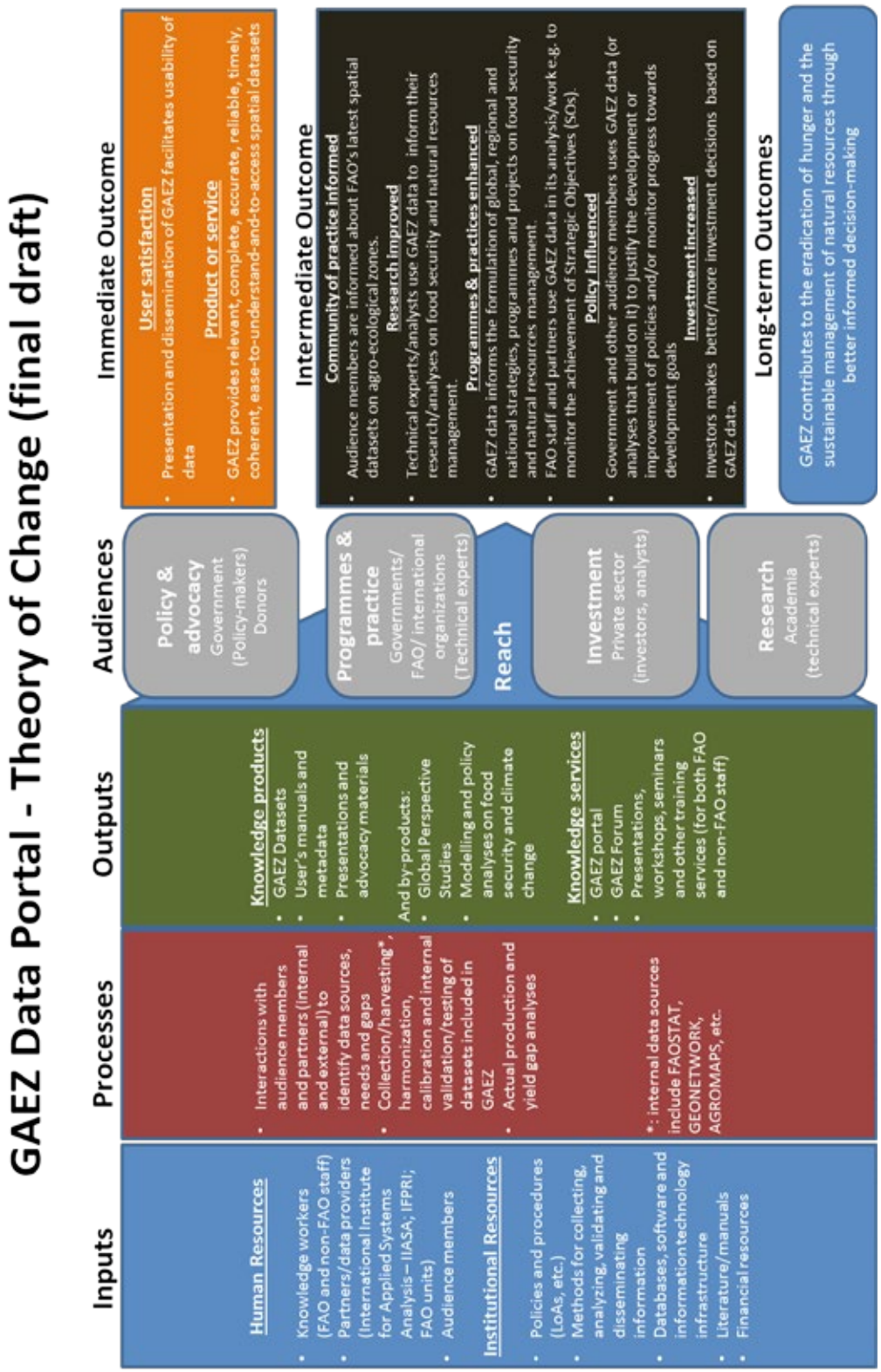
GAEZ also compiles data publically accessible for use and verification from the IIASA and FAO Web sites. Results can be aggregated for current major land use/cover patterns and by administrative units, land protection status, or broad classes reflecting infrastructure availability and market access conditions. The GAEZ Data Portal provides an interactive data access facility. It offers free access to data and information, allows visualization of data, and offers users with various analysis and download options.

6 http://gaez.fao.org/Main.html#

7 The theory of change was formulated in cooperation with FAO staff interviewed for this case study.

8 The survey was administered to 171 core FAO users in the following countries: Belgium, Switzerland, Japan, US, Canada, Albania, Chile, Lebanon, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Turkey, Uganda, and Zambia.

9 The Member Country survey was completed by thirty six countries.


GAEZ Data Portal - Theory of Change (final draft)
Inputs
Processes
Outputs
Audiences
Immediate Outcome
Intermediate Outcome
Long-term Outcomes
Human Resources
Knowledge workers (FAO and non-FAO staff)
Partners/data providers (International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis – IIASA; IFPRI; FAO units)
Audience members
Institutional Resources
Policies and procedures (LoAs, etc.)
Methods for collecting, analyzing, validating and disseminating information
Databases, software and information technology infrastructure
Literature/manuals
Financial resources
Interactions with audience members and partners (internal and external) to identify data sources, needs and gaps
Collection/harvesting*, harmonization, calibration and internal validation/testing of datasets included in GAEZ
Actual production and yield gap analyses
*: internal data sources include FAOSTAT, GEONETWORK, AGROMAPS, etc.
Knowledge products
GAEZ Datasets
User's manuals and metadata
Presentations and advocacy materials
And by-products:
Global Perspective Studies
Modelling and policy analyses on food security and climate change
Knowledge services
GAEZ portal
GAEZ Forum
Presentations, workshops, seminars and other training services (for both FAO and non-FAO staff)
Policy & advocacy
Government
(Policy-makers)
Donors
Programmes & practice
Governments/ FAO/ international organizations
(Technical experts)
Reach
Investment
Private sector
(investors, analysts)
Research
Academia
(technical experts)
User satisfaction
Presentation and dissemination of GAEZ facilitates usability of data
Product or service
GAEZ provides relevant, complete, accurate, reliable, timely, coherent, ease-to-understand-and-to-access spatial datasets
Community of practice informed
Audience members are informed about FAO's latest spatial datasets on agro-ecological zones.
Research Improved
Technical experts/analysts use GAEZ data to inform their research/analyses on food security and natural resources management.
Programmes & practices enhanced
GAEZ data informs the formulation of global, regional and national strategies, programmes and projects on food security and natural resources management.
FAO staff and partners use GAEZ data in its analysis/work e.g. to monitor the achievement of Strategic Objectives (SOs).
Policy Influenced
Government and other audience members uses GAEZ data (or analyses that build on it) to justify the development or improvement of policies and/or monitor progress towards development goals
Investment Increased
Investors makes better/more investment decisions based on GAEZ data.
GAEZ contributes to the eradication of hunger and the sustainable management of natural resources through better informed decision-making

The GAEZ Data Portal and related by-products contribute to FAO's Strategic Objective SO2 -with somewhat limited resources as presented in Annex 5. The portal aims at ensuring that "member countries have sufficient, reliable information and knowledge on sustainable management of natural resources for food and agriculture in support of policy decisions at all scales". GAEZ is of particular interest to national and international organizations dealing with aspects of agriculture, land and water resources, food security, agricultural development and policies, or with climate variability and climate change. GAEZ outputs and procedures can also be applied for *teaching and research*, enabling comparative regional analysis and promoting an enhanced level of resource literacy. National and sub-national applications of GAEZ may provide important components of land use planning. The assessment of alternative land utilization types provides *land use planners and policy makers* with options in dealing with utilization of land resources. The Data Portal is also utilized by FAO and other *international organizations* in their analyses and provision of policy advice within the context of international conventions and agreements on various areas of interest e.g. natural resources monitoring and management, climate change, biodiversity and land degradation.

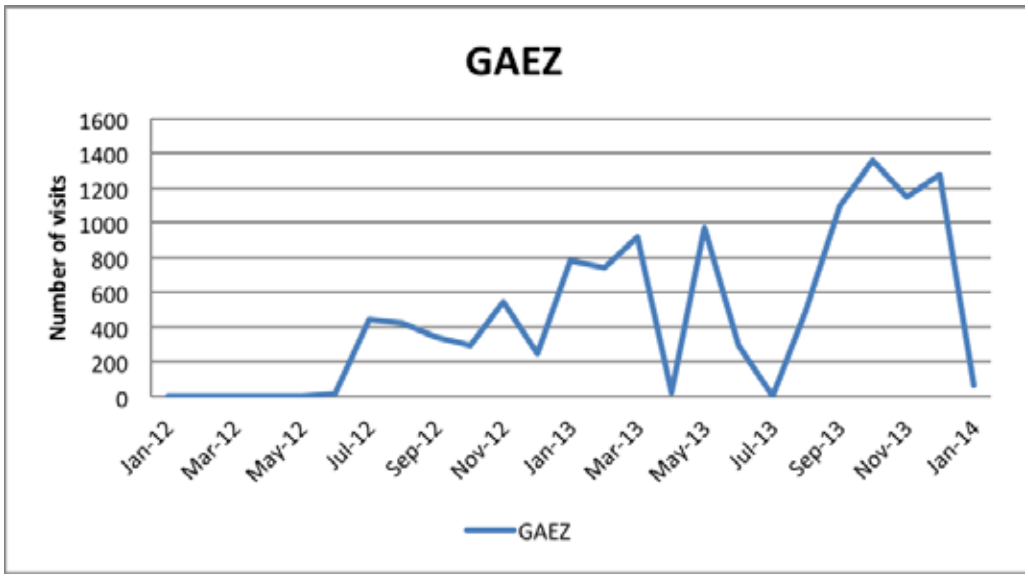
Assessment

This section aims to measure the extent to which the outputs and outcomes identified in the theory of change have been met from "a user point of view".

4.1. Outreach and targeting of GAEZ

GAEZ is a relatively "young" portal, having been online for less than three years. Web traffic information is not fully available but data for 2012-13 confirms that in terms of quantity the visits to the Portal have steadily increased, and reached a peak of 1,400 visits in late 2013 – Figure 1.

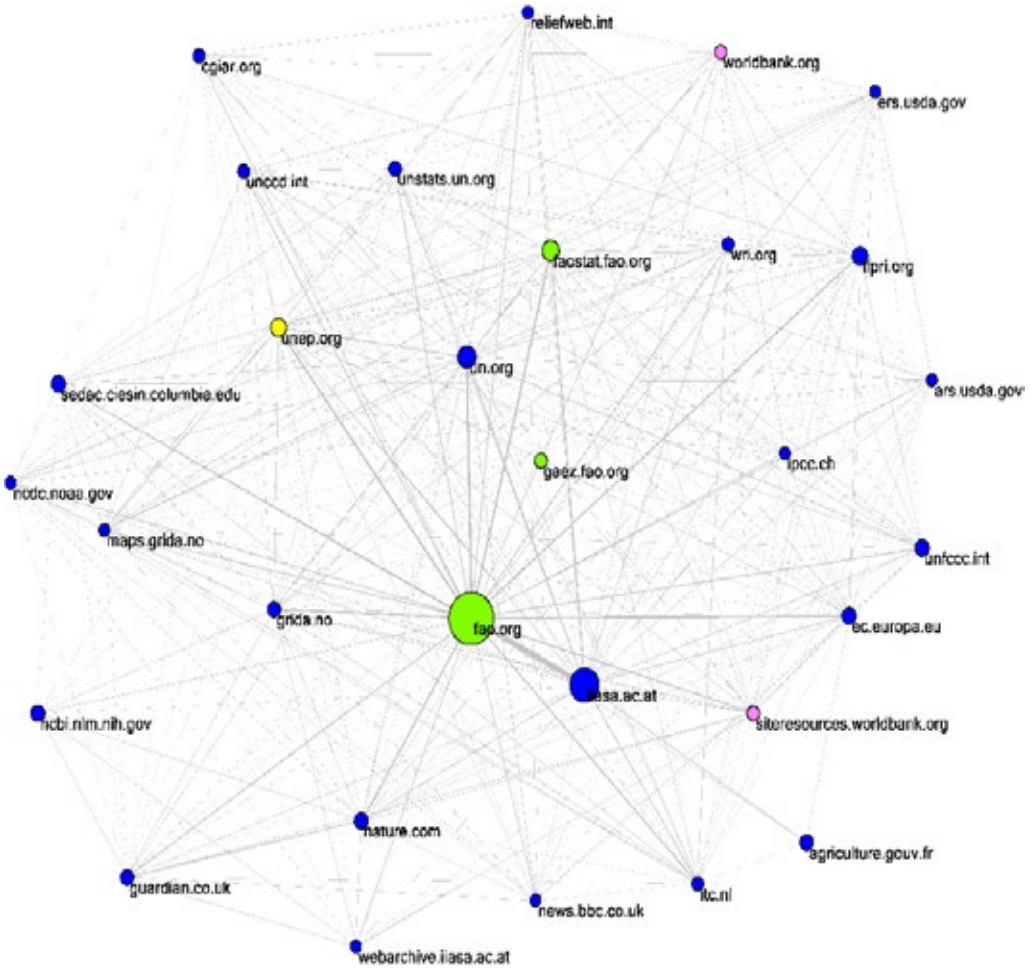
Figure 1: Monthly visits to GAEZ



Source: FAO CIO, 2015

Based on the survey results, top users of the Portal are research institutions and academia (66%), followed by international organizations (7%) and the private sector (7%). This is validated by the results of the mapping of the GAEZ web community, which shows that most referrals to GAEZ come from research and academia (IPCC, IIASA, ITC, Columbia University, IFPRI, CGIAR), international organizations (UNFCCC, UNCCD, UNSTATS, UNEP, GRID-Arendal, ReliefWeb, EC, World Bank), Governments (French Ministry of Agriculture, USDA, NOAA, NCBI), and the media (Nature, The Guardian, BBC) –Figure 2.

Figure 2: Network Map of GAEZ[10]



Source: Cybermetric Analysis, 2014.

Based on an analysis of survey respondents and the cybermetric results, the typical core user of GAEZ is a senior or middle-level official/expert/researcher who works on areas related to crop production, climate change, land/soils, or economics, and makes moderate use of the Data Portal (a couple of times per year) for scientific research or economic analyses. Most of the citations/references to GAEZ come from users located in developed countries. Discussions on ways of improving access to GAEZ analyses and results by policy-makers, especially in developing countries, would appear timely.

4.2. Presentation, quality and usability of GAEZ

The majority of survey respondents provided a favorable assessment of GAEZ's presentation especially on the criteria of *Cost, Comprehensiveness, Coverage, Uniqueness, and Performance*. Of particular interest for most users is the granular resolution of GAEZ datasets compared to other databases and the large number of series on crop yields, models, downscale data, etc. Furthermore, data can be combined in different ways to forge maps or download in grid format. According to key informants the Data Portal is a unique model; while there are lots of geospatial models in the world; GAEZ is referred as a very important one and a pillar to a number of research outputs. From an end-user perspective, the fact that data is freely and directly accessible online without having to register or to contact an intermediary is extremely convenient.

10 Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing GAEZ links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to GAEZ).

Key informants noted that GAEZ provides good quality data covering almost 20 years of time series and a large range of datasets (e.g. soils, water, land use, etc.) allowing sound agro-ecological modelling and analysis of future agricultural prospects with a systemic perspective especially at global scale. This was confirmed by survey respondents who rated *Relevance, Completeness, Accessibility,* and *Clarity* of GAEZ data as the criteria most favorably assessed. User assessment is less positive when it comes to *Punctuality, Timeliness, Accuracy* and *Reliability of GAEZ data*. Users pointed out that there is a lack of accuracy in the date of some countries (e.g. Madagascar) and data on some crops (e.g. maize, rice, soy beans, etc.) could be better validated and improved. Chiefly, the time series are outdated, as they often stop in 2001. More timely data –e.g. up to 2010 or 2014- would make GAEZ more useful especially if datasets could reflect the latest IPCC scenarios that were presented in 2014. Inconsistencies between GAEZ and a similar database run by IFPRI (Global land cover) were pointed out and it was suggested that both organizations reconcile their methodologies and datasets. Users further raised the needs for additional tables, such as on socio-economic data.

In terms of usability, users rated less favorably the *Navigation*, *Participation*, *Language*, and *User support*. As flagged by a survey participant, GAEZ has "great data, [but need to] improve the terrible portal so that users can access the data better". Improving the user-friendliness of the Portal will have an impact in the outreach of the portal – facilitating its use and understanding by a broader set of users (beyond those with higher IT skills and/or already familiar with/aware of the system). A new version of the portal currently underway should address such issues.

4.3. Usefulness of GAEZ

Survey respondents found GAEZ to be particularly effective at *improving the relevance and/or quality of the analyses and work* of its users and in *increasing their technical knowledge*. In the middle of the scale, users felt that GAEZ has supported building a stronger evidence base to decision-making in governments and organizations; the breadth of GAEZ data (in terms of terabytes) and the robustness of the underlying AEZ system seem to have played a role on this.

On the other hand, fewer survey respondents indicate that the Data Portal has made positive outcomes in terms of informing or directing new investment decisions, informing the formulation of national strategies or programmes, and supporting the monitoring of national development goals in food and agriculture; as described below, the complexities and vastness of GAEZ data, its relatively young age, and the need to improve the Portal's usability and capacities especially among developing world planners and scientist may have taken a toll in this respect.

Finally, the cybermetric analysis suggests that references to GAEZ-based studies and data in the media and by international organizations and by bloggers are numerous, but this in itself have not led to or being a major factor for policy or programmatic changes.

4.3.1. Uptake by policy-makers

Few partners from central government organizations have taken the survey and the evaluation did not find strong evidence of direct use of the Data Portal by policy makers. However, examples were identified of an indirect leverage by policy makers of GAEZ brokered by the research community. For instance IPCC reportedly using GAEZ in their programming work which informs the international conventions COP and sustainable development agendas. The subsequent international agreements lead to regional and national policy developments. A key informant shared also 3 policy briefs relying on GAEZ data to investigate the future of agricultural production, climate change and resources, and China economic model. These papers elaborated conclusions on the future of imports and exports of various products (e.g. maize, soya, etc.) to inform the central Government:

- *Who will feed China's livestock? – A policy report on feed security issue in the future*: This policy report pointed out that the issue of livestock feed security is of more concerns than the food security issue in China, and that more efforts should be made to improve the supply of livestock-feed via both domestic production and the import of dried distillers grain with soluble (DDGs). This report informed the State Council.

- *Assessment on the status of excessive fertilizers application and its impact on environment in Shanghai area*: This research was well received by the Shanghai local government that granted support for future research on nitrogen surplus.

- *"The status of nationwide excessive fertilizers application and its implications to environment and climate change"*: The report suggested that low-carbon and organic agriculture technologies should be implemented in the regions with severe nitrogen surplus. It was submitted to China Meteorological Administration.

The assessment could not however validate whether the above studies, and those noted below, were effectively used by policy-makers in the process of developing new policies or programmes. There is nevertheless strong evidence that academia and research users have targeted policy-makers as major users of their analyses.

4.3.2. Uptake by programme managers

There has been some uptake of GAEZ data by programme managers. FAO TCI (Investments) is using GAEZ data and information in formulation of proposals to target investments. A survey participant refers to an extensive mapping based on GAEZ for the DRC's first national analysis of the potential for sustainable cocoa production in the country. Several survey respondents however noted that at its present stage GAEZ data was not the most appropriate source to inform the development/enhancement of national programmes given that "*The gaps and current scale makes it almost useless for national projects*", especially in developing countries. Therefore "*it would be very helpful if the spatial resolution of the crop statistic datasets (area, yield, production) in raster format could be improved from 5 arc-minute grid cells"*. Programme planners appear to require greater detail in the analyses in order to be able to use the results. Further work in the development and integration of national and sub-national AEZ data may make the database and assessments more relevant to this set of users. FAO is currently working on assessments at 30 arc-second (~1 sqkm) for countries of focus which will provide more adequate information to address such needs but requires significant additional resources.

4.3.3. Uptake in academia and research

Strong evidence of use of GAEZ data in academia and research was found through the cybermetric analysis[11], user survey and the interviews with key informants[12]. According to academia users, the Portal is useful to analyze food demand and supply at global scale and to define potentials of productions as well as types of crops. Examples of research areas are provided by survey participants where GAEZ data has been used and was found essential include:

- An assessment of land productivity and food security in China in the mid 90's based on GAEZ data that informed the State Land Administration, an on-going research on the adaptation of rural livelihoods to climate change in India in order to devise relevant policies.

- Research on farming systems and poverty in Africa funded by the Australian

11 GAEZ is primarily cited by academia, followed by the general public. Citations come from reports, research papers and academic articles. When looking for formal references to GAEZ in academic documents and grey literature, Google Scholar finds 877 citations and Scopus 58.

12 GAEZ has reportedly informed more than 100 research papers in China alone. Two dozen examples of publications were provided to the evaluation complementing the list in Annex 4.

Government / ACIAR and implemented by ICRAF. It aims to inform policy makers, practitioners, INGOs and NGO by providing a framework to target and guide investments in agriculture. The research is commissioned by the Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance for Africa. The publication is expected to contribute to the formulation of strategies for scaling up climate smart agriculture and help to identify where to prioritize agricultural growth and investments according to prospects.

- Assessment of the agricultural potentials of pruning in Europe in a spatially explicit manner, by using agro-climatic indicators (from ECOCROP and GAEZ), as well as agro-climatic yields of reference species and ecological yields provided by GAEZ. This research is financed by the EU and aims to support the take-off of pruning in Europe. Findings are expected to be used by research centers as well as by policy-makers. The latter will find information about the reasons why pruning is being burned or integrated in the soil depending on strict or relaxed regulations. The research should also inform other EU projects on biomass exploitation.

- A recently published paper entitled "Sustainable agriculture - the potential to increase yields of wheat and rapeseed in Poland" made used of GAEZ data and the underlying model to identify areas for potential yield growth.

1. 4.3.4. Uptake in the private sector

New investments in agricultural projects by the private or public sector has received a boost in recent years to capitalize on higher food prices and/or substitute imports and provide rural employment options. A number of examples of uptake by the private sector were collected through the user survey. A user mentioned using GAEZ to inform producers about potential crop yields and how the differences between regions follow political and arbitrary boundaries and not the borders set forth by the natural environment. Another private sector respondent indicated that GAEZ enables quick comparisons across sectors and issues and quick assessments of hot spots. A key informant reported that GAEZ data served to search for new alternatives of agro-industrial development in the Congo Basin. A specific region of Gabon was identified as adequate for tea farming. Some trials were made that generated positive results and the development of a tea farm is now being pursued. Other anecdotal evidence regards the analysis of specific areas in Angola for the production of cassava, corn, and wheat in 2013 and 2014. Based on GAEZ data, relevant areas where production should be possible were selected.

A key informant cites McKinsey, KWR, and Unilever as some of the companies that have used GAEZ. As for Unilever the interest in GAEZ originates from the fact that two/thirds of this company's raw materials come from agriculture. Large scale global changes in climate, land use, population pressure and water availability will increasingly affect Unilever's agricultural supply base. Therefore Unilever is interested in enhancing the science, knowledge and data available to assess the impact of global change on agricultural raw materials. The collaboration with Unilever has been found to be mutually beneficial. Unilever has granted resources to conduct further research while GAEZ was able to leverage detailed data from Unilever. GAEZ also benefited from the support of Unilever's consultants. Nevertheless the current model of collaboration with private sector actors is unclear and potentially complex. The prevailing policy does not allow for bulk download of GAEZ data without making a request to IIASA/FAO. On one hand there is value and a need for GAEZ to get in-kind support or financial assistance from private sector companies. On the other hand, setting up a partnership and commercial agreement with a private company is not fully aligned with the positioning of a public institution that aims to collect and disseminate data as a public good. In addition, the objectives pursued by private sector companies may sometimes be contradictory with small farmers' agriculture, national food security, etc. For public organizations like IIASA or FAO, commercial partnerships are legally difficult to set up. Nevertheless key informants still find that the strategic positioning and operational modalities of Public-Private-Partnerships within FAO and in relation to GAEZ would deserve

to be clarified and opportunities for collaboration more vigorously explored.

2. 4.4. Dissemination prospects

In order to enhance data dissemination and foster the use of GAEZ, FAO could provide training courses on GAEZ datasets and functionalities. Key informants stress that it takes time to find data and to organize it. As mentioned by a survey participant: "*GAEZ should convince more and provide confident data and results. Basically, the GAEZ methodology and applications are not known in Latin America. GAEZ package should offer local training strengthening in GAEZ applications at country level."* Although the manual was sometimes found to be user-friendly, it is difficult for non-specialists to navigate, retrieve, and select data. Unless being proficient with GAEZ Data Portal, one key issue for some users is to be able to understand what is being downloaded. In addition, downloading GAEZ data is often found to be difficult as it requires being done table by table. This is so time consuming that a well-known research institution had to hire personnel especially to download GAEZ data. The portal would need to provide a capability of bulk download. As put forward by a survey respondent, "*I think the documentation is poor and seems half-finished. I think the methods of downloading data (in bulk, which is what almost anyone trying to do a serious study would do) is poor. I received no response to specific questions about seeming lack of availability of maps that should exist, and because of this I cannot use the product."*

Key informants also mention that the server of the Data Portal is not always operational and that there are times when the database cannot be accessed, e.g. "*First of all, I am very impressed with GAEZ database and the work of the FAO team. It is really helping us make strategic decisions in South Africa. Now the complaint...I cannot access high-resolution maps for publication purposes. I've been using 'screenshots' for unofficial use, but the publisher requires high-resolution images for the journal (Outlook on Agriculture)."* Consultations with key informants further pointed out that GAEZ portal tends to be accessed through FAO's partner site of IIASA, which is better known for GAEZ than FAO. A suggestion was made to make GAEZ easier to discover when searching the web and that search engine optimization (SEO) could be an area the GAEZ team could look into. Finally key informants find that FAO could be more closely involved in the production of publications that broker GAEZ data, either by taking more responsibilities and sharing greater ownership of the process or by providing financial support. If FAO was editing such publications this would give them more visibility and support the dissemination of GAEZ data.

4. Conclusion

There is evidence of satisfaction among GAEZ users with the data provided. The outreach achieved in three years and the contributions made to the scientific community especially for assessments of crop potential are widely recognized. There is room for improving user experience and the breadth of its use among policy-makers. Greater involvement of end-users, for example through the GAEZ forum, would help improving the usability of the Portal. The forum could also serve as a channel for exchange of experience and peer-to-peer advice and support among users. Reaching out policy-makers especially in developing countries would require several enhancements to the dissemination process, such as the conduct of capacity development activities, and the establishment of partnerships with thin-tanks and other policy-oriented institutions. FAO could also work with the scientific community or other FAO initiatives by providing joint trainings/capacity building[13], for instance in conjunction with the implementation of the *Action Plan of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics.* FAO could also make higher use of its field network in a way similar to IIASA's use of its network of National Member Organizations that already provide with opportunities for contacts with academia and the scientific community. Several users have called for a stronger integration of geospatial data with other FAO datasets. This together with higher

13 An interesting example of collaboration has recently been initiated between FAO and the University of Southampton. It aims to embed GAEZ in the Master programme on Sustainability and offer students an opportunity to complete their master thesis at FAO.

awareness and use of GAEZ in FAO work and analyses will help achieve the objectives of the Portal. GAEZ embedment in GEF projects is certainly a positive move in this direction. Finally, partnerships with the private sector may require to be clarified in order to increase opportunities for collaboration. A systematized approach to Public Private Partnerships that allow for the disclosure of GAEZ data could help to attract additional resources.

Appendix 1: List of persons consulted

1. **Achouri Moujahed,** Director, Land and Water Division (NRL), Natural Resources Management and Environment Department, FAO
2. **Boffa Jean Marc**, Researcher and Agro-forestry consultant
3. **Cumani Renato,** Environment Officer, Land and Water Division (NRL), Natural Resources Management and Environment Department, FAO
4. **Fischer Guenther**, Senior Research Scholar, IIASA
5. **García-Galindo Daniel, Project Manager, CIRCE. Research Centre for Energy Resources and Consumption, Natural Resources Area, BERA Group**
6. **Latham John, Senior Land and Water Officer (Geospatial Systems), Land and Water Division (NRL), Natural Resources Management and Environment Department, FAO**
7. **Martucci Antonio, Information Systems Officer, Land and Water Division (NRL), Resources Management and Environment Department, FAO**
8. **Monteduro Patrizia, Metadata and Information Expert, Land and Water Division (NRL), Natural Resources Management and Environment Department, FAO**
9. **Pradhan Prajal, Researcher, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research**
10. **Tian Zhan, Head of climate change division, Shanghai Climate Center**
11. **van Velthuizen Harrij, Associate, IIASA**

Appendix 2: List of documents reviewed

- **Anderson, W., You, L., Wood, S., Wood-Sichra, U. & Wu, W.** 2015. An analysis of methodological and spatial differences in global cropping systems models and maps. *Global Ecology and Biogeography 2015,* 24(2), 180-191.
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- Deininger K., Byerlee D., Lindsay J., Norton A., Selod H. and Stickler M. 2011. Rising Global Interest in Farmland: Can it Yield Sustainable and Equitable Benefits? The World Bank, Washington.
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- FAO & IIASA. 2012. GAEZ - User's Guide. Rome (available at: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/gaez/docs/UserGuide_EN.pdf).

- **FAO & IIASA**. 2012. Global Agro-ecological Zones (GAEZ v3.0) Model Documentation. IIASA, Laxenburg, Austria and FAO, Rome, Italy (available at: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/gaez/docs/GAEZ_Model_Documentation.pdf).

- Pradhan, P., Matthias, K. B., Lüdeke, M. K. B., Reusser , D. E. & Kropp, J. P. 2014. Food Self-Sufficiency across Scales: How Local Can We Go? *Environmental Science & Technology*, 48, 9463–9470.

- Pradhan, P., Matthias, K. B., Lüdeke, M. K. B., Reusser, D. E. & Kropp, J. P. 2013. Embodied crop calories in animal Products. *Environmental Research Letters*, 8, 044044, 10pp.

Appendix 3: Survey results

This annex provides a summary and analysis of the online survey conducted to gather perspectives and feedback on GAEZ. The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO and was opened during 5.5 weeks, from 16 December 2014 to 24 January 2015. It was sent to 1154 registered users of the database. The survey was anonymous. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether 213 responses were received. A detailed review did not lead to reject any response leaving a sample size well representative of GAEZ users (confidence level 95% and confidence interval 6%).

1. Survey Demographics

a. Organizations

Key findings:

- The highest proportion of survey respondents comes from **academia and research** institutions (circa 66%)
- The private sector is the second most represented population of the survey (circa 7%)
- Very few respondents come from the UN, media, and farmers organizations, and no response was collected from a local government organization
- The overall pattern of number of responses per type of organization does not allow any meaningful cross-tabulation of results

b. Positions

Key findings:

- The largest number of survey respondents holds **mid-level positions** (close to 29% of mid-level official/expert/researcher)
- Close to 18% of participants are students or retirees
- Overall there is little dispersion between the categories of respondents in terms of seniority

c. Countries

Key findings:

- Four countries –**USA, Italy, Netherlands, UK**- originate more than half of the responses
- Almost 75% of respondents are in Europe or North America
- The survey received very few responses from the Near East, Central Asia, and Africa

d. Work area

Key findings:

- The highest number of respondents (57.28%) works at the **global** level
- Near East and North Africa is the geographic area of focus with the fewer number of respondents

e. Thematic area of work

Key findings:

- **Crop production** is the thematic area of work that is the most represented
- Finance and insurance, Emergencies, Animal health, Gender and human rights, Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Plant health / protection have been selected by a small number of participants

f. Gender

Key findings:

- Survey respondents are primarily **males**

g. Age

Key findings:

- Respondents are almost evenly split between junior and experienced professionals

2. Current Use

a. Purpose

Key findings:

- The main reason for using GAEZ is for **Research on specific issues** followed by General economic analysis, econometric model building and forecasting
- There is a strong concentration of users on the two most selected purposes
- Other reasons for using GAEZ include education and teaching as well as:
    - Baseline for development of application tools. Specific analysis and assessment
    - Commodity supply-chain risk assessments
    - Effect of CC
    - Estimation of the agricultural productivity of water in kilogram of crop per cubic metre of water consumed.
    - Evaluation of investment projects
    - GIS projects on land-use planning
    - Map products for monthly monitoring
    - Priority setting on agriculturally related research

b. Frequency

Key findings:

- More than 75% of survey respondents do not use GAEZ frequently, i.e. a couple of times per year or less

3. Assessment

a. Quality

Survey respondents were invited to assess the quality of GAEZ according to a number of factors.

Key findings:

- The majority of survey respondents finds that GAEZ is from moderately good to very good
- A significant number of survey participants did not assess timeliness, punctuality, accuracy and reliability but these criteria tend to be less positively rated

b. Usability

Survey respondents were invited to assess the usability of GAEZ through a number of criteria.

Key findings:

- As a general pattern the usability of GAEZ is positively assessed by survey respondents
- The criteria of Cost, Coverage, Uniqueness, and Comprehensiveness are those that collect the most positive assessments
- Navigation, User support, Participation, and are the usability criteria that are the most poorly rated by survey respondents
- A significant number of survey participants did not rate the criteria of Participation, Language, and User support.

c. Outcomes

The survey assessed the contribution of GAEZ to a selected number of outcomes.

Key findings:

- As a general pattern survey respondents assess positively the contribution of GAEZ to the proposed outcomes
- GAEZ is particularly valued for its contribution to Improve the relevance and/or quality of the analyses/work , and to Increase technical knowledge of respondents
- Survey respondents as whole indicate a lower contribution of GAEZ to Inform or direct new investment decisions and to Inform the formulation of national strategies although a significant number of participants did not rate these criteria

4. Pending needs

a. Topics

Survey participants were proposed to indicate if there would be any features not provided by GAEZ that they would like to see. Almost 40 responses were received that convey very specific needs including:

- **Technical features**, such as: more recent as well as time series data, batch download options, downloads in Shapefile (shp) and Geotiff format, occasional push notifications with significant news about GAEZ data, option to view data as guest without needing to create an account, stop using Flash, complement GAEZ with GIS version of key FAOSTAT data (e.g., even in a multi-year binary format such as NetCDF or Grib) and pack everything into some current remote data access protocols such as OPeNDAP, OGC WMS and WCS, HTTP, etc.

- **Socio-economic data**, e.g.: local poverty levels and rural incomes, data on rural-urban migration, qualitative set of data (e.g. references to ethnographic or sociological literature), changes in potential under different climate change projections, climate data at national level, soil moisture integration, level of irrigation beyond either on/off (e.g. with full control over the extent of irrigation applied), human input decisions (such as mechanized inputs, manmade fertilizers, etc.),

b. Data types

As a more structured approach, survey respondents could prioritize their needs according the types of data that are not yet covered by GAEZ and that you would like to see.

Key findings:

- Overall the demand is higher for Potential agricultural productivity data, Current land use data, geospatial data and sub-national data

- Gender disaggregated data is not prioritized by survey respondents and cross-tabulations indicate that it is slightly more prioritized by males than by females

c. Areas of work

Survey participants were invited to indicate the main research areas/projects they were currently working on/preparing for. These were very varied but mostly in economic projections.

Appendix 4: Cybermetric analysis

Knowledge Product		GAEZ "FAO"
Number of web references		
	Link Hit Estimate	756
	Site Hit Estimate	378
	Site Repost Estimate	-
Number of citations		
	Google Scholar cites	877
	Scopus cites	58
Thematic focus areas		
	Agriculture	2
	Agriculture – Agroindustries	
	Agriculture – Crops	
	Agriculture - Fisheries and aquaculture	
	Agriculture – Forestry	
	Agriculture - Land and water	4
	Agriculture – Livestock	
	Economy	3
	Economy – Financing	
	Economy – Outlooks	

	Knowledge Product	GAEZ "FAO"
	Economy – Prices	
	Economy – Trade	2
	Emergency & rehabilitation	
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Disaster risk reduction (DRR)	
	Emergency & rehabilitation - Humanitarian response	
	Environment	
	Environment - Climate change	3
	Environment - Sustainable management & conservation	4
	Food	1
	Food - Food safety (quality)	
	Food - Food security (quantity)	2
	Food – Nutrition	
	Human impacts	
	Human impacts – Gender	
	Human impacts - Human rights	
	Human impacts - Social protection	
Actor type		
	Academia	6
	Government	2
	Intergovernmental organization	2
	International Financial Institutions (IFIS)	
	Media / News	1
	Multi-sector networks or platforms	
	Non-Governmental Organization	
	Private sector / Business	1
	Public (Individual / blogger / online community)	5
	United Nations system	2
Content type		
	Abstract, Summary	
	Article, News story, Press release, Books	3
	Blog, Editorial, Opinion	3
	Data tables, Statistics	
	E-commerce, Online sales	
	Education, Training	
	Employment, Work related, Job description, Procurement	
	Event listing, Announcement	

Knowledge Product		GAEZ "FAO"
	Listing, Directory	1
	Newsletter	
	Organizational information (about us section)	
	Policy, Legislation, Governmental strategy, Lobbying position paper	2
	Portfolio, Resume, Personal profile	
	Presentation	2
	Promotion, Advertising, Ads	
	Report, Research paper, Academic article	9
	Resource, Best practice, Workbook, Toolkit, How to	
	Social media, Discussion group	
	Speech, Discussion, Minutes	
	Wiki	
Citation type		
	Cited as a publication available for purchase	
	Cited in the format of an academic citation, bibliography, footnote	12
	Cited with an article, story, newsletter, etc...	3
	Listed as part of a resume, or listing of self/co-authored publications	
	Listed in a search engine result page, automated list, auto-aggregated result	
	Listed resource: library or academic sources	
	Listed resource: other	
	Promoted as featured content (Primary focus)	3
	Promoted as secondary content (Teasers, sidebar content, related content)	
	Referenced as the original source of repurposed or spin-off content	
	Referenced in a formal speech, statement, transcript	
	Referenced in a social media discussion, online discussion	2
Geographic scope		
	Africa	1
	Asia	1
	Europe	2
	Global / International	4
	Latin America and the Caribbean	1
	Near East	
	North Africa	
	North America	2
	The Pacific	

Appendix 5: Key facts on GAEZ Data Portal

Date created: The AEZ approach became global in 2000 with the availability of digital global databases of climatic parameters, topography, soil and terrain, land cover, and population distribution. In 2012 GAEZ 3.0 was launched. It was a major update of data and extension of the methodology used in the 2000 and 2002 GAEZ releases.

Human resources for the FPMA Tool: The GAEZ Data Portal is supported by part-time resources and consultants.

- P5: 20% including other activities than the Data Portal itself
- P4: 45% including other activities than the Data Portal itself

Financial resources: the estimate of GAEZ annual expenditure is as follows:

		Launch v3			Launch v4
Item	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
LoA	$ 94 500	$ -	$ 59 970	$ -	$ 45 000
Consultants	$ -	$ 35 000	$ 5 000	$ 16 320	$ 15 000
Hardware	$ -	$ 200 000	$ 150 000	$ 10 000	$ 2 000
Total (USD)	$ 94 500	$ 235 000	$ 214 970	$ 26 320	$ 62 000

List of the partners that contribute/support the development/maintenance of the database:

IIASA

List of FAO strategic objectives/outputs that the database (or related by-products) supports: SO2

Annex 3.8: Clients Surveys (Databases)

This annex provides a summary analysis of the clients' surveys conducted by the evaluation to gather perspectives and feedback on the use of FAO knowledge products and services at country level, and focuses specifically on the section of FAO databases.

The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO and was opened during 3 months, from 1 December 2014 to 5 March 2015. The survey was anonymous and delivered by email and/or during workshops to selected country "clients" and national FAO partners. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether the survey gathered input from 171 respondents.

1. Survey Demographics

a. Organizations

Key findings:

- The highest proportion of survey respondents comes from **Central Government** (circa 30%) followed by **academia and research** institutions (23%)
- Few participants come from the Media and Producer Organizations

b. Countries

Key findings:

- Most participating countries have provided between 10-20 participants

c. Gender

Key findings:

- A majority of participants is male

d. Collaboration with FAO

Key findings:

- A majority of participants has a long experience of using FAO products and services

2. Current Use

a. Examples of data uses

Participants were proposed to name 2 local FAO databases they utilize for their work. FAOSTAT was referred 6 times by the 20 participants who contributed a response and FISHSTAT/AQUASTAT a couple of times. A few other examples were cited once (e.g. AGRIS/CARIS, Caloric values, Forrest) Participants were also invited to name 2 regional/global FAO databases they utilize for their work. Out of the 50 responses collected FAOSAT was referred 15 times. Among the 171 respondents, 1 was involved in the design/operation of a global database, 2 were involved in design/operation of a regional database, and 4 in the design/operation of a national database.

b. Frequency

Key findings:

- FAO **global statistical databases** are used often or sometimes by more than 66% of surveyed FAO clients
- Proportionally, decision makers tend to use country specific databases more frequently than other types of respondents

c. Reasons for not using FAO databases

Key findings:

- Lack of awareness of FAO databases is the most prevailing reason for not using them

d. Reasons for using FAO databases

Key findings:

- FAO databases are primarily used because they are relevant for the work of respondents, accessible online, and of good quality
- Few respondents use the databases because they would be tailored to the local context and based on local knowledge

e. Purpose of use

Key findings:

- Informing activities, improving technical knowledge and supporting evidence-based decision making are the reasons most commonly cited for using FAO databases
- Few participants rely on FAO databases to identify new practices to upscale or to support resource mobilization activities

Annex 4. Assessment of FAO networks

Report

OED[14] has conducted an assessment of FAO networks as part of a broader evaluation of FAO contributions to knowledge on food and agriculture.

I. Description of FAO networks

Networks, both formal and informal, are major knowledge services provided by the Organization. FAO's global convening power and knowledge base gives the Organization a comparative advantage as a knowledge broker, and has made it a natural network enabler. A variety of informal networks have developed over the years at the global, regional and national levels with FAO support[15]. Formal networks have also flourished, especially since the establishment of technical networks in 2013[16].

An inventory of FAO networks conducted as part of this assessment identified a total of 123 global networks, including 103 discussion groups, 14 technical networks and six thematic or informal networks. This non-exhaustive list was collected with support from the Deputy Director-General Office for Natural Resources (DDN), and validated with technical departments and Regional Offices in late 2014. Although efforts were made to gather information on regional and national networks, it was not always feasible[17]. Evaluative information, good practices and lessons learned from past evaluations of regional and local networks were gathered for the assessment and included when relevant. To facilitate the assessment, FAO networks have been classified as follows:

1. **Informal networks (IN)**: volunteer grassroots initiatives created according to a common perceived need; often conducted both face-to-face and online, but characterized mainly by the informality of exchanges and a demand-driven nature.

2. **Thematic knowledge networks (TKN)**: virtual communities of professional staff and collaborating centres with common interests and objectives, based around the interaction between peers found in a Community of Practice (CoP), and involving the sharing of resources and experiences, as well as mutual problem solving assistance.

3. **Technical networks (TN):** formal networks established along main disciplinary lines with the aim to maintain and strengthen technical capacities by ensuring that knowledge is shared across organizational locations and by stimulating continuous learning and innovation.

4. **Discussion groups, or DGroups:** mainly one-way information dissemination channels, created either for specific face-to-events (and existing thereafter with limited or no messages), or for time-delineated e-forums or online discussions, some of which still function on an occasional basis.

II. Purpose and scope of the assessment

This assessment is a formative and forward-looking review of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of networks at FAO, with a special focus on global networks. The

14 The assessment was led by OED consultant Lucie Lamoureux with the support of OED staff Natalia Acosta.

15 FAO's former Office of Knowledge Exchange, Research and Extension (OEK) nurtured several of these networks

16 Crop Production and Protection; Livestock production and Veterinary Science; Rural and agricultural finance; Food Value Chain Development; Food Safety and Quality; Statistics; Gender; Social Protection; Fisheries and Aquaculture; Forestry; Climate Change; Land and Tenure; Water; and, Environment and Social Impact Assessment Network.

17 In two countries contacted for the evaluation (Peru and Ecuador) FAO reportedly supported over 50 learning initiatives. Two other countries could not provide such data (Pakistan and Papua New Guinea).

findings of the assessment will inform the development and refinement of current strategies, policies and plans aimed at ensuring the excellence of FAO technical knowledge through networking, and serve as an input to the evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture. The assessment covers FAO networks supported by the Organization from 2011 to 2014, and builds on evaluative evidence collected in past evaluations and reviews. In order to identify good practices and lessons learned, and to illustrate the specific contributions made by FAO networks in selected areas, selected networks were reviewed in detail as case studies. The following selected networks have been in place for several years and represent the diversity of networks within FAO: Climate Change Study Circle (informal network); Forestry (technical network); and the Global Food Security and Nutrition Forum (thematic knowledge network).

III. Questions

In line with the overall evaluation, this assessment seeks to answer the following questions:

1. Are FAO networks consistent with the Organization's objectives and based on expressed needs or mandates from Member Countries?

2. Are FAO networks adequately formulated, in view of the context, needs or problems to which they are intended to respond?

3. How efficiently has FAO used its human and institutional resources in the operation of networks?

4. Have FAO networks reached their intended users and uses?

5. What outcomes have FAO networks achieved, or contributed to achieving?

In addition, the assessment has sought to understand how networks factored into medium- to long-term sustainability, an important aspect of ensuring satisfactory performance over time.

IV. Methodology

This assessment is guided by the evaluation questions mentioned above. Information to answer these questions has been collected from primary (interviews and surveys) and secondary sources (desk reviews). The list of documents reviewed[18] and people interviewed (network managers and key informants) is provided in Appendices 4.1 and 4.2, respectively. The design of the assessment is provided in Annex 4.1 and the inventory of networks in Annex 4.2. An online survey was administered to managers of FAO networks at HQ in order to gather information on their networks' objectives, membership, operations and desired outcomes. The results of the survey, which was responded to by 30 network managers, can be found in Annex 4.3. The results of the case studies are available in Annexes 4.4 (Climate Change Study Circle), 4.5 (Forestry Technical Network), and 4.6 (Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition). In Annex 4.7 are the past OED evaluations reviewed to identify relevant findings, conclusions and recommendations regarding networks at FAO. Finally, in Annex 4.8, a client survey is provided which was administered to 171 users of FAO knowledge products and services (including networks) in a sample of countries to gather information on the networks' contributions[19]. The surveyed users were identified by the relevant Country or Liaison Office and included national counterparts, partners and beneficiaries.

Limitations: Consultations with network managers and users as well as data on the networks' achievements were relatively limited. Many networks – especially recently established

18 A review of documentation related to networks at FAO, as well as relevant evaluation reports/assessments, was conducted as part of the assessment. Relevant citations/quotes are included in this report.

19 Albania, Belgium, Turkey and Switzerland (Europe), Zambia and Uganda (Africa), Panama, Chile, the United States (The Americas), Lebanon (Near East), Japan, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea (Asia).

technical networks– did not have data on the ways their users engaged with the shared information and resources. In addition, most of the primary data collected relates to the work of HQ-based networks; evaluative information relating to non-HQ networks comes mainly from past OED evaluations and self-assessments made available to the team.

V. Findings

The main findings are presented below grouped by evaluation question.

1. *Are FAO networks consistent with the Organization's objectives and based on expressed needs or mandates from Member Countries?*

FAO-supported networks are generally aligned with FAO's mandate. Linkages with Strategic Objectives could be made more explicit and take greater account of target users' expressed needs.

All but two of the 30 network managers surveyed indicated that their network(s) contribute to at least one (and in some cases all) of FAO's Strategic Objectives. In some cases, such as the FSN Forum, the contributions are formally included in the FAO results framework[20]. Nevertheless, the majority of networks do not explicitly link their work to (corporate-level) results. Most network managers consider their networks' main objective to be "sharing information and knowledge", "support professional growth" and "strengthen collaboration". Moreover, only a small percentage (20 percent) monitor progress toward the achievement of objectives, which partially explains the lack of evidence on network results.

Table 1. Top three network objectives

Network objective	First	Second	Third
Share information and knowledge	57%	17%	13%
Support professional growth of network members	10%	13%	10%
Strengthen network members' collaborations across geographic locations	3%	20%	20%

Source: Survey of network managers, 2014

One of the reasons mentioned by key informants for the lack of impact pathways is the internal nature of some networks (i.e. created on FAO's own initiative and/or with FAO staff as their main designers, with little input from external target users). This is corroborated by the survey results, in which only three (11 percent) of the survey respondents[21] indicated that national Governments had requested the establishment of a network, yet nearly half of them include Member Countries' representatives in their membership.

2. *Are FAO networks adequate in view of the context, needs or demands to which they are intended to respond?*

FAO networks have mostly been created to address context-specific needs and demands. More can be done to ensure responsiveness to changing user needs. Enhanced communication could help in reaching out to potential new members.

20 Under Output 10103 "Improving capacities in governments and stakeholders for human resource and organizational development in the food security and nutrition domain", the FAO-led Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN Forum) "will facilitate the uptake of knowledge on policies for nutrition and agriculture-nutrition linkages" specifically in West Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, Central Asia and Europe.

21 FAOSTAT Emissions, International Tropical Fruit Network and FAO Animal Welfare Knowledge Platform.

According to the network managers surveyed, two-thirds of the networks respond to an expressed need or demand. The robustness of the justification provided however is variable. Some network managers indicated that the need for the network came together with the "birth of the technical department", while others undertook "global surveys", "stakeholder consultations" and "evaluations" to better define the networks' role. In one-third of the cases, the networks were created based on Member Countries, International Bodies or FAO's own demands for knowledge sharing platforms, without an analysis of actual needs.

As per international good practices[22], undertaking thorough needs assessments can help to ensure the relevance of networks. A needs assessment can also help to identify relevant topics for discussion and potential new users or partners. In this regard, about two-fifths (39%) of FAO clients surveyed in thirteen member countries indicated that they were not aware of FAO networks on their topics of interest, but if informed would consider participating in such networks.

3. *How efficiently has FAO used its human and institutional resources in the operation of networks?*

Several FAO networks represent good value for money. Corporate support and guidance for network operation should be enhanced to improve network efficiency.

As a result of FAO's decentralized "network of networks", not every network has a specific budget line in the regular programme. About half of the surveyed network managers are thus unsatisfied with the resources available to operate their network. Most networks, except the technical networks, do not receive funds and work mostly on the basis of informal relationships[23]. Given the limited human and institutional resources put into networks[24], and that several appear to be highly successful[25], they represent a cost-efficient way of disseminating and sharing knowledge.

In discussions with the evaluation team, some network managers complained about the lack of support and guidance provided by FAO. This includes guidance to design and operate networks, as well as advice on technological solutions[26]. While most staff (62%) was aware of the existing solutions[27], information was lacking on a broader range of platforms or modalities (e.g. face-to-face meetings or video conferencing). These additional options should be explored to supplement the existing solutions or provide a more appropriate interface for each network's audience and objectives[28]. Some network managers noted that the recent FAO directive to move all FAO network websites under the "fao.org" domain may affect their efficiency. Since some TKNs (e.g. e-Agriculture[29]) are multi-partner initiatives, such a move may suggest the network is becoming an "FAO only" initiative and thus limit the involvement of other partners and members.

22 FAO is a sponsor of the Knowledge Sharing Tool Kit http://www.kstoolkit.org/KM+Self+Assessment

23 2015 Evaluation of FAO's role and work on crop production.

24 The Technical Networks are an exception since they were given each around 50 000 euros over 2 years for their operation. It is currently too soon to say if these funds are/will be used efficiently.

25 See FSN Forum case study.

26 The FAO Information Technology Division (CIO) has recently stepped up its efforts to strengthen IT support.

27 In June 2015 two TNs had active collaborative workspaces and 8 were in the process of setting them up.

28 See FTN case study.

29 http://www.e-agriculture.org/

Box 1. E-Agriculture community

The e-Agriculture community of practice, which is facilitated by FAO, was one of the first TKNs at FAO. It emerged as an action identified in the 2005 Geneva Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). At that time FAO decided to launch "e-Agriculture" as a follow-up to WSIS in collaboration with several partners. The aim of the network is to enable members to exchange knowledge related to ICTs in agriculture, and ensure that the knowledge created is effectively shared and used. The community currently has over 12 000 registered members (December 2014 figures) and has become a meeting point for information management specialists from over 170 countries.

4. *Are there synergies, duplications or gaps among the services provided by FAO networks?*

Several FAO networks operate in synergy with other (FAO and non-FAO) initiatives. Enhanced coordination would help minimize potential duplications and address any perceived gaps.

According to network managers, about two-thirds of the networks cooperate with institutions outside of FAO – other UN agencies, academia, international organizations and civil society – on the planning, design, maintenance and delivery of network activities, with the view of seeking synergies with external partners. An OED country evaluation in Central America noted how a regional network (REDBIO) was able to broker partnerships and leverage members' resources by working with regional and local partners (see Box 2). However, no network managers indicated that they had cooperated with another FAO network. Thus there is an opportunity for FAO to assess the networks' purpose, objectives and users in order to minimize potential duplications.

Box 2. Red de Cooperación Técnica en Biotecnología Vegetal (REDBIO)

REDBIO was launched in 1991 under the auspices of FAO. By 2008 it had a membership of about 2 300 researchers from 619 laboratories and institutions in plant biotechnology in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). FAO provided the secretariat and funded REDBIO regional and country level activities with regular programme and TCP resources until 2011. The loss of funding coincided with the departure of the FAO staff member who was the network's secretariat. At that time, the network had grown to 5 427 members from 741 research organizations in LAC, and was undertaking capacity building and dissemination activities throughout the region (including producing newsletters and holding conferences) with support from regional partners such as CIAT[30] and research institutions.

Judging by the responses to the network managers' survey, there do not appear to be major gaps in the thematic areas covered by FAO networks. At least one network covers each of the twenty themes[31] included in the survey. Most networks however focus on food security, climate change and natural resource management (including forestry, land and water). Although the networks working on these themes tended to serve different purposes or audiences, over one-third (37%) of the respondents considered that there is some overlap among them, while a sizeable minority of managers (16%) could not answer, indicating a lack of awareness of what others are doing.

30 CIAT has played an active role since the network was established, and continuous supporting the network after FAO formally ceased providing support. More information about the partnership between REDBIO and CIAT can be found at http://ciat.cgiar.org/es/redbioinfo

31 Climate change, Food security, Land Management, Water, Animal production, Forestry, Biodiversity, Agricultural production, Animal health, Gender, Soils, Aquaculture, Fisheries, Food production, Nutrition, Agricultural trade, Food safety, Social protection, Investment in agriculture, Plant Health.

Table 2. Top five themes discussed in FAO network

Theme	Discussed by % of networks	Discussed by no. of networks
Climate change	33.3%	10
Food security	33.3%	10
Land management	30.0%	9
Water management	26.7%	8
Animal production	20.0%	6
Forestry	20.0%	6

Source: Survey of FAO network managers, 2014

5. *How have networks planned for medium to long-term sustainability?*

FAO networks generally lack a long-term vision. Strengthening network design with the inclusion of sustainability plans and exit strategies will help to address this challenge.

Fifty percent of respondents to the survey do not have a long-term strategy or plan for their networks, which together with the limited funding available indicates a lack of long-term vision. Too often, networks depend on the goodwill of one or a few individuals or donors, and a change in staff[32] or funding priorities threatens their continuation[33]. Similarly, networks often depend on a single institution (such as FAO) or a particular unit within FAO for support. The FSN is one of the few networks that has mobilized extra-budgetary resources to ensure its medium-term sustainability. Others, such as ESCORENA, exemplify the struggle of ensuring long-term sustainability once regular funding ceases.

Box 3. European System of Cooperative Research Networks in Agriculture (ESCORENA)[34]

ESCORENA was established in 1974 by FAO and European research institutions to promote the exchange of information and experimental data; support joint research projects; and facilitate the sharing of expertise, germplasm and technologies. FAO provided the Secretariat to ESCORENA until 2007 and funded many regional activities. Since 2008, the network has been based in the Institute of Natural Fibres and Medicinal Plants in Poland and comprises twenty thematic knowledge networks. For almost forty years, ESCORENA provided one of the few opportunities for scientists to get together in the rapidly changing economic and geopolitical situation in Europe. A review undertaken in 2013 concluded that the network had become too complex. Several knowledge networks were no longer functional, some recorded little active participation, and a few kept a very active profile. The report recommended innovative forms of collaboration such as cross-cutting and cross-sectoral actions, as well as a new business model in order to transform ESCORENA into the knowledge-sharing arm of a regional agricultural innovation system.

6. *Have FAO networks reached their intended users and uses?*

Several FAO networks have provided useful services to their membership. There is room to improve knowledge about current users and outreach.

According to network managers[35], user motivation to participate in networks includes: i) staying current on a given thematic area; ii) professional development; iii) learning from others; and iv) improved performance. These responses are in line with those reported by users

32 FAO's in-kind support to REDBIO reportedly ended after the retirement of a FAO staff member.

33 See CCSC case study.

34 http://www.escorena.net/

35 More than half (52%) noted that the networks are mostly used to receive information and updates (46%), exchange good practices and lessons learned (41%) and increase connections.

as their motivation for participating in some networks, such as Climate Smart Agriculture, FSN Forum and RADCON (see Box 4). Several networks reported high rates of active participation (measured by contributing postings, asking/responding to questions and participating in face-to-face or online meetings) much higher than the widely quoted standard known as the "90-9-1 principles"[36], where 10% participate actively and the remaining 90% are known as lurkers[37]. About one-third of the networks however don't have information on their users, and over two-thirds do not disaggregated it by gender.

Box 4. The Rural and Agricultural Development Communication Network (RADCON)

RADCON was established to enable extension agents, researchers and rural communities to participate in the process of generating, developing and sharing knowledge. As part of the project, over 115 extension agents in fifty villages were trained to work with farmers. A comprehensive curriculum for the training of trainers (TOT) was developed, field tested and implemented. Extension agents, particularly those in geographically dispersed areas, were given access to information on various issues involving agriculture and rural development. The system was reportedly a catalyst for developing rural enterprise. For example, extension agents gave relevant information to smallholder farmers and put them in contact with NGOs for assistance marketing their crops. Additionally, it enabled facilitators to learn which crops are in market demand, and subsequently provide farmers with the appropriate seeds for cultivation.

Half of FAO networks have access restrictions (e.g. membership by invitation only, or access only for FAO staff or qualified experts). In spite of this limitation, most networks (83%) report significant member growth during their lifetimes. In the case of e-agriculture, membership increased from 3 640 at inception in 2008 to 12 100 in 2014. In the case of the climate change network and to a lesser extent REDBIO, membership doubled over the last five years due to members' interest in the thematic area. Some network managers attributed this growth to dissemination activities (such as online events, conferences, workshops, moderated discussions, connecting with new partners and word of mouth), and the development of knowledge products, including newsletters, compendiums, proceedings and databases) which facilitated the reuse of information.

7. *What outcomes have FAO networks achieved, or contributed to achieving?*

Several FAO-supported networks have successfully contributed to the work of their members. More can be done to monitor achievements and collect user feedback.

About half (13) of the network managers surveyed provided examples of their achievements to date, including facilitating access to good practices in order to improve members' knowledge and practices (Forestry technical network); leveraging FAO's information resources (AGROCHILE, as shown in Box 5); and supporting the improvement and adoption of policies and legislation following online consultations (FSN forum). About one-third of the network managers had no examples to share, and for the rest (mostly technical network managers) it was too early to assess.

Box 5. REDAGROCHILE

REDAGROCHILE[38] is a National Bibliographic Information System that provides agricultural sector users with easy access to agricultural information. It includes 26 information units from a range of public and private institutions, including: university libraries, government libraries, documentation centers, and private sector libraries. The network has a team of eight representatives from the information units that steer the network, under the coordination of the Foundation for Agricultural Innovation (FIA) of the Ministry of Agriculture of Chile. In

36 Jakob Nielsen: http://www.nngroup.com/articles/participation-inequality/

37 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lurker

38 http://www.redagrochile.cl/

2004, FIA requested technical cooperation from FAO to restructure the Chilean Agricultural Information System. Following the assistance provided, the network became aware of information resources promoted by FAO such as AGRINTER and AGRIS, which boosted the range of information sources available to users.

Among the different types of networks supported by FAO, those with country- or context-relevant focus were found most useful by respondents to the client survey. For instance, a decision maker in a central government institution shared an example regarding the FAO network on Veterinary Public Health[39], which was frequently used to obtain information about regional and global status, as well as emergencies. Another programme manager referred to the Climate Smart Agriculture network, which showcased results of FAO projects in three countries (Zambia, Malawi and Vietnam) that were relevant to the user's work.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

FAO has developed several types of networks, with varying degrees of geographical (global, regional and national) and thematic coverage, in order to serve various development and context-specific needs. This diversity makes it difficult to reach an overall conclusion regarding FAO networks. The majority are still related to information or knowledge dissemination, and basically unidirectional. In general, the services offered relate more to FAO's role as an information provider rather than a knowledge enabler or facilitator.

FAO-supported networks have generally addressed a real need or demand for easier access to knowledge. Nevertheless, a sizeable minority do not monitor or record achievements, which make it difficult to identify success factors and address shortcomings. Some of the most successful networks identified in this assessment have shared the following characteristics: continuous membership growth; well engrained within a "results chain"; high visibility among their target users; and enabled the exchange of and access to locally-relevant knowledge. The adage that "success-breeds-success" largely applied to these cases: The more those members become aware of a network's practical relevance to their work, the more likely they are to participate.

Most networks (with the exception of the recently established technical networks) operate with very limited resources and in an environment that does not always encourage flexibility and innovation. Long-term business plans and resources for network facilitation are often absent and their operations are rife with inefficiencies. Moreover, several networks reportedly address similar themes and some use incompatible platforms. In order to address these issues, as well as the relatively low level of institutionalization of networks, FAO should work to strengthen overall network coordination and corporate support. Increasing the usefulness and efficiency of the networks would allow FAO to capitalize on the good practices, lessons learned and successes achieved, while also identifying potential gaps and synergies among networks.

This assessment **recommends** that FAO develop corporate guidance for its networks, outlining how they can best enable the sharing and quality assurance of technical knowledge. Some elements that may be discussed in the process of developing and implementing such a vision include:

- Thematic networks should clearly link their objectives to one or several of the corporate results to ensure focus on context-specific needs and prevent overlap with the themes of other networks.
- Technical networks should make explicit reference to their expected role as a quality assurance mechanism.

39 http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/vph/Networks.html

- Regular monitoring and reporting on progress, through user surveys or other forms of consultation, should be conducted by all networks to ensure continuous relevance.
- Earmarked resources should be set aside for network development, such as scaling up successful initiatives or piloting the application of newer or more appropriate technologies.

Appendix 4.1. List of documents consulted

Background documents

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Networks - General

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- **Livinets, S**. 2013. *Report on Review of regional agricultural networks AGROWEB and ESCORENA in context of strengthening knowledge-sharing in Europe and Central Asia*. FAO. Rome.

- **Loumbeva, N., Salokhe, G., Kolshus, K. & Lamoureux, L**. 2009. *Report of the Review of the Pilot Phase of FAO TKNs*. Rome (available at: http://www.fao.org/3/a-ak992e.pdf**).**

Networks - Case studies

Climate Change Study Circle (CCSC)

- Attendance folder. Paper copies.

CCSC intranet page: https://home.fao.org/nr/nrc/73908/en/

Forestry Technical Network (FTN)

- **FAO**. 2012. *First meeting of the Functional Technical Network-Forestry, meeting notes, 1 October 2012 - 3 October 2012*. Rome (available at: https://home.fao.org/fo/ftn/Shared%20Documents/Background-and-meetings/Meetings/,DanaInfo=workingwith.fao.org,SSL+First%20meeting%20of%20the%20Forestry%20FTN%20report_2012.pdf).

- **FAO**. 2012. *Follow-up report of the Management response to the Strategic Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Forestry.* Rome.

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FSN Forum

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- FSN Forum website: http://www.fao.org/fsnforum
- **Livinets, S**. 2014. *Report on the FSN Forum Strategy Review, executive summary*. Rome.

Appendix 4.2. List of people interviewed

Networks - general

1. **Alexandrova Nevena**, KM Officer (VC), REU, FAO
2. **Chisenga Justin**, KM Officer (VC), RAF, FAO
3. **Gallagher Kevin**, Agricultural Officer (VC), FAO
4. **Katz Steve**, Statistics Technical Network coordinator, ESS, FAO
5. **Lanzarone Giorgio**, Information Management Officer, CIO, FAO
6. **Laporte Marie-Christine**, Liaison Officer, DDN, FAO
7. **Livinets Svetlana**, Consultant, ESA, FAO
8. **Malo Meshack**, Technical Officer, DDN, FAO
9. **Otto Halka**, Senior Advisor, DDN, FAO
10. **Pena Pedro**, FAOR, Ecuador (VC), FAO
11. **Pressing John**, FAOR Peru (VC), FAO
12. **Quereshi Adnan**, Senior Administrative Officer, RAP, FAO
13. **Rosales Mauricio**, FSN Forum coordinator, ESA, FAO
14. **Vaquero Carlos**, Consultant, DDN, FAO
15. **Varas Samuel**, Director, CIO, FAO

Networks - Case study/boxes

Climate Change Study Circle (CCSC)

16. **Avagyan Armine**, Co-coordinator CCSC, NRC, FAO
17. **Bunning Sally**, Technical Officer, NRL, FAO
18. Delobel François, Natural Resources Officer, NRC, FAO
19. **Gerrard Adam**, Co-coordinator CCSC, FOMA, FAO
20. **Gordes Alashiya**, Junior Professional Officer, Climate Change, NRC, FAO
21. **Kanamaru Hideki**, Co-coordinator CCSC, NRC, FAO
22. **Kessl Christiane**, Administrative Assistant, NRC, FAO
23. **Matteoli Federica**, Project Manager, NRC, FAO
24. **Nuutinen Maria**, Climate Change Officer, NRC, FAO
25. **Snijders Fred**, Programme Coordinator, NRC, FAO

Forestry Technical Network (FTN)

26. **Rojas Eduardo**, ADG Forestry, FAO

27. **Conte David**, Programme coordinator, FAO

28. **Durst Patrick**, RAP, Senior Forestry Officer, FAO

29. **Bojang Foday**, RAF, Senior Forestry Officer, FAO

30. **Meza Jorge**, RLC, Senior Forestry Officer, FAO

31. **Yazici Ekrem**, Deputy Chief, FAO/UNECE Joint Forestry and Timber Section, FAO

FSN Forum

32. **Stamoulis Kostas**, Director, ESA, FAO

33. **Smulders Mark**, Senior Economist/Programme Coordinator, ESA, FAO

34. **Rosales Mauricio**, FSN Forum coordinator, ESA, FAO

35. **Mirulla Renata**, FSN Forum facilitator, ESA, FAO

36. **Blanc Max**, FSN Forum facilitator, ESA, FAO

37. **Livinets Svetlana**, FSN Forum consultant, ESA, FAO

38. **Verona Daniela**, FSN Forum designer, ESA, FAO

39. **Omosa Eileen**, University of Alberta

40. **Kent George**, University of Hawaii

41. **Marras Stefano**, University of Milan

42. **Lama Kanchan**, WOCAN, Nepal

43. **Botir Dosov**, CACAARI and CGIAR, Uzbekistan

READAGROCHILE

44. Jofré Soto Andrea, Coordinator, REDAGROCHILE

45. **Brossard Francine**, CEPAL (on REDAGOCHILE)

E-AGRICULTURE

46. **Treinen Sophie**, Knowledge/Information Management Officer, OPCC, FAO

47. **Kolshus Kristin**, Information Management Specialist, OPCC, FAO

Annex 4.1. Design of FAO networks assessment

This document describes the methodology for the evaluation of FAO networks' contribution to knowledge. This methodology has been developed after a preliminary review of secondary sources as well as consultations with key informants at FAO HQ (including DDN, OPC, CIO and TDs) and the evaluation's focal points in the Regional Offices (ROs).

1. *Scope*

The assessment will cover different types of networks developed over the years at FAO. The typology of networks at FAO includes: Thematic Knowledge Networks; Technical Networks; and, discussion groups. The evaluation will examine the different types of networks and analyze their relevance, quality and usefulness towards the achievement of the Organization's strategic goals and objectives. A tailored version of the evaluation matrix indicating which and how data will be collected and used is available in appendix 1. Initiatives too recent to yield results – for e.g. FAO's new 14 Technical Networks - will not be assessed in detail but accounted for in the overall analysis. In order to illustrate the specific contributions made by FAO in a few selected areas, the following three networks will be reviewed in detail as case studies (FAO lead unit between brackets):

- Climate Change Study Circle (NRC)
- Forestry [Technical] Network (FO)
- Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (ESA)

2. *Data Sources*

The data for the evaluation will be collected from general documentation (including past evaluations, and reviews) and from a range of stakeholders, including:

- FAO staff as coordinators/participants of FAO networks
- External Experts and Partners, as participants of FAO networks
- Other FAO network participants, such as staff from other UN agencies and international organizations, research and academia, NGOs, private sector, etc.

3. *Data Collection Mechanisms and Processes*

The review will capture evaluative evidence on the relevance, quality and effectiveness of the FAO networks through the following tools:

a) **Desk review**: review of documentation related to networks at FAO, as well as and relevant reports that FAO has already conducted to review networks, including:

   - Report of the Review of the Pilot Phase of FAO TKNs [40]
   - Documentation on FAO Technical Networks (including Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan, CPMB 2014/03 11 April and individual network plans)
   - FSN Forum publications
   - Review of three regional/national networks (AGROCHILE, REDBIO and ESCORENA)

b) **Inventory and mapping survey of FAO networks:** an online survey will be administered to owners of FAO networks in order to gather information on their objectives, membership, operations and desired outcomes.

40 Report of the Review of the Pilot Phase of FAO TKNs, Oct 2009.

c) **Meta-evaluation of FAO networks:** a synthesis of evaluation findings related to FAO networks, including documentation collected through the desk review, will be prepared as part of the meta-analysis of OED evaluations being conducted for the evaluation.

d) **Case studies**: Three networks will be further assessed as part of case studies. Interviews with key informants, user surveys and SWOT analysis will be conducted to gather information on usage and use of FAO publications.

- **Interviews/focus groups:** with a sample of network managers and participants to identify success factors, lessons learned and benefits resulting from networking.
- **SWOT Analysis:** SWOT analysis aims to identify the key internal and external factors seen as important to achieving a network's objectives. SWOT analysis groups key pieces of information into two main categories:
  - internal factors – the strengths and weaknesses internal to the organization
  - external factors – the opportunities and threats presented by the environment external to the organization

It must be noted that in the case of this SWOT, the strengths and weaknesses refer to those internal to the networks themselves. The opportunities and threats refer to forces that are external to the networks, which can either mean within FAO (for example, regarding structures or procedures), or truly external (for example, other agencies).

4. *Output*

The main deliverable will be the Report on FAO networks (maximum 15 pages, excluding annexes), which will include the following:

1. Background, purpose and methodology
2. Description of networks
3. Findings (structured by evaluation question[41], with text box examples)
4. Conclusions

Annexes should include the list of persons interviewed, list of documents reviewed, Inventory of networks, Case studies, Client surveys (when relevant) and Member Country surveys (when relevant).

5. *Work plan*

The work-plan for the assessment of FAO networks is provided in appendix 2.

41 See Annex 1 for specific network indicators in the evaluation matrix

Appendix 1 – Indicative Evaluation Matrix (networks)

KEY EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCES	COMPONENT (TOOL)
1. Are FAO networks planned and designed based on expressed needs or mandates from the Member Countries (MCs)?	• Number/percentage and level networks developed as a result of a robust needs assessment	• Documentation • Staff • Member Countries	• Mapping • Case studies
	• Range of networks with a clear mandate/justification	• Documentation • Staff • Member Countries	• Mapping • Case studies
	• Number/percentage and type of MCs involvement in the planning/design of FAO's networks	• Documentation • Staff • Member Countries	• Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop • Member Countries survey
	• Number/percentage/level of MCs which indicate that FAO networks address their knowledge needs	• Member Countries	• Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop • Member Countries survey
2. Are FAO networks adequate, in view of the context, needs or problems to which they are intended to respond?	• Number/percentage/level of networks anchored in country, regional or global programs/frameworks	• Documentation • Staff • Evaluation reports • Member Countries	• Mapping • Meta-evaluation • Client Survey and Workshop • Member Countries Survey
	• Number/percentage/level of participation which indicates that FAO's networks are easily accessible and with contextualized content	• Documentation • Staff • Evaluation reports • Member Countries	• Meta-evaluation • Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop • Member Countries Survey
3. Are FAO networks consistent with the Organization's goals?	• Level of networks with clear impact pathways/Theory of Change linked to the Organization's goals and objectives	• Documentation • Staff • Member Countries • Partners	• Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop • Member Countries Survey

KEY EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCES	COMPONENT (TOOL)
4. Is there synergy, gaps or duplications among FAO networks?	• Number/percentage of network products and services developed in partnerships	• Staff • Partners	• Mapping • Case studies
	• Range of partners involved and types of contributions	• Documentation • Evaluation reports • Staff • Partners	• Meta-evaluation • Case studies
	• Level of thematic and geographic coverage of networks	• Documentation • Staff & partners • Member Countries	• Meta-evaluation • Case studies
	• Number/percentage and level of network services that appear to overlap with other (FAO and non-FAO) networks	• Documentation • Staff & partners • Member Countries • Beneficiaries	• Mapping • Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop • Member Countries survey
5. How well does FAO ensure the technical excellence and quality of their networks?	• Number/percentage of networks with quality assurance frameworks in place	• Documentation • Staff	• Mapping
	• Level of credibility of FAO networks	• Partners • Beneficiaries • Member Countries	• Case studies • Client survey and workshop • Member Countries survey
6. Have FAO's networks reached their intended users?	• Number of members in FAO networks	• Documentation	• Mapping • Case studies
	• Number of contributions on lists/ website by participants	• Documentation	• Mapping
	• Number /percentage of growth of network members	• Documentation	• Mapping
	• Level of knowledge sharing from staff to colleagues or external peers	• Staff	• Mapping/ focus groups • Case studies
	• Level of accessibility to FAO's networks	• Documentation • Evaluation reports • Member Countries	• Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop • Member Countries Survey

KEY EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCES	COMPONENT (TOOL)
7. Have FAO's networks achieved their intended uses?	• Number/percentage/level of networks for which participant satisfaction levels are monitored	• Documentation • Staff	• Mapping • Case studies
	• Level of participant satisfaction with networks	• Evaluation reports • Member Countries • Partners • Beneficiaries	• Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop • Member Countries survey
	• Number/level of participants who report knowledge gained from participation in a FAO network	• Evaluation reports • Staff • Member Countries • Partners • Beneficiaries	• Staff survey/focus groups • Meta-evaluation • Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop • Member countries survey
	• Number/level of network's name/ work cited in policy papers/ documents	• Member Countries • Partners • Beneficiaries	• Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop
8. What outcomes have FAO networks achieved, or contributed to achieve?	• Number/percentage/level of participants intending to adapt knowledge or use learning from a network	• Evaluation reports • Staff • Beneficiaries	• Meta-evaluation • Case studies (user survey) • Client Survey and Workshop
	• Number/percentage/level of participants using learning from a network to inform policy and advocacy or to enhance programs, training, education or research	• Evaluation reports • Staff • Beneficiaries • Member Countries	• Meta-evaluation • Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop • Member Countries Survey
	• Number/percentage/level of participants using a network to improve their own practice or performance	• Evaluation reports • Staff & Beneficiaries • Member Countries • Partner	• Meta-evaluation • Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop • Member Countries Survey
	• Level of influence achieved on gender and human right issues through the application of learning from FAO networks	• Evaluation reports • Staff & Beneficiaries	• Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop

KEY EVALUATION QUESTION	INDICATORS	SOURCES	COMPONENT (TOOL)
9. How efficient has been the use of FAO human and institutional resources in the development of networks?	• Breadth and depth of FAO's institutional and human resources for the development of networks	• Documentation • Staff • Member Countries	• Mapping • Staff survey/focus groups • Case studies
	• Number/percentage of networks that have a robust strategy/ sustainability plan	• Documentation • Staff & Members	• Mapping • Case studies
	• Number and types of activities aimed at improving FAO Staff capacity to coordinate networks	• Documentation • Staff	• Staff survey/focus groups • Case studies
	• Number and type of network activity targeting vulnerable groups including women	• Documentation • Staff & Beneficiaries	• Case studies • Client Survey and Workshop
	• Availability of sex disaggregated data on network participants	• Staff	• Mapping
	• Level of support by managers for network activities	• Documentation • Staff	• Staff survey/focus groups
	• Inclusion of network activities in official job descriptions and performance reviews	• Documentation • Staff	• Staff survey/focus groups
	• Number and level of involvement of FAO staff (technical experts) in networks	• Documentation • Staff	• Staff survey/focus groups
	• Level of uptake of FAO networks for individual and institutional learning within FAO	• Documentation • Staff	• Staff survey/focus groups • Case studies

Appendix 2 – Indicative Work Plan

Type	Name	Description	# subscribers
TN	Livestock production and Veterinary Science	Rationale: Under the new Strategic Framework, Livestock Production and Health Specialists will contribute to all 5 Strategic Objectives. Coordination of approaches, information exchange and harmonization of interventions for livestock related issues are difficult and complex and the Livestock Production and Veterinary Science TN will address this issue. Scope and Objective: The TN aims to keep intellectual leadership on livestock related issues within its mandate of sustainable growth, food security and poverty reduction. It will: • support in-house harmonization of strategies/ approaches/programmes addressing the development of the livestock sector. (Cross SOs) • serve as information exchange platform and link between HQ & DOs for implementation of livestock related activities within Regional Initiatives for example. • serve as platform to disseminate corporate policies and decisions relevant to livestock production and health. • assist in bringing together existing expertise on production and health.	na
TN	Food Safety and Quality	Rationale: In addition to FAOs core food safety unit (AGDF), there are staff with sector specific or general food safety competence spread across the organization. Such a network will be a source of knowledge for the staff, with often disparate background and perspectives, working throughout the organization on food safety, support a "one-FAO" approach to food safety by facilitating stronger linkages between the relevant staff and support the appropriate integration of food safety into other work areas. Scope and Objective: The TN will focus on food safety in the context of consumer protection, food security and economic development, including quality as it pertains to safety. A broader consideration of quality issues could be considered at a later date according to the interests of the network members and the needs of the member countries they support. The TN aims to support professional growth of staff working on food safety issues at HQ and DOs, to assist in maintaining and upgrading technical skills and knowledge, develop an FAO wide food safety community of practice and to assure the quality of the guidance/ advice provided by FAO on food safety issues across all jurisdictions, and, as appropriate, consistency of message.	na

Type	Name	Description	# subscribers
TN	Crop Production and Protection	Rationale: The TN aims to promote a constant exchange of information, disciplinary discussions on conceptual matters and keeping staff informed and knowledgeable on disciplinary developments made outside FAO. Scope and Objective: The TN will cover specified technical topics that will change on a quarterly basis and prioritized on an annual basis through a consultative process with members with "champions" identified for each topic who will work with the facilitator in leading the discussion. Initial topics include Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Conservation Agriculture, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Pesticide Management, Plant Nutrition. Agro-ecology, Emerging plant pests and diseases e.g. banana wilt, citrus greening etc. The aim is for staff to maintaining and up-grade technical skills/knowledge through an opportunity to share, discuss and document concepts, technologies, experiences and practices.	na
TN	Rural and agricultural finance	Rationale: To facilitate knowledge management within the discipline of rural and agricultural finance within different parts of FAO (AGS, ESP, TCI, EST, FIR, FOE, OCP, TCE), between HQs and DOs and among partner development agencies (e.g. IFAD, GIZ, UNCDF, WB members of the CABFIN partnership) Scope and Objective: (i) To develop capacity of the FAO staff, to disseminate of state-of-art knowledge and dialogue on good practices in the promotion of access to rural and agricultural finance; (ii) To foster coordination and synergies internally in FAO on related HQ and field work, and also between FAO and CABFIN and Rome-based Agency members.	na
TN	Food Value Chain Development	Rationale: The VC approach is used by many FAO technical divisions. However, there is a great variety in definitions and tools, even within FAO, and very little interaction between the divisions/departments and between officers in these divisions practicing the discipline of value chain development (analytical, implementation, and monitoring tools). Furthermore, there are many developments outside of FAO in this discipline that need to be tracked in order for FAO to remain at the cutting edge, especially in terms of tools and approaches to assess and improve sustainability. Scope and Objective: The TN aims to: • support professional growth of persons using food value chain development approaches at HQ and in the field (from various divisions). • assure an application of a consistent approach that follows best practices and takes account the latest thinking in this discipline into account. • facilitate knowledge management and collaboration on new activities related to the discipline of value chain development.	na

Type	Name	Description	# subscribers
TN	Gender	Scope and Objective: In order to advance the achievement of the ambitious goals of FAO's Gender Equality Policy, the Network will aim to: • Facilitate knowledge exchange and cooperation among FAO's staff and external partners by bringing them together to foster expert dialogue and multi-sectoral thinking and to plan and coordinate activities and collective advocacy on gender in agricultural development and research within the scope of the Organization's mandate; • Help identify and address gender-based needs in agriculture for collective action with the overarching aim of placing gender equality and women's empowerment at the heart of the agricultural policy, research and development, capacity-development and institutional-building agenda of FAO and its Member countries; • The TN is expected to keep abreast of evolving practices in the international development community, research and academia and the changing needs of Member Countries and FAO staff in the field of gender equality and enhance skills and competencies of the Network members through targeted capacity development activities; • Enhance the evidence base to show the impact and value of addressing men's and women's different needs in agriculture to enable food, nutrition and income security for the rural poor through the development of joint cross-sectoral knowledge products	na
TN	Social Protection	Scope and Objective: i) strengthening coordination, coherence, and synergies in the development and delivery of FAO support to Members; ii) providing a forum to exchange knowledge, information, capacity development opportunities, experiences, and good practices that will contribute to increase FAO delivery quality and effectiveness; iii) assuring the technical quality of FAO work in social protection	na

	September					October				November				December					January				February				March					April				May			
	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	4	11	18	25
Implementation Phase																																							
INVENTORY AND MAPPING				M																																			
Launch of survey				I																																			
Analysis and synthesis				S																																			
CASE STUDIES				S																																			
Focus groups and interviews in Rome				I																																			
Design				O																																			
Interviews (incl. Skype)				N																																			
REPORT PREPARATION																																							
Analysis and drafting of case studies																																							
Drafting of report on networks																																							
Finalization of Report																																							

2 Annex 4.2. Inventory of FAO networks

Type	Name	Description	# subscribers
TN	Statistics	Rationale: FAO's statistical system is mostly decentralized, where each FAO technical unit carries out its own statistical programme of work and maintains ownership of data. To ensure coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of this approach requires a formal and well established governance system. The FAO Technical Network on Statistics represents a key component of the corporate statistical governance system, and one which only exists on an informal and uncoordinated basis that cannot be leveraged at the corporate level. Scope and Objective: To share experience, know-how and best practices among colleagues organization-wide and around the world, to build a community of statisticians and facilitate their professional development; To promote quality assurance of statistical methodologies and practices applied within FAO, in collaboration with the Interdepartmental Technical Task Force on Statistics; To provide feedback on the application of statistical standards within FAO and to contribute to the further development of FAO statistical standards by identifying issues to be addressed by the corporate governance bodies on statistics.	na
TN	Fisheries and Aquaculture	Rationale: To ensure technical excellence in FAO work in Fisheries and Aquaculture across the various levels of the Organization with a view to maintain and strengthen the technical capacities of the human resources and to exchange information and knowledgeScope and Objective: 1) To ensure better coordination between HQ and Decentralized Offices for optimal delivery of FAO work at the global, regional and country levels; 2) To promote synergies and exchange of expertise, experience, knowledge and information between Fisheries and Aquaculture staff in HQ and in Dos and other partners.	na
TN	Forestry	Rationale: To ensure technical excellence and innovation in forestry work across all levels of the Organization; this is essential in an increasingly decentralized and country-focused FAO; approved in late 2011; Scope and Objective: to promote exchange of information of ideas and experiences on development and application of technical standards, particularly between HQ and DOs; to ensure that HQ and DO forestry practitioners are aware of the main challenges and issues facing their counterparts;	na

Type	Name	Description	# subscribers
TN	Climate Change	Rational: Climate change is already impacting food security and agricultural production systems. Addressing climate change requires interdisciplinary expertise and coordinated responses across sectors. The network will therefore serve to bring together a community of technical professionals who can exchange knowledge and provide support. Scope and Objective: The proposed network would address climate change issues by: • Enhance collaboration on climate change between FAO staff at HQ, regional, sub-regional and national levels; • Sharing, discussing and documenting innovative concepts, technologies, practices and lessons learned; • Organizing and participating in relevant disciplinary work; • Providing coordinated responses to member countries requests, and; • Keep members abreast of disciplinary developments and experience.	na
TN	Land and Tenure	Rationale: While it is a globally recognized component of sustainable development, sustainable land management, i.e. "the adoption of land use systems that, through appropriate management practices, enables land users to maximize the economic and social benefits from the land while maintaining or enhancing the ecological support functions of the land resources" is yet to find its place in national policies or global governance mechanisms for meaningful, wide-scale implementation. The governance of tenure is a crucial element in determining associated rights, duties, and in using and managing land, fisheries and forests. Many tenure problems arise because of weak governance, and attempts to address tenure problems are affected by the quality of governance. Scope and Objective: The Technical Land and Tenure covers the governance and management-related aspects to land end tenure systems with a specific objective of creating a platform and channels to help improve the capacity of its members and equip them with the optimal combination of disciplinary knowledge, information, competence and shared experiences.	na
TN	Environment and Social Impact Assessment Network	Rational: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) is one of the internationally accepted safeguard and operational standards agreed in the UN system and International Financial Institutions (IFI), for which FAO is expected to comply in its programmes and projects. Scope and Objective: This technical network on Environment and Social Impact assessment will contribute to enhancing technical capacity of staff in the decentralized offices and HQs, on environment and social impact assessment; as well as in the implementation of the EIA Guidelines. The network will provide technical support, capacity building and systematic knowledge sharing and reporting between HQs and Decentralized Offices (DOs) on ESIA.	na

Type	Name	Description	# subscribers
TN	Water	Rationale: At global level the insufficient governance and improper management, coupled with the absence of water in the agenda of decision makers in other spheres leads to undesired and sometimes unpredictable outcomes, including local and regional crises where these resources are further stressed and inadequately used to serve the demand. They serve, directly as well as implicitly, all of the societal goals. As a result, water managers and those advising them bear a double responsibility. They, on the one hand, have to manage these resources in a sound manner to the extent possible and within the constraints imposed externally. They also have the duty of informing those decision makers in the other domains whose decisions impact water resources, typically in the direction of increased pressures and further degradation and deterioration. It is imperative that the human resources remain on top of these developments and are well-equipped to provide the service expected from them. Scope and Objective: The Technical Network on Water Governance and Management covers the technical expertise in data, monitoring and assessments; planning, formulation and implementation of sustainable water-related programmes and activities. The Network's specific objective is to provide an efficient, managed, participatory and enabling environment that helps improve the capacity of its members and equip them with the optimal combination of disciplinary knowledge, information, competence and shared experiences.	na
Thematic	Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) Forum		na
Thematic	Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods		na
Thematic	Urban Forestry		na
Thematic	Bioenergy		na
Thematic	Community of Practice of climate change mitigation in agriculture		na
Thematic	e-Agriculture		na
DG	LEAD-Announce-L	LEAD General Public Annoucements List	4300
DG	FAO-AnimalFeeding-L	FAO-AnimalFeeding-Mailing list to share relevant information and documents	2833
DG	FAO-AnimalWelfare-L	Disseminate information and stimulate collaboration on animal welfare issues	2476
DG	LEAD-Annonce-L	LEAD French General Public Announcements List	1871
DG	LEAD-Anuncio-L	LEAD Spanish General Public Announcements	1793
DG	Dairy-Outlook-L	Newsletter on production and trade development in the dairy sector	1443
DG	VPH-L	Veterinary Public Health E-conf on Zoonotic diseases	1398

Type	Name	Description	# subscribers
DG	Meat-L	Forum on national and international markets for livestock and meat products	972
DG	Milk-L	Conference on small-scale milk collection and processing in developing countries	585
DG	Animal-CA-L	E-Conference on livestock in conservation agriculture	466
DG	EMPRES-Livestock-L	E-newsletter covering animal health topics, in particular transboundary animal diseases (TADs)	342
DG	FAO-AnimalHealth-L	Establishment of a PPR Global Research and Expertise Network (PPR-GREN)	304
DG	PoultryDevelopment-L	Forum on family poultry production in developing countries	242
DG	Katima-Mulilo-L	ML for follow-up discussion of TADinfo training workshop	72
DG	FAO-AGA-Partners-L	Mailing list of AGA partner organizations	42
DG	FMD-EPI-NET-L	Foot and Mouth disease (FMD) epidemiology network discussion list	36
DG	SameSameBut-L	Mailing list between Asian TADinfo users and developers	31
DG	Codex-L	List for exchange of Working Papers for Codex Alimentarus	470
DG	Codex-Direct-L	Direct mailing of Codex documents in native format	155
DG	Biotech-L	FAO Biotechnology Forum	3589
DG	Pesticide-Mgt-L	FAO Pesticide Management	1879
DG	PBN-L	Plant Breeding Newsletter	1724
DG	CA-Cop-L	Global Community of Practice on Conservation Agriculture	971
DG	Crop-Livestock-L	International Consultation on Integrated Crop-Livestock Systems for Development	656
DG	Biotech-Room3-L	Moderated conference on Genomics in Food and Agriculture	525
DG	GIPB-Newsletter-L	Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building (GIBP)	6279
DG	GFAR-Stakeholders-L	List for GFAR Stakeholders	6104
DG	GCARD-L	Mailing list for GCARD 2010 Conference	1878
DG	FAO-Sustainability-L	Sustainability Pathways	1250
DG	Impact-L	Moderated conference on impact assessment of agricultural research	618
DG	AIS-L	Moderated conference on agricultural innovation systems (AIS) and family farming	577
DG	GCARD2010-AP-L	Mailing list for the GCARD 2010 e-consultations: Asia Pacific	322

Type	Name	Description	# subscribers
DG	GCARD2010-EU-L	Mailing list for the GCARD 2010 e-consultations: Europe	217
DG	GCARD2010-WANA-L	Mailing list for the GCARD 2010 e-consultations: West Asia and North Africa	211
DG	GCARD2010-CAC-L	Mailing list for the GCARD 2010 e-consultations: Central Asia and Caucasus	119
DG	SAFA-Task-Force-L	Backstopping of SAFA pilot studies and finalization of the SAFA Guidelines	40
DG	Post2015-L	Post 2015 Global Thematic Consultation on Food Security and Nutrition	4796
DG	FSNFORUM-L	FSN Forum, a knowledge network on Food Security and Nutrition	4562
DG	RTF-News-L	Right to Food Distribution	3342
DG	FSNForum-WA-L	Distribution list of the FSN Forum for West Africa	1756
DG	IPC-L	The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)	949
DG	Food-Climate-L	Electronic Newsletter on Climate Change and Food Security issues	887
DG	Global-Governance-L	Improved Global Governance for Hunger Reduction Programme	862
DG	Info-Action-L	EC-FAO Food Security Programme, new distance learning and publications	851
DG	Biotech-Room2-L	Moderated conference on GMOs in the pipeline, hosted by the FAO Biotechnology Forum in 2012	775
DG	InFoods-Food-Comp-L	Food Composition Discussion Group	696
DG	FSNForum-ECA-L	Distribution list of the FSN Forum for Europe and Central Asia	670
DG	FSIN-L	FSIN Stakeholder Consultation	357
DG	School-Milk-L	Exchange of information on school milk programmes	310
DG	FSNForum-RU-L	Russian language distribution list of the FSN Forum	268
DG	FAOSTAT-NEWS-L	FAOSTAT-News, a knowledge network on FAOSTAT Database	15373
DG	Rice-Market-L	Rice Market Information Exchange	2939
DG	Oilcrops-L	Oilcrops Market Network on the world market for oilcrops and derived products	543
DG	GIEWSAlertsWorld-L	GIEWS Special Reports/Alerts	1153
DG	GIEWSAlertsAfrica-L	GIEWS Special Reports/Alerts for Africa	355
DG	SMIAR Alerts	Liste de diffusion des Alertes et Rapports speciaux du SMIAR en francais	297
DG	GIEWSAlertsAsia-L	GIEWS Special Reports/Alerts for Asia	162
DG	GIEWSAlertsLA-L	GIEWS Special Reports/Alerts for Latin America	93
DG	GIEWSAlertsEurope-L	GIEWS Special Reports/Alerts for Europe	85

Type	Name	Description	# subscribers
DG	Pakistan-Agri-Links-L	Pakistan Agriculture Sector Issues Discussion Forum	1641
DG	FI-Aquaculture-L	FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department Newsletter on Aquaculture	2051
DG	FI-Capture-L	FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department Newsletter on Capture Fisheries	1167
DG	SSF Guidelines-L	Distribution list for the SSF Guidelines	1094
DG	EAF-Nansen-L	Mailing list on news and information on the EAF-Nansen Project	236
DG	FI-Aquaculture-Events-L	List used to promote important events and publications	215
DG	ASFA-Board-L	Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts Advisory Board	161
DG	EIFAAC-L	European Inland Fisheries and aquaculture Advisory Commission	160
DG	In-FO-News-L	FAO Forestry Programme updates	20665
DG	Infosylva-L	FO Department news (Infosylva)	20299
DG	NWFP-Digest-L	List to disseminate information on all aspects of Non-Wood Forest Products	2632
DG	CLIM-FO-L	Forum on information and experiences about climate change and forestry	2541
DG	Friends-Mountains-L	List of people and institutions not members of the Mountain Partnership	1075
DG	Mountain-Partnership-L	Documentation and newsletter to members of the Mountain Partnership	465
DG	IPROMO-L	Alumni list for the IPROMO training programme	216
DG	LegalPublications-L	FAO legal office publications	171
DG	VG-Venture-L	Voluntary Guidelines - responible governance tenure of land, fisheries & forests	2570
DG	Land-Tenure-Journal-L	A distribution list to provide updates about the Land Tenure Journal	2267
DG	ORCA-L	Organic Research Centres Alliance (ORCA)	717
DG	GBEP-Newsletter-L	Global Bioenergy Partnership GBEP newsletter	421
DG	Agromet-L	Agrometeorology and Agroclimatology discussion list	233
DG	GBEP-Partners-L	Members of the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP) involved as Partners	220
DG	GBEP-Observers-L	Members of the Global Bioenergy Partnership (GBEP) involved as Observers	134
DG	Organic-Farming-L	Discussion list on organic agriculture and related issues	84
DG	Water-Cooperation-2013-L	The Water and Cooperation 2013 campaign and event list	6980

Type	Name	Description	# subscribers
DG	AGLINET-L	Aglinet Members Resources and Information Sharing List	44
DG	AAHM-L	Alliance Against Hunger and Malnutrition	2883
DG	YUNGA-L	List server for the new initiative Youth and United Nations Global Alliance	2773
DG	Knowledge-Sharing-L	Knowledge cafe/knowledge sharing trainings participant list	521
DG	NAAHM-L	National Alliances Against Hunger and Malnutrition focal point mailing list	81
DG	CPLP-L	List for the online consultation on family farming in CPLP countries	45
DG	FAO-DairyAsia-L	Dairy Asia Network	519
DG	TADS-NETWORK-ASIA-L	Forum on Avian Influenza / Transboundary Animal Diseases, Asia & Pacific Region	383
DG	APCAS-L	Information to APCAS members on agricultural statistics - Asia Pacific Region	361
DG	SAP-Price-L	Forum on food prices in the Pacific Islands	208
DG	Food-Asia-L	Agricultural policies critical for food security in Asia	205
DG	RAP-Price-L	Forum on food prices policies in Asia	175
DG	Zoonoses-Network-Asia-L	Issues on HPAI, Nipah, SARS and other zoonotic diseases (Asia and the Pacific)	87
DG	ECFS-L	Eurasian Food Security Network	615
DG	RLC-Iniciativa-L	Iniciativa America Latina y Caribe sin Hambre	1506
DG	SFE-Price-L	Discussion Forum on food prices policies in Eastern Africa	163
DG	SFW-Price-L	Discussion forum on food price policies in Western Africa	86
DG	Carib-Agri-L	Discussion group on Caribbean agriculture	1793
DG	Policy-Forum-L	Discussion on policy issues - focussing on TCS and outposted policy officers	85

Annex 4.3. Survey of FAO network managers

A Survey Monkey online survey was administered to owners of the FAO networks identified through the evaluation in order to gather information on their objectives, membership, operations and desired outcomes. The survey, which consisted of 26 questions, was open for 4 weeks in October 2014 and was followed up by interviews in December 2014. It was sent to 65 officers responsible for networks at FAO; 30 responses were obtained representing:

- 9 Discussion Groups or Forums
- 9 Technical Network
- 7 Thematic Knowledge Networks
- 2 Informal Networks
- 1 Regional Network

No	Name of network	Type of network
1	Climate Change Mitigation in Agriculture - Community of Practice & Climate-Smart Agriculture Discussion group	Discussion forums or groups
2	Water Technical Network	Functional Technical Network (now Technical Network)
3	Social Protection Technical Network	Functional Technical Network (now Technical Network)
4	ASFA (Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts)	Informal Network
5	IDWG Institution Building	Thematic Knowledge Network
6	inFO news	Discussion forums or groups
7	FAO Animal Welfare Knowledge Platform	Thematic Knowledge Network
8	International Tropical Fruits Network	Thematic Knowledge Network
9	Technical Network on Climate Change	Functional Technical Network (now Technical Network)
10	FAOSTAT Emissions database	Discussion forums or groups
11	Infosylva	Discussion forums or groups
12	DAD-Net	Thematic Knowledge Network
13	Farmer Field Schools	Discussion forums or groups
14	Forestry Technical Network	Functional Technical Network (now Technical Network)
15	Sustainable Food Value Chain Development	Functional Technical Network (now Technical Network)
16	POULTRYDEVELOPMENT-L	Discussion forums or groups
17	Perennial crops	Discussion forums or groups
18	Food for Cities	Discussion forums or groups
19	Global Food Security and Nutrition Forum (FSN)	Thematic Knowledge Network
20	SHARP	Discussion forums or groups
21	Rural and Agricultural Finance and Investment Technical Network (RAFI-TN)	Functional Technical Network (now Technical Network)
22	AgrInvest	Discussion forums or groups

23	CLIM-FO	Informal Network
24	LAM Forest Communicators Network	Regional Network
25	Livestock Technical Network	Functional Technical Network (now Technical Network)
26	E-Agriculture Network	Thematic Knowledge Network
27	Land Tenure Technical Network	Functional Technical Network (now Technical Network)
28	Fisheries Technical Network	Functional Technical Network (now Technical Network)

The themes that are most discussed in these networks are food security (10), climate change (10), land management (9), water (8), and animal production/forestry (6 for each of them).

The main objective of the networks is overwhelmingly to share information and knowledge (87%), but many secondary and tertiary objectives were also cited, such as: strengthening collaboration across geographic locations (43%), supporting professional growth (33%), identifying and documenting lessons learned and innovative practices, harmonization of strategies and promoting interdisciplinary collaborations (each 23%).

The sample networks were mostly open to external users, with only 4 of them (17%) purely internal to FAO. Some restrictions applied to access the networks, though, ranging from registration login and moderation, to nominal fees and partnership agreements.

Posting information in an online forum is the most frequently cited type of activity by the networks (90%). The more interactive types of online exchanges such as "Online spontaneous queries and replies to/from members" (63%) and "Online organized good practices/lessons learned exchange" (37%) are less common. This underlines the fact that the information dissemination network model (i.e. all postings done by the network owner) is still more prevalent at FAO. Trainings, either face-to-face (60%) or online (30%), are also a commonly stated type of activity undertaken by the sample networks.

63% of the networks collect information on their members but only half of those have gender disaggregated data. The female to male ratio is very different from one network to another, ranging from 80% female (Climate Smart Agriculture) to 20% female (Farmer Field School) but very much reflects the gender breakdown of staff working in the technical areas.

Annex 4.4. Case Study – The Climate Change Study Circle (CCSC)

The Climate Change Study Circle (CCSC) is an informal network on Climate Change which was created in November 2008. The CCSC has a very straightforward model: FAO staff from all technical units, as well as external guests, present new ideas and work in progress in an informal, face-to-face setting. The one-hour lunch time meetings are held usually every second Monday, with presentations of no more than 30 minutes to allow time for discussions. The forum fosters joint presentations across technical units on climate change topics. It is organized by FAO's NRC Division and is open to all interested FAO employees and occasionally external speakers who are visiting FAO and can present on Climate Change related topics. There are currently roughly 300 members on the mailing list which is used to send out invitations. A few hundred past presentations are currently available on the CCSC intranet pages. Although the CCSC meetings are face-to-face at HQ, organizers are trying to include people outside Rome though video conferences or webinars (but only 3 of those so far), these gained some additional viewings from people who couldn't attend in person as they are also on the intranet). Some of the speakers are external but roughly 90% of presenters are from FAO. People usually find out about the CCSC meetings through word of mouth or the CCSC intranet page[42] and events are listed on the FAO intranet home page "meetings today at HQ" or noticeboard).

CCSC was co-developed by a Senior Officer and an Officer from NRC with the primary objective to share information between different teams working on climate change issues. It has been coordinated by volunteer organizers who have changed over time; if they leave, they need to find others to continue the Study Circle. They take turns organizing and facilitating the meetings. The network has no funding and is completely based on goodwill. Participation in each meeting is variable, running from 10 to 50 or more people, depending on the topic.

> *"I presented twice, I think. The CCSC is an extremely useful occasion to present your work. Regular sharing is good but also to see the same people and strengthening Climate Change networking."*
>
> –NRL Staff member

The topics presented are mostly technical ones with Climate Change as the main focus. The interaction afterwards can be more like a Q&A session, or sometimes a more casual discussion, depending on the presenter. There are usually at least two presentations in the pipeline but this can also be irregular, sometimes with gaps, sometimes with so many potential topics, the organizers need to schedule an online calendar which is used to show future speakers and titles and links to past presentations. The organizers try to find topics through personal contacts but recently, for the first time, they tried asking the mailing list if they have any topics or interesting visitors coming to FAO who could present at the CCSC.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths: Interviewees[43] agreed that the non-hierarchical and informal nature of the network is a major plus in an organisation such as FAO, where formal meetings tend to be the norm. The major strength of CCSC is offering this neutral space for sharing and learning in an area (Climate Change) whose cross-cutting nature makes it ideal for networking. Many of those interviewed mentioned that even just *knowing* what others are doing is extremely valuable that if this person is working on this, I can find them at CCSC. As one of the CCSC coordinators put it, the best indicator is that they keep coming and are positive about the meetings. In fact, the 300 members on the mailing list amount to roughly 15% of the Rome-based staff and this number grows with every meeting.

42 http://intranet.fao.org/nr/nrc/73908/en/

43 See Annex IV.2 - List of persons interviewed

> *"After my presentation, two colleagues from other divisions came to say, let's work together. They had a FAO project in the same region but in another division. They found out about our project through the CCSC and ended up participating in a workshop in the region."*
>
> –NRC Staff member

This form of volunteer, cross-department, cross-discipline knowledge sharing is really akin to the Community of Practice[44] model, where participating in the group also provides opportunities for professional development or capacity building.

> *"The CCSC should be taken as a series; one meeting doesn't change your life. But it's the fact that such a place exists that makes a difference in building a community around Climate Change."*
>
> – FAO Staff member

Weaknesses: The flip side of the informality is that very little is known about the members[45]. Paper sign-in sheets are distributed at each meeting and are kept in a binder afterwards, their purpose limited to finding out if any of the participants want to be on the mailing list. A list of names and email addresses is kept, but there is little information about why they come and what they would like in the future. A survey of members has been considered but would take time and effort to organise so hasn't been done yet, but is a possible recommendation for the CC Functional Network to consider. There is also no stats counter on the intranet page so the coordinators don't know how many people come to look at the previous presentations and which ones are of most interest.

Interviewees suggested a few ideas for improvement, especially related to communications aspects, such as announcing meetings earlier that the usual one week notice (although they are put on the calendar as soon as confirmed), circulating the minutes and making the CCSC meetings more open by announcing them in the lobby. Looking for presenters doing more interesting/innovative work was another suggestion raised by two of those interviewed but they were also cognisant that would mean a lot of effort on the part of the organizers.

This leads to another important weakness, the limitations of volunteerism. Of course, many things hinge on the resource issue (human, financial) be it a new system, being more proactive or developing products or services. For example, the mailing list is currently used only for announcement purposes. The CCSC group has potential for use for online discussion but there was a negative reaction when some members started a discussion by "replying to all" 300 email addresses on the list and some members didn't like to get these messages. The CCSC Coordinators decided to discourage the use of the mailing list for that and instead to encourage members to use the Workspace which has those functions but those have not been well developed or gained much interest across most sections of FAO. Also currently no one has the time to support facilitation of such a discussion which would be useful for the community to flourish.

Opportunities: Nearly all those interviewed mentioned the usefulness of having more presenters and participants from outside of FAO. This is seen as a huge opportunity for learning and, potentially, for eventual coordination or collaboration around Climate Change initiatives.

Another identified opportunity was to develop more the interactive portion of the CCSC. For example, the presentation portion could be shorter and followed up by table discussion topics, or debates on common questions.

44 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Community_of_practice

45 The 300 members quoted earlier is an approximate number, there is a mailing list but some names are inactive and steps are being taken to clean it up .

> *"I presented my project at the CCSC and IFAD came. They were actually planning to have a similar project in their Indonesia program so now we are now involved in their project."*
>
> –NRC Staff member

> *"In one Study Circle, an ICRAF staff member was here to present. The CCSC provided a good opportunity to see what they were doing on the ground and also how people reacted. I now have a much better understanding and when I am sitting in donor meetings - since I grasp it better - I can defend it better."*
>
> – NRC Staff member

Threats: As already mentioned, the volunteer model makes the CCSC more fragile. One of the Coordinators is moving to another division and is currently looking to have someone else in NRC take on his coordinator role. Although they have managed to find replacements over the course of the last 6 years, the reality of staff turnover at FAO means that finding champions to lead CCSC every couple of years may become increasingly difficult to sustain.

Also, the CCSC is not a demand-driven model and there is a risk that people stop to be interested in what is being offered. As one of the Coordinators said, there used to be a queue of topics in the pipeline so maybe interest is dropping off.

The biggest threat is the institutional commitment issue. Only one of the Coordinators had the time spend on CCSC in his PEMS (Performance Management System) and it was less than 5%, when in actuality he spends more time on it. One member suggested that participation in CCSC should be included in TORs for everyone who participates, as the networking and knowledge sharing should be considered part of one's work.

Conclusion

The institutional low profile of CCSC is a double-edged sword: keeping it nimble and informal ensures relevance but the lack of institutional recognition keeps it from blossoming into something with even more impact.

As it is, the model works because of its simplicity. The issue with something that works is that people see possibility for more and this raises expectations that cannot be currently sustained. But in the end, the fundamental message from all interviewed participants was to keep the CCSC informal, as this was perceived as being of the highest value at FAO.

Annex 4.5: Case Study – The Forestry Technical Network (FTN)

The Forestry Technical Network (FTN) was established in 2012 intended primarily to ensure that a high standard of quality of FAO's work in forestry is upheld through a clear understanding and appreciation by all concerned staff and consultants of the standards, policies and best practices that have been defined and accepted by FAO regarding forestry issues. Two main objectives were identified: improved knowledge exchange between headquarters and the decentralized offices; and the provision of technical support to forestry staff in the decentralized offices. The FTN has been cited in former evaluations as the only example of an existing Functional Technical Network remaining from those established in 2011-2012 to ensure the quality assurance of technical work and share experiences between Decentralized Offices (DOs) and HQ. As a result, the FTN already had a variety of achievements under its belt when the Technical Networks were created in April 2014 under the new SF matrix arrangements and improved ways of working. Membership – including staff and non-staff human resources working on forestry issues house-wide – stands at approximately 244, 146 at HQ and 98 in DOs or otherwise non HQ-based.

A first face-to-face meeting was held at FAO headquarters during the Committee on Forestry (COFO) in October 2012, followed up with a second during the FFSN conference in 2013 and the third in June 2014 at the last COFO. Since not all can participate in the face-to-face events, regular Video Conferences (VC) are held with the participation of decentralized officers (for e.g. meetings of the Forestry Management Team).

During its two years of existence, discrete deliverables were developed such as on-boarding resources for newcomers, as well as a Foresters Resource Kit. The FTN was also used to coordinate the inputs for the development of the new strategic framework.

Members interviewed[46] underlined the importance of the FTN to learn from each other and to identify opportunities for better collaboration and were keen on more learning and exchange activities. They considered FTN highly useful to develop good working relations, especially through the periodic face-to-face interactions, which they feel improve interpersonal relations. Finally, also saw the FTN potential for forward strategic planning.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths: Members interviewed were in agreement on the strength of face-to face meetings, but most specifically the "learning from each other" element and experience sharing that the Knowledge Café[47] session in the 2014 COFO allowed. The idea of small group interactions focussing on technical issues and more in-depth understanding was very appealing and contrasted from the usual presentations and time limited discussions. This is something very positive that they would like to see repeated.

46 See Annex 2 - List of persons interviewed

47 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knowledge_Cafe

"The Knowledge Café at the last face-to-face meeting was extremely useful. I was able to learn of important work of other officers and colleagues and make connections for potential future collaboration. For e.g., I learned *of the human-wildlife conflict tool kit developed in Africa that could potentially be adapted to meet the needs of national colleagues in Bhutan who are struggling with similar issues."*

- FAO Regional Staff member

"Definitely what works best are the face-to-face meetings and what comes out of them. I can't follow all the time the issues discussed on email. But with Senior Officers sitting together around a table, we come to an understanding. It makes me more enlightened on how to approach issues because what is discussed is in line with I do on a daily basis."
– FAO Regional Staff member

The Video Conferences (VC) were also considered a strong element of the FTN, with members finding the FMT meetings generally useful to help keep them abreast of issues and activities in HQ and also to remind HQ staff of perspectives from the regions. One member mentioned the advantage of participating via VC was that you can listen and then ask questions, permitting an interaction something that less easily done when the information is sent by email.

Weaknesses: One interviewee would like to see more firm commitments to work together on project/programme development coming out of the FTN meetings, as well as more attention to follow up of recommendations. Another member thinks that the network should be used more for detailed technical discussions, as a knowledge sharing platform. In regular meetings, he thinks the balance is more on the administrative than on the technical (although the balance is shifting a bit he would like to see more).

The Forestry resources (Kit and onboarding) for new staff were not known or used by 2 out of 4 interviewed. As one member said, they may be useful to newcomers but he isn't one so they aren't of interest to him. Further resources developed by the network might want to focus on needs of more experienced members.

Another perceived gap of the FTN was regarding resource mobilization and resources awareness. It was raised that FTN should make the resources existing at HQ known so the members can bid on projects.

Opportunities: There was agreement on the need for more engagement of a wider group of staff during face-to-face sessions in Rome (currently mostly limited to decentralized staff and senior HQ staff). An opportunity to tap into is to broaden the scope of participation, not only Senior Officers and Team Leaders but involving more people at lower levels. Much of the normative work happens in Rome and the interviewees felt that the Rome-based staff should be part of the discussions for at least a few hours (for e.g. during the Knowledge Café).

Another recurrent opportunity mentioned was developing better collective work. Joint action, concerted action with HQ, coming together to decide global, regional and sub-regional activities, would make life easier according to interviewees. Trying to define and design together three or four global programs related to the strategic framework, implementing together and using the network to make commitments to implement global program, using all member capacities, was suggested as a way forward for FTN by one member.

"The field operational work is usually not as normative as HQ so it is useful to bring the forestry team together and see the potential for joint activities, to see what they are doing at HQ but also in decentralized offices. If we come together, we can find more cross-cutting activities".

– FAO Regional Staff member

One interviewee saw the potential of online discussions on technical issues, saying that they could be done at any time during the year, not just during the annual face-to-face meeting.

Threats: Two interviewees still reported problems with accessing the SharePoint intranet in the regional offices[48]. A functioning network platform, accessible by every member, is an important factor in getting buy-in and a necessity to avoid a two-tier network.

Participation and engagement in the FTN is a major challenge as there are currently few champions within the team leaders. The champions are potentially more in regions but they have little time to get involved in the FTN. Similarly, the capacity for overall coordination using the existing staff base is also limited and may inhibit the Network from realizing its full potential, particularly in this still relatively early phase. The central catalytic resources may mitigate this problem to some extent.

Conclusion

In its two years of existence, the FTN has paved the way for the current Technical Networks. The FTN Coordinator is already aiming to address much of what was raised by interviewees, such as better coordination on project formulation, on normative products and work plans, as well as better coordination of donor information. He is looking at developing a skills and knowledge roster and encouraging more sharing on the SharePoint platform. He is also considering a survey of member needs.

Nonetheless, a wider engagement is necessary and the FTN Coordinator is actively looking to explore the most effective ways to do this. The team leaders need to be champions but they currently do not yet seem to have taken on a real sense of ownership. The FTN Coordinator is seeking to identify something concrete like a pilot based on a real work group experience/need, so as to demonstrate the potential of the Network and thereby promote a more ground up ownership.

48 Since these interviews were done, platform issues have reportedly been fixed.

Annex 4.6: Case Study – The Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN)

> *"The FSN Forum is unique in many ways: it gives network members a chance to define topics and moderate discussions so practitioners can both share information and develop moderation skills. The Forum facilitators compile all the input from particular topics and make the document available to members, a nice way for one to catch up on discussions."*
>
> - Network member in the Americas

The Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN Forum) was created in October 2007 to bring together academics, researchers and development practitioners for facilitated online discussions and knowledge sharing on food security and nutrition. The FSN was considered to be one of FAO's Thematic Knowledge Networks (TKN). Starting with 300 members when it launched its first online discussion in 2007, FSN now has 10,000+ members from 175 countries and covers seven languages (Arabic, Chinese, French, English, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish). The FSN Forum also supports overall outreach and promotion on global food security and nutrition issues by linking online discussions to FAO publications, news and events.

Typically, FSN Forum online discussions last about 3 weeks and are summarized in different languages. The current team is composed of one coordinator, two facilitators (who are FAO staff), one technical facilitator, one web designer, six different language translators and one secretary. This makes it one of the biggest network team supported by FAO[49].

In 2010, the FSN Forum developed a new strategy which focused on the following components:

- Technical infrastructure: efforts to make it more user-friendly
- Communications and advocacy: raising the profile of FSN by sharing with other partners
- Content: trying to focus discussions on processes that have impact and yield results for food security and nutrition, for e.g. as a platform for policy dialogue
- Membership: diversifying membership geographically but also including governments and the private sector
- Financing: a new funding model offering clients a specific package and charging for consultation services. Typically, the package includes the discussion space, facilitation, translation into 3 languages (FR, EN, SP) and the summary of the discussion in one language. In some cases they provide a set of discussions; for e.g. they held seven online consultations for the CFS and its High Level Panel of Experts.

As a result of the strategic overhaul and more proactive approach, they were awarded the FAO Innovation fund award in both 2010 and 2011 ($100,000 each year). Although the latest FSN Forum strategy predates FAO's 2013 Strategic Framework, the network's activities specifically address Strategic Objectives 1.13 and 1.2.1[50]. The stated goal is for FSN Forum to become a Centre of Knowledge in food security and nutrition.

SWOT analysis

Strengths: The current "pay for services" funding model has ensured FSN Forum's sustainability, making it the only fully self-supporting network at FAO. This has allowed FSN to employ two experienced facilitators full-time, ensuring sustained facilitation to maintain and cultivate the network, a very important function for any knowledge sharing initiative. Existing funding has

49 Only the International Tropical Fruit Network has reportedly a bigger team (9-10 people).

50 1.1.3 - Improving capacities in governments and stakeholders for human resource and organizational development in the food security and nutrition domain, and 1.2.1 - Improving capacities of governments and stakeholders for strategic coordination across sectors and stakeholders for food security and nutrition.

also enabled them to hire translators and work in multiple languages, ensuring the reach and geographic diversity of the network.

> *"One of the best things about FSN is their ability to bring together so many people from different backgrounds and to be able to focus on different topics by bringing together the points of view of nutritionists, sociologists, economists, etc."*
>
> – Network member in Europe

This mixed membership is another one of FSN Forum's strengths. The diversity is not only geographical, covering all regions of the world, but also across disciplines and affiliations. The 2009 review of FAO's Thematic Knowledge Networks[51] argued that mixed membership often resulted in richer discussions.

The technological platform also allows members to choose how they want to interact, either through email or the web, making it accessible to those with low bandwidth.

Weaknesses: The only apparent weakness is the lack of a mechanism such as a monitoring and evaluation framework to assess FSN. The team has been able to capture feedback through surveys and collecting member stories but a more sustained impact assessment framework is currently missing[52].

> *"I learnt various lessons from African cases of working in the climate change context for food security shared in the FSN Forum, which enabled me to develop new working strategies for project implementation. This not only helped me to plan for community-based resilience practices with women farmers groups, but also encouraged me and my team to develop evidence-based documentation for policy advocacy on women's rights to public productive assets."*
>
> – Network member in Asia

Opportunity: The FSN's demand-driven nature ensures that it is responsive and flexible. This demand-driven approach is the key opportunity, as all activities are focused on the needs of involved parties.

In the first few years of its existence, FSN Forum established its online discussion/knowledge sharing niche, which was in and of itself a positive thing. But as of 2010, they seized the opportunity to position themselves as the place to hold high level policy discussions around food security and nutrition, hence becoming also a policy tool. With this positioning – combined with active lobbying by the coordinator – they have managed to convince others to avoid creating other platforms to host discussions (for e.g. for ICN2).

They are also acting upon working more regionally, with national and regional networks and institutions, since collaborations with regional actors such as FAO regional offices and other regional food security institutions are also becoming increasingly important to allow the FSN Forum to respond to member needs.

Threats: The main threat lies in the bureaucratic environment in which FSN Forum operates. The FAO administration structure is often not flexible enough to cope with receiving funds linked to services rendered. Therefore, contrary to most networks at FAO, FSN Forum doesn't lack funding; they lack ways to process the incoming funds, and a system that is willing or able to accommodate them.

Another issue related to structure is that because Communications in divisions is funded through extra-budgetary funds – and internal knowledge and information sharing is often lacking - there is a tendency to start everything from scratch. So projects tend to create

51 Report of the Review of the Pilot Phase of FAO TKNs, October 2009.

52 S. Livinets's Report on the FSN Forum Strategy Review (2014) suggests the creation of such a mechanism.

networks or forums, instead of using what's already in place, such as the FSN Forum.

The FSN Forum may also risk becoming a victim of its own success. Since OEK was abolished there is no longer a Unit offering supports to networks. FSN facilitators have often found themselves playing this role, with people coming to them for advice. As satisfying as it must be to enjoy the internal recognition, they are not formally charged to provide this role on top of their network duties.

Conclusion

> *"Increase audience, have more influence. Just keep evolving. I think the FSN Forum is in the right direction of development."*
>
> – Network member in Asia

The successes of the FSN Forum have created momentum and membership has been steadily growing. And more members also mean more expectations, requiring enhanced communication and offering more services and activities. The FSN Forum team and its management have been recognised as being very efficient and flexible in finding solutions to support the demand-driven network. Other than suggesting a potential mix in format (using for e.g. webinars and Skype), members interviewed were unanimous in their support and in saying that they were satisfied with how the FSN forum has developed over the years.

Annex 4.7. Meta-analysis of past evaluations

Several OED evaluation reports have been reviewed as part of the evaluation, and nine of them had relevant findings, conclusions and recommendations for the networks assessment.

Final Report Issued (Month/ Year)	Geographical scope/Division	Evaluation Title	Type of evaluation
Mar-10	RAF	Evaluation of Capacity Development in Africa	Thematic/Strategy
Dec-12	REU	Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Europe and Central Asia	Thematic/Strategy
Jul-13	RAF	Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Africa	Thematic/Strategy
Jan-14	RAP	Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Asia and Pacific	Thematic/Strategy
Feb-14	AGP	Evaluation of FAO's work in sustainable intensification of crops	Thematic/Strategy
Jan-11	RNE	Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for the Near East	Thematic/Strategy
Feb-08	RLC	Evaluation of FAO cooperation in Honduras	Country
Jun-12	FO	Evaluation of FAO's role and work in forestry	Thematic/Strategy
Jun-14	RLC	Evaluación de la cooperación de la FAO en Colombia	Country

Below are extracts of the evaluation reports that have been used/quoted in the main report as needed.

REU **REU-SEC** The Plant Production and Protection Division Platform (aka Plant Protection Thematic Network) should be taken as example for information sharing.

RAF **RO-SROs Africa** Knowledge networks that provide for a free flow of ideas among colleagues at all levels of the Organization are critical for knowledge generation and up-to-date technical support. At present not nearly enough focus has been given to this important responsibility, with people relying upon informal contacts for knowledge exchange. This puts many of FAO's younger employees and national staff, who have not been placed in headquarters, at a disadvantage...Recommendation 3.3: To Regional Technical Officers and members of the sub-regional Technical Teams: Establish broader technical networks that include all FAO technical expertise in the region and expand their use. Suggested actions: a) Technical Teams should maintain and use rosters of all FAO technical personnel (regular programme and project staff/non-staff) within the sub-region for short-term assignments and redeployments – and co-ordinate their use. The roster will facilitate a better use within the networks of available expertise in decentralized offices, especially those working at country level. These personnel are a major complement to the expertise available in RAF and the multi-disciplinary teams. b) To free up Technical Team time to focus on COs needing technical support, qualify technical personnel at the lowest level feasible to technically clear project related inputs/outputs in keeping with process streamlining recommended below (Recommendation 4.1). c) Overcome disincentives at all levels of decentralized offices for engaging in knowledge exchange and networking, namely hierarchical behavior and the lack of appropriate corporate mechanisms and procedures to recognize and acknowledge participation in knowledge networks.

Knowledge management has been a core function of FAO since its establishment, when FAO's founders stressed its role as a Knowledge Organization, whose information and normative products on food and agriculture issues were to be available to member countries in support of their efforts to reduce hunger and poverty. With decentralization, the importance of strengthening knowledge management both as a programmatic tool and as a means of linking

technical staff was recognized. With the decision to transfer direct supervision of technical staff from the technical divisions in Rome to the Regional Representative in 2010, specific provision was made for the establishment of Functional Technical Networks (FTNs), as a means of maintaining the links between decentralized technical officers and their counterparts in headquarters as well as in other regions. While thus far only a Forestry FTN has been created, there are a number of informal, ad hoc communities of practice in which technical staff in decentralized offices in Africa participate.

In plant production and protection, ad hoc groups have met regularly for some time to plan, share information on their activities and draft documentation. Collaboration has also been organized for normative work between East and West Africa. Other examples of informal networks exist among technical experts in Uganda, Liberia, Kenya and South Sudan. There are some cases in which SREOs serve as a bridge to connect the country level with groups of normative production at global level, although on an individual and ad hoc basis. Strong desire on the part of COs to improve their contributions to normative and knowledge products above and beyond the present informal exchanges were firmly expressed to the Evaluation.

The Forestry FTN was established in 2012 with two purposes: a) knowledge exchange between headquarters and the decentralized offices; and b) provision of technical support to forestry staff in the decentralized offices. The five forestry officers located at RAF, SFC, SFE, SFS and SFW are formal participants in this FTN and attended its first face-to-face meeting at FAO headquarters in October 2012. Due to its early stage of implementation, it is not possible to assess any results of the FTN in terms of knowledge exchange. Nonetheless, decentralized technical officers reported that they are enthusiastic about its establishment, and are planning to extend its coverage within Africa with additional members. Additionally, members of this FTN in Africa praised their access to their forester colleagues in FAO offices around the world through its website.

With regard to external communities of practice, the Evaluation did not find a high level of participation by decentralized office employees in other FAO communities of practice, such as the Food Security Network. There is also little evidence that RAF and the SROs have been effective in establishing mechanisms for exploiting the potential of their multi-disciplinary teams to facilitate knowledge sharing. Currently, external knowledge management in RAF has focused on agricultural research117. With the exception of the Horn of Africa Agri-Knowledge Share Fair organized by SFE at the end of 2012, only anecdotal and limited evidence was found on the facilitation of knowledge and formation of networks by SROs with their partners. Experience in other organizations has shown that knowledge networks require leadership and appropriate incentives to reward collaboration for them to be successful. Neither of these elements has been in place thus far in FAO. The new Strategic Framework, however, explicitly designates technical department ADGs with the responsibility for knowledge sharing. This should result in more intentional work in this extremely important field to formalize and provide resources for knowledge management within the Organization, as well as contribute to further programmatic use of knowledge networks...

RAF and the SROs are best placed to make the link between normative work and knowledge management, given their overview of FAO's work in Africa. Technical officers in these units will need to play an active leadership role in network formation and in the continuing management of the networks.

RAP **RAP-SAP** With the exception of the Forestry Department, no other formal Functional Technical Network was established since 2010. Feedback about this FTN was limited, while other informal divisional and departmental networks have fulfilled the same purpose of sharing knowledge and experience to a certain extent. In this regard it is noted that there are currently plans to roll out technical networks in the coming biennium under the leadership of the Technical Departments and backed by modest resources.

AGP **CROPS** There are a number of internal networks working on different themes – conservation agriculture, farmer field schools, biotechnology, genetic resources, etc. But

they work mostly on the basis of informal relationships, and they do not receive funds. … (Recommendation 4: FAO should) (b) fully implement the internal Technical Networks, key to FAO's ability to play its role in technical assistance effectively, and that have been on the books for several years now but have not yet become effective. This must be done with appropriate levels of management and resources, to ensure (i) the development of "communities of practice" around the priority disciplinary fields needed to allow the innovative and effective implementation of the new vision, and (ii) the continued contribution of both Regular Programme and project staff to the build-up of the organization's knowledge capital.

RNE **Near East** The Rural and Agricultural Development Communication Network (RADCON): This project is founded on participatory communication and sharing information by establishing a triangulation between extension agents, researchers and the community. The objective is to enable rural communities to participate in generating, developing and sharing knowledge. Over 115 extension agents in fifty villages were trained to work with farmers. A comprehensive curriculum for training of trainers (TOT) in Arabic was developed, field tested and implemented. Extension agents, particularly those in geographically dispersed areas, were enabled to have access to information online on various issues involving agriculture and rural development. The system has also been a catalyst for developing rural enterprise. For example, extension agents put small farmers in contact with NGOs to assist them market their crops. Equally, this has allowed facilitators to learn about what crops are in market demand, subsequently, provide farmers with the seeds to cultivate these crops. During the project three training courses were provided to extension agents and twelve follow-up workshops. By project completion, approximately 804 participants were trained in using the system.

Recommendation 7: RNE should be subject to a re-engineering process as part of the reshuffling of FAO institutional set-up in the region. a. RNE should build and/or maintain the expertise and resources required to establish and manage Functional Technical Networks that would mobilize knowledge and encourage specialization around priority topics selected from among those identified in the RPF-NE. FAO expertise available at all levels (FAORs, SMTs and HQ) would be associated to these Networks as appropriate, under the coordination of RNE. The constitution of these networks, which will have a time-bound scope, resources and mandate – will improve the efficiency of internal working arrangements and help FAO functioning as one in the provision of technical assistance to the region....

Main thematic networks in the Near East: Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa (AARINENA). Established in 1985. Regional Network on Waste Water Reuse (RNRTWATER). Established in 2001. Near East and North Africa regional network for agricultural policies (NENARNAP) Established in 2003. Near East and North Africa Rural and Agricultural Knowledge and Information Network (NERAKIN). Established in 2008. Network on Drough Management for the Near East, Mediterranean and Central Asia (NEMEDCA). Established in 2001.

RLC **Honduras** La InfoREDBIO/FAO, Red de Cooperación Técnica en Biotecnología Vegetal (REDBIO/FAO), iniciada en 1991 bajo los auspicios de la FAO, congrega a 2300 investigadores de 619 laboratorios e instituciones de Biotecnología Vegetal en 32 países de América Latina y el Caribe. La Red ha promovido el intercambio de conocimientos, tecnologías y materiales biológicos y ha fomentado la enseñanza, uso racional, capacitación e innovación biotecnológica para superar problemas de producción, diversificación e intensificación agrícola, uso irracional de pesticidas, así como también la conservación de recursos fito-genéticos.

RAF **RO-SROs Africa** SFE, REOA and Country Offices made contributions in the form of good practices to the Horn of Africa Agri-Knowledge Share Fair organized by SFE in October 2012 in the fields of agricultural production enhancement; sustainable intensification of production based on ecosystem services; farmer field schools; agriculture water management; livestock and pastoralism; technological innovation in information communication; value chain enhancement113. During country visits, FAO's partners expressed enthusiasm for the Share Fair and made reference to the utility of the best practices promoted.

FO **Forestry** FAO has been particularly active during recent years in organizing global, regional, and national workshops and conferences related to wood energy. At the regional level, FAO has been sharing knowledge and policy experiences related to financing NFPs and SFM in Latin America and Asia, but less in Africa. NFP-related workshops have been organized in China, Bosnia and Turkey with partners such as ITTO and Traffic.

AGP **CROPS** 243. A related experience that should be pointed out, as it was highly positive, is the knowledge fair ("AGP Market Place") organized in November of 2010 as part of the restructuring process of the Division. The "Market Place" had the purpose of bringing together the whole Division for the different "teams" to share experiences, products and methodologies and become more familiar with each other and their respective programmes. Reports from the event highlight that the experience enabled a better understanding of (i) the ecosystem approach and the concept of sustainable crop intensification (SCPI), (ii) how the different teams contribute to SCPI, (iii) the synergies existing among the teams, and (iv) areas that needed more work/improvement. In spite of the apparent success of this experience, it has not been repeated since.

Annex 4.8. Client survey (networks)

This study presents the results of country clients surveys administered to 171 network participants as part of the evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture. The assessment seeks to identify the main outcomes achieved by FAO knowledge instruments at country level, as well as success factors, gaps and unmet needs.

Objectives

The objective of the surveys were to gain understanding of how diverse constituencies view the relevance, accessibility and applicability of the development knowledge and expertise that FAO has helped them acquire and use, and the impact of that exchange of knowledge on their work.

Methodology

Surveys were conducted to gather the views of individuals ("key informants") with significant expertise and familiarity with FAO or with potential exposure to FAO products and services. The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO and consultations were opened during 3 months, from 1 December 2014 to 5 March 2015. The surveys were anonymous and delivered by email, telephone or in-person. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether the survey gathered input from 171 participants across 13 countries –Table 1. Key informants included representatives from central government organizations (30%) being either decision makers (11%) or programme managers (19%), research and academia (23%), UN organizations (9%), CSOs/NGOs (9%), local/regional governmental institutions (6%), IFI (5%), the private sector (5%), IGOs (4%), bilateral donors / resource partners (4%), producer organizations (4%) and the media and other (1%). The areas of work most commonly shared by participants were food security (52%) followed by crop production (34%), climate change (33%), nutrition (26%) and trade and markets (26%). Conversely few respondents worked on social protection (6%), aquaculture (9%), emergencies (10%) or animal health (10%). The majority of participants (77%) have been using FAO knowledge products and services for more than 3 years. About 70% of the respondents were male and 30% female.

Use of FAO networks

The networks most referred by respondents are country networks which are used often or sometimes by 34% of respondents –Table 2. Examples of national networks shared by participants show a variety of networking formats including working groups, task forces, or think tanks –e.g. Zero hunger network in Japan, the Network on Agriculture Extension Services in Albania, the REACH and National Multi-stakeholder Technical Working Group in Uganda, the DRR working group in Pakistan, or the University of Zambia (UNZA) Think Tank. Global informal networks refer mostly to working groups around official events –e.g. COFI and CFS Consultation group on Land Governance- and in some instances to personal networks –e.g. on ecosystem approach to fisheries-. In general terms the global and regional networks cited by participants point to a variety of networking modalities –e.g. African Union Rapid Alert Response, CODEX Meetings, Conservation Agriculture Working Group, East African Farmers Federation, Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) of South Eastern Europe, Task team on financing for Preparedness CADRI, etc.-. Only few respondents made reference to FAO supported global networks –e.g. FAO/WMO AGROMET-L, e-Agriculture Community, Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition "FSN Forum", Community for Climate Change Mitigation in Agriculture / MICCA Programme, FAO Networks on Veterinary Public Health, Zoonoses, Feed & Food Safety (VPH).

Table 2: Frequency of use of FAO networks

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Don't know
COUNTRY NETWORKS	19	30	14	61	20
GLOBAL: Informal networks	12	23	20	64	24
REGIONAL NETWORKS	11	27	25	60	24
GLOBAL: Other networks	10	18	28	59	28
GLOBAL: Thematic knowledge networks	9	33	21	64	22

Source: FAO Client Survey, 2015

Networks used rarely or never. For country clients the first reason for not using FAO networks comes from an unawareness of their existence in spite of having a need for such knowledge services (39%). As put forward by several respondents, from producer organizations –e.g. "We need to know the farmers networks which FAO has formed"- to decision-makers from central government organizations –e.g. "I need to know more about networks which operate for our facilitation", or private sector actors –e.g. "Did not knew their existence but would be interested to participate in some."-, FAO networks lack visibility. Additional factors that lead to use FAO networks rarely or never include the ignorance of their existence but no perceived need to participate (21%) and not knowing where/how to access them (19%). Participants suggested therefore communicating more on FAO networking services and events, to partner with other institutions such as OIE or EU initiatives, and to link more closely networks and publications as means to increase use and uptake. Capacities devoted to network facilitation could also be strengthened as for instance "Regional networks are more information sharing forums and can be utilised much more intensively. Currently these networks don't yield real outcomes and do not stimulate knowledge production or innovation, as they could potentially do."

Networks used often or sometimes. For those networks that are used sometimes or often, the main reasons are their relevance to the work of participants (40%) followed by their credibility (26%) and easiness to use/apply the knowledge that is shared (20%). Participants find that FAO networks help to receive information and get updates about new developments in their field of work (39%) and contribute to exchange good practices and lessons learned (33%) and to increase connections/collaborations with partners (30%). A decision maker in a central government institution shared the example of the VPH network which was used frequently to get information about regional and global situations and emergencies. A programme manager referred to a network implementing Climate Smart Agriculture in three countries (Zambia, Malawi and Vietnam) which has provided an online platform to discuss and to share experiences and lessons learnt between members.

Annex 5. Assessment of FAO learning resources

Report

OED[53] has conducted an assessment of FAO learning resources as part of a broader evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture.

I. Description of FAO learning resources

Learning, both formal and informal, has been a key element in FAO's fight against hunger. For years, learning resources have been produced across the organization by different technical divisions at global level, and by decentralized offices at regional and country levels. FAO has recently expanded the range of e-learning events and materials that it offers, while developing corporate policies and guidelines to ensure the production and dissemination of high quality resources.

Following the adoption of a Corporate Strategy on Capacity Development (CD)[54] in 2010, the Inter-Departmental Working Group on CD, supported by the Office of Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development (OPC), was set-up to, among other things, support its implementation. As part of these ongoing efforts, the IDWG on CD has spearheaded the adoption of good learning practices throughout the Organization[55]. An inventory of FAO learning resources conducted as part of this assessment identified 78 *learning resources*[56], including 57 e-learnings, 13 learning materials, 6 face-to-face training events, and 2 blended learnings. This non-exhaustive list was collected with the support of OPC and validated by FAO technical departments and Regional Offices in late 2014. Although efforts were made to gather information on regional/national learning resources, data was not always readily available[57].

For the purpose of the assessment, FAO learning resources have been classified as follows:

1. **Face to face training events (F2F):** a learning initiative which takes place in a traditional classroom environment and aims to improve knowledge, skills, attitudes, and/or behaviours in a person to accomplish a specific job task or goal. F2F training events typically take the form of a workshop focused on improving business skills, knowledge and, ultimately, performance.

2. **E-learning:** a term covering a wide set of applications and processes, such as web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital collaboration. It includes the delivery of content via the internet, intranet/extranet (LAN/WAN), audio and videotape, satellite broadcast, interactive television, CD-ROM, and more.

3. **Blended learning:** learning events that combine aspects of online and face-to-face instruction.

4. **Online collaborative learning:** learning which takes place online, via video/audio conference or synchronous web-based learning, in which two or more people learn something together.

5. **Learning materials:** books or booklets designed to improve the quality of a performed task, typically used to support training events.

53 The assessment was led by Natalia Acosta with inputs from OED staff Marta Bruno and consultant Ana Urgoiti.

54 http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/newsroom/docs/Summary_Strategy_PR_E.pdf

55 All material available can be found in the IDWG on CD webpage: http://www.fao.org/capacity-development/en/

56 Learning resources are texts, videos, software, websites, e-learning platforms or events that FAO staff develop and disseminate to assist learners achieve their desired learning outcomes.

57 In two countries contacted for the evaluation (Peru and Ecuador) FAO reportedly supported over 90 learning initiatives. Other country offices approached (Pakistan and Papua New Guinea) could not provide such data.

6. **On-the-job learning:** a form of learning which takes place in a normal working situation, with the support of a coach, advisor, or facilitator in the work setting. This learning takes place both in traditional institutional settings (e.g. workshops for FAO staff and/or partners at global or country level) and in learning cycles with project stakeholders, such as farmer field schools.

II. Purpose and scope of the assessment

This assessment is a formative and forward-looking review of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of FAO learning resources, with a special focus on global learning resources. The findings will inform the development or refinement of corporate strategies, policies and plans aimed at ensuring the excellence of FAO learning resources, and serve as an input to the evaluation of FAO's contribution to knowledge on food and agriculture. The assessment covers learning resources disseminated by the Organization during the period 2011-14, and heavily relies on evaluative evidence collected in past evaluations and reviews.

III. Questions

In line with the objectives of the evaluation, this assessment seeks to answer the following questions:

6. Are FAO learning resources consistent with the Organization's objectives and based on expressed needs or mandates from Member Countries?
7. Are FAO learning resources adequately formulated, in view of the context, needs or problems to which they intend to respond?
8. How efficiently has FAO used its human and institutional resources in the production and dissemination of learning resources?
9. Are there synergies, duplications or gaps among the learning resources produced and disseminated by FAO?
10. Have FAO learning resources reached the intended users and uses?
11. What outcomes have FAO learning resources achieved, or contributed to achieving?

IV. Methodology

The assessment was guided by the key evaluation questions mentioned above. Information to answer these questions was collected from primary (interviews and surveys) and secondary sources (desk review of past evaluations and other FAO learning-related documents). Learning resources and capacity development initiatives are routinely assessed by OED. Findings and recommendations from recent evaluations have been a major source for this assessment.

The list of documents reviewed and people interviewed (learning resource's owners and key informants) is available in Appendices 5.1 and 5.2, respectively. The design of the assessment is available in Annex 5.1, and the inventory of learning resources collected with OPC and technical departments' support is in Annex 5.2. Two different surveys were administered to collect information related to the use of learning resources. First, an online survey was administered to the owners/producers of FAO learning resources in order to gather information on their learning resources' objectives, development process and desired outcomes. The result of this survey, which was responded to by 16 owners/producers of some of the best-known FAO's learning resources, is available in Annex 5.3. A survey of FAO clients was administered to 171 users of FAO knowledge products and services (including learning resources) in a sample of countries from all the regions[58] to gather information

58 Belgium, Switzerland, Japan, United States of America, Albania, Chile, Lebanon, Pakistan, Panama, Papua

on the uses and contributions of these learning resources; the users were identified by the relevant Country or Liaison Office and included national counterparts, partners and beneficiaries. The countries were chosen in consultation with the Regional Offices, and excluded countries recently subject to, or planned for, a programme evaluation. The results of the client survey are available in Annex 5.4. Finally, Annex 5.5 contains a review of past OED evaluations that identified relevant findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning FAO learning resources.

Limitations: Consultations with the producers/owners and users of learning resources were limited when compared to the wide array of learning resources produced by FAO. Several learning producers/owners did not have information on how their target audience used the learning resources provided, which limited the breadth of evaluative information available. Most of the data collected refer to late 2014/early 2015 and relate to the work of global learning resources, which skewed the results in favor of learning resources developed at HQ. Moreover, the assessment focused on external learning, and thus did not review in detail FAO's internal learning strategy or the staff time dedicated to it. Finally, this assessment was not designed to consider all dimensions of CD, but rather to focus on the outcomes of (individual) learning only.

V. Findings

The main findings are presented below grouped by evaluation question.

1. *Are FAO learning resources consistent with the Organization's objectives and based on expressed needs or mandates from Member Countries?*

FAO learning resources are generally aligned with FAO's mandate and contribute to the achievement of the Organization's Strategic Objectives. Some learning resources also respond to the expressed needs or mandates from Member Countries; however, greater consideration of target users' needs should be given when developing the learning resources.

Each of the 16 surveyed learning producers indicated that their learning resource(s) contribute to at least one (and in some cases all) of FAO's Strategic Objectives (SOs). Most of the producers consider their learning resources to target the "technical", "results focus" and "communication and knowledge sharing" skills and competencies of their audience. This is corroborated by the survey results, in which Member Countries considered that, overall, FAO's knowledge products and services are especially useful "to increase the *technical knowledge* in countries". Most FAO learning resources are reportedly based on an expressed request or need of the Member Countries (63%). In some cases, such as the "Núcleo de Capacitación de Políticas Públicas"[59], the learning resource respond to the demand of both the national governments and FAO technical staff (Box 1). Interestingly, national governments do not appear as one of the top three partners during the learning resource's planning and development phase (which is the best time to ensure the needs of target audiences are taken into account). Although past evaluations have found that FAO learning initiatives "were often carried out in response to *ad-hoc* needs expressed by Member Countries and regions"[60], the extent to which these needs were duly incorporated into the learning content was often questioned.

Box 1. Núcleo de Capacitación en Políticas Públicas

The "Núcleo de Capacitación en Políticas Públicas" was established in 2008 as a result of a regional technical cooperation project on capacity building in economics, agricultural policies and rural development in Latin America. This unit specializes in distance learning and its value added derives from its capacity to integrate the vast knowledge and experiences generated by FAO field programmes with innovative learning solutions, tailored to the needs

New Guinea, Turkey, Uganda, and Zambia.

59 Webpage available at: http://www.fao.org/in-action/capacitacion-politicas-publicas/resumen/es/

60 Evaluation of FAO's support to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries

and demands of the countries in the region. Its target audiences are actors involved in the implementation of public policies in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors, including technical experts or professionals from the public sector, academia, research institutions and civil society organizations, as well as FAO staff. Since its establishment, the Núcleo de Capacitación has trained over ten thousand people through 154 courses across all countries in the region.

2. *Are FAO learning resources adequately formulated in view of the context, needs or problems to which they intend to respond?*

Some FAO learning resources are formulated taking into account the context and problems that are being addressed. However, several could better target the learning content to the audience's needs.

As per FAO's own guidance[61], thorough needs assessments can help to ensure the success of learning resources. There are several examples (see boxes 2 and 3) that confirm that without a clear alignment and target to the users' needs, learning resources risk becoming irrelevant. Needs assessment can also help to identify potential new users and partners to involve in the process. In this regard, even though many learning producers indicated that they carry out needs assessments (81%)[62], findings from previous evaluations show there is limited evidence that needs assessments are mainstreamed into capacity development projects and activities[63]. For example, in the evaluation of FAO's work in Forestry, "many stakeholders criticized the majority of training guides for not being written with a clear audience in mind".

Moreover, based on the responses of learning producers, national governments do not appear to be a main partner in the initial development stage of learning resources, despite accounting for 88% of the primary target audience. This weak collaboration with national governments during the planning phase was also reflected in both the Member Country and Clients surveys. Respondents suggested that FAO should better identify user needs to improve the usefulness of its knowledge products and services "*by improving targeting, and by involving end-users at design stage and partners during implementation*".

3. *How efficiently has FAO used its human and institutional resources in the production and dissemination of learning resources?*

Learning resources could be produced and disseminated in a more efficient manner. Efforts should be devoted not only to the production of learning resources, but should also focus on dissemination and outreach.

FAO has a decentralized system for the production and dissemination of learning resources[64]. Therefore, the allocation of human and financial resources for their development is dependent on the priority given by the funders. As most of the Organization's work on capacity development is carried out through projects, which tend to be of short-term duration, it is not surprising that about one-half of the producers surveyed are unsatisfied with the resources available to design, develop and deliver their learning resources. Past evaluations have also found that weak dissemination or follow-up hinder the sustainability and institutionalization of FAO's trainings and CD activities.[65] Approximately two-thirds of the producers surveyed expressed dissatisfaction with the budget available to promote their learning resources; about half of them dedicate less than 10% of their time to the promotion and follow-up of learning resources.

61 "FAO Good Learning Practices for Effective Capacity Development" http://www.fao.org/3/a-i2532e.pdf

62 Respondents indicated that needs assessments were mainly conducted through "consultations", "surveys" and "workshops" as an input to their learning resource(s).

63 Evaluation of FAO's support to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

64 The Technical Department with most learning resources is the Economic and Social Department with 36 learning resources, followed by the Agriculture and Consumer Protection (17), Natural Resources (15) and Forestry (6).

65 Evaluation of FAO's role and work related to water.

Previous FAO evaluations[66] and key informants have also noted that many learning resources are not fully utilized. Several evaluations have recommended that FAO make an effort to optimize the sustainability and long-term impact of the range of learning resources it produces. For instance, the evaluation of FAO's work in Capacity Development in Africa encourages "a more selective production of materials in order to ensure that resources are available for effective distribution". According to the inventory, there also appears to be several e-learning programmes (56) developed by FAO using different platforms and websites.

4. *Are there synergies, duplications or gaps among the learning resources produced and disseminated by FAO?*

In the development of FAO learning resources, there appear to be synergies among the divisions and decentralized offices as well as with external parties. However, to avoid potential duplications and identified gaps, enhanced coordination should be further promoted across the Organization.

There are several stages at which synergies can take place in the production of learning resources, such as collaboration within FAO or partnerships with external institutions undertaken to exploit the comparative advantages of each constituency. According to FAO learning resource producers, most collaboration takes the form of cooperation at the planning, design, development and testing stages within FAO offices and divisions, at both the HQ and Decentralized Offices (DO) level. The results of this survey are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. FAO learning resources' partnerships and collaborations

Answer Options	Planning & design of your learning resource	Development & testing of your learning resource
FAO HQ	94%	80%
FAO Decentralized Offices	44%	60%
Academia & Research Institutions	44%	60%
National government	38%	33%
International Organizations	25%	13%
Other	19%	7%
UN Agency	13%	27%
Civil Society Organization	13%	20%
Donors	6%	0%
Producers (farmers, fishermen, forest dwellers)	6%	20%
Private Sector	0%	7%
Media	0%	0%

Source: Survey of FAO learning resources owners, 2014.

About 94% of producers indicated that they cooperate with other HQ divisions during the planning and design of learning resources, while approximately 44% collaborate with decentralized offices. A good example of collaboration within FAO is the case of Farmer Field Schools (FFS), in which technical divisions (e.g. NRL and AGP) jointly promote and adapt FFS and work with DOs to implement the approach (see Box 2).

66 Evaluation of FAO's role in Investment for Food and Nutrition Security, Agriculture and Rural Development.

Box 2. Farmers Field Schools

Farmer Field Schools (FFS) were initiated through a FAO programme in Indonesia in the late 1980s to introduce new Integrated Pest Management approaches among groups of farmers cultivating rice. From these origins and for the next 25 years, the FFS approach has been introduced in almost all developing countries and extended to different aspects of agriculture, pastoralism and livestock rearing, climate change, agricultural marketing and life skills. The FFS approach can be easily modified and adapted to many different topics, provided that it blends the technical focus with the development of farmers' capacities to learn through their own observations, exchange with peers and develop soft skills that help them in becoming more empowered. Considering the need for technical as well as methodological expertise in adult education, FFS are developed through internal cooperation among different divisions and offices. This has allowed FAO to be recognized as a source of know-how on rural research and extension. FFS are one of the longest-running and most widely adopted approaches to promoting learning among farmers, primarily due to the participatory, farmer-led adult learning method.

Similarly, cooperation with external partners such as academia and research institutions, takes place mostly for the development and testing of the learning resource (60% of respondents). Several users have suggested increasing collaboration with universities and other local actors to increase the dissemination and uptake of knowledge products. In addition, respondents from the client survey suggested stronger linkages between knowledge products and services as a way to boost the use of learning resources, including publications, networks, learning resources and networks, and capacity development initiatives.

Judging by the producers' response, there do not appear to be thematic gaps in FAO's learning resources. There was at least one learning resource covering the twenty themes[67] included in the survey. Moreover, learning resources seem to concentrate in the following thematic areas, as detailed in Table 2: climate change, food production, investment in agriculture, agricultural trade, fisheries, food security, gender and land management. The main demand observed by core users was the need for better dissemination and more context-specific learning resources, as discussed in the next section.

Table 2. Top themes covered by FAO learning resources

Theme	Percentage of owners of learning resources	Number of owners of learning resources
Climate change	37.5%	6
Food production	31.2%	5
Investment in agriculture	31.2%	5
Food security	25%	4
Gender	25%	4
Agricultural trade	25%	4
Fisheries	25%	4
Land management	25%	4

Source: Survey of FAO learning resources owners, 2014

5. *Have FAO learning resources reached their intended users and uses?*

Not all FAO learning resources have effectively reached their intended users. There is room for improving knowledge about users, as well as reaching out to potential trainees.

67 Climate change, food security, land management, water, animal production, forestry, biodiversity, agricultural production, animal health, gender, soils, aquaculture, fisheries, food production, nutrition, agricultural trade, food safety, social protection, investment in agriculture, plant health.

According to the FAO staff surveyed, FAO's learning resources mainly target national governments (88%), academia and research institutions (56%), and FAO staff and civil society organizations (44% each). About one-fourth of the surveyed producers of FAO learning resources do not have information on their actual users, and even fewer disaggregate user data by gender. Furthermore, more than half of the interviewed clients[68] of FAO knowledge products and services "rarely or never use" FAO learning resources despite their perceived need for them, mainly because they are not aware that they exist. A related factor is that potential clients often do not know where or how to access such materials. This suggests the need for better dissemination and follow-up, and enhancing the discoverability of such resources.

Among the different types of learning resources made available by FAO, those with **country and context-relevant focus are the ones most often used** (29%) by the surveyed clients. Government representatives seem to benefit the most from FAO learning resources, whereas learners from academia, research institutions and civil society indicated to "rarely or never" use FAO's learning resources. The later might be due to the fact that most FAO learning resources target Government representatives; in those instances when they are made available to other users, the resources often are not promoted in a timely and effective manner[69]. Nonetheless, there are several cases of e-learning courses such as those formulated under the EU-FAO Improved Global Governance for Hunger Reduction Programme (IGGHR) that have reached a wide audience, including from Governments, and been recognized for their quality (see box 3).

Box 3. E-learning curriculum on Food Security: EU-FAO Improved Global Governance for Hunger Reduction Programme

Since 2006, the European Union (EU) has supported FAO in the development of a comprehensive e-learning curriculum on food security. Through the EU-FAO Improved Global Governance for Hunger Reduction (IGGHR) Programme, over 23 free online courses have been developed in 11 thematic areas and in 3 languages. The e-learning courses, which have been produced in collaboration with several partners, have served as the basis for a wide range of capacity development activities on food security. Within the United Nations and International Financial Institutions, the courses are being used for staff development and external training activities of FAO, the World Food Programme, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNITAR, ILO, World Bank and the UNFCCC. Other institutions, such as the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA) and the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC), are also using the courses for capacity development purposes. As of August 2015, the e-learning curriculum on food security has reached more than 165 000 online learners worldwide, with 76% of its learners coming from Africa, Latin America and Asia. Collaborations with other development partners for the dissemination of the e-learning curriculum have proven to be a key factor in the outreach of the programme. Apart from being available at FAO's e-learning Centre, the e-learning courses are also disseminated through the EU's Learn4dev network, EuropeAid's Operational Food Security (ROSA) network, and through university consortia, allowing member universities to use the e-learning courses in existing or new curricula. In addition, more than 80 international NGOs working in the field of development, humanitarian relief, health, conservation and social justice have access to the e-learning courses through the Learning in NGOs (LINGOs) platform. The example of this e-learning curriculum shows the potential reach that FAO e-learning courses could have if designed following thorough learning needs assessments and using quality standards and workflows[70].

68 See section on methodology for more information on the client survey.

69 The 2014 evaluation of FAO's programme in Colombia found that one-quarter of the learning events sponsored by FAO went unattended.

70 E-learning methodologies: A guide for designing and developing e-learning courses.

6. *What outcomes have FAO networks achieved, or contributed to achieving?*

Some FAO learning resources have successfully contributed to the achievement of development results. More can be done to improve the documentation of results, especially at organizational and policy levels.

The client survey identified several examples of the ways in which users apply FAO learning resources in their work. For instance, guidelines developed after a seminar and workshops on Land Tenure and Governance are now used by technical staff (120 experts) in a Government department to "incorporate FAO know-how in their projects/activities". Another example is an on-site training course in fishing harbor management, which "contributed to the self-sustained management of fishing harbors, in line with international standards, in two harbors in India and across 11 provinces in Sri Lanka". In Nigeria, FAO's EASYPol[71] material is being used to enhance the capacity of over 50 government officers at Federal and State level, enabling them to better analyze and prepare policy proposals for agriculture, food security and rural development. These results are in line with producers' expectations, who indicated that the main outcomes of FAO's learning resources were to improve: i) technical knowledge (94%), ii) implementation capacity, practices and performance (81%); and iii) the skills and behaviour of trainees (63%). However, very few FAO staff reportedly evaluate the results of their learning initiatives, and only 19% (3) of the producers surveyed were able to present achievements to date.

Past evaluations have also struggled to find evidence of results and long-term impacts emerging from FAO's learning initiatives. For instance, in Sri Lanka, where FAO trained 416 farmers on rehabilitation contract work, organizational and financial management, and water management, little evidence was found that trainees were applying the knowledge gained. This situation is mostly due to the limited follow-up and negligible use of results evaluation. About two-thirds of FAO staff surveyed (63%) provided follow-up support, while only 19% conducted post-assessments 6-12 months after the event in order to gather evidence on how the acquired skills and knowledge have been implemented by participants. According to those surveyed, the main reasons for the lack of post-learning assessments included the limited availability of resources provided, and the minimal consideration given to the assessments during the planning and develop of learning resources. As noted earlier, some efforts have been made by the IDWG on CD to raise awareness of good practices for effective learning[72]. As a result, some learning producers/owners are reportedly considering increasing the follow-up and evaluation of their learning initiatives.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

FAO has produced and supported a wide range of learning resources, ranging from e-learning programmes, learning materials to country-specific training events. Considering the mixed performance and nature of FAO learning resources over the years, the evaluation finds difficulties in reaching an overall conclusion. However, some preliminary conclusions can be drawn based on the identified lessons and gaps. In general, FAO learning resources are consistent with the Organization's mandate and functions, and respond to the needs of Member Countries. However, this alignment is not always translated into an effective tailoring of the learning content to the specific needs of the audiences. Moreover, the outcomes and long-term impact of FAO learning resources are difficult to identify, as only a minority monitor or record achievements post-learning. Additional efforts are also needed to target the right audiences and promote learning resources among potential users. In this regard, FAO should give priority to the development of context-relevant resources, and support Member Countries in adapting the learning resources, when relevant.

This assessment **recommends** that, building on the ongoing work of IDWG on Capacity

71 EASYPol is a platform providing resources for policy advice and capacity development.

72 As part of these efforts OED made a presentation to the IDWG on CD about evaluation of FAO learning resources.

Development, FAO strengthens its efforts to promote the application of good learning practices throughout the organization. Some examples of good practices include the conduct of thorough needs assessments, involvement of main partners in the initial development stage, application of quality standards and procedures for the design and development of the learning resources, and the assessment and/or evaluation of learning resource.

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Farmer Field Schools

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Appendix 5.2. List of people consulted

Learning Resources - General

1. **Berman Sally**, Capacity Development Officer, OPC, FAO
2. **Bunning Sally**, Senior Officer, NRL, FAO
3. **de la Puerta Rodrigo**, Director ad interim, OSD, FAO
4. **de la Rosa Cecilia**, Capacity Development Officer, OPC, FAO
5. **Jasinski Helene**, Senior Human Resources Officer, CSPL, FAO
6. **Kalas Patrick**, Capacity Development Officer, OPC, FAO
7. **Nadeau Andrew**, Senior Capacity Development Officer, OPC, FAO
8. **Villareal Marcela**, Director, OPC, FAO

Learning Resources – Boxes

Farmer Field Schools

Non-FAO

9. **McMillan Andrew**, Former FAO Staff
10. **Winarto Yunita**, Professor, Department of Anthropology Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, University of Indonesia

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11. **Abe Kaori**, Partnership and Resource Mobilization Officer, RAP, FAO
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14. **Chuluunbaatar Delgermaa**, Agricultural Extension Officer, DDNR, FAO
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17. **Groppo Paolo**, Technical Officer, NRL, FAO
18. **Hani May**, Policy Officer, ESP, FAO
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Nucleo de Capacitacion en Politicas Públicas

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27. **Lobo Luis, Oficial Técnico, RLC, FAO**

Annex 5.1. Design of learning resources assessment

This document describes the methodology for the evaluation of FAO learning resources' contribution to knowledge. This methodology has been developed after a preliminary review of secondary sources as well as consultations with key informants at FAO HQ (including OPC, OHR, the Interdepartmental Working Group on Capacity Development and TDs) and the evaluation's focal points in the Regional Offices (ROs).

1. Scope

The assessment will cover a broad range of FAO learning resources made available in the period 2012-13 and will rely on information collected from several data sources. In order to illustrate the specific contributions made by FAO in a few selected areas, the following learning resources will be reviewed in detail: Núcleo de Capacitación en Políticas Públicas (RLC)[73] and Farmers Field Schools (AG, FI, FO, NR, DDN).[74]

2. Data Sources

The data for the evaluation will be collected from general documentation (including past evaluations, audits, and reviews) and a range of stakeholders, including:

- FAO staff as authors/owners of FAO learning resources.
- Member Countries as decision-makers and target users of FAO learning resources.
- External Experts and Partners, as collaborators in the generation and dissemination of FAO learning resources.
- Other users/beneficiaries of FAO learning resources, such as staff from UN agencies and international organizations, research and academia, NGOs, private sector, media, etc.

3. Data Collection Tools

The review will capture evaluative evidence on the relevance, quality and effectiveness of the learning resources through the following tools:

a) **Desk review**: review of any surveys and relevant studies that FAO has already conducted to assess the effectiveness of specific learning resources.

b) **Inventory and mapping of FAO learning resources:** an online survey will be administered to authors/owners of FAO learning resources made available in the period 2012-13 in order to gather information on their objectives, operation, dissemination, quality assurance and results monitoring systems in place. The results of the mapping survey will be analyzed quantitatively and presented in a statistical form.

c) **Meta-evaluation of FAO learning resources**: a synthesis of evaluation findings related to FAO learning resources will be prepared as part of the meta-analysis of OED evaluations being conducted for the evaluation.

d) **Client surveys:** A survey will be conducted to seek client views on the relevance, quality and effectiveness of FAO's knowledge products and services,[75] and on their knowledge needs in a sample of countries. Participants will be drawn from government, the private

73 http://www.rlc.fao.org/es/capacitacion

74 In collaboration with DDN and AGP, including several FFS-related materials e.g. http://www.fao.org/ag/ca/CA-Publications/Farmer_Field_School_Approach.pdf; http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2561e/i2561e.pdf; http://www.vegetableipmasia.org/docs/Food%20Safety%20Manual%20for%20FFS%20Part%20I%20&%20II.pdf.

75 The surveys will be used to gather information on usage of learning resources and other types of knowledge products and services covered by the evaluation i.e. publications, databases, experience capitalization, and networks.

sector, research and academia, NGOs, and media. The survey might be complemented with local workshops and reviews of national policy documents in order to gather additional information on the use and uptake of FAO's knowledge products and services.

e) **Member Country Survey:** a survey will be carried out in order to gather feedback on FAO's knowledge products and services from Member Countries, as well as evaluative information on knowledge needs and dissemination mechanisms.

4. Outputs

The following deliverables will be produced and will inform the final evaluation report:

Meta-evaluation:	Synthesis report on learning resources
Mapping of FAO learning resources:	Statistical analysis
Report on learning resources:	Compilation and synthesis of the above

Since they cover a wider selection of FAO knowledge products and services (not only learning resources), the results of the client surveys and the Member Country surveys will be presented separately.

The outline of the report on FAO learning resources is available in appendix 2.

5. Work plan

The work-plan for the evaluation of FAO learning resources is provided in the following page.

Appendix 1 - Outline of the report on FAO learning resources
(Max 15 pages, excluding annexes)

1. Introduction

2. Description of learning resources

3. Findings (structured by evaluation question, with text box examples)

4. Conclusions

Annexes

- List of persons interviewed
- List of documents reviewed
- Inventory of learning resources
- Client surveys (when relevant)
- Member Country surveys (when relevant)

Annex 5.2. Inventory of FAO learning resources

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
E-learning	Foot-and Mouth Disease e-learning course	As part of the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (EuFMD) program to support Foot-and-Mouth Disease preparedness for its Member States, the EuFMD training team has collaborated with the Royal Veterinary College, London, to create an e-learning site which complements its existing training activities. The EuFMD e-learning site is currently operational and includes the induction course and the reports from previous real time training courses, as well as an Foot-and-Mouth Disease Emergency Preparation Course.	http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/home/en/news_archive/2013_EuFMD_e-learning.html
E-learning	Sustaining livestock diversity	An e-learning tool has been designed to inform the general public about the importance of livestock and its genetic diversity. It is the product of an ongoing annual collaboration between FAO and the students of Iowa State University in the United States of America.	http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/resources/documents/e-module/AnGR_Emodule.pdf
E-learning	Taenia Solium: A Common Parasite affecting Global Health		http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/documents/tenia/TaeniaSoliumFAO1.swf
E-learning	Interactive Training on the Operation of the Rotterdam Convention (ITORC)	The Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention has developed this e-Learning tool with the goal of providing technical training to Designated National Authorities (DNA) and other interested stakeholders for the implementation of the Convention. For each of the four key operational elements of the Rotterdam Convention a training course has been designed including an overview of the obligations and operational procedure of the Convention, an introduction to the standard forms to be completed and submitted by the DNA, and in-depth discussions on specific issues. Each course contains a case study that aims to provide practical experience in the implementation of the individual operational procedures	http://www.pic.int/Implementation/PublicAwareness/ELearningTool/ITORC/tabid/1153/language/en-US/Default.aspx
Learning material	Severely Hazardous PesticideFormulations Tool kit	The Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention has developed this tool with the goal of providing technical training to Designated National Authorities and other stakeholders for the implementation of the article 6 of the Rotterdam Convention	http://www.pic.int/Implementation/SHPFs/SHPFKit/PesticidePoisoning/tabid/3117/language/en-US/Default.aspx

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
Learning material / Training events	Farmers Field Schools (various)	An FFS Guidance Document is being prepared to assist FFS programme developers, on the basis of findings from the Global FFS Review. This will be tested during regional FFS training/workshops.	
E-learning	Interactive Guidance to Designated National Authorities on the Operation of the Rotterdam Convention	This document has been developed to provide comprehensive guidance to Designated National Authorities (DNAs) on the rights and obligations of Parties under the Convention. It contains:background and contextual information on the purpose and function of the Rotterdam Convention; a step-by-step explanation of the responsibilities of countries as Parties to the Convention; a checklist as a guide to DNAs on actions required under the Convention.	http://www.pic.int/Portals/5/Guidance/dna-2013/Dna-Guidance-E/DNA/dna.html#cover
E-learning	Interactive Forms and Instructions for key operational elements of the Rotterdam Convention	In order to facilitate the implementation of the key operational elements of the Convention, standard forms and instructions for their completion have been developed. This section includes copies of the following forms and instructions: Form for Notification of Final Regulatory Action to Ban or Severely Restrict a Chemical, Severely Hazardous Pesticide Report Forms for Human Health and for Environmental Incidents, Form for Import Response and Form for Export Notification.	http://www.pic.int/Portals/5/Guidance/dna-2013/FORMS%20INSTRUCTIONS-E/FormsInstructions/FormsInstructions.html
E-learning	E-learning module for law enforcement officers on hazardous chemicals and wastes under the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions	Interpol and the Secretariat have jointly developed an e-learning module for law enforcement officers on hazardous chemicals and wastes under the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. The legal international trade in chemicals and wastes is an important part of the global economy, but it is crucial that this trade be effectively controlled. Protecting human health and the environment from the dangers of hazardous chemicals and wastes is a growing area of responsibility for enforcement officers. This tool will help them to meet their responsibilities to protect their countries, their peoples, and the global community. It was developed with the financial support of the European Union and is also available on the	http://synergies.pops.int/Implementation/TechnicalAssistance/ToolsandMethodologies/Eleaningmoduleforlawenforcement/tabid/3534/language/fr-CH/Default.aspx
E-learning	E-learning module on Laws and instructions for the key operational elements of the Rotterdam Convention		http://www.pic.int/Portals/5/Guidance/dna-2013/FORMS%20INSTRUCTIONS-E/FormsInstructions/FormsInstructions.html

Work Plan – Learning Resources	September					October				November				December					January				February				March				
	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15	22	29	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23	2	9	16	23	30
Implementation Phase																															
DESK REVIEW																															
Review & analysis previous studies																															
META-EVALUATION																															
Analysis and synthesis																															
MAPPING OF FAO LEARNING RESOURCES																															
Launch survey																															
Analysis & synthesis																															
IN-DEPTH EVALUATION OF 3 LEARNING RESOURCES																															
a) User Surveys																															
Design & test online survey																															
Launch																															
Interviews key informants																															
Data analysis																															
b) Cybermetric Analysis																															
Design & launch																															
Data analysis & synthesis																															
b) Client Survey & workshops																															
Design and test country survey																															
Launch surveys & conduct workshops																															
Data analysis & synthesis																															
c) Report writing																															
Compilation & comparative analysis																															
Drafting of case studies and synthesis																															
Review and finalization																															

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
Learning material	Plant Breeding Capacity Analysis	Training modules for plant breeding capacity analysis	http://plantbreedingcapacity.ctl1.com/
Learning material	HORTIVAR training modules	Training modules to use the HORTIVAR database	
Learning material	Course on agribusiness management for producers' associations	The manual is aimed at improving the agribusiness management capabilities of leaders and managers of producers' associations as well as those of technicians from government, NGOs and the private sector, who provide technical assistance to agro-enterprises. It is addressed to small and medium size producers' associations with experience in production and marketing of agricultural products. The manual includes four modules on subjects such as agrofood systems and chains, organizational principles for producers' associations, planning for producers' associations and finally post-harvest and marketing. An additional one on business management for small-scale agro-industries is also provided. These modules can be of help to strengthen producers' and technicians' capabilities in order to respond better to globalization and cope with the threats of increased competition, but also in order to respond to new market opportunities.	
Learning material	Curso de gestión de agronegocios en empresas asociativas rurales en America Latina y el Caribe	El objetivo de estos materiales de capacitación es mejorar la capacidad de gestión de agronegocios competitivos por parte de líderes de empresas asociativas rurales y técnicos de agencias gubernamentales, ONGs o del sector privado, que prestan servicios de asistencia técnica a esas organizaciones empresariales.	
E-learning	Microfinance Lessons	This Learning Centre aims to assist organisations in developing countries to build their capacity to deliver improved financial services which meet the needs of rural households and businesses.	
E-learning	A primer to the Right to Adequate Food	The course introduces the principles and concept of the human right to adequate food and its practical application. The course also provides an overview of the historical development of this human right, the human rights based approach to development, recourse mechanisms, the Right to Food Guidelines and describes the rights, obligations and responsibilities of rights-holders and duty-bearers of the right to food.	http://www.fao.org/righttofood/knowledge-centre/distance-learning/a-primer-to-the-right-to-adequate-food/en/

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
E-learning	Assessing Impact of Development Programmes on Food Security	This e-learning course on "Assessing Impact of Development Programmes on Food Security" has been designed to support countries and regions in assessing the overall impact of their investments in food security on the well being of the targeted populations. The course brings together the latest information on impact assessment from numerous guidelines and presents it within the context of large-scale development programmes that address food insecurity; however the methods and approaches described in the course are equally applicable to smaller projects.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	Availability Assessment and Analysis	This course introduces the most commonly used methods to assess food availability at regional, national and local levels. It also provides examples and criteria for selecting the appropriate availability indicators.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	Baseline Food Security Assessments	This course describes the purpose and features of baseline assessments and how they differ from action-oriented assessments. The course also provides guidance on selecting a baseline assessment method depending on the context, and on how to incorporate historical trends when conducting food security assessments.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	Food Security Concepts and Frameworks	This course introduces the concepts and tools used in food security analysis. As a starting point, it defines the concept of food security and its relationship to the concepts of vulnerability, hunger, malnutrition and poverty. The course also provides guidelines on how to interpret and use conceptual frameworks for analysing food security.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	Food Security Information for Action	The e-learning curriculum "Food Security Information for Action" is being delivered as part of the "EC/FAO Programme on Linking Information and Decision Making to Improve Food Security". The curriculum brings together twelve courses developed as part of the EC/FAO Food Security Information for Action Programme to support capacity development and on-the-job training at regional, national food security information systems and networks.	http://www.fsnau.org/e-learning-series-food-security-information-action

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
E-learning	Food Security Information Systems and Networks	This course introduces and provides guidance in assessing different kinds of information systems related to food security analysis.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	Food Security Policies - Formulation and Implementation	This course describes Food Security Policies and explains when and why they are required. The course also describes the process of Food Security Policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	High-level policy learning programme	FAO's High-level policy learning programme (HLPLP) is a bi-annual, two-week event which strives to strengthen capacities of policy makers and senior policy analysts from selected countries and supranational organizations involved in country, regional or global policy processes.	http://www.fao.org/tc/policy-learning/hlplp-home/en/
E-learning	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification	This course provides an overview of the IPC approach (version 1.1) and its components. A new 2.0 version of the IPC tools is now being used and has replaced the previous version. This course is still available for reference and for those interested in learning more about the IPC and its original design.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	Introduction to Social Safety Nets	The course provides an overview of Social Safety Net programmes and systems and how they are used and customized according to different contexts. It also introduces the key processes for designing and implementing Social Safety Net programmes.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	IPC Certification Programme	The IPC Certification Programme aims at qualifying IPC practitioners professionally. It is relevant for food security experts who are engaged or want to involve in IPC activities at global, regional and country levels.	http://www.ipcinfo.org/training-and-resources/certification-programme/en/
E-learning	Methodologies for implementing the Right to Food	This course describes a series of analytical, educational and normative methodologies that offer guidance and hands-on advice on the practical aspects of the right to adequate food. It covers a wide range of operational issues such as assessment, legislation, advocacy, education, budgeting and monitoring of this human right.	http://www.fao.org/righttofood/knowledge-centre/distance-learning/methodologies-for-implementing-the-right-to-food/en/

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
E-learning	Qualitative Methods for Assessing the Impact of Development Programmes on Food Security	This e-learning course on Qualitative Methods for Assessing the Impact of Development Programmes on Food Security will contribute to technical capacity building on the application of qualitative methods for food security impact assessment of development programmes. By promoting a common methodological approach and a set of practical tools, the objective of the course is therefore to provide guidance and to assist programme managers and monitoring and evaluation officers on how to use qualitative methods in conducting the assessment of food security and nutrition impact of development programmes.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	Reporting Food Security Information	This course provides guidance in designing, writing and increasing the impact of food security reports in different contexts.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	Resilience in Food Security Analysis	This e-learning course, entitled Resilience in Food Security Analysis, introduces you to the concept of resilience and its possible use in food security analysis.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses#IA
E-learning	Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis	This course provides a definition of vulnerability and illustrates the three critical dimensions used to define it. It also presents the most commonly used methods to assess vulnerability, and provides examples and criteria for selecting the appropriate vulnerability indicators.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	Nutritional Status Assessment and Analysis	This course covers the basic concepts of malnutrition, describes how nutritional status is assessed, and identifies the most commonly used nutrition indicators, as well as the criteria to be used when selecting the indicators in specific contexts and situations.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	Markets Assessment and Analysis	The course illustrates how markets operate and how they relate to, and affect, food security and vulnerable households. It describes market components and how they function, and introduces some of the methods and indicators used to assess markets for improving food security analysis.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	Climate Change and Food Security	a "primer" on the subject of "climate change and food security"; basics of climate science, climate change adaptation, mitigation and climate-smart agriculture.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
E-learning	Communicating for Food Security	The course provides guidance on how to design and implement a communication strategy for food security information. Using several realistic examples, the course illustrates the various components of a communication strategy, and provides concrete and detailed guidelines on how to communicate through the media and how to present information to policymakers in order to influence the policymaking process.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	What is food security?	The distance learning component of this website, which especially aim at trainers and professionals, offers self-paced e-learning, developed by international experts with the aim to support capacity building and Training and Workshops for national and local food security information systems and networks.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/course/shortcourseFC/EN/lesson.asp?lessoncode=0411
E-learning	Livelihoods Assessment and Analysis	This course introduces the concept of livelihoods and the components of the livelihoods framework. It also provides guidance on assessing livelihoods in different food security contexts and on selecting and interpreting livelihoods indicators.	http://www.foodsec.org/DL/elcpages/food-security-courses.asp?pgLanguage=en&leftItemSelected=food-security-courses
E-learning	FAO/INFOODS e-learning course on Food Composition Data	to close the existing knowledge gap	Web version and CD rom (link at: http://www.fao.org/infoods/infoods/training/en/
E-learning	End Child Labour in Agriculture	The FAO-ILO E-learning course aims to strengthen capacities of agricultural stakeholders to address child labour in agriculture. The prevalence of child labour in agriculture undermines decent work, sustainable agriculture and food security. While the course is tailored to the information needs of agricultural stakeholders (including agricultural policy makers and advisors; agricultural programme designers and implementers; as well as agricultural researchers and statisticians) much of the content will also be highly relevant to others.	http://www.fao.org/resources/learning/childlabouragriculture/en/

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
E-learning	Gender and Food and Nutrition Security	This FAO E-learning course aims to provide a thorough overview of concepts of gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition (FSN) and it explores gender aspects of food security and nutrition policy, legislation programming. The course comprising of three units and 12 modules and is intended to serve as an innovative capacity development tool to help agriculture and nutrition specialists, practitioners and the academic community to learn on how to use a gender lens effectively in their work, which will lead to improved development outcomes and impact.	http://www.fao.org/elearning/#/elc/en/course/FG
Learning material	Capacity Building Programme on Social Protection Policy - PART I	The Capacity Building Programme on Social Protection Policy is composed of three main parts, each covering a large number of topics, organized by modules. The first part is on "Social protection policy and programmes - A review of experiences, lessons and best practices", which was developed in collaboration with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) and a first training for FAO staff was organized and delivered in November 2013. The second part "Harnessing the potential of social protection for rural poverty reduction: designing effective social protection policies for achieving FAO's global goals" focuses on concepts, experiences and lessons for designing and implementing social protection policies/ programmes for agriculture and rural sectors that contribute to achieving sustainable rural development and poverty reduction. The third part on "Methodologies and tools for the analysis and formulation of SP policies" will focus on analytical approaches and tools for social protection policy analysis and formulation.	
Learning material	Training materials on prices and cost of production		
Learning material	Training material on SUA and FBS		
Learning material	Training material on production and trade		

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
Learning material	Regulations and certification for agricultural exports.	Information manuals on regulations and certification for agricultural exports. These manuals explain the objectives, scope, advantages and constraints of a selection of voluntary private certification programmes (e.g. organic agriculture, "fair trade", GlobalGAP). They are designed for farmers and exporters. These manuals also give a brief overview of the main categories of import regulations that exporters of agricultural products have to meet when they export to major markets (United States, European Union, Japan). Links to the web sites of organizations providing more details are given. There are manuals for exporters and producers of different regions: - Central America (only in Spanish) - South America (only in Spanish) - East Africa (only in English) - West Africa (in English and French) - Asia (in English, and other Asian languages)	Manual for Central America (S) http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/ad818s/ad818s00.htm Manual for South America (S) http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/est/PUBLICATIONS/Manual_Suramerica.pdf Manual for East Africa (E) http://www.fao.org/docrep/010/a0791e/a0791e00.htm Manual for West Africa (E & F) http://www.fao.org/docrep/009/a0587e/a0587e00.HTM Manual for Asia (E) http://www.fao.org/docrep/010/ag130e/ag130e00.htm
Learning material	Managing certifications for agricultural exports	Training manual: "Managing certifications for agricultural exports". This manual is meant for trainers who intend to organize a training session on certification for agricultural exports.	http://www.fao.org/economic/est/publications/publications-on-standards/manuals/manual-for-trainers/en/
Learning material	Exporting Organic and Fair-trade Products	Manual on Exporting Organic and Fair-trade Products. Decision-making guide for farmer organizations and exporters wishing to export organic and fair-trade certified products. It can also be useful to business support organizations.	http://www.fao.org/organicag/organicexports/export-guide/en/
E-learning	Good practices for forest health protection	Help minimize the presence and spread of forest pests and encourage safe trade by refreshing your knowledge of forest health practices and associated phytosanitary standards	http://www.fao.org/forestry/foresthealthguide/82419/en/
E-learning	Good practices for forest health protection - Africa edition		http://www.fao.org/forestry/foresthealthguide/84542/en/
E-learning	Bonnes pratiques pour la protection sanitaire des forêts	Contribuer à réduire la présence et la propagation des ravageurs forestiers et d'encourager la sécurité du commerce en actualisant vos connaissances des pratiques pour la santé phytosanitaire des forêts et des normes phytosanitaires associées	http://www.fao.org/forestry/foresthealthguide/83279/en/

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
E-learning	Trade in Forest Commodities and the role of phytosanitary measures	Help ensure safe international trade in forest commodities by learning more about the importance and relevance of phytosanitary measures	http://www.fao.org/forestry/foresthealthguide/82418/en/
E-learning	Climate and Flood Forecast Applications in Agriculture	interactive learning sessions and practical resources for better understanding of the concepts and the implementation of climate and flood forecast applications in agriculture.	http://www.webgeo.de/fw_1/
Webinars	Climate Smart Agriculture	The learning event consists of 2 webinars of 1,5 hours, combined with online discussions on Climate-Smart Agriculture approach and policies. The presentations of the webinars will be followed by a question and answer session where participants have the opportunity to ask the presenters about Climate-Smart Agriculture approach and policies.	http://www.fao.org/climatechange/micca/79527/en/
E-learning	Climate-resilient and environmentally sound agriculture or "climate-smart" agriculture	through simplified concepts and relevant resources and examples, this package explores the impacts of global change on agriculture, the impacts of agriculture on ecosystems and possible technical and policy considerations that can help building food security under current and future challenges. The package was developed in the context of a climate change adaptation project in the Yellow River Basin in China.	http://www.cpesap.net/online-c-resap-information-package
E-learning	Planning for Community based adaptation to climate change (CBA)	interactive learning sessions and practical resources for training on climate change adaptation in rural communities.	http://www.media-suedwest.de/FAO/FAOnrcASIAtool2012en/fao-webgeo-2-intro/
E-learning	Introduction to the Responsible Governance of Tenure	The course illustrates what is meant by "responsible governance of tenure" and identifies responsible ways of governing the use and control of land, fisheries and forests. It aims to help people understand the Guidelines and to apply the principles to practical situations in their countries, as well as to raise the general awareness of responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests. It explains the concepts and principles, and then illustrates how they can work in practice by offering a wealth of examples and case studies.	http://www.fao.org/elearning/#/elc/en/course/VG1
E-learning	Investment & climate change		
Training event	TOT programme on Collaborative Conflict management for Enhanced National Forest Programmes		http://www.fao.org/forestry/29010-0891ed3c1db6578171c4c0e7deb9833ba.pdf

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
Training event	Study visits		
Training event	Global Plant Clinics initiative		
Training event	All ACP Agriculture Commodities project - FAO-Ministry joint case study development		
Training event	Avian Influenza simulation exercises		
Learning material	Template to document good practices		
E-learning	Addressing tenure issues in the context of natural disasters		http://www.fao.org/elearning/#/elc/en/course/VG8
E-learning	Addressing corruption in the tenure of land, fisheries and forests		http://www.fao.org/elearning/#/elc/en/course/VG6
E-learning	Addressing Disputes and Conflicts over the tenure of Natural Resources		http://www.fao.org/elearning/#/elc/en/course/VG7
blended learning	IPC Certification Programme - Process and Levels		http://www.ipcinfo.org/training-and-resources/certification-programme/en/
blended learning	ENACT Course in Nutrition Education	to introduce participants to the principles and practice of "effective education for nutrition in action" (ENACT). ENACT aims at promoting long-term improvements in diet through an active approach based on identified needs, with attention to social and environmental contexts, all relevant sectors and the whole food cycle (production, processing, marketing, consumption)	http://www.fao.org/ag/humannutrition/nutritioneducation/89049/en/
Webinars	Learning event on Climate Change, Food Security and Nutrition	TheFood security, nutrition and climate change are interconnected. Experts and practitioners involved in this online event help to reveal exactly how and why climate change is making it harder to feed the world's growing population and take a look at action already underway preparing farmers globally to face the impacts of climate change. •Share in-depth knowledge on the interactions between food security, nutrition and climate change. •Exchange experiences and best practices in the design of agricultural projects that consider food security and nutrition in a changing climate. •Produce a summary of the event results based on the expert presentations and online discussions.	http://www.fao.org/climatechange/micca/88950/en/

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
Webinars	Getting ready for the Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions in Agriculture	•To encourage participation and exchange between policy-makers from different countries •To provide a better understanding of: 1.What types of NAMA can be in found in agriculture sectors 2.How to start planning a NAMA in an agriculture sector 3.Where countries can get support and funding to implement NAMAs	http://www.fao.org/climatechange/micca/87484/en/
Webinars	Challenges and Solutions for Responsible Peatlands Management	•Evaluate negative consequences of unsustainable peatlands management for livelihoods, climate change and environmental services, •Define the concept of responsible management and priority requirements for its implementation, and •Present case studies of responsible management from different regions.	http://www.fao.org/climatechange/micca/87265/en/
Webinars	Tackling Climate Change through livestock	to introduce three sector specific Life Cycle Assessment guidelines focusing on the poultry, small ruminant and animal feed supply chains. The guidelines present a methodology for the assessment of the environmental performance of livestock supply chains. This initiative represented an important step towards coordinated cross-sectoral and international effort to harmonize measurement approaches. The webinar was followed by a facilitated online discussion.	http://www.fao.org/climatechange/micca/85064/en/
Webinars	Gender and Climate Smart Agriculture		http://www.fao.org/climatechange/micca/85924/en/
Webinars	Agroforestry, food security and climate change	1.To facilitate the exchange of knowledge on agroforestry and its role and potential for climate change mitigation, adaptation and food security; 2.To gather recommendations for agroforestry policy mechanisms, practices and strategic decision making, with specific considerations regarding the implementation of the Agroforestry Guidelines: Advancing Agroforestry on the Policy Agenda – A guide for decision-makers; and 3.To contribute to the background document of the International Conference Forests for Food Security and Nutrition (Rome, Italy, 13 to 15 May, 2013).	http://www.fao.org/climatechange/micca/84244/en/
Webinars	Conservation Agriculture for climate change mitigation		http://www.fao.org/climatechange/micca/81637/en/

Type	Name	Description	URL (if any)
Learning material	Capacity Development Learning Modules	Consists of 4 learning modules on capacity development	http://www.fao.org/capacitydevelopment/capacity-development-home/en/
Blended learning	Núcleo de Capacitación en Politicas publicas	El Núcleo de Capacitación en Políticas Públicas es una unidad de la Oficina Regional de la FAO para América Latina y el Caribe, apoyada por la Iniciativa América Latina y Caribe Sin Hambre (IALCSH), que promueve el fortalecimiento de las capacidades técnicas y funcionales de los países miembros en la región, y está especializada en la capacitación a distancia e-Learning y en la capacitación presencial/semipresencial.	

Annex 5.3. Survey of FAO Learning resources owners

An online Survey Monkey was administered to owners/producers of the FAO learning resources identified during the evaluation in order to gather information on their learning resources objectives, development and desired outcomes. The survey, which consisted of consisting of 32 questions, was open for three weeks, and was followed up by interviews in December 2014. It was sent to 54 officers/producers responsible for learning resources and 16 responses were obtained.

No	Name of Learning Resource
1	Núcleo de capacitación
2	Resource Kit on the Rotterdam Convention
3	ToT Programme on Collaborative Conflict Management for Enhanced National Forest Programmes
4	Planning for Community Based Adaptation to Climate Change (e-learning)
5	On-site training course in fishing harbor management
6	Agricultural production
7	High Level Policy Learning Programme
8	E-Learning Course on Pre-Breeding
9	Various - all related to investment planning and management
10	e-learning on gender in food and nutrition security
11	staff training; regional/global statistical capacity development; global guidelines
12	Sustainability Pathways
13	FAO EASYPol, E-Publishing series and knowledge exchange platform
14	review of information
15	RIGHT TO FOOD
16	awareness raising and guidelines

The main themes covered by the learning resources are climate change (38% of respondents), food production and investment in agriculture (32% each).

The majority of the learning resources are developed on FAO's owns initiative (88% of respondents) or the Member countries' (63%) request. These learning resources mostly target National governments (88%), Academia & research institutions (56%) and FAO staff and CSO (44% each).

81% of the respondents confirmed that they do conduct needs assessment as an input for their learning resources/initiatives. These are mostly conducted through consultations (92% of respondents), surveys (54%), workshops (54%), and desk reviews (38%).

On the other hand, 19% of respondents stated that no needs assessment was carried out, mainly due to the lack of funds, time and even awareness.

81% of respondents implement complementary activities to support their learning resources, while 19% does not. Some of the main activities include: learning events and field missions (77% of respondents each), provision of technical assistance (69%), expert support to develop appropriate policies and legislation, and field projects (54% each).

All of the respondents confirmed their learning resources are subject to peer reviews or other forms of quality assurance processes. The main QA procedures include: Internal peer reviews (94% of respondents), piloting/testing of learning resource and review by learning/content development specialist (69% each).

63% of the respondents confirmed they do have follow-up plans in place, while 13% were not sure if such mechanism was in place. The main follow up activities included: establishment of online networks, forums or discussion groups and the provision of toolkits or web-based materials (60% of respondents for ach), on-the-job technical assistance, mentoring programmes and refresher courses or online sessions (30% each). Those respondents who do not have carry out follow up plans (25% of respondents): stated that the main reasons were: lack of funding & resources and limited capacity in the team for such activity.

75% of the respondents stated that they do evaluate the results of their LR. These assessments were mostly conducted at the end of the training/workshop or project (50% of respondents), through evaluation forms (56% of respondents). In some occasions, assessments were done 6-12 months after the training or learning event (19% of respondents).

Most of the respondents were moderately satisfied with the budget available for designing (31%) and developing their learning resources (44%). While 63% were unsatisfied with the budget available for promoting and assessing (56%) their learning resources.

All of the respondents cooperate with other stakeholders in the development of their learning resources. The main partners in the different phases were:

- Planning & design: FAO HQ (94% of respondents), FAO Decentralized Offices and Academia/ research institutions (44%), and national governments (38%).
- Development & testing: FAO HQ (75% of respondents), FAO Decentralized Offices and academia/research institutions (56%), and national governments (31%).
- Delivery: FAO Decentralized Offices (56%), FAO HQ (44%), national governments and academia/research institutions (38% each).
- Follow up: FAO Decentralized Offices (50% of respondents) and Academia/ research institutions (44%).
- Assessment/ evaluation: FAO Decentralized offices (50% of respondents) and FAO HQ (44%).

Annex 5.4. Client survey (learning resources)

This study presents the results of country clients surveys administered to learning resources users as part of the evaluation of FAO's contributions to knowledge on food and agriculture. The assessment seeks to identify the main outcomes achieved by FAO knowledge instruments at country level, as well as success factors, gaps and unmet needs.

Objectives

The objective of the surveys were to gain understanding of how diverse constituencies view the relevance, accessibility and applicability of the development knowledge and expertise that FAO has helped them acquire and use, and the impact of that exchange of knowledge on their work.

Methodology

Surveys were conducted to gather the views of individuals ("key informants") with significant expertise and familiarity with FAO or with potential exposure to FAO products and services. The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO and consultations were opened during 3 months, from 1 December 2014 to 5 March 2015. The surveys were anonymous and delivered by email, telephone or in-person. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether the survey gathered input from 171 participants across 13 countries –Table 1. Key informants included representatives from central government organizations (30%) being either decision makers (11%) or programme managers (19%), research and academia (23%), UN organizations (9%), CSOs/NGOs (9%), local/regional governmental institutions (6%), IFI (5%), the private sector (5%), IGOs (4%), bilateral donors / resource partners (4%), producer organizations (4%) and the media and other (1%). The areas of work most commonly shared by participants were food security (52%) followed by crop production (34%), climate change (33%), nutrition (26%) and trade and markets (26%). Conversely few respondents worked on social protection (6%), aquaculture (9%), emergencies (10%) or animal health (10%). The majority of participants (77%) have been using FAO knowledge products and services for more than 3 years. About 70% of the respondents were male and 30% female.

Use of FAO learning resources

Learning resources most frequently used by survey respondents are country based –Table 3. Country-specific learning resources and materials are used often or sometimes by 29% of survey respondents. The types of learning resources country clients are most familiar with relate to seminars, training events, local and regional workshops –e.g. Workshop on Farmer Field Schools, Stakeholder mapping Workshops, LANEA Commutative Workshop, Land Tenure Workshop, Climate Smart Agriculture training, etc. -. A minority of participants made reference to standalone training manuals –Food security training manual, GMO training manual, SEAGA handbook, Dietary Guidelines for Eastern and Central Africa, etc.-, and to e-learning resources –e.g. IMARK.

Table 2: Frequency of use of FAO learning resources

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Don't know
COUNTRY-SPECIFIC: Learning resources and materials	11,6%	18,1%	11,0%	44,5%	14,8%
COUNTRY-SPECIFIC: Learning events	8,3%	26,8%	10,2%	42,7%	12,1%
REGIONAL-SPECIFIC: Distance/ e-learning resources	7,7%	5,8%	11,0%	59,4%	16,1%
GLOBAL: Distance/e-learning resources	6,4%	14,7%	9,6%	55,1%	14,1%
Blended learning resources	3,4%	11,0%	8,2%	57,5%	19,9%

Source: FAO Client Survey, 2015

Learning resources never or rarely used. The first reason for rarely or never using FAO learning resources is due to a lack of awareness of their existence in spite of being in need of such products or services (40%). A related factor comes from the fact that clients do not know where/how to access such materials (23%). About 23% of respondents indicate that they are not aware of the existence of such resources and do not need them. Respondents shared suggestions to increase the uptake of FAO learning resources such as to "better integrate them in the country plan", to "improve outreach to farmers and extension workers", to "provide better technical inputs rather than just advocacy about rights of people", to "cooperate with Agricultural faculties to roll out" these resources, to create a "national learning center supported by FAO" and local extensions that farmers can access, or to "strengthen the training and manpower capacity building component of FAO projects". Staff from the World Bank invited also to greater cooperation between both organizations.

Learning resources used often or sometimes. As for the learning resources which are used often or sometimes, clients point out that this stems from their technical soundness (30%), online accessibility (28%), relevance to the work (27%) and quality (26%). FAO learning resources are utilized to improve technical knowledge (35%), to improve training, education and research activities (25%), to enhance technical skills (24%), and to support evidence based policy making (20%). A few examples of utilization were reported by respondents. For instance IMARK has been used to train 200 people in Chile as part of a "national project that was instrumental to increase the reach and adaptation of the system to the country's realities". Guidelines developed after a seminar and workshops on Land Governance working with the private sector are used by technical staff (120 experts) in a Government's department to "incorporate FAO know-how in their project/activities".

Annex 5.5. Meta-analysis of past evaluations

Several OED evaluation reports have been reviewed as part of the evaluation, and nine of them had relevant findings, conclusions and recommendations for the learning assessment.

Final Report Issued (Month/ Year)	Division/ Office	Evaluation Title	Type of evaluation
Oct-08	ESS	Independent Evaluation of FAO's role and work in Statistics	Thematic/Strategy
Oct-09	ESA	Joint FAO/WFP evaluation on Food Security Information Systems	Thematic/Strategy
Feb-10	TCE	Second Real Time Evaluation of FAO's work on the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza	Emergency and rehabilitation
Feb-10	NRL	Evaluation of FAO's role and work related to water	Thematic/Strategy
Mar-10	RAF	Evaluation of Capacity Development in Africa	Thematic/Strategy
Jan-11	RAF	Evaluation of FAO's cooperation in Ethiopia	Country
Jan-11	RNE	Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for the Near East	Thematic/Strategy
Jun-11	ESP	Evaluation of FAO's role and work related to gender and development	Thematic/Strategy
Jun-11	ESN	Evaluation of FAO's role and work in nutrition	Thematic/Strategy
Jun-11	RAF	Evaluation of FAO's cooperation in Zimbabwe	Country
Jan-12	ESA/EST	Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Food and Agriculture Policy	Thematic/Strategy
Jun-12	FO	Evaluation of FAO's role and work in forestry	Thematic/Strategy
Dec-12	REU	Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Europe and Central Asia	Thematic/Strategy
Jun-12	FI	Evaluation of FAO's support to the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries	Thematic/Strategy
Oct-12	RAP	Evaluation of FAO's cooperation with Sri Lanka	Country
Jul-13	RAF	Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Africa	Thematic/Strategy
Jan-13	TCI	Evaluation of FAO's Role in Investment for Food and Nutrition Security, Agriculture and Rural Development	Thematic/Strategy
Mar-13	REU	Country evaluation of FAO's cooperation with Armenia	Country
Apr-13	RAP	Evaluation of FAO's cooperation with Viet Nam	Country
May-13	TCE/NRC	Evaluation of FAO's work in Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean	Emergency and rehabilitation
Jan-14	RAP	Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Asia and Pacific	Thematic/Strategy
Feb-14	RLC	Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Latin America and the Caribbean	Thematic/Strategy
Feb-14	AGP	Evaluation of FAO's work in sustainable intensification of crops	Thematic/Strategy

Below are extracts of the evaluation reports that have been used/quoted in the main report as needed.

AGP **CROPS** FAO should institutionalise its effort to consolidate FAO's vast and worldwide experience with Farmer Field Schools. It should lead to development of packages of FFS products for different types of technical cooperation projects financed by different donors, including regional development banks and the World Bank.

RAP **Sri Lanka** For example, FAO trained members of 416 farmers' organizations on rehabilitation contract works, organizational and financial management and water management. The evaluation team found little evidence that trainees were applying the knowledge gained, owing in part to other more urgent priorities, according to the spokespersons interviewed from several farmer organizations. The evaluators found similar patterns of questionable effectives resulting from training in other sub-sectors.

RAF **Zimbabwe** The strategy of using training colleges for HIV mainstreaming to train trainers has allowed scaling-up of the efforts to change knowledge attitudes and practices.

RAF **Ethiopia** There has been considerable capacity building undertaken in many of the projects and this is highly appreciated by BoARDs and farmers. It is very difficult to tell how effective this training is, and the short-term nature of the projects does not encourage FAO to follow-up or assess outcomes through any type of effective M&E strategy

REU **Armenia** Capacity development was considered adequate and good in most initiatives, including those funded through Regular Programme resources. There was evidence of uptake, albeit at different speeds, and of changed practices and attitudes through some initiatives: e.g. in ASF, brucellosis, FMD; forest nursery; improved diagnostic methods in animal health and pesticide residue monitoring (upcoming).

RAP **Vietnam** The IPM programme involving the training of farmers has been a successful, long-running and nationally owned programme. But greater attention could have been given to ensuring or strengthening the capacity of GOV institutions in planning, management and implementation for follow-up on the projects and programmes, and the coordination among them.

TCE **Transition** Capacity development in transitional activities was too often limited to short-term technical training, not sufficient to ensure sustainability, although it was very relevant. Among the tools which could be used, prominence should continue to be given to the Farmer Field School approach, supporting national structures and strengthening decentralized and peripheral institutions and organizations at the community, district and provincial level in full participation and dialogue with national beneficiaries and international partners. One particular experience, that of Farmer Field Schools (FFS – and in some places 'Pastoralist Field Schools'), is a flagship activity for the Organization in several countries since many years, though this is a very limited example of dissemination of a specific technical approach. The experience of the Farmers Field Schools (FFS) and Pastoralist Field Schools (PFS): The FFS/PFS promotes a participatory and "learning by doing" approach. FFS/PFS are mainly used as development initiatives. FFS/PFS also proved important for creating social cohesion at intra-community and inter-community level, as well as in terms of enhancing gender equality.

TCE/NRC **DRR** It is however important to note that none of the projects or activities related to capacity development included monitoring components that measured training outcomes. Therefore, in both LAC and Asia there was limited evidence on the overall outcomes of capacity development efforts, which is not only a challenge for evaluators, but also for FAO staff in terms of understanding the effects and relevance of these interventions. However, the tendency to use similar project designs in all countries without accounting for local needs

and conditions limited effectiveness in other places (for example Nepal and Ecuador). For the most part, there was little sign that effective capacity development had taken place through the projects.

FAO-WFP The Evaluation also found that the relevance of capacity development activities is jeopardized by inadequate assessments of needs as a basis for the design of the activities

NRL **Water** Capacity development has been a common element of many water-related initiatives. However, while there is much evidence of FAO's contributions to capacity development across its core functions, the Evaluation noted weak performance in dissemination, in institutionalising training and capacity building; and to some degree, in building implementation capacity. The Evaluation concludes that 'Water at FAO' has far too many products in the form of books and other publications lacking clarity on target audience and relevance to differentiated types of users.

REU **REU-SEC** Many among the government officers interviewed, mentioned attending various FAO events. Capacity development work done by FAO was largely appreciated by Member Countries. Taking into account also the Member Countries responses to the question on core functions, the Evaluation's conclusions were that while FAO had a comparative advantage and was appreciated for its expertise in capacity development particularly in technical fields, there was significant room for improvement in terms of CD approaches, inclusions of lower levels of policy making and governance, gender balance and effectiveness of the capacity development component within projects and activities.

RAF **CD in Africa** FAO's CD performance in Africa has been mixed. Most interventions are relevant, many have been effective, but few have been sustainable. The Evaluation noted a number of successes, principally where FAO had engaged continuously over time and across all three dimensions, most obviously in plant protection, statistics and increasingly in transboundary animal diseases. This continuous engagement over a long period, across dimensions, allows for the building of a critical mass of skills, institutional memory and the policies, norms, values and structures to support the work in those areas. FAO has also achieved widely recognised success in integrating CD into pilot projects testing new technologies using effective CD approaches such as Farmer Field Schools. There have also been some good examples of policy assistance which has effectively and sustainably strengthened policy analysis and implementation capacity in Burkina Faso, Mozambique and Zanzibar among others. Several factors contributed to the effectiveness: · adequate participatory planning, needs and context assessment; · appropriate consideration of the enabling environment, including institutional linkages and challenges; · long-term planning and involvement with appropriate follow-up; · the use of national consultants with strong FAO back-up; and · engagement across time with successive projects. However, despite many effective and relevant interventions, the Evaluation found that FAO CD activities are, for the most part, unsustainable. There is very little emphasis given to sustainability and too much given to immediate results and outputs. This is evident in the project timeframes and modalities; the lack of understanding by FAO staff of the importance of process to CD; lack of focus on institutionalising CD activities and building the political will to sustain them; and also to the limited motivation and opportunity for follow-up and for monitoring and evaluation by FAO staff...With regard to CD targeting individuals, the country field visits and beneficiary assessments found strong appreciation of the FFS approach which is being taken up by donors, development agencies and governments but the evaluation found that the principles are sometimes poorly understood. The evaluation felt that FAO should make a more concerted effort to document key principles of its successful approaches and make these available to a wide range of audiences....Stakeholders in several countries called on FAO to shift emphasis from policy development to policy implementation; to enhance capacities at the national and district levels and translate policies into action. In many cases, this requires better inter-departmental linkages, between national and local government and with other stakeholders. Some FAO projects specifically addressed these linkages but far greater emphasis needs to be

given to them and to policy analysis and implementation. FAO can work with partners to help strengthen capacity on the frontline, particularly important in the increasing number of countries emphasising decentralisation...The country case studies and the meta-synthesis of evaluations reflected the demand for more CD of business, financial and marketing skills. They also underscore the importance of soft skills such as confidence, negotiating skills, teamwork, creativity, adaptability, leadership and trust. These are often best developed through using a participative approach to CD, emphasising process in delivering specific skills training... FAO has provided little support to strengthening farmers' lobbying efforts for services so essential to building farmers' voice. In contrast, FAO's efforts to facilitate the participation of Africans at regional and international fora, workshops and other exchanges to strengthen their knowledge and build their confidence, has been important to developing soft skills and sustaining capacity. FAO should strengthen endogenous capacity, and be encouraged to partner more effectively.

FAO produces much valuable and relevant knowledge as an important contribution to CD but its uptake and use in Africa is limited. Africa is constrained by poor communications infrastructure which means that additional investment, or partnering, is required to ensure wider access to FAO's normative products. This may also involve the more selective production of materials in order to ensure that resources are available for effective distribution. There is no point in producing materials which do not reach their intended audience.

FO **Forestry** There is little evidence on FAO's normative work on forest resources management having major impacts on the ground. From the perspective of many stakeholders interviewed, the work in FRM is seen today as being of less of direct use than in the past. In part this appears to be because of the general nature of much of its output. Further, in the interviews private companies stated that they do not use the generic FAO guidelines. Lack of dissemination strategies for normative products. Most of the listed normative products related to forest products and economics have not had clear dissemination strategies paying attention to reaching the main target groups. In most cases there has been no follow up. Many stakeholders have criticized the majority of the guidelines for not being written with a clear audience in mind

RNE **Near East** Efforts should be made to gather feedback from users of FAO technical information to increase the relevance and visibility of the normative work conducted by FAO in the region.

Annex 6. Cybermetric Analysis

1. Study objectives

This report presents a cybermetric analysis of FAO knowledge products, designed to help the FAO evaluate its contribution to knowledge.

This analysis has focused on the following study objects:

- **Knowledge products:** The primary study examines four types of knowledge products, which include publications, communities of practice, learning resources, and online databases.
- **Benchmarking:** To provide a perspective on relative impacts, several comparable knowledge products have been evaluated from organizations that are working in the same space as the FAO.

This study does not represent a stand-alone report nor a set of definitive conclusions. Rather, it presents a source of data intended to aid triangulation of FAO's evaluation of its knowledge products and services.

2. Methodology

This study uses a mix of methods, primarily relying on cybermetric approaches to analyse vast quantities of online data and use social scientific research methods to draw conclusions. Cybermetric methods differ from web analytical methods that are primarily limited to a particular website. Instead, Cybermetric methods provide insight into activity happening in cyberspace, potentially drawing on data from thousands of websites. This provides insight into larger online trends, such as what types of organizations are citing documents, their geographic distribution, and how they are referencing publications.

2.1 Research process

Our study began by building a list of FAO knowledge products and comparable benchmarking knowledge products. Next, we ran an evaluability assessment on each knowledge product with a standard search query syntax that we assessed with the Bing search engine. In cases where there were many false matches, we calibrated queries to increase the hit accuracy of the search.

In total, 45 knowledge products were evaluated. These comprised 31 FAO knowledge products in English, French and Spanish, as well as 14 other knowledge products selected for benchmarking purposes.

Figure 1 illustrates the study flow, with N referring to a population, and n referring to a random sample selected from a population. The process began by first building a list of all online references to the 31 FAO knowledge products, which included a population of 36,549 references, representing 15,930 unique website references.

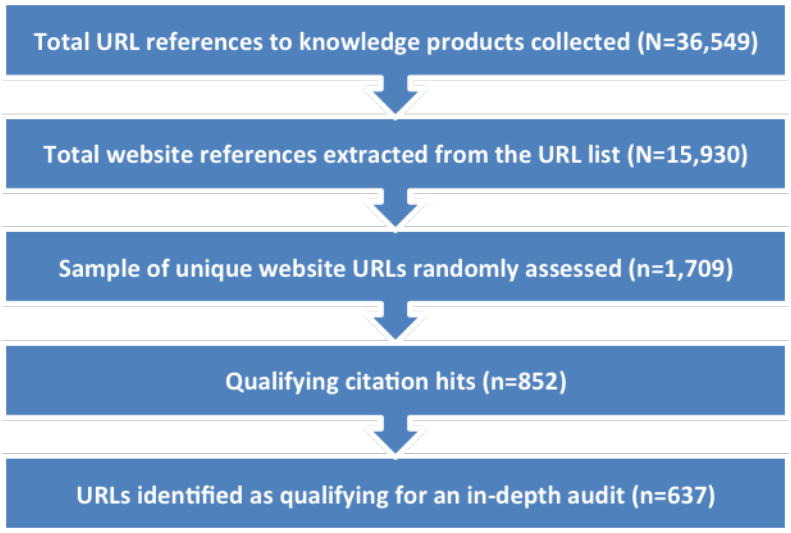
Figure 1. Process for identifying and selecting webpages referencing FAO knowledge products for a follow-up in-depth audit.

We then randomly selected references and manually assessed 1,709 of them. Out of this number, 852 were evaluated as qualifying (valid, meaningful and not repeated) citations to the corpus of FAO and benchmarking study objects. Finally, 637 references to FAO publications were subjected to an in-depth audit. In other words, the end result was a collection of 637 representative, manually filtered webpages that mentioned or referenced an FAO knowledge product.

The in-depth audit of the 637 references was conducted by a research team of subject matter experts using a coding taxonomy designed for this study. To ensure an acceptable level of

inter-coder reliability, we applied several quality control measures, starting with educating researchers on coding procedures, resolving ambiguities through consensus building, and running automatic risk assessment procedures.

As an impact metric, we collected all URL references, and summarized them as the total number of URLs and the total number of distinct websites, called *sites*. *URL counts* represent the total number of web links to an object of study, while *site counts* represent the number



of *different* websites that contained those URLs. We make this distinction because a blog may place a link on its side bar, resulting in hundreds of URL references from just one site. Consequently, we use *sites* as the main impact metric because it provides a more reliable figure.

2.2 Generalizability

Drawing on approaches from meta-analysis and systematic reviews, it is possible to design studies that could generalize from a sample to the population of publications. Given the specific focus on key knowledge products selected to provide insights, the generalizability of this population is limited to the selected publications.

Although research reveals a variety of correlations between online and offline phenomena, we cannot necessarily assume that online findings reflect offline trends, since online populations are known to be different from offline populations ranging across regions and groups. In particular, developing countries are likely to be under-represented and academics are likely to be overrepresented in our sample. In the context of programme evaluation, we have found these methods to offer a valuable source of evidence to inform triangulation, but should not be taken as conclusive on their own.

2.3 Confidence level

For this study, we used random sampling, with a minimum sample of 20 valid references per publication or website, where possible. For the knowledge products for which we provided in-depth analysis, we coded a minimum of 20 valid references. This number is not large enough to be able to make strong generalizations for *individual* publications or websites. However, when describing the entire population of publications or websites, we have a large enough sample size from which to draw conclusions at an acceptable level of confidence.

For the assessment of knowledge products, we examined 1,709 randomly selected URL references and conducted an in-depth content analysis on 637 relevant knowledge products. Based on two categories, with this sample size, we would be 95% confident that our figures are within +/- 4 percentage points. In other words, if a category shows 15%, the actual result

may range between 11% and 19% because of the natural variations to be expected within any population.

2.4 Cybermetric limitations

The findings in this evaluation are subject to a number of limitations:

- **Evaluability -** Not all publications can be assessed with the methods that we have employed due to inconsistencies in naming conventions, broken links, and the unique characteristics of some document titles. Publications with short and generic titles are not easily queried as they may result in numerous unrelated results, while long and complex titles can be underrepresented if organizations refer to the title in different ways, such as by shortening them or referring to them only indirectly. Where possible we have developed customized searches for these, but in some cases, particular publications could not be easily evaluated for the above reasons.

- **Hit count estimates –** By simply counting engine hit counts (i.e. recording the number of matches reported by a search engine when submitting web searches), it is difficult to make accurate hit count estimates for publications, as search engine hit results are known to be largely comprised of fake websites, often used for online marketing. To overcome this limit, we retrieved all related Bing results, excluding spam links, and manually reviewed them to ensure reliable hit count estimates. This considerably lowers our hit count estimates, but renders our figures more reliable and comparable.

- **Bing API scope -** For this analysis, we used data from the Bing search Applications Programming Interface (API). Although Google has a larger index of websites, it is against their terms of use to scrape data, leaving Bing as the only legally viable data source for this type of research. Consequently, the scale of web coverage and search results is smaller than that available through Google, making our hit estimates lower than the full scope of actual citations that exist on the web. This means that our numbers are conservative, and can be taken as reliable minimums. Additionally, some online sources may be underrepresented, such as social media and news media, due to coverage limits in Bing and privacy settings within some websites (e.g., Facebook).

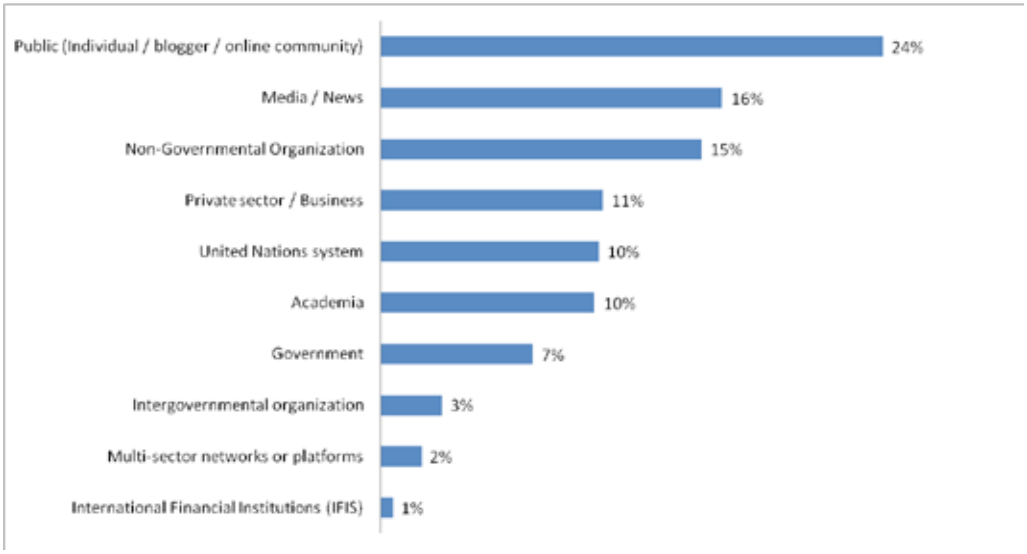
3. Overall trends

This chapter presents an overview of the 31 FAO knowledge products assessed in English, French and Spanish and they are listed in Section 8.1.

3.1 Referencing actors

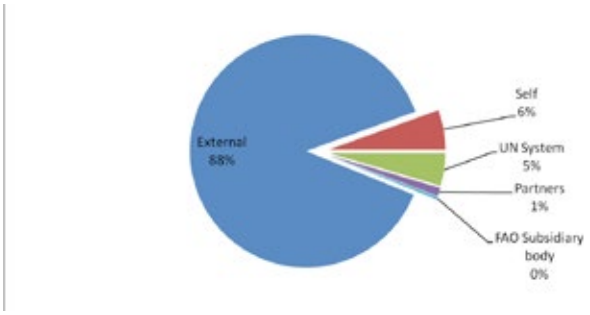
This section presents reference sources by actor type. A full list of the referencing organizations is available in Annex B (accompanying Excel file). Figure 2 shows that the majority of citations to FAO knowledge products came from individuals and online communities, followed by news media, and non-governmental organizations.

Figure 2. Types of organization referencing UN FAO knowledge products online.



In **Figure 3**, we compare references to the knowledge products by actors, looking at their relationship with the FAO. Only 12% of the references come from FAO, its subsidiary bodies, partners, and the United Nations system, signifying that FAO is having a significant impact on external actors.

Figure 3. Online references to FAO knowledge products, broken down by relationship with the FAO



Nevertheless, Table 3 reveals that FAO's partners and subsidiary bodies may not be engaging with FAO publications at a significant level, as our random sample of citations did not pick up any references from cgiar.org, oecd.org, unep.org, or planttreaty.org, and because the remaining citations from partner and subsidiary organizations numbered no more than 3 out of a maximum of 31. In other words, partner organisations seemed to cite only a small fraction of FAO knowledge products online.

Table 3. The websites of FAO, its partners, and subsidiary bodies that reference FAO knowledge products.

Category	Website domain	Number of references to FAO knowledge products in our sample
FAO	fao.org	28
FAO Partner	cgiar.org	
FAO Partner	ifad.org	2
FAO Partner	oecd.org	
FAO Partner	unep.org	

Category	Website domain	Number of references to FAO knowledge products in our sample
FAO Partner	wfp.org	1
FAO Partner	worldbank.org	3
FAO Subsidiary body (Article XIV body)	codexalimentarius.net	1
FAO Subsidiary body (Article XIV body)	ippc.int	1
FAO Subsidiary body (Article XIV body)	planttreaty.org	

We also analysed the types of websites hosting documents referencing FAO knowledge products to assess the extent to which document authors distributed their work onto others' websites. As shown in Figure 4, the majority of references were made by authors posting their own content on their own site. Fifteen percent came from content that was disseminated by third parties, or authors who distributed content that they did not co-author, which may be due to the popular online marketing strategy of sharing and disseminating third party content. Another way of describing this trend is that 81% of the citations come from authors who post their own citing documents within their own website or social media, while 19% of the citations come from content that is disseminated by 3rd parties.

Figure 4. References from owned and social media.

Figure 5 shows how actors referenced FAO's knowledge products, broken down by whether they authored the citing content or shared it. An example of what this chart shows is a World Bank report that cites the FAO, which is posted on the World Bank's website, which we call "Owned Dissemination". This also describes a situation where 3rd party organizations also post or cite the World Bank report on their web properties, which we call "3rd party dissemination".

Individuals and online communities were responsible for the majority of original works that cited FAO knowledge products, but were also heavily involved in sharing and disseminating third party sources that further cited FAO knowledge products. This was closely followed by news and media sources. Our research team informally noticed that several organizations posted information that appeared to come from FAO press releases, which may explain the large impact on news media.

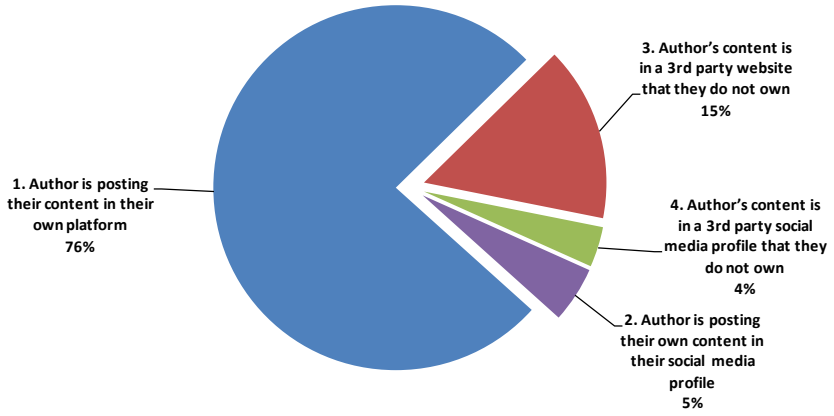
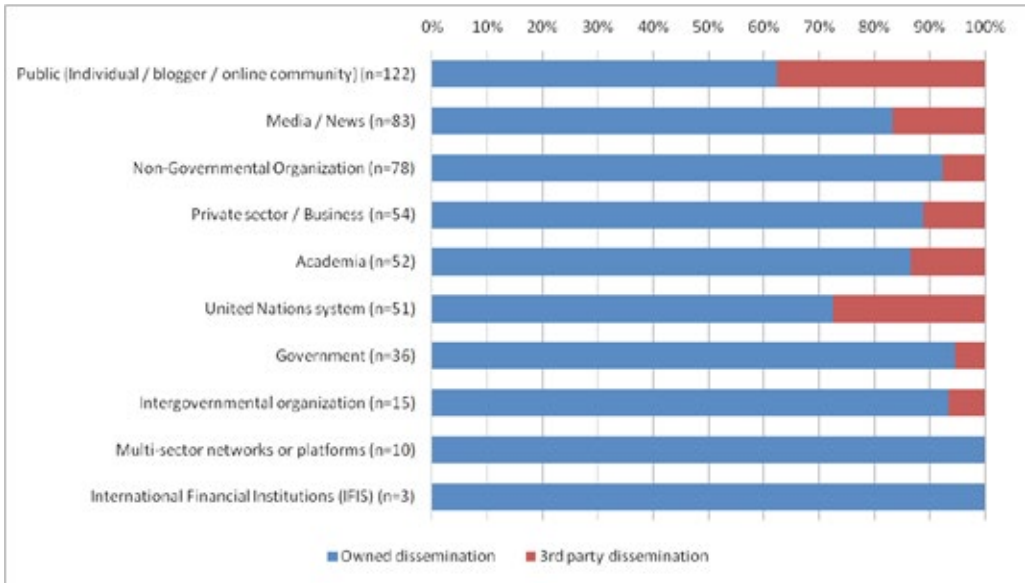


Figure 5. Organizations referencing FAO knowledge products broken down by content source**.**



3.2 Contexts and document types for references to FAO KPs

This section describes how organizations referenced the FAO's knowledge products in terms of the types of pages they used to post this information and the context of the reference within the web page or document.

The most common combinations of page types and reference contexts are as follows.

- **Articles, news stories, press releases, books:** These primarily cited FAO knowledge products within the body of the article (105), while many used formal academic style citations (63), with a smaller number featuring the FAO publication (20) or "teaser" references to FAO knowledge products as sources for additional information (11).

- **Report, Research paper, Academic article:** These primarily relied on formal academic citations (72), with a small number citing FAO knowledge products within the body of the content (14)

- **Blog, Editorial, Opinion:** These publications primarily cited FAO knowledge products within the body of the content (37), with a slightly smaller number citing them in a formal academic style (23).

- **Abstract, Summary:** These primarily mentioned the FAO publications within the context of a summary of that publication, or in some cases, within the body of the text.

- **Policy, Legislation, Governmental strategy, Lobbying position paper:** In most cases, these cited FAO knowledge products in formal academic styles (15), with a smaller number cited within the body (6).

Figure 6. Contexts in which FAO knowledge products were referenced within web pages.

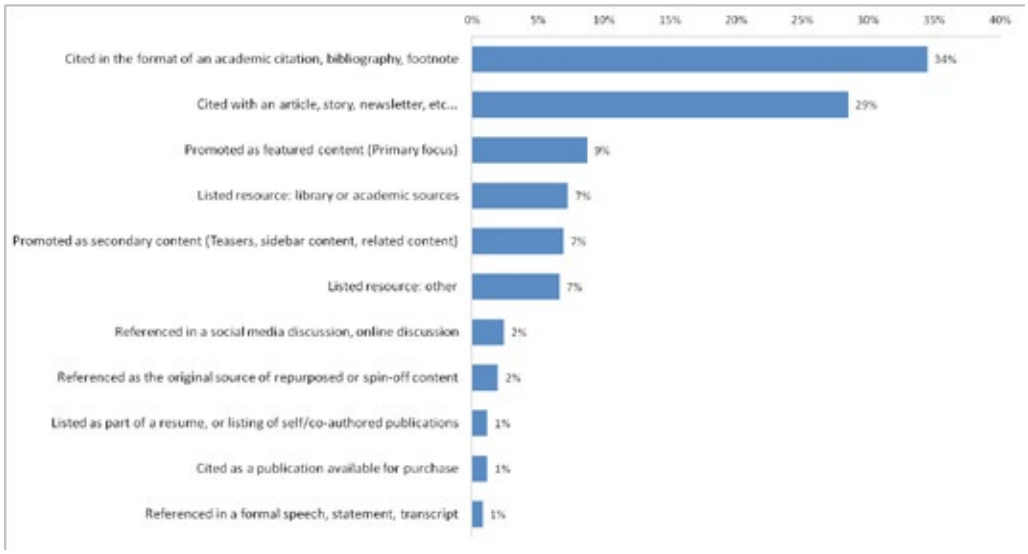
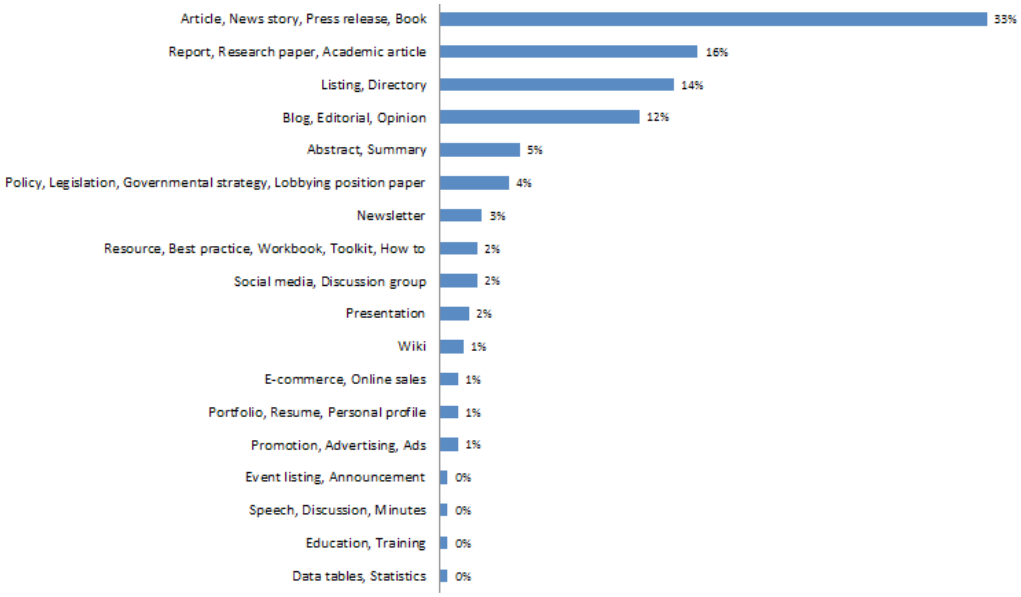


Figure 7. Types of webpages referencing FAO knowledge products.



3.3 Thematic focus areas

Figure 8 summarises the dominant themes of the corpus of 31 FAO publications analysed, each of which was classified with one or two themes. The dominant themes used across the knowledge products are agriculture, food security and pricing.

Figure 8. The main themes of the 31 FAO knowledge products analysed.

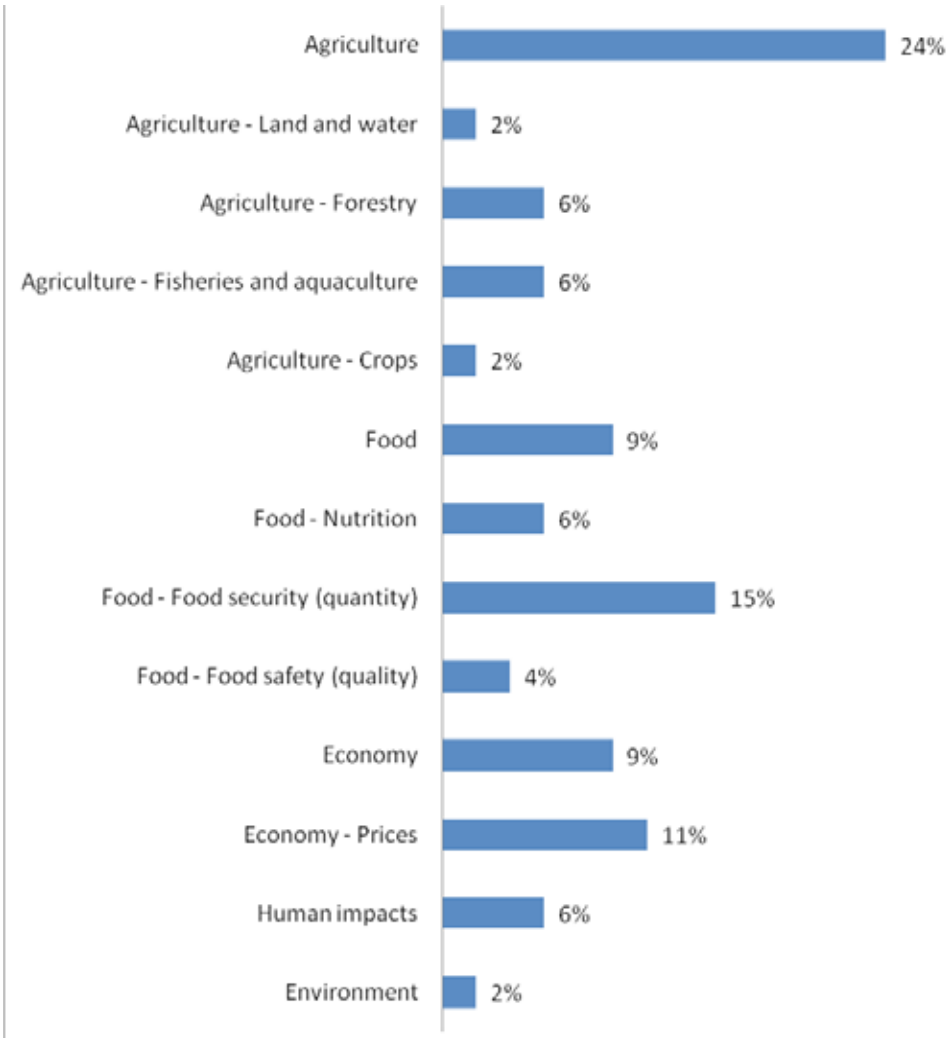
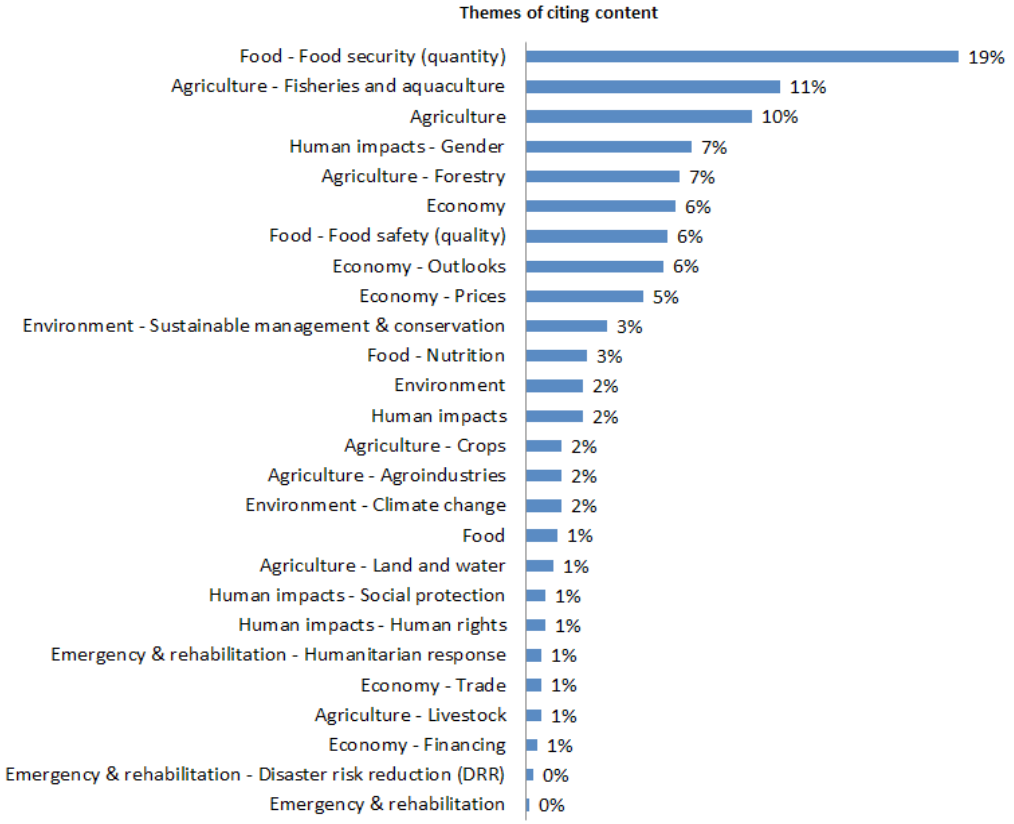


Figure 9 breaks down the web references to the 31 FAO knowledge products by the same set of themes. The most popular topics were food security, fisheries and aquaculture, and agriculture.

A number of additional themes were also identified: gender (7%), human rights in the context of food security (19%), human impacts (2%), social protection (1%), and human rights (other than for food security) (1%). When combined, the economy category and its subcategories appear to be highly relevant (6% Economy, 6% Outlooks, 5% Prices, 1% Trade, 1% Financing), which our research team suspecting a possible relationship between economic trends and food security.

Figure 9. Web references to the 31 FAO knowledge products by the theme of the FAO knowledge products referenced.



3.4 Geographic scope

This section examines the geographic sources of the references. We classified the references according to FAO's geographic divisions (Figure 10). When classifying organizational presence, it is difficult and often impossible to identify the geographic location of some individual and groups of actors, such as bloggers or online networks, and so these have been classified as "Global / International".

Figure 10. The geographic locations of references to FAO knowledge products.

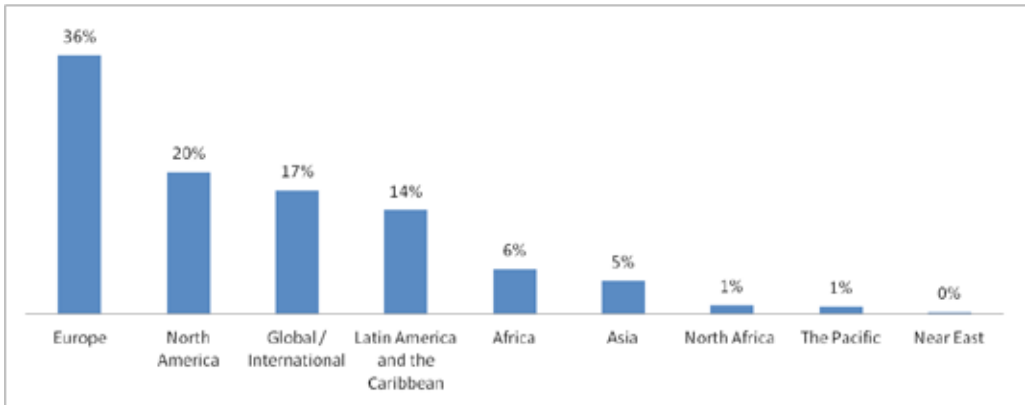
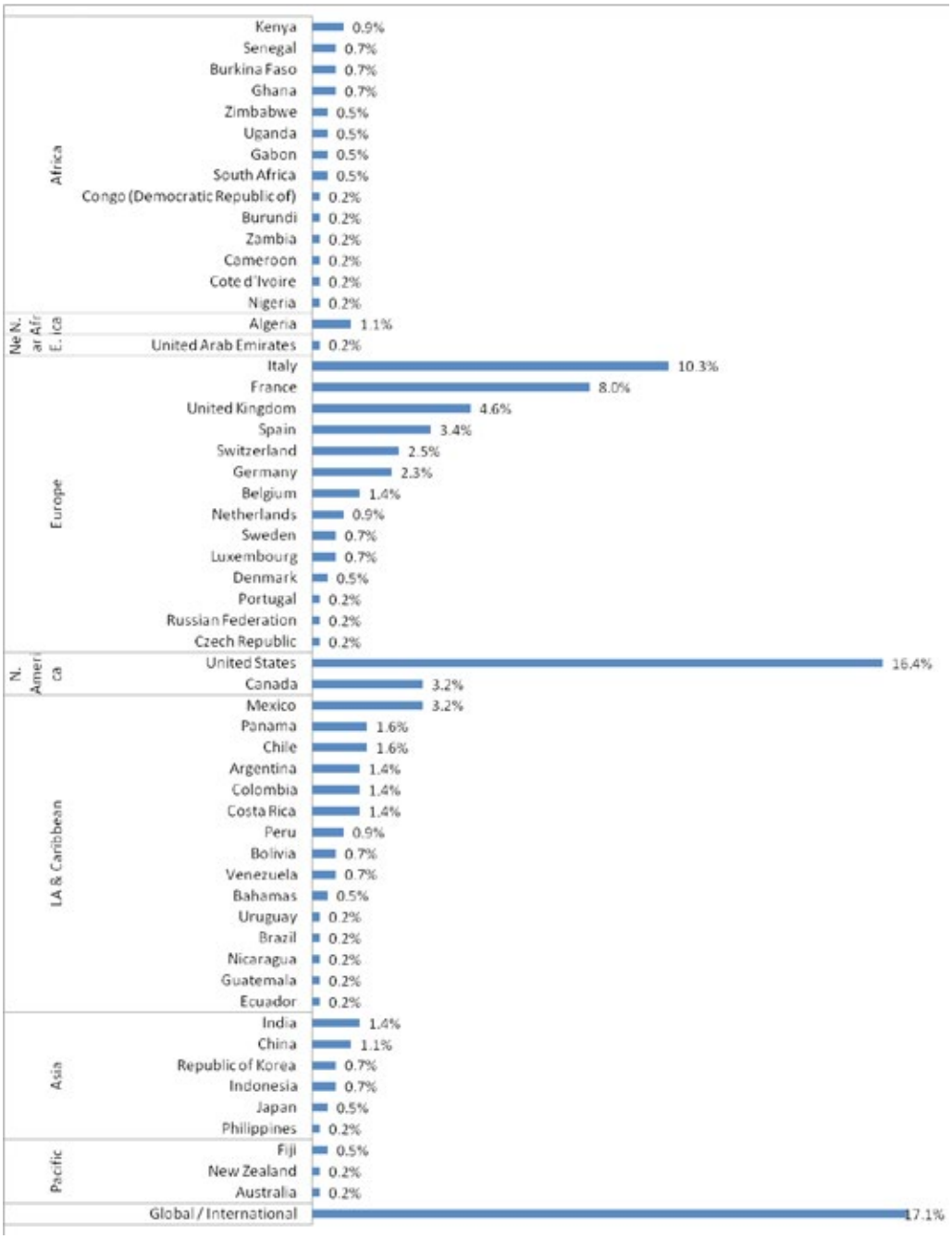


Figure 11. The geographic locations of references to FAO knowledge products by country and FAO region.



3.5 Academic references

Table 4 and Table 5 present citation counts from Google Scholar and Scopus, with grey bars showing benchmarking knowledge products. The names of cited document are available in Annex B (accompanying Excel file).

We searched for formal references to the knowledge products from academic documents in Google Scholar and Scopus. Scopus was chosen in preference to the Web of Science because it has substantially wider and more international coverage of the academic literature and allows searching for references to databases. Google Scholar tends to have wider coverage of academic literature than does Scopus, but not all of its documents are academic – some being grey literature and student work.

Table 4. Academic citations to FAO knowledge products (in bold) and benchmarks (in grey cells) from both Google Scholar and Scopus.

Document or database or collection	Google Scholar cites	Scopus cites
2013 Human Development Report	55	185
Rural Poverty Report 2011 IFAD	2	65
World Development Report 2012 Gender Equality and Development	19	134
Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano 2013	7	6
Rapport sur le développement humain 2013	-	4
Global Hunger Index 2011 IFPRI	-	5
Panorama de la Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional en América Latina y el Caribe	-	5
State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011	11	53
State of Food and Agriculture 2011	4	20
El estado mundial de la agricultura y la alimentación 2010-11	-	-
El estado de la Inseguridad Alimentaria en el Mundo 2011	-	-
La situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture 2011	-	-
L'état de l'insécurité alimentaire dans le monde 2011	-	-
Prospects for Agricultural Markets and Income in the EU 2012-2022	3	6
OECD-FAO Agriculture Outlook 2013-2022	-	13
OECD-FAO Perspectivas Agrícolas	-	-
Perspectives agricoles de l'OCDE et de la FAO	-	-
data.un.org	2,720	585
data.worldbank.org	21,400	4,752
data.fao.org	49	8
FEWSNET	1,260	32
FAO GIEWS	613	208
wfp.org/content/market-monitor	4	1
GIEWS food price data and analysis tool	80	6
Fisheries investing in natural capital	-	5
State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012	5	188
El estado mundial de la pesca y la acuicultura 2012	1	5
La situation mondiale des pêches et de l'aquaculture	-	1
Global Environment Outlook 2012 (GEO5)	5	21
Perspectivas del Medio Ambiente Mundial 2012	-	1
State of the World's Forests 2011	7	97
Situacion de los bosques del mundo 2011	-	2
Situation des Forêts du monde 2011	-	-

Table 5. Academic citations to FAO knowledge products without benchmarks from both Google Scholar and Scopus.

Document or database or collection	Google Scholar cites	Scopus cites
FAOstat	44,400	12,967
FAO GAEZ	877	58
Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition	48	5
Guidelines for Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance	4	7
GIEWS Global Food Price Monitor	37	3
Perspectivas de la agricultura y del desarrollo rural en las Américas: una mirada hacia América Latina y el Caribe 2013	-	1
Improved Global Governance for Hunger Reduction e-learning	-	-
Directrices para el Análisis de Riesgos de Resistencia a los Antimicrobianos transmitida por los Alimentos	-	-
The outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas: A perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2013	5	-
The State of Food and Agriculture in Asia and the Pacific 2014	-	-
Selected Indicators of Food and Agricultural development in the Asia-Pacific Region 2001-2011	5	-
Seguimiento de los precios de los alimentos en el mundo (SMIA)	1	-

4. Contributions to policy and programs

This section examines evidence of the contributions of FAO products to policy and programs, and also uses sentiment assessments to evaluate how each publication is regarded by third party actors.

Table 6 provides an overview of the knowledge products that were identified as clearly making a contribution or possibly making a contribution to programs or policy. Few web documents explicitly mentioned that FAO knowledge products had influenced policy, but this observation should be considered against the background that many policy documents are not online, especially outside of the global West, and that policy documents typically do not systematically cite their sources or influences. Hence these figures are absolute minimums and are likely to be *huge* underestimates of the influence of these documents.

Table 6. Contributions to policy and programs.

	No	Perhaps	Yes
Contribution to policy	577 (91.0%)	44 (6.9%)	13 (2.1%)
Contribution to programs	596 (94.0%)	36 (5.7%)	2 (0.3%)

To provide insight into the potential contributions of each document, Table 7 provides an overview of the contribution of each knowledge product[76] to programs or policy, along with sentiment scores. This table includes an impact index, which provides a "contribution" score[77], where contributions to policy are scored as 1 out of the total assessed, while contributions to programs are scored at .5 out of the total assessed. It also includes a "positivity" score that shows how often a given publication received favorable sentiment judgements as a percentage of all judgements with a clear positive or negative tone.

76 The State of Food and Agriculture in Asia and the Pacific 2014 (B1-E) and the Selected Indicators of Food and Agricultural development in the Asia-Pacific Region 2001-2011 (B2-E) did not register any online contribution.

77 Contribution index: No = N | Perhaps = P | Yes = Y | Sentiment index: No Tone Expressed / Neutral = NT | Explicitly Negative = (-) | Mixed (positive & negative) = (-/+) | Explicitly Positive = (+)

Table 7. Contributions to policy and programs mentioned online for FAO knowledge products.

		Policy			Programs			Citation tone				Impact index	
KP title	code	N	P	Y	N	P	Y	NT	(-)	(-/+)	(+)	Contributions	Positivity
The outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas "A perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2013"	A1-E	6			6			4		1	1	0	100%
Perspectivas de la agricultura y del desarrollo rural en las Américas "una mirada hacia América Latina y el Caribe 2013"	A1-S	19	1		20			8	5	3	2	1	29%
Panorama de la Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional en América Latina y el Caribe	A2-S	19	1		20			4	4	10		1	0%
FAOstat	D1	24		1	24	1		21		1	2	3	100%
GAEZ "FAO"	D2	19	2		19	2		15		3	3	5	100%
GIEWS "FAO"	D3	19	1		17	3		10		2	1	5	100%
GIEWS food price data and analysis tool	D4	18	2		16	4		16			1	8	100%
data.fao.org	D5	20			20			10		2	6	0	100%
State of Food and Agriculture 2011	F1-E	24			24			10		5	9	0	100%
La situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture 2011	F1-F	18	8		17	9		14		7	5	16	100%
El estado mundial de la agricultura y la alimentación 2010-11	F1-S	21	3	1	23	2		8		13	2	7	100%
State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011	F2-E	30			30			3		27		0	-
L'état de l'insécurité alimentaire dans le monde 2011	F2-F	27	2	1	23	5	2	20		8	1	11	100%
El estado de la Inseguridad Alimentaria en el Mundo 2011	F2-S	28	1	1	28	2		7	1	17	5	4	83%
State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012	F3-E	25			25			11		9	5	0	100%
La situation mondiale des pêches et de l'aquaculture	F3-F	25			24	1		9		16		1	-
El estado mundial de la pesca y la acuicultura 2012	F3-S	20	5		24	1		8	2	6	8	6	80%
State of the World's Forests 2011	F4-E	25			25			12		8	5	0	100%
Situation des Forêts du monde 2011	F4-F	26			25	1		18		7	1	1	100%
Situacion de los bosques del mundo 2011	F4-S	24	1		25			5	10	3	7	1	41%
OECD-FAO Agriculture Outlook 2013-2022	F5-E	20			20			18		1	1	0	100%
Perspectives agricoles de l'OCDE et de la FAO	F5-F	25			23	2		13		12		2	-
OECD-FAO Perspectivas Agrícolas	F5-S	16	4		20			13		3	3	5	100%
Improved Global Governance for Hunger Reduction e-learning	L1-E	20			20			9			10	0	100%
Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition	N1-E	13	6	1	18	2		8			8	13	100%
Guidelines for Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance	O6-E	15	6	4	25			23		1	1	14	100%
Directrices para el Análisis de Riesgos de Resistencia a los Antimicrobianos transmitida por los Alimentos	O6-S	10	1	4	14	1		13			1	17	100%
Global Food Price Monitor "GIEWS"	O7-E	20			20			17		1	2	0	100%
Seguimiento de los precios de los alimentos en el mundo "SMIA"	O7-S	1			1							0	

5. Benchmarking

Figure 12. FAO knowledge products compared against benchmark products in terms of the (audited) total number of websites referencing them (groups 1 of 2 – benchmarks are pink).

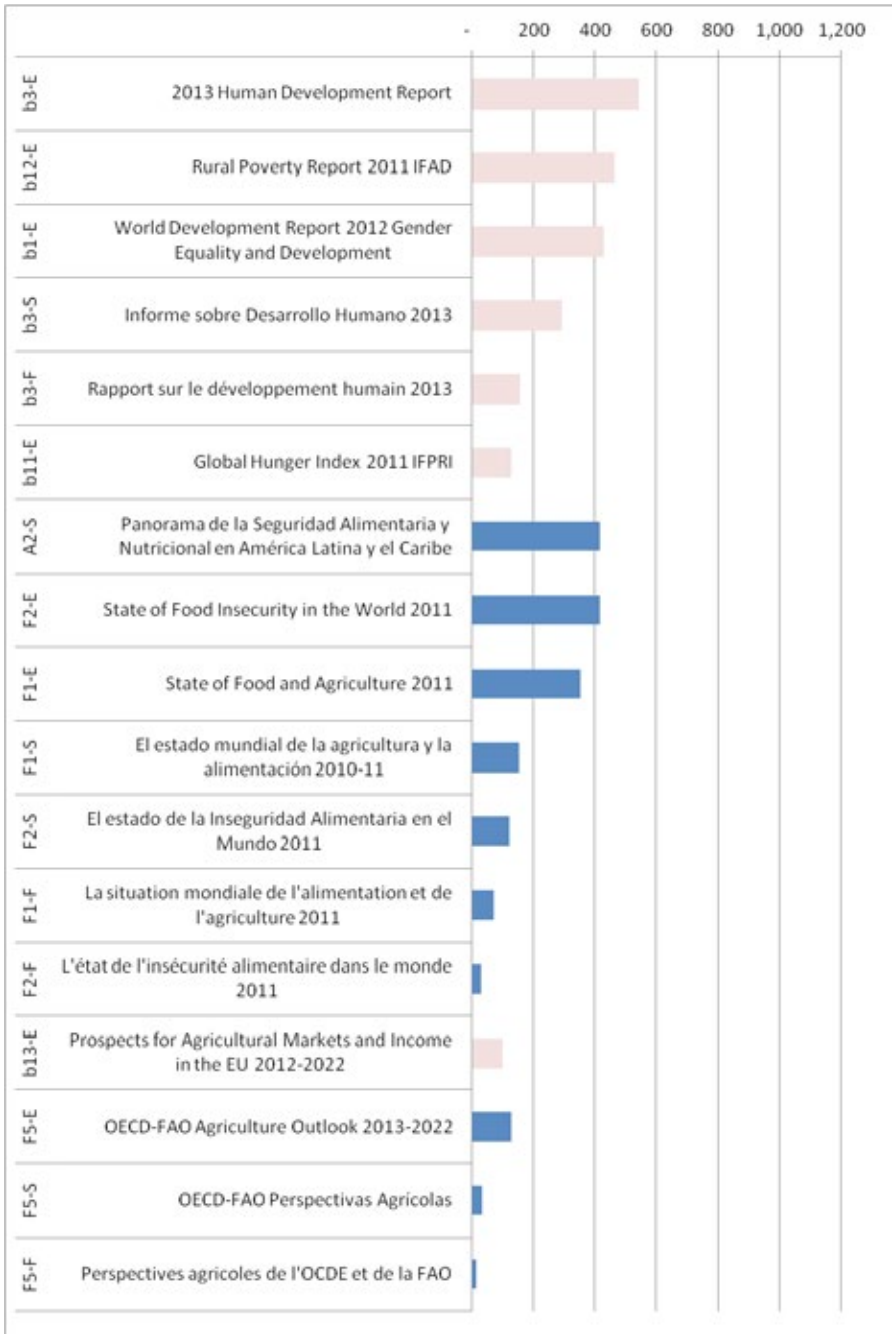
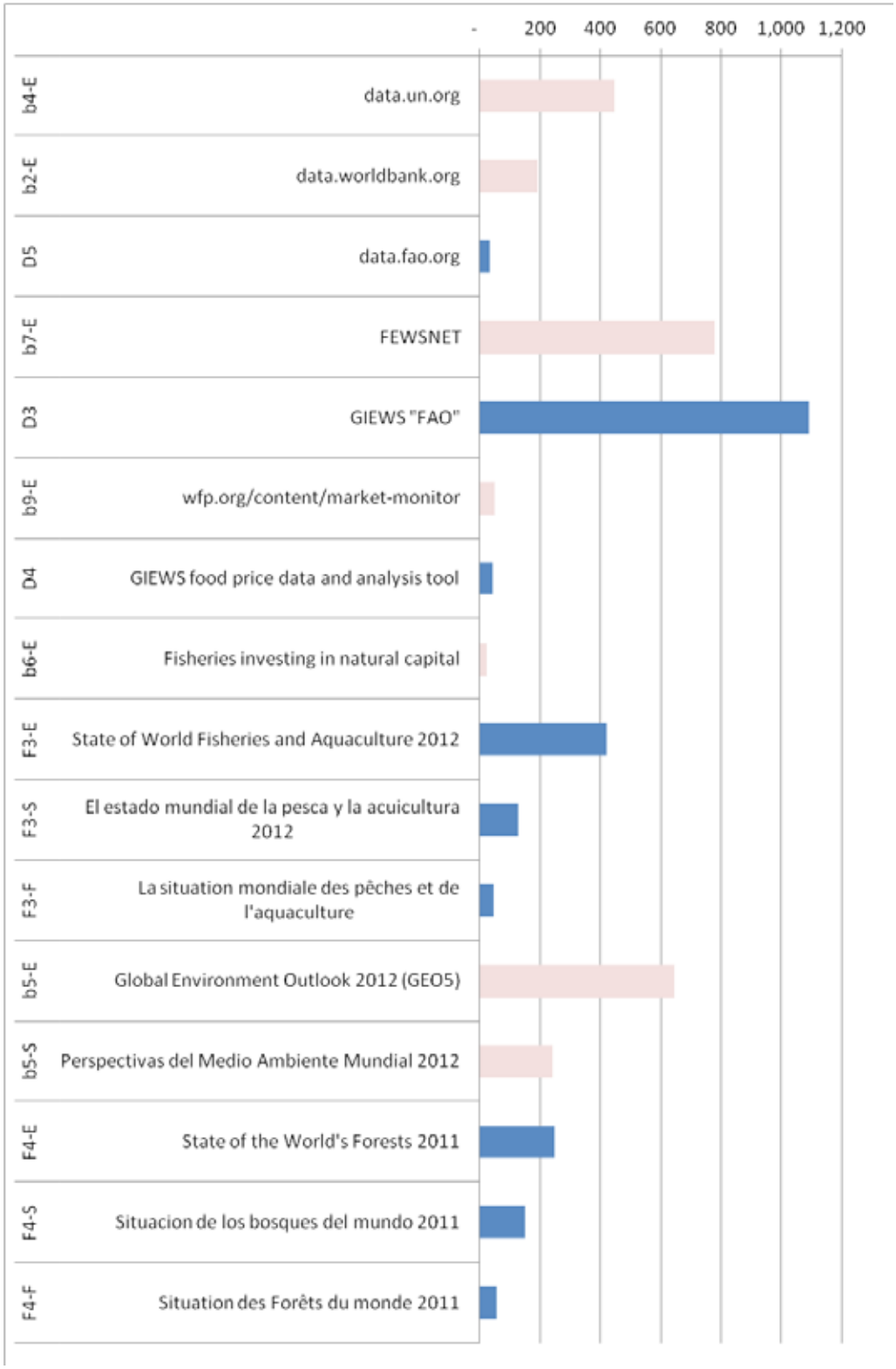


Figure 13. FAO websites compared against benchmark websites in terms of the (audited) total number of websites referencing them (groups of 2 - benchmarks are pink).



6. In-depth analysis

To ensure that each knowledge product is presented within a meaningful context, the in-depth analysis is reported in multiple data tables with different metrics and insights about each knowledge product.

6.1 High-impact knowledge products

Table 8 presents a list of knowledge products that have been identified as potentially high-impact. This short list was produced by identifying knowledge products with a significant number of site references (300 or more), positive third party endorsements, or evidence of potential/actual contributions to programs and policy.

Table 8. FAO knowledge products classified as high-impact.

KP title	code
Panorama de la Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional en América Latina y el Caribe	A2-S
FAOstat	D1
GAEZ "FAO"	D2
GIEWS "FAO"	D3
GIEWS food price data and analysis tool	D4
La situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture 2011	F1-F
State of Food and Agriculture 2011	F1-E
El estado mundial de la agricultura y la alimentación 2010-11	F1-S
State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011	F2-E
L'état de l'insécurité alimentaire dans le monde 2011	F2-F
El estado de la Inseguridad Alimentaria en el Mundo 2011	F2-S
State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012	F3-E
El estado mundial de la pesca y la acuicultura 2012	F3-S
Situacion de los bosques del mundo 2011	F4-S
OECD-FAO Perspectivas Agrícolas	F5-S
Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition	N1-E
Guidelines for Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance	O6-E
Directrices para el Análisis de Riesgos de Resistencia a los Antimicrobianos transmitida por los Alimentos	O6-S

6.2 Quantitative insights

To provide insight into each knowledge product, a series of tables have been produced that can be printed out and compared with each other, so that each publication may be compared.

These tables include:

Table 7

Section 8.1

See the attached excel file for a list of remaining tables (NOTE: for the next draft, we need to discuss how to present/structure the data, given the extremely large volume of data)

6.3 Researcher insights

To provide greater insight into each publication, the research team made notes about any apparent trends or issues that were believed to be of value to the greater evaluation. The following research logs may be used to provide greater insight into each publication.

7. Online communities

In order to provide a broad perspective on FAO's online communities, we created network maps of FAO and partner agencies. The websites were gathered starting from a list of websites referencing the main website for each network. In each map, a node represents a website. The sizes of the nodes reflect the level of influence of the websites within this network, in terms of the number of hyperlinks to them.

When interpreting the network maps, line width indicates the number of other websites that link to both. A wider line means that more websites link to both, while a narrower line indicates fewer links. For example, the relatively thick line between cgar.org and fao.org reflects the fact that many sites within this network simultaneously link to both fao.org and cgar.org. In contrast the lack of a line between worldwatch.org and bbc.co.uk indicates that no organisations within this network link to both sites. To simplify the network, generic, spam and technical websites were removed[78].

For example, the following steps produced the FAO network:

1. We ran the three searches below in Bing for non-FAO websites mentioning FAO.

- "fao.org" -site:fao.org
- "UN FAO" -site:fao.org
- UNFAO -site:fao.org

2. We combined the results of the above three searches and removed duplicates, producing a list of 2151 different URLs, (from 1,533 different websites).
3. We downloaded the 2151 URLs and extracted the hyperlinks from the 2151 downloaded webpages.
4. We identified the 50 websites (based on domain names) that were most commonly linked to by the 2151 downloaded webpages.
5. We removed common spam, statistics and generic sites (e.g., Google).
6. For each remaining pair of sites A and B in the diagram, we counted up how many different websites from the 2151 URLs linked to both A and B – this gives the width of the line in the diagram between A and B.
7. The diagram was drawn with node sizes proportional to the total number of websites (from the 2151 URLs) linking to the node.
8. The nodes were positioned in the diagram so that nodes tended to be close to other nodes when there is a line between them (using a mathematical technique for this, the Fruchterman Reingold algorithm).
9. Common websites were coloured in to make them easier to identify within and between diagrams.
10. Lines were drawn on the diagrams manually to indicate important groupings of sites.

78 Specific sites removed: pandastats.net, ipaddress.com, statcounter.com, extremetracking.com, siteadvisor.com, quantcast.com, domaintools.com, whois, browsehappy.com, mywot.com, tinyurl.com, validator.w3.org, geek-tools.org, whatisonip.com, histats.com, addthis.com, ipaddressnetwork.com, avgthreatlabs.com, error, alexa.com, siteanalytics, siteexplorer, creativecommons.org, addtoany.com, templatix.com, jigsaw.w3.org, bit.ly, feedburner, preventionweb, printfriendly, omniture, eepurl. Big sites removed: google, bing, yahoo, facebook, youtube, twitter, linkedin, digg, del.icio.us, archive.org, technorati.com, flickr.com, doi.org, reddit, stumbleupon, myspace, pinterest, instagram, tumblr, dmoz, blogger, wordpress, disqus, amazon, apple, delicious, vimeo

shows the FAO web community, which comprises three communities: (1) United nations agencies, (2) US Governmental agencies, and (3) media.

Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green in all web communities). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing FAO links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to FAO).

Figure 12. Web community of the FAO.

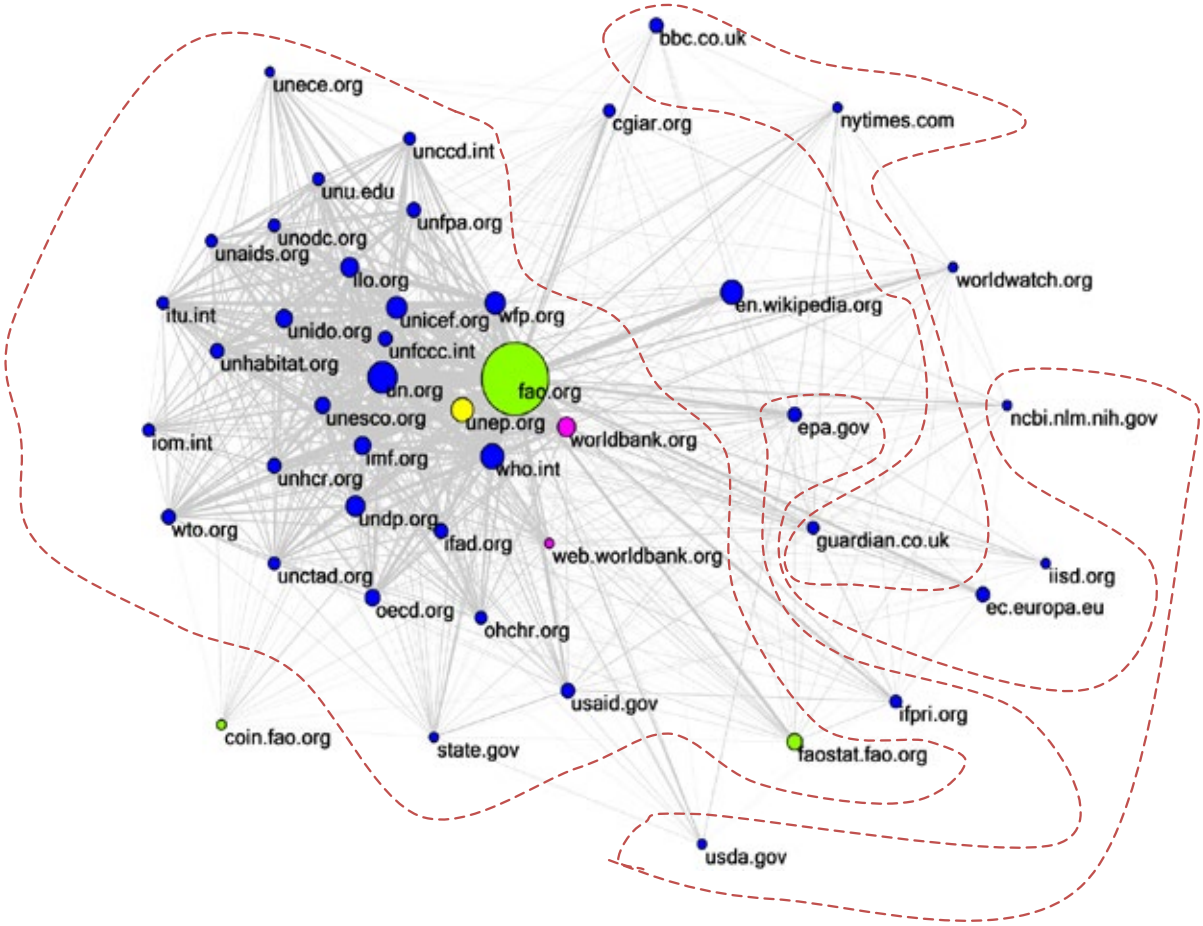


Figure 13 shows the FAO GIEWS web community, which also comprises the same three communities as the primary FAO website: (1) United nations agencies, (2) US Governmental agencies, and (3) media.

Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green in all web communities). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing GIEWS links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to GIEWS).

Figure 13. Web community of FAO GIEWS.

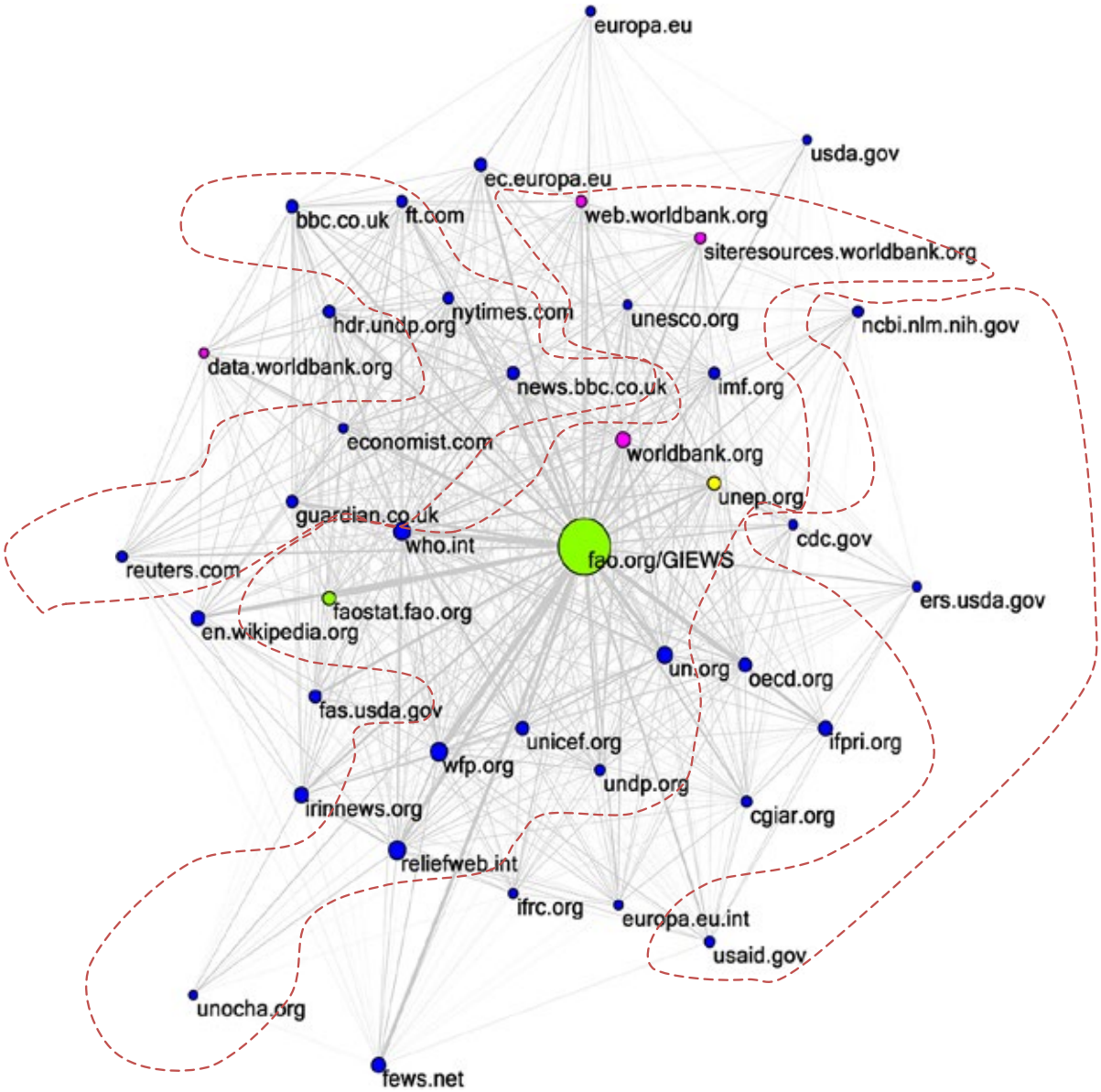


Figure 16 shows the UNEP web community, which primarily comprises UN agencies, with a small cluster of sub-domains from the IISD development portal.

Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green in all web communities). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing UNEP links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to UNEP).

Figure 14. Web community of the UNEP.

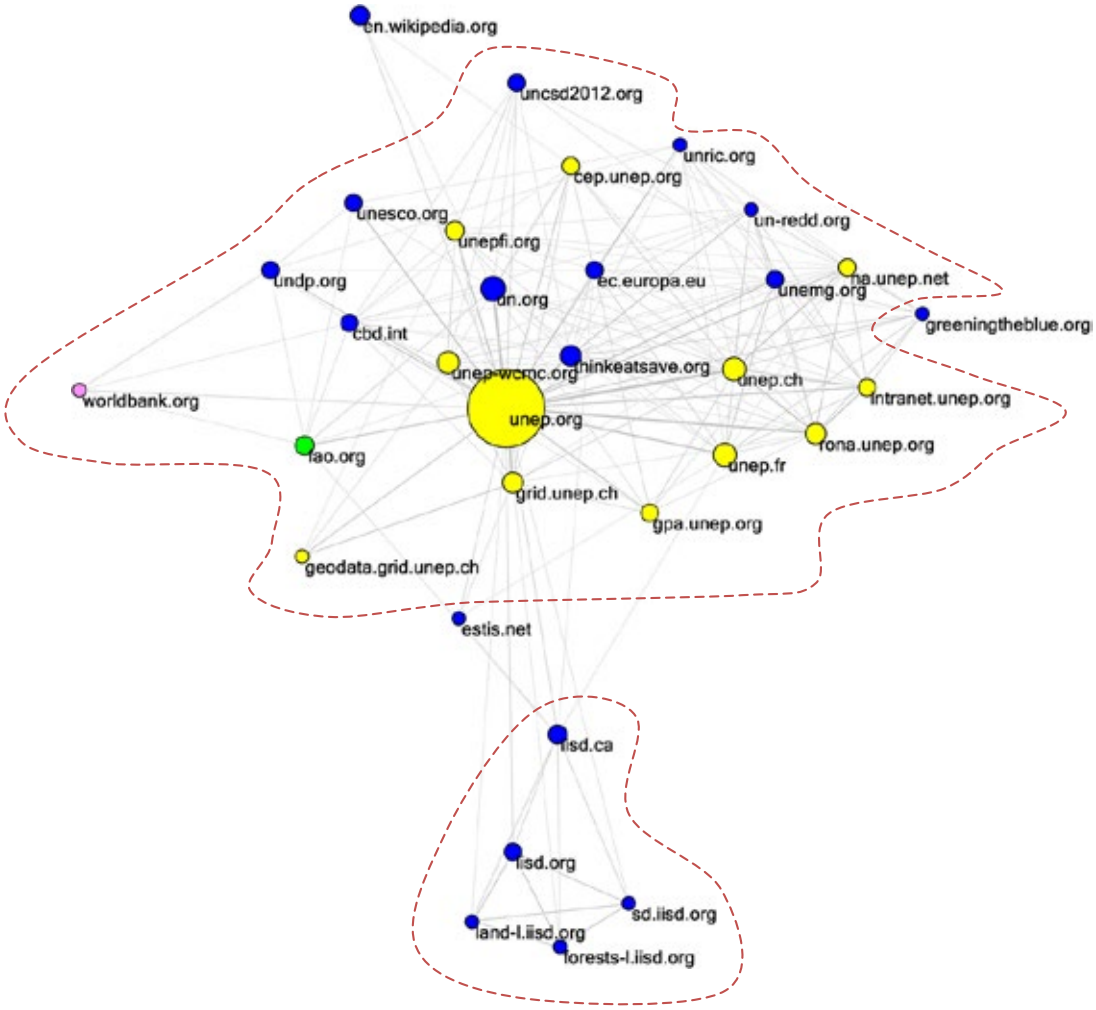
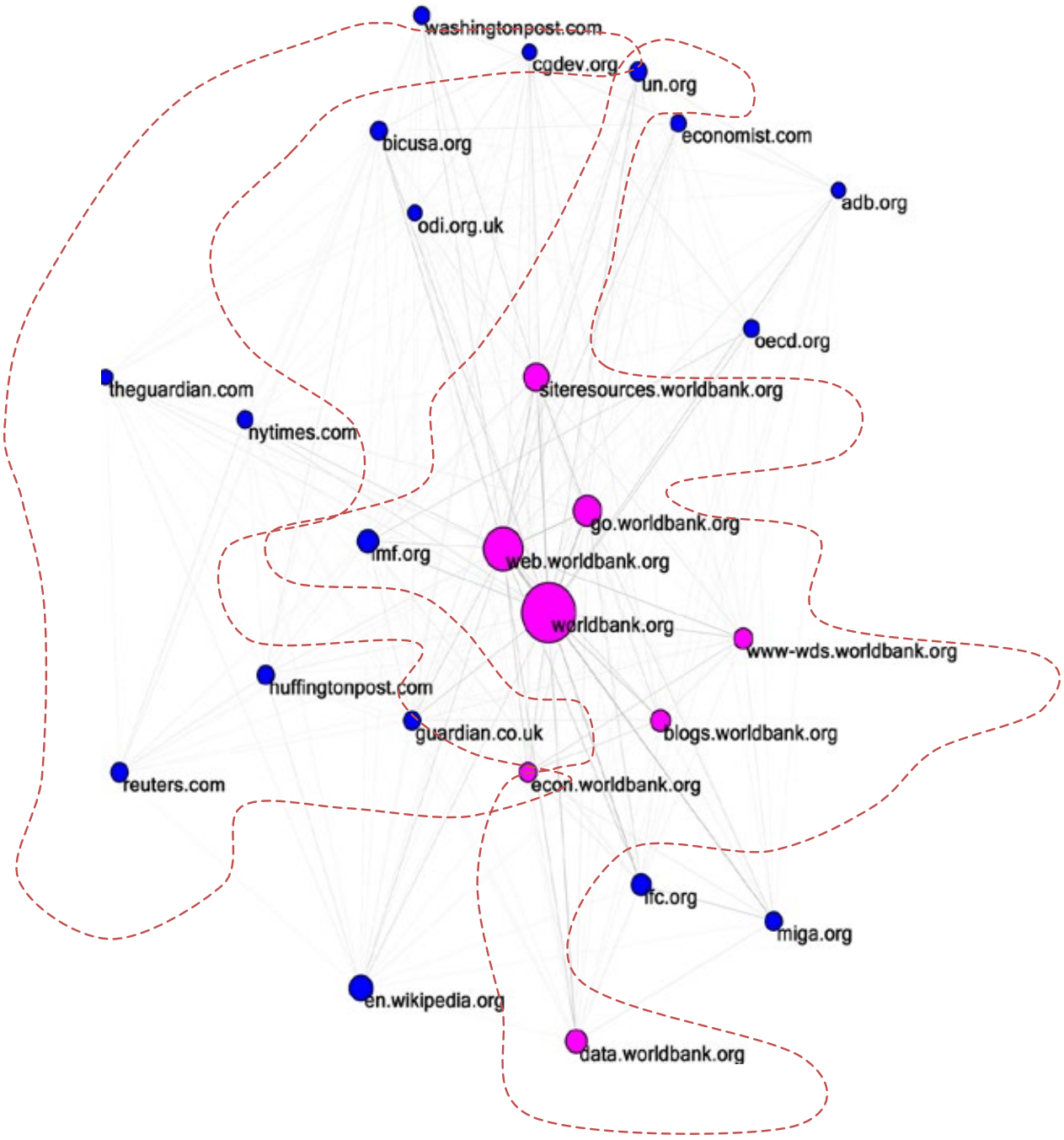


Figure 15 shows the World Bank web community, which comprises two communities: (1) Financial United Nations agencies and (2) media.

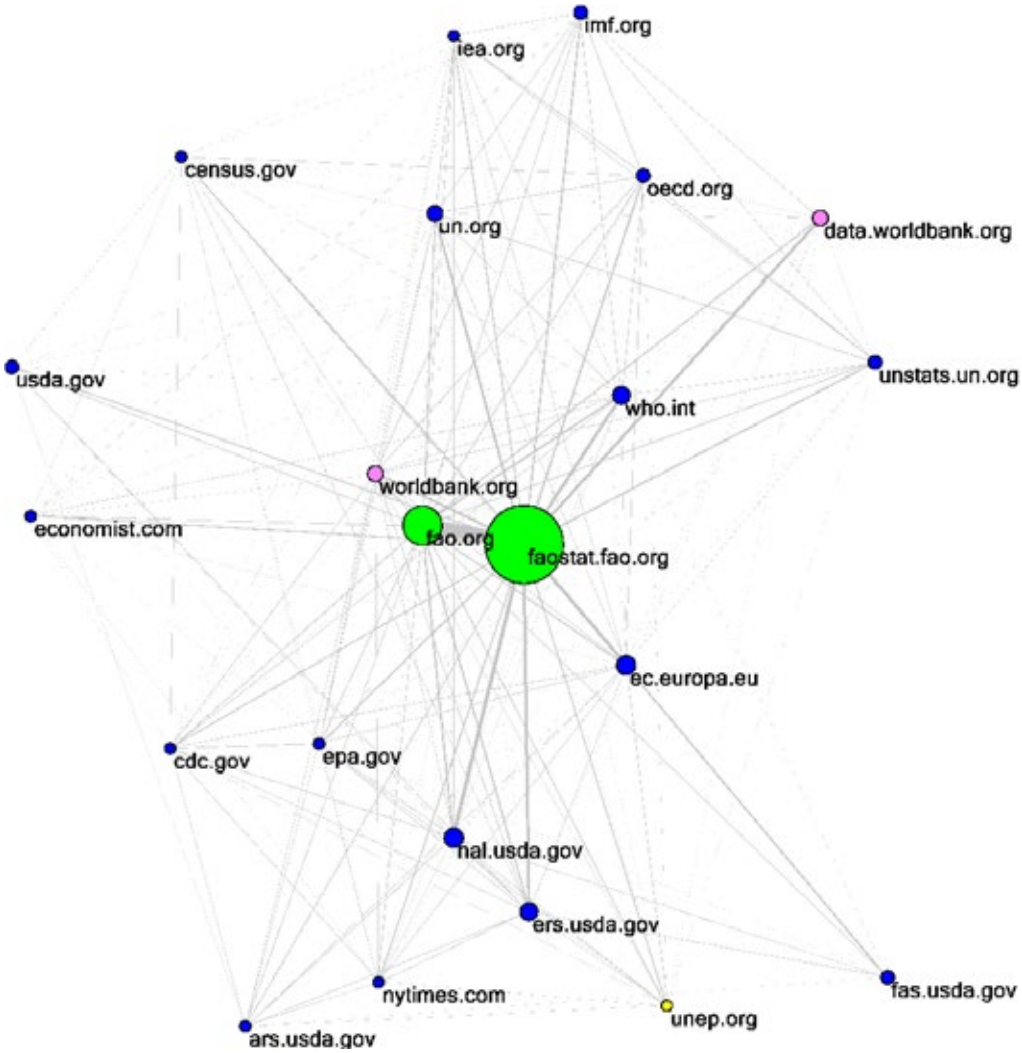
Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green in all web communities). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing the World Bank links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to the World Bank).

Figure 15. Web community of the World Bank.



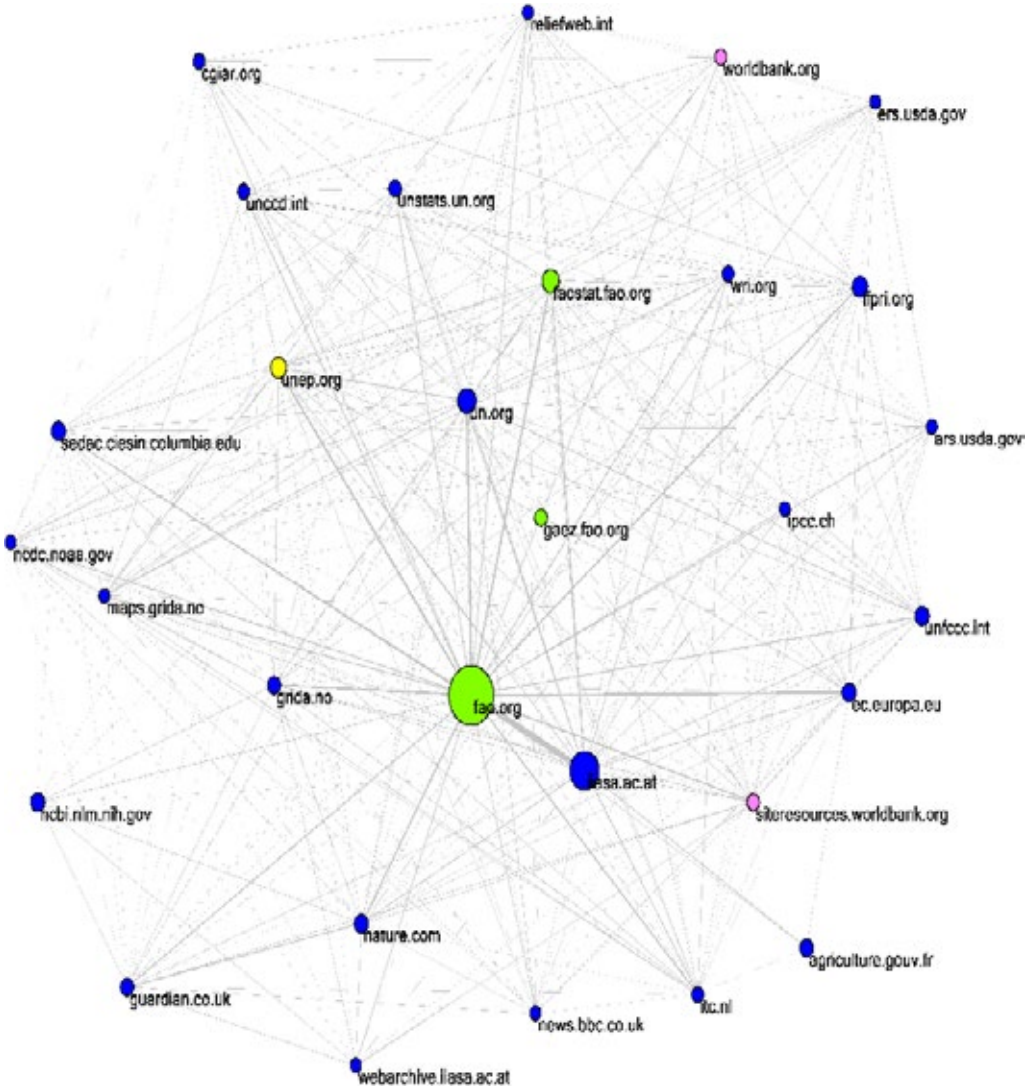
Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green in all web communities). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing FAO stat links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to FAO stat).

Figure 16. Web community of FAO Stat.



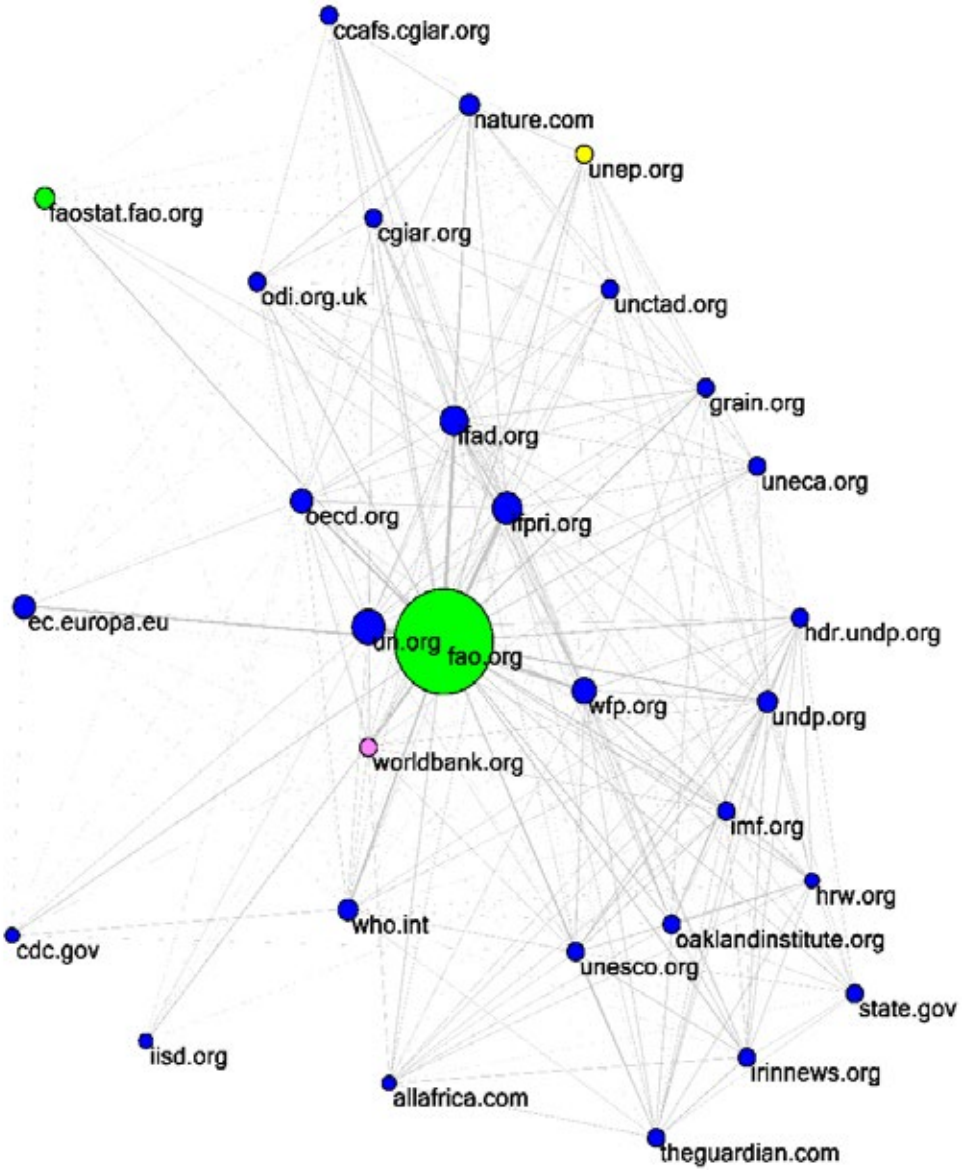
Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green in all web communities). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing GAEZ links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to GAEZ).

Figure 17. Web community of GAEZ.



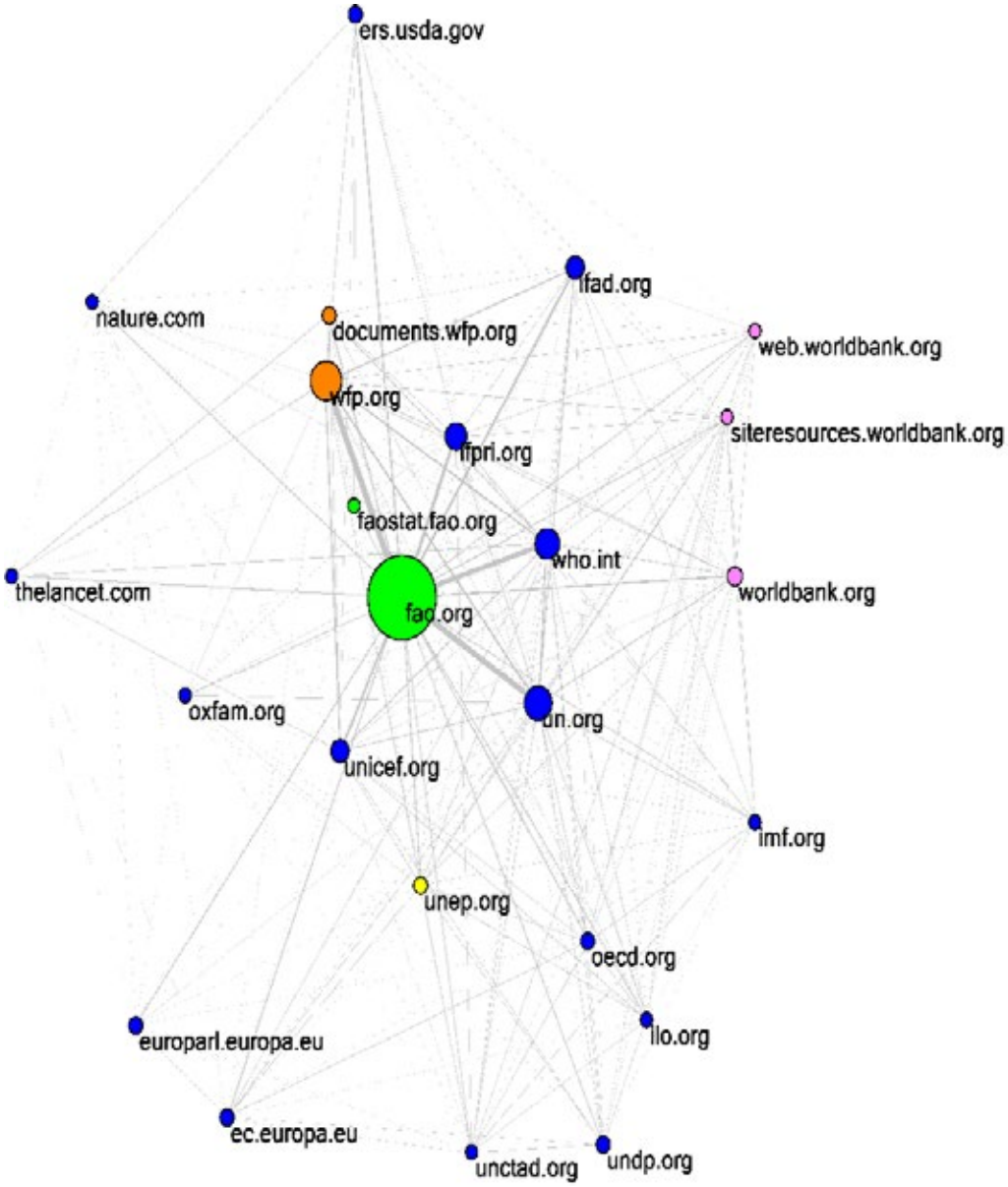
Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green in all web communities). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing SOFA links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to SOFA).

Figure 18. Web community of SOFA.



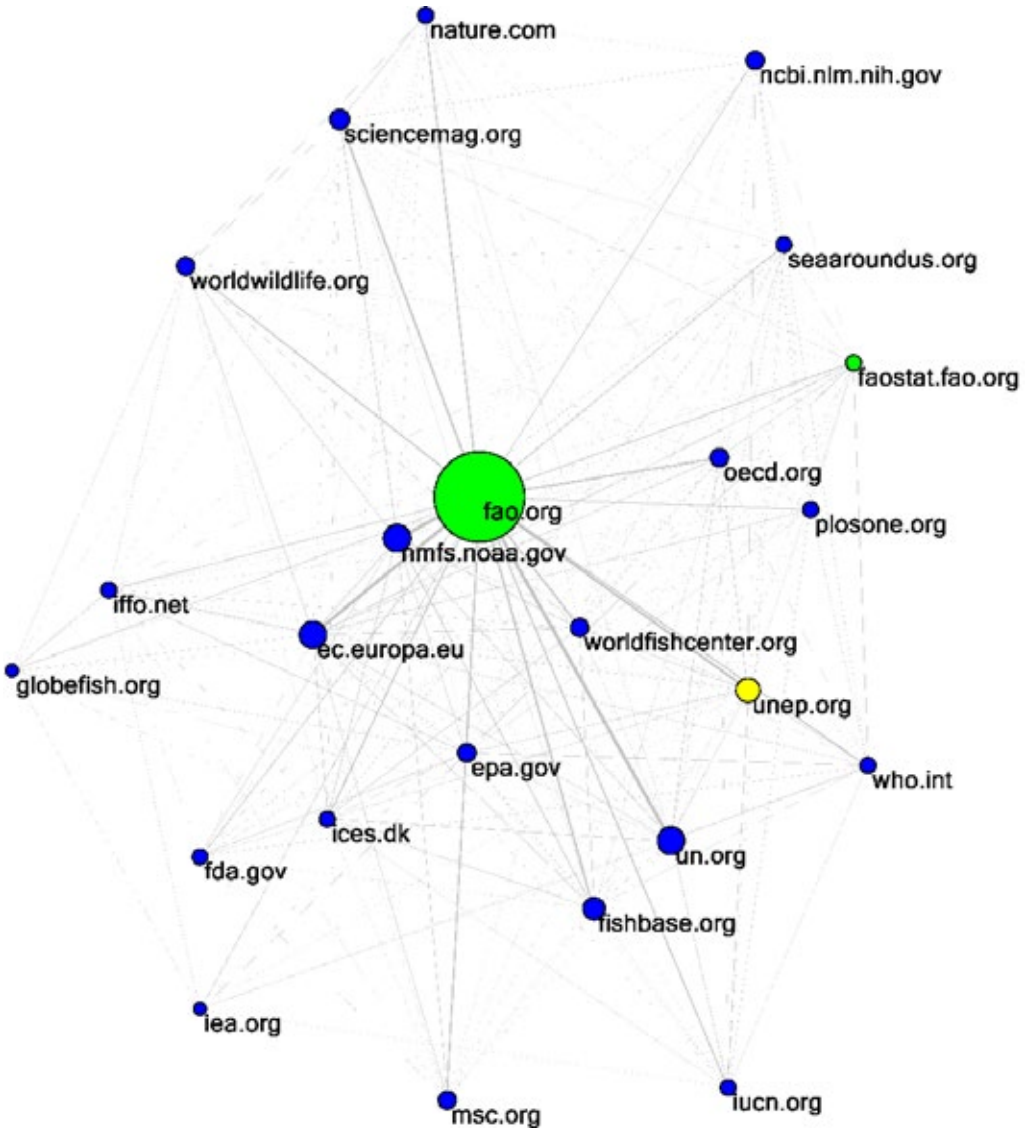
Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green in all web communities). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing SOFI links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to SOFI).

Figure 19. Web community of SOFI.



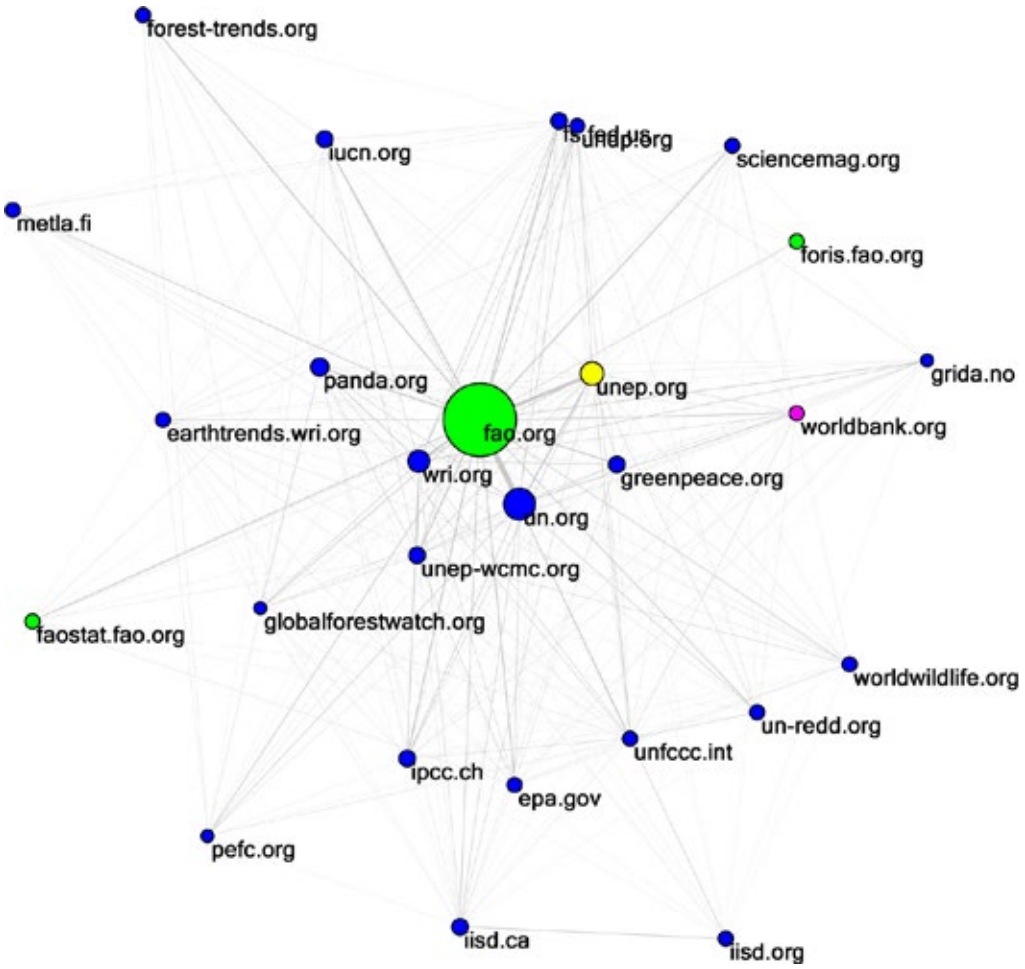
Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green in all web communities). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing SOFIA links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to SOFIA).

Figure 20. Web community of SOFIA.



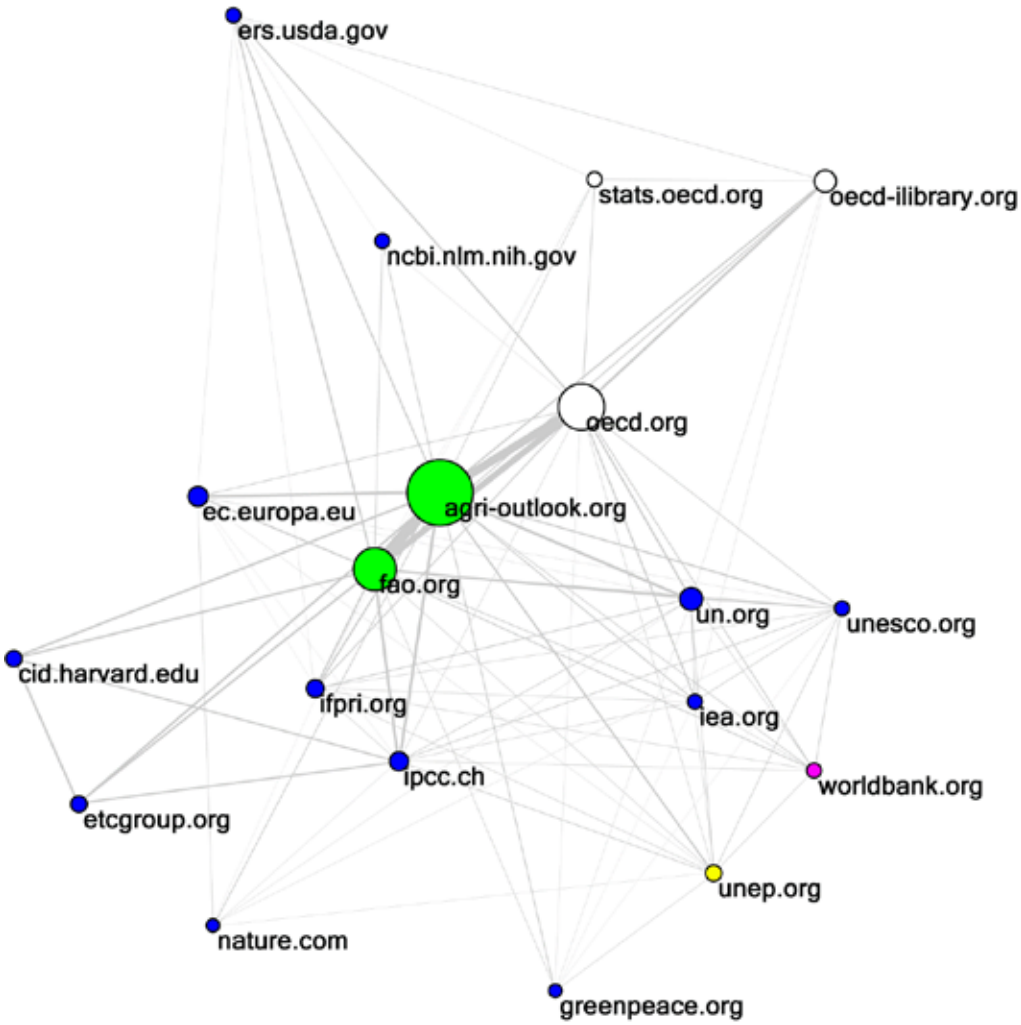
Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green in all web communities). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing SOFO links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to SOFO).

Figure 21. Web community of SOFO.



Colours other than blue indicate different parts of a single organisation that appear in more than one web community figure (e.g., all FAO websites are light green in all web communities). Organisations that are close together tend to be linked to by the same websites. A line between two websites A and B indicates that at least one organisation citing OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook links to both A and B (so A and B have something in common, relative to OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook).

8. Figure 22. Web community of OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook.Tables and data



8 Tables and data

8.1 Knowledge products and reference estimates

Type	KP Title	Code	Language	Year	Themes	Authors	Est. Links	Est. Websites	Est. Reposts
Publication	The outlook for Agriculture and Rural Development in the Americas "A perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2013"	A1-E	English	2013	Agriculture Economy	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)	18	10	1
Publication	Perspectivas de la agricultura y del desarrollo rural en las Américas "una mirada hacia América Latina y el Caribe 2013"	A1-S	Spanish	2013	Agriculture Economy	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)	73	49	-
Publication	Panorama de la Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional en América Latina y el Caribe	A2-S	Spanish	2013	Food - Food security (quantity) Food - Nutrition	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	932	418	-
Publication	The State of Food and Agriculture in Asia and the Pacific 2014	B1-E	English	2014	Agriculture Food	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	5	1	-
Publication	Selected Indicators of Food and Agricultural development in the Asia-Pacific Region 2001-2011	B2-E	English	2011	Agriculture Agriculture - Crops	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	2	1	-
Publication	State of Food and Agriculture 2011	F1-E	English	2011	Agriculture Human impacts	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	786	353	-
Publication	La situation mondiale de l'alimentation et de l'agriculture 2011	F1-F	French	2011	Agriculture Human impacts	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	110	71	3
Publication	El estado mundial de la agricultura y la alimentación 2010-11	F1-S	Spanish	2011	Agriculture Human impacts	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	279	153	-

Type	KP Title	Code	Language	Year	Themes	Authors	Est. Links	Est. Websites	Est. Reposts
Publication	State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011	F2-E	English	2011	Food - Food security (quantity) Economy - Prices	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) World Food Programme (WFP) International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	849	415	-
Publication	L'état de l'insécurité alimentaire dans le monde 2011	F2-F	French	2011	Food - Food security (quantity) Economy - Prices	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) World Food Programme (WFP) International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	41	31	5
Publication	El estado de la Inseguridad Alimentaria en el Mundo 2011	F2-S	Spanish	2011	Food - Food security (quantity) Economy - Prices	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) World Food Programme (WFP) International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	256	124	-
Publication	State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2012	F3-E	English	2012	Agriculture - Fisheries and aquaculture	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	889	421	-
Publication	La situation mondiale des pêches et de l'aquaculture	F3-F	French	2012	Agriculture - Fisheries and aquaculture	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	62	46	4
Publication	El estado mundial de la pesca y la acuicultura 2012	F3-S	Spanish	2012	Agriculture - Fisheries and aquaculture	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	252	129	-
Publication	State of the World's Forests 2011	F4-E	English	2011	Agriculture - Forestry	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	564	249	-
Publication	Situation des Forêts du monde 2011	F4-F	French	2011	Agriculture - Forestry	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	83	55	4

Type	KP Title	Code	Language	Year	Themes	Authors	Est. Links	Est. Websites	Est. Reposts
Publication	Situacion de los bosques del mundo 2011	F4-S	Spanish	2011	Agriculture - Forestry	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	341	150	-
Publication	OECD-FAO Agriculture Outlook 2013-2022	F5-E	English	2013	Economy Agriculture	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	299	127	13
Publication	Perspectives agricoles de l'OCDE et de la FAO	F5-F	French		Economy Agriculture	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	20	14	2
Publication	OECD-FAO Perspectivas Agrícolas	F5-S	Spanish		Economy Agriculture	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	60	33	7
Publication	Guidelines for Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance	O6-E	English		Food - Food safety (quality)	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) World Health Organization (WHO)	204	82	-
Publication	Directrices para el Análisis de Riesgos de Resistencia a los Antimicrobianos transmitida por los Alimentos	O6-S	Spanish	2011	Food - Food safety (quality)	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) World Health Organization (WHO)	13	11	1
Publication	Global Food Price Monitor "GIEWS"	O7-E	English		Food Economy - Prices	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) [FAO]	155	66	7
Publication	Seguimiento de los precios de los alimentos en el mundo "SMIA"	O7-S	Spanish		Food Economy - Prices	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) [FAO]	3	1	2
Database	FAOstat	D1	English		Agriculture Food	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	3,612	1,377	-

Type	KP Title	Code	Language	Year	Themes	Authors	Est. Links	Est. Websites	Est. Reposts
Database	GAEZ "FAO"	D2	English		Environment Agriculture - Land and water	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)	756	378	-
Database	GIEWS "FAO"	D3	English		Food - Food security (quantity) Agriculture	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) [FAO]	2,710	1,091	-
Database	GIEWS food price data and analysis tool	D4	English		Food - Food security (quantity) Economy - Prices	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) [FAO]	98	41	-
Database	data.fao.org	D5	English		Agriculture Food	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	72	34	-
Learning Resource	Improved Global Governance for Hunger Reduction e-learning	L1-E	English		Food - Food security (quantity) Food - Nutrition	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	64	28	-
Community of Practice	Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition	N1-E	English		Food - Food security (quantity) Food - Nutrition	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	1,210	366	-

8.2 Benchmarking sites

Type	KP Title	Code	Language	Year	Themes	Authors	Est. Links	Est. Websites	Est. Reposts
Publication	Global Hunger Index 2011 IFPRI	b11-E	English	2011	Food security (quantity)Economy - Prices	International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) Concern Worldwide Welthungerhilfe	265	126	-
Publication	Rural Poverty Report 2011 IFAD	b12-E	English	2011	Food - Food security (quantity) Economy - Prices	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	1,104	461	-
Publication	Prospects for Agricultural Markets and Income in the EU 2012-2022	b13-E	English	2012	Foodsecurity (quantity) Economy - Prices	European Commission	161	97	-
Publication	World Development Report 2012 Gender Equality and Development	b1-E	English	2012	Human impacts - Gender	The World Bank	938	427	-
Publication	2013 Human Development Report	b3-E	English	2013	Human impacts	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	1,157	540	72
Publication	Rapport sur le développement humain 2013	b3-F	French	2013	Human impacts	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	293	155	-
Publication	Informe sobre Desarrollo Humano 2013	b3-S	Spanish	2013	Human impacts	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	688	291	-
Publication	Global Environment Outlook 2012 (GEO5)	b5-E	English	2012	Environment	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	1,474	641	-
Publication	Perspectivas del Medio Ambiente Mundial 2012	b5-S	Spanish	2012	Environment	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	575	238	-
Publication	Fisheries investing in natural capital	b6-E	English		Agriculture - Fisheries and aquaculture	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	33	19	-

Type	KP Title	Code	Language	Year	Themes	Authors	Est. Links	Est. Websites	Est. Reposts
Publication	wfp.org/content/market-monitor	b9-E	English		Food Economy - Prices	World Food Programme (WFP)	97	46	-
Database	FEWSNET	b7-E	English		Emergency & rehabilitation - Disaster risk reduction (DRR) Economy - Outlooks	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	2,238	777	-
Database	data.worldbank.org	b2-E	English		Economy Agriculture	The World Bank	353	191	-
Database	data.un.org	b4-E	English		Human impacts	United Nations (UN)	861	445	-

Annex 7: Member Countries Survey

1. Background

This study presents the results of a Member Countries survey conducted as part of the evaluation of FAO's contributions to knowledge on food and agriculture. The assessment seeks to identify the main outcomes achieved by FAO knowledge instruments at country level, as well as success factors, gaps and unmet needs.

1.1. *Objectives*

The objective of the survey was to gain understanding of how diverse Member Countries (MC) view the quality, relevance and utility of FAO's publications, learning resources, databases and networks. The survey examined the following questions:

- Quality, relevance and utility of FAO's publications, learning resources, databases and networks
- Approaches to make FAO publications, learning resources, networks and databases more relevant, credible and useful to the country
- Approaches to improve FAO knowledge dissemination
- Contribution of FAO's "State of the World" publications to the country's agenda on food and agriculture

1.2. *Methodology*

The survey questionnaire was developed in collaboration with FAO staff from the Office of Corporate Communications (OCC) and was opened during 3 months (from 1 December 2014 to 5 March 2015). The survey was anonymous and delivered by email to MC Representatives. Survey questionnaires were made available in English, French and Spanish. Altogether the survey gathered input from 38 participants representing 36 countries –Table 1. About 62% of the respondents were working in a Ministry of Agriculture while the remainder is evenly shared between permanent representatives to FAO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and other (university, not specified). About 75% of the respondents were senior officials (deputy minister, director, senior expert).

Table 1: Member Countries participating in the assessment

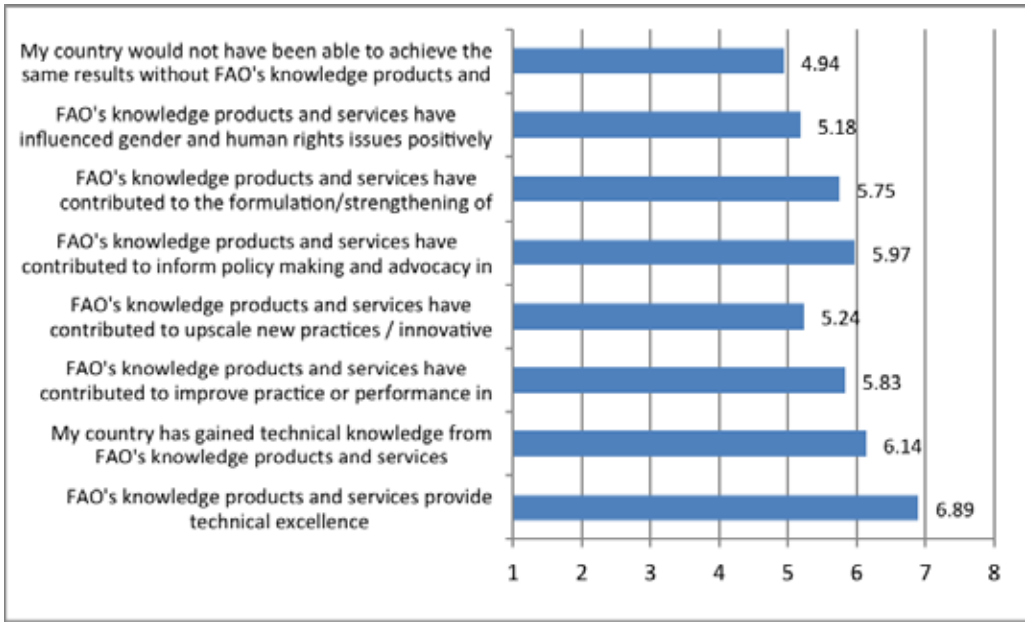
Countries		
Armenia	Georgia	Republic of Korea
Austria	Germany	Republic of the Union of Myanmar
Bangladesh	Hungary	Republic of the Congo
Belgium	Ireland	Seychelles, Republic of
Brazil	Kazakhstan	Slovakia
Burkina Faso	Netherlands	State of Kuwait
Canada	New Zealand	Sweden
Colombia	Nicaragua	Switzerland
Czech Republic	Norway	Togo
Estonia	Pakistan	Turkey
France	Peru	United States of America
Gabon	Republic of Azerbaijan	Vietnam

Source: FAO Member Countries Survey, 2015

2. Quality, relevance and utility of FAO's publications, learning resources, databases and networks

In general terms survey respondents return a positive assessment of the quality, relevance and utility of FAO's knowledge instruments. FAO's publications, learning resources, databases and networks are especially found to provide *technical excellence*, to *increase technical knowledge* in countries, and to *inform policy making and advocacy* –Figure 1. The outcome contribution that returns the lowest ranking regards the *ability to achieve the same results without FAO's knowledge products and services*, but remains positively assessed. A cross-tabulation of survey results shows that respondents from non-OECD countries assess more favorably the contribution of FAO's knowledge instruments to the stated outcomes than participants from OECD countries.

Figure 1: Member Countries assessment of FAO's publications, learning resources, databases and networks

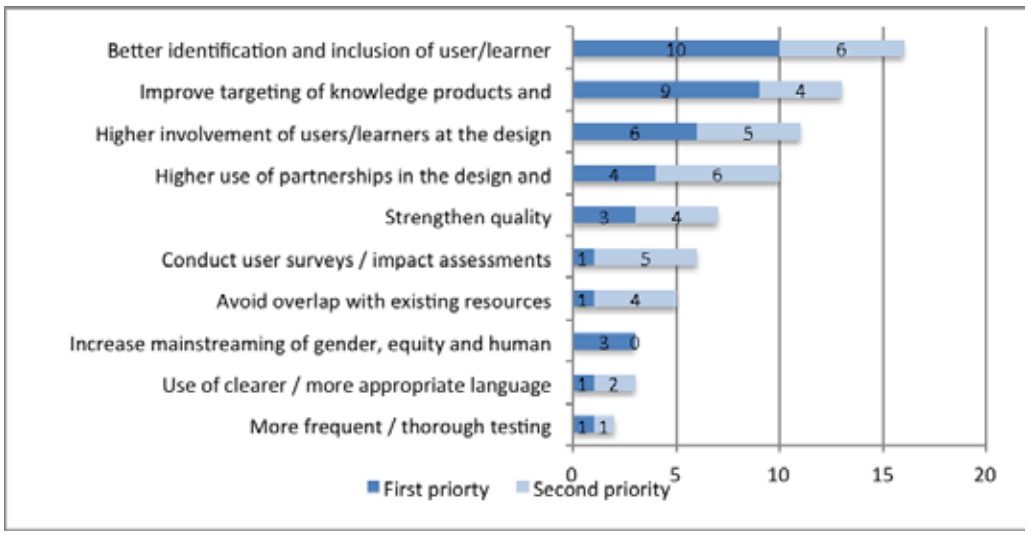


Respondents indicate that "*FAO provides a very good knowledge base*" through reports and data that are used "*frequently to add context analysis, compare indicators and data across countries and regions, and give up to date information on emerging events*". The fact that FAO has a country presence is positively valued as a means to get access to and disseminate local data. However national collaborations could be strengthened to better factor in countries' capacity in FAO framework and to develop "*more country specific policy work in consultation with the country experts*". This would entail also "*to develop a better communication and advocacy strategy to tell FAO's story*" in developed countries.

3. Approaches to make FAO publications, learning resources, networks and databases more relevant, credible and useful to the country

According to respondents FAO could make knowledge instruments more relevant, credible and useful by better *identifying and including users' needs*, by *improving targeting*, and by *involving end-users* at design stage and *partners* during implementation –Figure 2. These suggestions standing for collaborative design, client oriented and tailored solutions, and implementations building on local capacities and partnerships depict a participatory process quite similar to the one FAO adopts with development projects and capacity building initiatives.

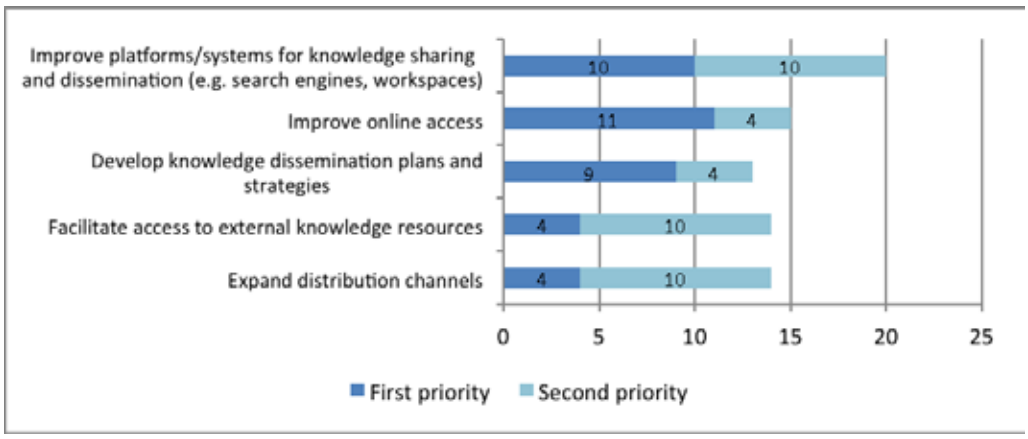
Figure 2: Priorities to make FAO knowledge products and services more relevant, credible and useful



4. Approaches to improve FAO knowledge dissemination

Among the options proposed to respondents emphasis was put on improving knowledge sharing platforms and online systems as means to improve FAO knowledge dissemination –Figure 3. A number of respondents pointed out that it was "*not always easy to quickly find what you are looking for on the website*" as "*the structure of FAO's website is far from being transparent and user-friendly. A number of topics, such as bioenergy are extremely difficult to find. We suggest introducing a standard format for all departments and divisions/topics*." Improving the user friendliness of the website could also involve to categorize information differently as well as to provide easier access to the online publications catalogue. Other suggestions shared by respondents regard keeping knowledge products such as FAO databases up to date, valid, and accurate by involving country experts more closely. Active targeting to relevant experts and installing user feedback mechanisms would also be an improvement to dissemination. Finally launch events in Rome could contribute to raise attention to newly released products and services while "*FAO Representative Office should inform and share the information to related department and ministry and should provide more hard copies of publications*". Dissemination should also consider that "*face to face interaction at country level conferences, seminars and workshop must be attended by recognized FAO Experts*".

Figure 3: Priorities to improve FAO knowledge dissemination



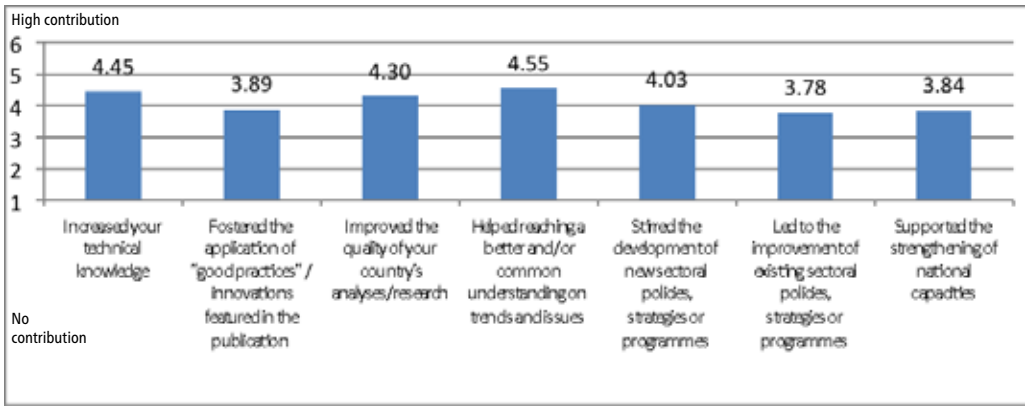
5. Contribution of FAO's "State of the World" publications to the country's agenda on food and agriculture

FAO's flagship publications are positively assessed by participating Member Countries. Respondents found these reports "*much informative*" for instance to "*compare food production and nutrition rates among countries*". They convey background data against which the "*local state of affairs can be measured and provide an indication of the level of performance of local policies and actions*" which "*gives very useful background information to the decision-makers*." In a number of instances the "State of the World" publications have been used to develop "*country profiles, policies, strategies, sectoral plans*" as well as "*Commodity Situation and Outlook Reports*". They provide "*farmers and food producers the unique opportunity to adapt their production to the next challenges from short term period to the middle term period*". Finally, according to some countries "*all these publications have a demonstrative role that helped increase agricultural production and productivity*".

5.1. Contribution of SOFA to the countries' agenda on food and agriculture

Respondents acknowledge more particularly the contributions of SOFA to *help reaching a better and/or common understanding on trends and issues* in the country as well as to *increase technical knowledge* –Figure 4. Examples of use were shared such as in the case of SOFA 2010-11 (on the role of women in agriculture) that revealed new trends and statistics on the matter and contributed to national debates in Europe. Similarly, SOFA 2013 was important for a Member Country in Asia to recognize issues such as undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity, and to persuade the Government to address such problems through a multi-sectoral approach (health-education-agriculture-trade-communication/broadcasting) linked to existing national programmes and strategies. Referring to the 2014 edition of SOFA, a respondent form Latin America refers to the key messages and statistics as very useful during the International Year of Family Farming including "*in the preparation of a diagnosis for the design of a Food Security and Family Farming Strategy*".

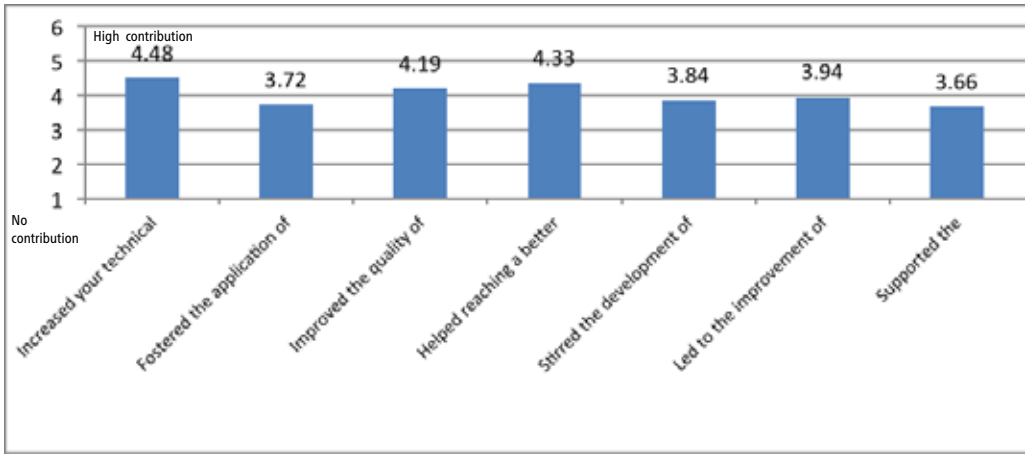
Figure 4: Contribution of SOFA to the countries' agenda on food and agriculture



5.2. Contribution of SOFI to the countries' agenda on food and agriculture

Respondents assessed more highly SOFI's contribution to *increasing technical knowledge*, followed by *helping to reach a better and/or common understanding on trends and issues* in the country –Figure 5. SOFI is found to "*give good explanations about food security indicators*" to inform the public as well as an "*important benchmark for public policies*". Hence SOFI has led an African country to prepare *"a report on the State of Food Security"* and to implement *"strong measures for the fight against food insecurity"*. Similarly SOFI has provided "*guidance in preparation of a Food Security Policy"* in Central Asia.

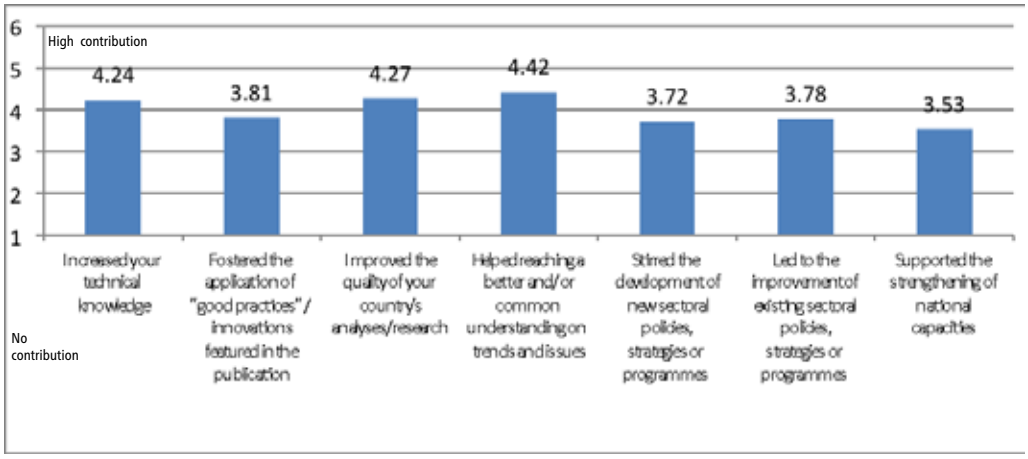
Figure 5: Contribution of SOFI to the countries' agenda on food and agriculture



5.3. Contribution of SOFIA to the countries' agenda on food and agriculture

A number of European respondents indicate that SOFIA is "*highly relevant in the field of Aquaculture*" for instance to help maintaining "*up to date professional cooperation with developing countries*", to direct ODA to overfished species, and to fight IUU fishing. SOFIA is a reference "*for writing country papers, project proposals and regional information papers effectively*". Furthermore "*information on production and countries provides insight to identify partnerships for collaboration and synergies*". SOFIA is also referred as "*very useful in elaborating development projects in the field of small scale aquaculture in South-East Asia*". SOFIA's main contribution has been to *"help reaching a better/common understanding on trends and issues"* (see figure 6).

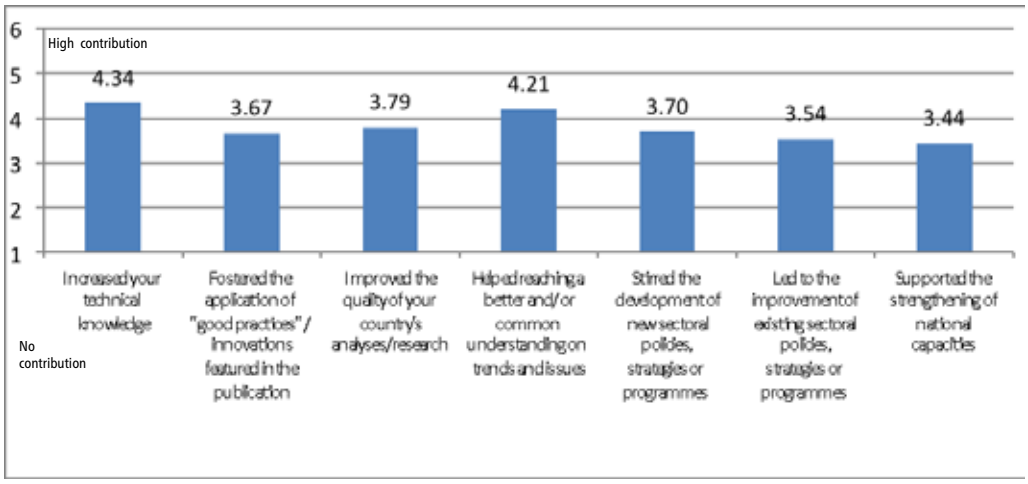
Figure 6: Contribution of SOFIA to the countries' agenda on food and agriculture



5.4. Contribution of SOFO to the countries' agenda on food and agriculture

According to respondents SOFO is more favorably assessed for *increasing technical knowledge* and – similarly to SOFIA- for *helping to reach a better and/or common understanding on trends and issues* in the country –Figure 7. One country indicates that SOFO "*contributed to the preparation of the national Forest Program*".

Figure 7: Contribution of SOFO to the countries' agenda on food and agriculture



6. Dissemination prospects

Recognizing the high quality of these publications, respondents suggest that they "*should get even more visibility and publicity*". Issues and proposals made by MC can be articulated around a few key items:

- **Greater involvement of national actors**. According to respondents FAO interventions should be aligned with the country's priorities and not the opposite. Knowledge products and services should aim at strengthening the technical capacities of national actors while accounting for the local development agenda.
- **Balancing the scope**. Respondents indicated that flagship reports are faced with the challenge of striking a balance between the need for country specific analysis and trends, and analyses on international competitiveness of food and agriculture commodities and products. So far the focus has been on global/regional issues, which are sometimes not very relevant for national policy discussions.
- **Blending knowledge products and services**. Dissemination of flagships and other knowledge products should consider the allocation of resources for enabling capacity development activities (such as local workshops or learning materials), so as to provide catalytic capacities to implement the recommended actions.
- **Improving targeting**. Stand-alone generic letters informing MCs about a publication are usually ignored. By-products targeted to specific audiences are required along with face-to-face interactions.

7. Conclusion

In general terms Member Countries return a positive assessment of FAO's knowledge products and services. They have also identified some areas where knowledge dissemination could be strengthened, including by better *identifying and including users' needs; involving end-users* at design stage and *partners* during implementation; and *improving targeting*. From the MC's perspective, improving FAO's online capabilities and involving HQ experts and FAO Country Representatives in dissemination activities could have immediate positive effects in the use of FAO's knowledge products and services.

Annex 8: Clients Survey

1. Background

This study presents the results of clients surveys conducted as part of the evaluation of FAO's contributions to knowledge on food and agriculture in a sample of countries. The survey sought to identify the main outcomes achieved by FAO's knowledge products and services at country level, as well as enabling factors, knowledge gaps and unmet needs.

1.1. *Objectives*

The objective of the client survey was to gain understanding of how diverse constituencies perceive the relevance, accessibility and applicability of the knowledge and expertise that FAO has made available to them, through the development and promotion of publications, databases, learning resources and networks, and the impact of such knowledge on their work.

1.2. *Methodology*

The client surveys were administered to 171 participants in thirteen countries selected in consultation with all the Regional Offices and the relevant Country/Liaison Office – Table 1. The sample included countries from all the regions, and did not overlap with any of the about thirty countries already subject to, or planned for, country evaluations in the period 2011-15.

Table 1: Countries participating in the client survey

Countries (number of participants)			
Albania (12)	Japan (13)	Panama (7)	Turkey (10)
Belgium (13)	Lebanon (15)	Papua New Guinea (14)	Uganda (19)
Chile (9)	Pakistan (17)	Switzerland (9)	United States of America (16)
			Zambia (17)

Country and Liaison Offices were requested to identify individuals ("key informants") with significant expertise and familiarity with FAO or with potential exposure to FAO's knowledge products and services. A semi-structure questionnaire was developed in three languages (English, French and Spanish), in collaboration with the participating FAO Country and Liaison Offices, to capture the above information. The client survey was undertaken during 3 months, from 1 December 2014 to 5 March 2015, by a team of six researchers[79]. It was delivered by email, telephone and/or in-person.

Profile of respondents: Key informants included representatives from central government organizations (30%), research and academia (23%), UN organizations (9%), CSOs/NGOs (9%), local/regional governmental institutions (6%), IFI (5%), the private sector (5%), IGOs (4%), resource partners (4%), producer organizations (4%) and the media and others (1%). The main areas of work of the participants were food security (52%) followed by crops (34%), climate change (33%), nutrition (26%) and trade and markets (26%). Most participants (77%) used FAO's knowledge products and services for more than 3 years. About 70% of the respondents were male and 30% female.

2. Assessment of FAO's knowledge products and services

This section presents the results of the assessment of the use of FAO publications, learning resources, databases and networks by the sample of key country-level users.

79 Rose de Jong (coordinator and responsible for the surveys in Albania, Belgium, Turkey, the United States, Canada, Lebanon and Japan), Joel Owani (Uganda), Stephen Tembo (Zambia), Zubair Faisal Abbasi (Pakistan), John Duguman (Papua New Guinea), and German Escobar (Chile, Panama).

2.1. *Use of FAO publications*

FAO global publications are more frequently used than regional or country specific publications with a slight prevalence of advocacy reports (SOFA) over technical papers (guidelines, research papers, good practices) and policy briefs –Table 2. On average, publications are used often or sometimes by only 36% of country clients. This applies also to the well-known FAO flagship publications and to specific segments of end-users. For instance, about 33% of respondents working on forestry indicate never or rarely using SOFO. Similarly, 27% of participants working on fisheries never or rarely use SOFIA and 30% of respondents working on food insecurity never or rarely use SOFI.

Table 2: Frequency of use of FAO publications

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Don't know
GLOBAL: The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA)	20,8%	27,0%	19,5%	22,6%	10,1%
GLOBAL: Guidelines/manuals	20,0%	30,7%	16,0%	23,3%	10,0%
GLOBAL: Research/working papers	19,9%	32,5%	19,2%	15,2%	13,2%
GLOBAL: Good practices	19,2%	30,5%	15,2%	19,9%	15,2%
GLOBAL: The State of Food Insecurity (SOFI)	17,6%	25,2%	19,5%	26,4%	11,3%
GLOBAL: Policy briefs	15,8%	31,6%	19,7%	20,4%	12,5%
GLOBAL: State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA)	12,3%	4,8%	18,5%	45,9%	18,5%
GLOBAL: Codes and standards	11,2%	16,1%	17,5%	38,5%	16,8%
GLOBAL: Evaluations	10,2%	23,1%	21,8%	25,9%	19,0%
COUNTRY-SPECIFIC: Evaluations	10,3%	22,8%	13,8%	32,4%	20,7%
COUNTRY-SPECIFIC: Other publications	9,7%	25,7%	18,1%	27,1%	19,4%
REGIONAL: Other publications	8,4%	23,8%	25,9%	21,7%	20,3%
GLOBAL: The State of the World's Forests (SOFO)	5,4%	9,5%	18,9%	48,6%	17,6%

Publications rarely or never used. The key informants surveyed indicated that the primary reason for rarely or never using some FAO publications was unawareness of their existence (40%), in spite of being in need for such products. Suggested actions to mitigate this issue included improving the user-friendliness of FAO web site, opening up information centers, going public more often with the results of FAO publications, or sharing them through the field programme and with technical project staff in the field. The second most commonly cited factor for rarely or never using FAO publications relates to a lack of relevance to the work that is being conducted (36%). Several respondents emphasized that publications should address local needs, formulated "ideology-free", contain real-world and practical recommendations, expose thorough methodologies (especially when targeting research and academia), and benefit from more solid technical basis.

Publications used often or sometimes. As for those publications that are used often or sometimes by participants, the main reasons for their use is their relevance to the work of users (65%), their technical soundness (56%), quality (54%), credibility (53%) and accessibility online (52%). Such publications are used primarily to improve the technical knowledge of country clients (55%) and to support evidence based policy making (39%). Conversely FAO publications are less frequently used to support resource mobilization (15%), to upscale new practices/innovative field projects (14%), and to inform new investment decisions (12%). Survey participants shared examples of local publications they have utilized in their work with a focus on technical papers –e.g. Farmer Field School Report on Plant Clinics in Uganda,

a Guide to help the small dairy holders in Lebanon, etc.- and country / sectoral reviews –e.g. Food Security Briefs in Pakistan, Fishery and Aquaculture Country Profiles in Turkey, etc.-. Similarly, examples of utilization of global publications were provided with an emphasis on "The State of the World" flagship reports, followed by technical papers.

2.2. *Use of FAO learning resources*

The learning resources most frequently used by survey respondents are learning materials and events with a country-specific focus –Table 3. The key informants surveyed were most familiar with local seminars, trainings and workshops e.g. Farmer Field Schools, Stakeholder mapping Workshops, LANEA Commutative Workshop, Land Tenure Workshop, Climate Smart Agriculture training, etc. Some participants referred to some learning materials such as a Food security training manual, GMO training manual, SEAGA handbook, Dietary Guidelines for Eastern and Central Africa, etc., and e-learning programmes e.g. IMARK.

Table 3: Frequency of use of FAO learning resources

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Don't know
COUNTRY-SPECIFIC: Learning materials	11,6%	18,1%	11,0%	44,5%	14,8%
COUNTRY-SPECIFIC: Learning events	8,3%	26,8%	10,2%	42,7%	12,1%
REGIONAL-SPECIFIC: Distance/e-learning programs	7,7%	5,8%	11,0%	59,4%	16,1%
GLOBAL: Distance/e-learning programmes	6,4%	14,7%	9,6%	55,1%	14,1%
Blended learning programmes	3,4%	11,0%	8,2%	57,5%	19,9%

Learning resources never or rarely used. The first reason for rarely or never using FAO learning resources is due to a lack of awareness of their existence in spite of being in need of such products or services (40%). A related factor comes from the fact that clients do not know where/how to access such materials (23%). Respondents made suggestions to increase the uptake of FAO learning resources e.g. by "better integrating them in the country work-plan", "improving outreach to farmers and extension workers", "providing better technical inputs rather than just advocacy about rights of people", "cooperating with Agricultural faculties to roll them out", "creating a national learning center supported by FAO" and "strengthening the capacity building component of FAO projects". Staff from partner organizations, such as the World Bank, invited FAO to increase cooperation between both organizations in the production/dissemination of learning resources.

Learning resources used often or sometimes. Heavy users of learning resources appreciate their technical soundness (30%), online accessibility (28%), relevance (27%) and quality (26%). These are utilized to improve technical knowledge (35%), improve training, education and research activities (25%), enhance technical skills (24%), and support evidence based policy making (20%). A few examples of utilization were reported by respondents. For instance IMARK has been used to train 200 people in Chile as part of a "national project that was instrumental to increase the reach and adaptation of the national information system to the country's realities". Learning materials developed after a seminar and workshop on Land Governance are used by technical staff (120 experts) in a Government's department to "incorporate FAO know-how in their project/activities".

2.3. *Use of FAO databases*

The FAO databases that are most frequently used are the global statistical databases –Table 4. The majority of examples of global databases used by participants concentrate on FAOSTAT, with the addition of a few other databases –e.g. FAOSTAT-Forestry, GIEWS, FISHSTAT, AMIS, OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook-. Country specific databases were referred as the second most used type of database. However, except for a few items –e.g. Country Stat-, examples

of such databases provided by respondents tend to allude to country level datasets of global databases –e.g. FAOSTAT, GIEWS-. Geospatial databases –e.g. Collect Earth, TADInfo- are less frequently used.

Table 4: Frequency of use of FAO databases

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Don't know
GLOBAL: Statistical databases	32,2%	34,2%	9,2%	19,1%	5,3%
COUNTRY-SPECIFIC DATABASE	20,3%	19,6%	10,9%	33,3%	15,9%
GLOBAL: Textual databases	15,4%	22,4%	14,0%	33,6%	14,7%
REGIONAL-SPECIFIC DATABASE	14,3%	23,6%	12,1%	35,0%	15,0%
GLOBAL: Geospatial databases	5,0%	20,6%	20,6%	39,7%	14,2%

Databases never or rarely used. The most common reasons for never or rarely using FAO databases are an ignorance of their existence in spite of a need for such products or services (31%), followed by a lack of relevance to the work performed by country clients (26%), and an unawareness of their existence but absence of need for such products or services (23%). These findings were validated and complemented by some respondents mentioning that FAO datasets are not always comprehensive or detailed enough –e.g. incomplete list of countries in the Gender and Land Rights Database, lack of a capability to focus on livelihood protection after disaster situations, insufficient details on trade between partner countries and per product group in FAOSTAT, lack of applicability of FAO databases to local level projects, or data reliability being sometimes questionable leading some partners to use alternative sources such as UNStat, EUStat, UNHabitat, UN Economic Commissions-. In order to enhance uptake, FAO could consider working more closely with National Statistics Units to build capacity, to improve the quality of the databases by going in the field to gather primary data, to partner and find synergies with other actors (e.g. CGIAR) and avoid duplicating efforts, or to provide access to FAO databases through local resource centers or telecentres.

Databases used often or sometimes. The prevailing reasons for using FAO databases often or sometimes are their relevance to the work of country clients according to 45% of survey respondents as well as their online accessibility (43%), technical soundness (40%), high quality (37%) and credibility (37%). Utilization of FAO databases contributes primarily to inform projects/activities (36%), to improve technical knowledge (33%), and to support evidence based policy making (31%). Respondents shared examples of such utilizations. For instance a programme manager in a central government organization relies on FAO databases for background information to plan investments, and in some occasions to support advocacy work at a donor/partner level. Another programme manager reports using FAO databases for comparative analysis of the country's performance. A respondent in research and academia uses FAO databases for proposal development, for designing nutrition in emergency, and when working with students.

2.4. *Use of FAO networks*

The networks most referred by respondents are country networks which are used often or sometimes by 34% of respondents –Table 5. Examples of national networks shared by participants show a variety of networking formats including working groups, task forces, or think tanks –e.g. Zero hunger network in Japan, Network on Agriculture Extension Services in Albania, REACH and National Multi-stakeholder Technical Working Group in Uganda, DRR working group in Pakistan, or the University of Zambia (UNZA) Think Tank. Global informal networks refer mostly to working groups around official events –e.g. COFI and CFS Consultation group on Land Governance- and in some instances to personal networks –e.g. on ecosystem approach to fisheries-. In general terms the global and regional networks cited by participants point to a variety of networking modalities –e.g. African Union Rapid Alert Response, CODEX Meetings, Conservation Agriculture Working Group, East African Farmers

Federation, Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) of South Eastern Europe, Task team on financing for Preparedness CADRI, etc.-. Only few respondents made reference to FAO supported global networks –e.g. FAO/WMO AGROMET-L, e-Agriculture Community, Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition "FSN Forum", Community for Climate Change Mitigation in Agriculture / MICCA Programme, FAO Networks on Veterinary Public Health, Zoonoses, Feed & Food Safety (VPH)-.

Table 5: Frequency of use of FAO networks

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Don't know
COUNTRY NETWORKS	13,2%	20,8%	9,7%	42,4%	13,9%
GLOBAL: Informal networks	8,4%	16,1%	14,0%	44,8%	16,8%
REGIONAL NETWORKS	7,5%	18,4%	17,0%	40,8%	16,3%
GLOBAL: Other networks	7,0%	12,6%	19,6%	41,3%	19,6%
GLOBAL: Thematic knowledge networks	6,0%	22,1%	14,1%	43,0%	14,8%

Networks used rarely or never. For country clients the first reason for not using FAO networks comes from an unawareness of their existence in spite of having a need for such knowledge services (39%). As put forward by several respondents, from producer organizations –e.g. "We need to know the farmers networks which FAO has formed"- to decision-makers from central government organizations –e.g. "I need to know more about networks which operate for our facilitation", or private sector actors –e.g. "Did not knew their existence but would be interested to participate in some."-, FAO networks lack visibility. Additional factors that lead to use FAO networks rarely or never include the ignorance of their existence but no perceived need to participate (21%) and not knowing where/how to access them (19%). Participants suggested therefore communicating more on FAO networking services and events, to partner with other institutions such as OIE or EU initiatives, and to link more closely networks and publications as means to increase use and uptake. Capacities devoted to network facilitation could also be strengthened as for instance "Regional networks are more information sharing forums and can be utilised much more intensively. Currently these networks don't yield real outcomes and do not stimulate knowledge production or innovation, as they could potentially do."

Networks used often or sometimes. For those networks that are used sometimes or often, the main reasons are their relevance to the work of participants (40%) followed by their credibility (26%) and easiness to use/apply the knowledge that is shared (20%). Participants find that FAO networks help to receive information and get updates about new developments in their field of work (39%) and contribute to exchange good practices and lessons learned (33%) and to increase connections/collaborations with partners (30%). A decision maker in a central government institution shared the example of the VPH network which was used frequently to get information about regional and global situations and emergencies. A programme manager referred to a network implementing Climate Smart Agriculture in three countries (Zambia, Malawi and Vietnam) which has provided an online platform to discuss and to share experiences and lessons learnt between members.

2.5. *Use of other FAO knowledge products and services*

A few examples of other knowledge products and services were provided by participants –i.e. AGROVOC, FAO Facebook account, FAO website, free market observatory in Chile, technical meetings and video conferences-. However no reference was made by respondents to a number of knowledge activities FAO had promoted until 2012 –e.g. Knowledge cafés, Share fairs, or Learning routes-.

3. Main outcomes of FAO's knowledge products and services

> *The country has managed to come up with a policy and strategy in aquaculture through FAO knowledge resources and the on-going TCP. As a result, aquaculture production which had stagnated for 10 to 12 years about 8 years ago at 12,000 MT per year has now jumped to 20,000 MT (2013).*
>
> Decision maker from a central government organization in Africa

Country clients return a positive assessment of FAO knowledge products and services –Figure 1. Ample anecdotal evidence of contributions to development outcomes was provided.

Technical knowledge. About 87% of respondents agree to have gained technical knowledge from FAO's knowledge products and services. Evidence is conveyed by participants in generic form –e.g. "FAOSTAT data are essential inputs to the analysis that my institutions does. SOFI and World Agriculture towards 2030/2050 are important resources for the work that my institution does", etc.-, or in relation to specific knowledge gains -e.g. "How better institutional arrangement can enhance efficiency in land allocation and better coping strategies to HIV/AIDS, food security and livelihoods".

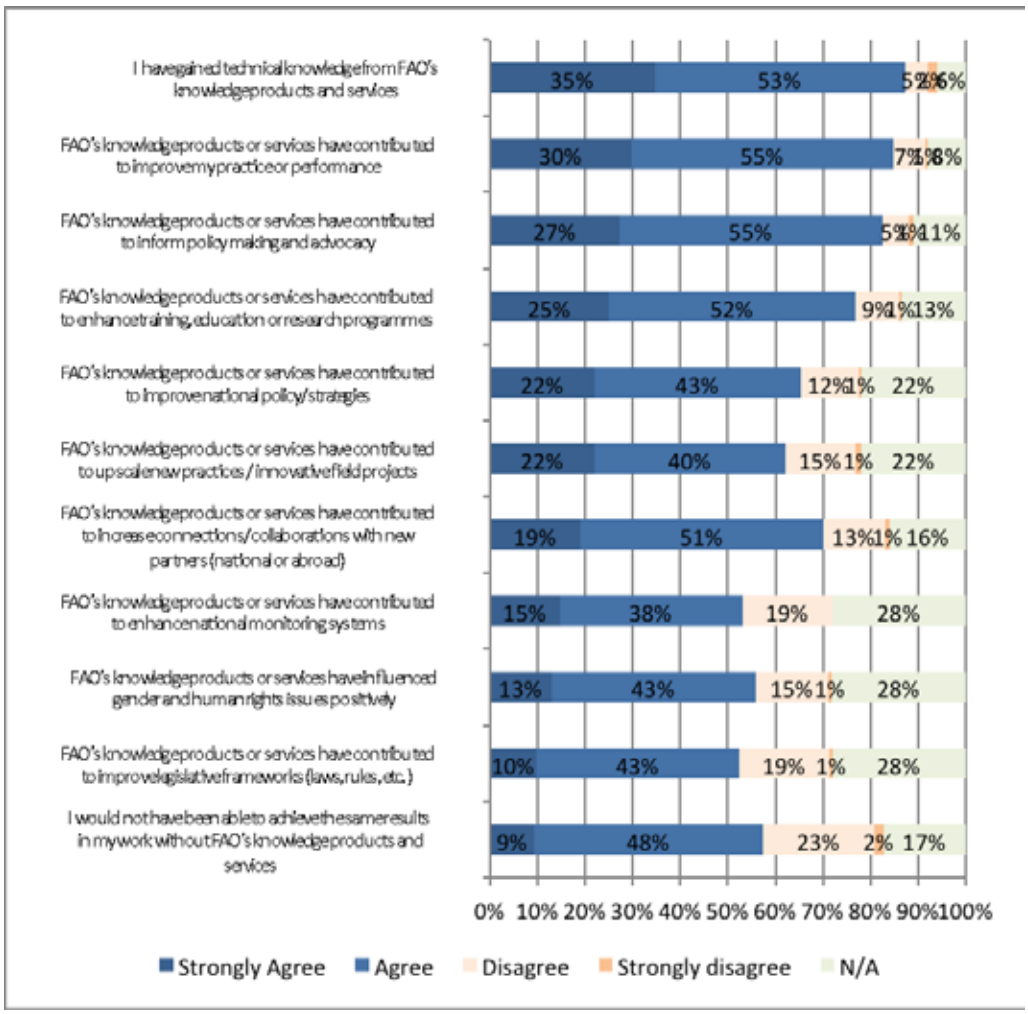
Practices and performance. FAO's knowledge is found to have contributed to improve practices or performance by 85% of survey participants with examples such as a "safer use of pesticides used for public health and food security/protection in agriculture", "installation of drip irrigation system as recommended in FAO standards", up "to enriching nutritional practices in schools including universities" or "designing nutrition in emergency".

Policy making and advocacy. For 83% of country clients FAO knowledge resources have contributed to inform policy making and advocacy. Contribution to advocacy regards for instance the comparison of yields between Albania and EU that helped "to argue in favor of yield/efficiency increase in Albania", the "fruit/apple consumption per capita combined with production capacity and other trade related data helping to build an argument in favor of export enhancement strategy for the apple product", etc. In terms of policy making participants indicate that "FAO statistics have been used in shaping or informing the development of agriculture strategy in the region", or have helped to mainstream aspects of right to food "into district plans/budget and national nutrition action plan".

Policies and strategies. Close to 65% of country clients indicate a contribution to improving national policy/strategies. This regards for instance building on FAO knowledge resources for "screening the National Agriculture Investment Plan (MAIP) to climate smart agriculture in terms of establishing the extent to which NAIP incorporated smart agriculture", using the "Codex Alimentarius for policy guidance at global level", or calling on "ASEG materials to stir discussion on gender socioeconomic value in the Ministry of Agriculture of Chile. As a result, the MoA has had a strong gender equity focus." About 58% of survey participants indicate that they would not have been able to achieve the same results in their work without FAO's knowledge products and services.

Training, education and research programmes. According to 77% of survey participants FAO knowledge products have contributed to enhance training, education or research programmes. A number of respondents provided examples of using FAO knowledge resources with students as well as more specific applications such as using "FAO 306_Introduction to tropical fish stock assessment, manual in enhancing my own understanding of fisheries stock assessment techniques covered in the manual and to also adopt material in the manual in my own projects in fisheries stock assessment and also, in teaching of my courses at University", or "FAO Knowledge materials have been very useful in developing technical manuals for "capacity building of farmer institutions" Savings Credit Cooperatives (farmer SACCOs) and designing farmer strategies for rural innovations". A respondent from the private sector mentions also that "FAO's FAOSTAT database and SOFI and SOFA reports and the OECD/FAO AG Outlook reports are used by my organization to support our annual Global Agricultural Productivity (GAP) Report and to provide case studies and data for our discussions of how to improve agricultural productivity and to conserve the environment."

Figure 1: Level of agreement with the proposed outcomes



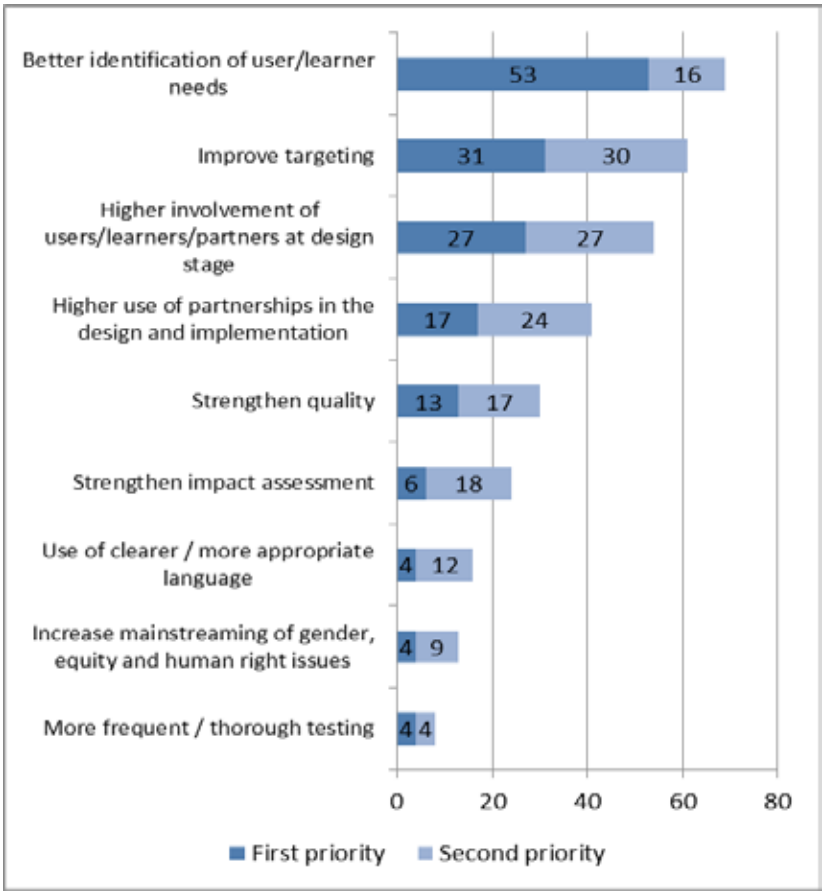
4. Dissemination prospects

Country clients were invited to share perspectives on improving FAO's knowledge dissemination.

4.1. Improving usefulness

Respondents prioritize a better identification of users/learners needs as a means to improve the usefulness of FAO knowledge products and services –Figure 2. Stronger collaborations during products development and dissemination and better targeting are also related priorities. Accordingly participants proposed "involving higher level policy makers on issues of policy (ministerial, parliament and cabinet)", to collaborate with universities including for knowledge dissemination, and other local actors to translate "research into practice". As noted by a participant such partnerships would also contribute to dissemination and greater uptake as "it would also generate interest leading to many players/actors accessing the knowledge products". A number of country clients suggested also strengthening the expertise of local FAO staff as it was found that "there seems to exist a technical divorce between Rome technical capacity and the actual technical backstopping provided by FAO at the country level". More rarely participants pointed pout a need for greater coordination between FAO initiatives and more training and accessibility to e-learning resources in order to ensure knowledge sharing beyond projects period.

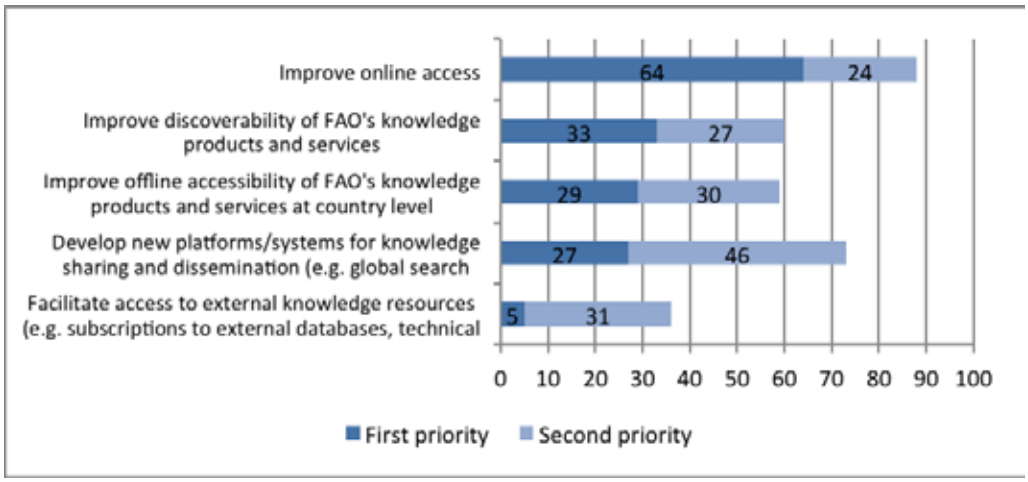
Figure 2: Priorities to make knowledge products & services more useful



4.2. Improving dissemination

Emphasis is to be put on online dissemination improvements according to survey respondents –Figure 3. Findability of content on FAO website as well as through search engines is found not optimized and technical jargon and acronyms could be better elicited with a wiki platform. In addition FAO could "make better use of networks in knowledge dissemination" including at national level with appropriate partnerships. Capacities may be a positive enabler also and FAO could have "staff that is specifically focused on the dissemination of knowledge and stimulate partnerships".

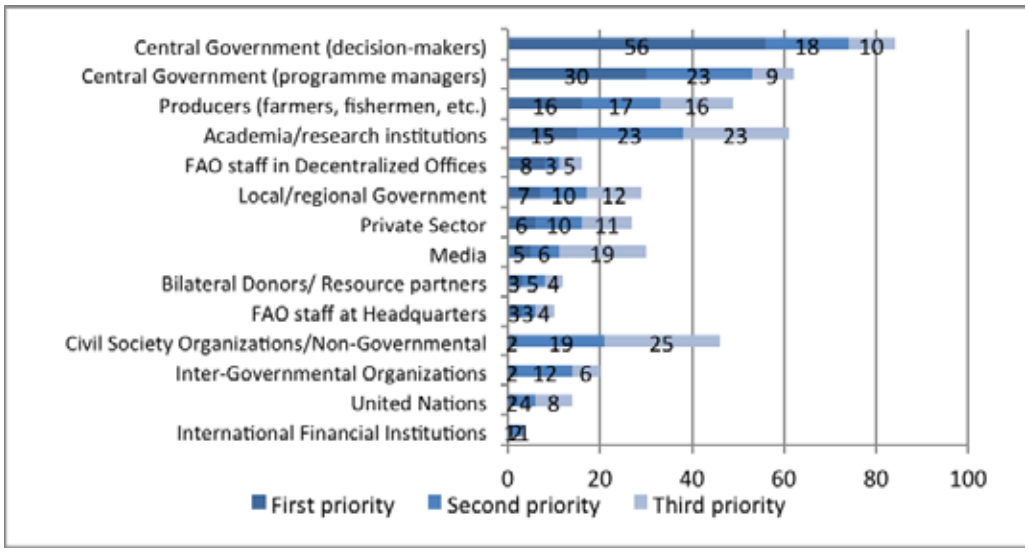
Figure 3: Priorities to improve knowledge dissemination



4.3. Target audiences

There is general agreement among country clients that FAO knowledge products and services should first target central government staff with a focus on decision makers followed by programme managers –Figure 4. Producers, academia and research, and CSOs/NGOs are found also to be among the main target audiences. Comparing these results with the number of respondents per type of organization leads to highlight the pre-eminent position given to producers in this ranking. However several survey participants commented on the systemic nature of FAO's work and requirement to approach these audiences holistically, meaning for "FAO to invest its resources in such a way that it enhances the performance of this chain".

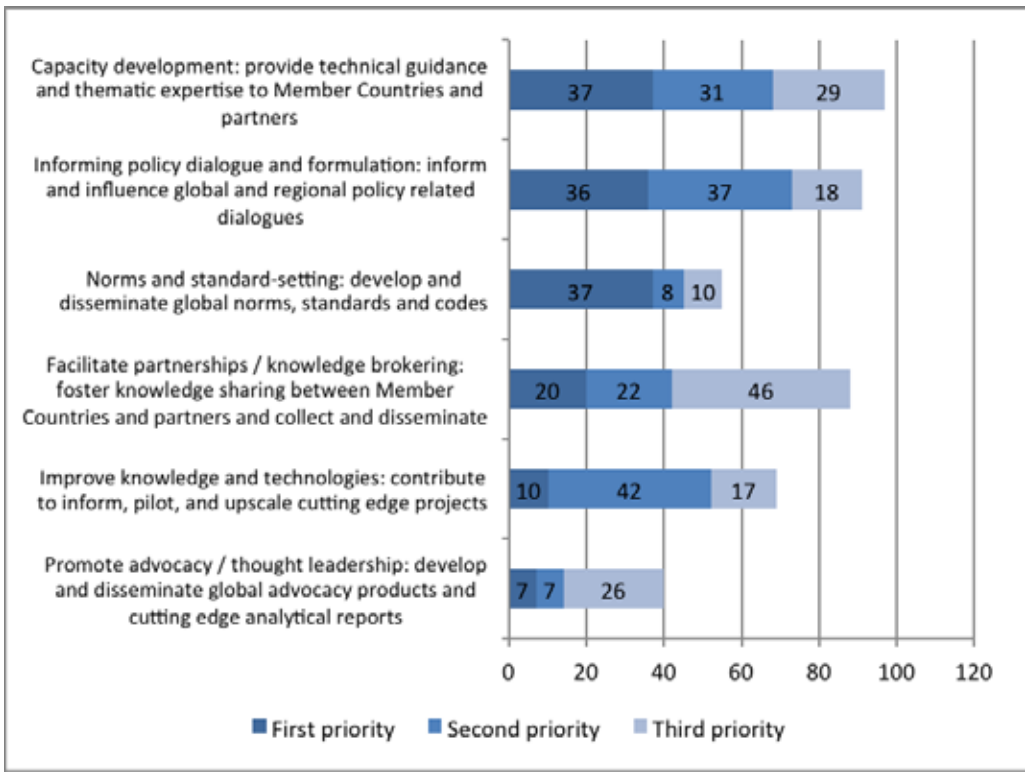
Figure 4: Priority target audiences for knowledge dissemination



4.4. Knowledge dissemination functions

According to respondents, FAO knowledge generation and dissemination functions should first aim at developing capacities of Member Countries and partners and to inform global and regional policy dialogue and formulation –Figure 5. Participants further stressed the role of FAO as a producer of norms and standards and knowledge broker.

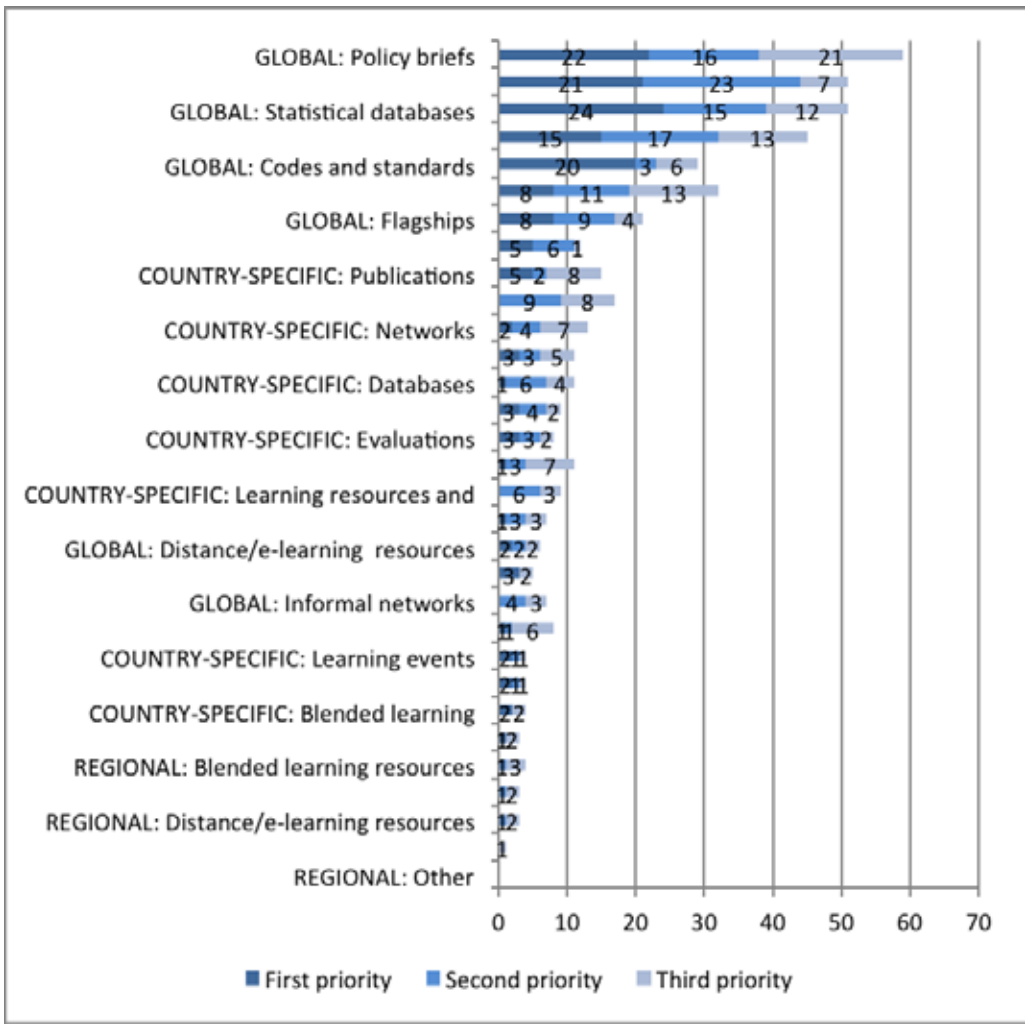
Figure 5: Priority functions with regards to knowledge generation and dissemination



4.5. Knowledge products and services

Country clients listed FAO's global knowledge products and services (i.e. policy briefs, guidelines/manuals, statistical databases, good practices, codes and standards) as those most helpful to their work and priorities for knowledge dissemination –Figure 6. Policy related issues have been featured highly as they were found "critical in influencing what must happen in the whole sector". Survey participants emphasized in their closing comments some of the points referred earlier such as the need for FAO to make its knowledge production more visible including by strengthening national networks and partnerships with all actors (e.g. Government institutions, research and academia, private sector, CSO/NGOs, other UN organizations, EU, the media, etc.). Knowledge development based on local needs, relevant targeting, stronger expertise of FAO staff in DO, coverage of emerging themes, and greater balance between knowledge production and dissemination were provided as complementary factors that could enhance FAO knowledge dissemination.

Figure 6: Knowledge products and services FAO should disseminate in priority



5. Conclusion

Country clients returned a positive assessment of FAO knowledge dissemination showing in particular a strong use of FAO statistical databases. Almost 90% of survey participants reported to have gained technical knowledge from FAO's knowledge products and services and more than 80% found that FAO's knowledge products and services have contributed to improve practices or performance and to inform policy making and advocacy. Better identification of users/learners needs, improved targeting (central government staff, producers, academia and research, and CSOs/NGOs), and involvement of end users in products/services development are approaches that could help to enhance usefulness. Online findability could contribute to wider dissemination and national partnerships to stronger uptake and sustainability. Finally respondents suggested stronger synergies between knowledge instruments –publications, networks, learning resources and networks, but also capacity development initiatives- and adequate focus on dissemination including supportive capacities.