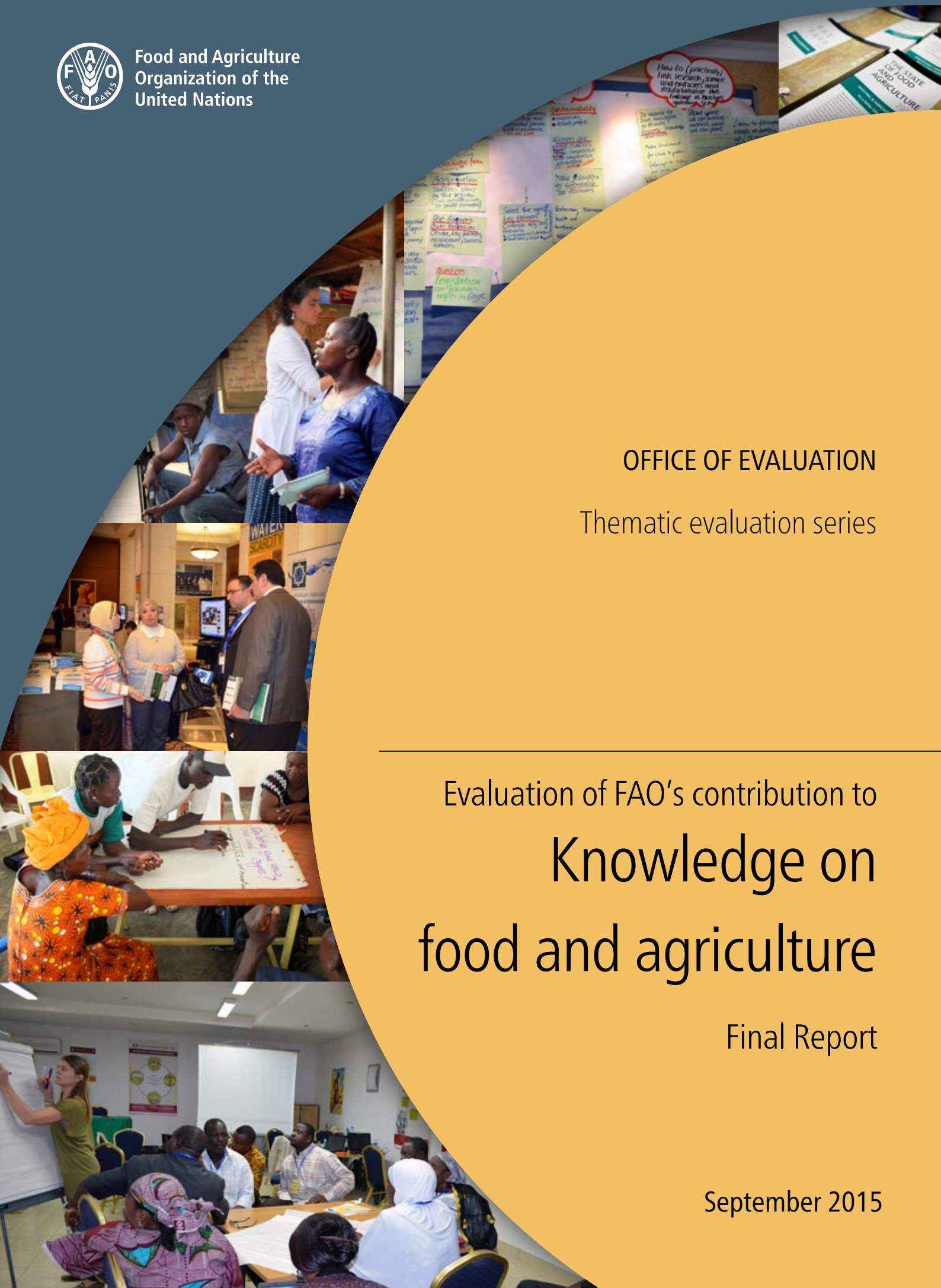




Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



OFFICE OF EVALUATION

Thematic evaluation series

Evaluation of FAO's contribution to

Knowledge on food and agriculture

Final Report

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Office of Evaluation (OED)

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Acronyms

| | |
|-----------|---|
| CIO | Chief Information Officer |
| DDN | Deputy Director General Office for Natural Resources |
| DO | Decentralized Office |
| ESD | Economic and Social Development Department |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| FAOSTAT | FAO Corporate Statistical Database |
| FPMA | Food Price Monitoring and Analysis Tool |
| FSN Forum | Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition |
| GAEZ | Global Agro-Ecological Zones |
| IDWG | Inter-Departmental Working Group |
| IIASA | International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis |
| MC | Member Country |
| OCC | Office for Corporate Communications |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OED | Office of Evaluation |
| OPC | Office for Partnership, Advocacy and Capacity Development |
| PWB | Programme of Work and Budget |
| RO | Regional Offices |
| RLC | Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean |
| SO | Strategic Objectives |
| SOFA | State of the World Food and Agriculture |
| SOFI | State of the World Food Insecurity |
| SOFIA | State of the World Fisheries and Aquaculture |
| SOFO | State of the World Forestry |
| SQAF | Statistics Quality Assurance Framework |
| TD | Technical Departments |
| WHO | World Health Organization |
| UNEG | United Nations Evaluation Group |

Executive Summary

Introduction

- ES1 FAO's knowledge products and services, such as publications, databases, networks and learning **resources**, are core elements to fulfil the Organisation's mandate to "collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture". In 2014-15, the Office of Evaluation (OED) evaluated the contributions made by FAO's knowledge products and services to sustainable food and agricultural development in response to a request by the FAO Programme Committee with the aim of providing evidence-base recommendations for making FAO's knowledge-related work more relevant and useful.
- ES2 The evaluation assessed the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of FAO's knowledge products and services, including quality assurance and dissemination processes. The latter are key elements in the new strategic framework and within the remit of FAO's new objectives 6 (technical quality, knowledge and services) and 8 (outreach). It was undertaken in a consultative manner, and guided by seven evaluation questions. The evaluation met with almost 400 stakeholders; reviewed about 300 documents; assembled an inventory of over 600 FAO's publications, 70 databases, 120 networks and 70 learning resources; surveyed over 100 staff members and 3 000 known users; carried out a meta-analysis of over 50 evaluations and selected cybermetric analyses; and consulted all FAO member countries as well as a sample of core clients in thirteen members.

Main findings

- ES3 The main findings of the evaluation are presented below, grouped by evaluation question.

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?*

- ES4 FAO knowledge products and services are largely consistent with the Organization's mandate. There is however limited involvement of users and potential partners at the design stage, especially from key target groups such as national governments. More consistent involvement of such users and partners would further enhance the relevance of FAO knowledge products and services.

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

- ES5 Most FAO knowledge products and services are frequently accessed and read, but some need to increase their visibility and accessibility, especially in terms of language coverage and online access. Furthermore, some knowledge products and services should be better designed and more user-oriented in order to enhance their utility.

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

- ES6 FAO knowledge products and services are widely recognized for their technical excellence. The Organization provides guidance and mechanisms to ensure the quality of technical content. Some gaps exist, however, especially at implementation level. Overall, end users and experts have a positive opinion of (and high expectations for) the quality of FAO databases and publications. This positive assessment should serve as an incentive to both strengthen and consistently apply quality assurance mechanisms for all knowledge products and services.

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

ES7 FAO knowledge products and services are produced in a decentralized manner, and generally operated on a shoestring budget. In particular, few resources are devoted to dissemination activities, which limit outreach to potential new users. Although cooperation with external partners has helped to cope with the lack of resources, there has been less cooperation between authoring and decentralized offices, between technical and communication experts, and among operators. Greater internal cooperation and coordination would enhance their efficiency.

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

ES8 Although there appear to be few duplications, knowledge gaps exist in some thematic areas, especially those addressing specialized topics. FAO data, analyses and learning resources are often disseminated through unrelated platforms and channels.

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

ES9 The extent varies to which user-groups are effectively reached by, and make effective use of, FAO's knowledge products and services. International organizations, national governments, research and academia benefit the most from FAO data and information. Country-level users, especially from developing regions with poorer internet connectivity and/or language coverage, face more problems accessing FAO data, analyses and resources, and demand context-relevant knowledge products and services.

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

ES10 FAO knowledge products and services have contributed to enhancing technical knowledge and analyses, and strengthening the evidence base for policies and programmes. User feedback is not systematically collected, and the influence and results achieved by FAO knowledge products and services are rarely recorded, especially at organizational and policy levels. Furthermore, opportunities to capitalize on successful experiences are often missed.

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusion 1: FAO produces a broad range of knowledge products and services, which largely respond to the Organization's mandate and Member Countries' requests. Several are widely recognized and appreciated, such as the statistical databases. Some however, could be even better tailored to the specific needs of their target audiences. Also, not enough is done to ensure users' easiness of access to, awareness of and satisfaction with FAO knowledge products and services, or to document and capitalize on successful experiences.

Recommendation 1. FAO could pay greater attention to users' and learners' needs, as well as the potential for improving ease of use and expanding the resources' influence to a broader audience.

ES11 FAO produces a wide range of knowledge products and services. Some are produced in response to global commitments and demands, such as the statistical databases and flagships, whereas others (especially at country level) are geared towards emerging or immediate knowledge needs. The diversity in the objectives, capacities, and means of the potential recipients of FAO knowledge products and services is very broad. At present, not enough is being done to assess users' and learners' needs, which is a limiting factor for their use.

ES12 Some users look for different sets of data and information, which they expect to find with the minimum amount of effort. Others do not have time to search or are not aware of what FAO can offer; and even when they are aware, they require additional support to translate

the knowledge gained into concrete actions. FAO may consider anchoring future online dissemination efforts on FAOSTAT, one of its most successful platforms, and facilitate greater discoverability and use of its knowledge products and services by providing greater user support and by “blending” dissemination activities with capacity development and experience capitalization initiatives. In an era of data and information overload, FAO should consider developing a corporate vision outlining how it intends to position itself to ensure that it continuously meets emerging and changing user needs and expectations, and facilitate accessibility and findability of its different products and services. Such a vision should also describe how the Agency will support users’ capacities and skills to enable maximum use of FAO’s data and analyses, and that the products and services disseminated by the Organization benefit from institutional knowledge.

Conclusion 2. FAO data and information are used to improve the relevance of research and analyses, and to support evidence-based decision making in governments and international organizations. However, quality assurance procedures are applied inconsistently.

Recommendation 2: FAO should continue to strengthen the mechanisms and measures in place to ensure technical excellence of its knowledge products and services.

- ES13 Building on the policies and guidelines that already exist for databases and learning resources, FAO should develop tailored guidance for quality assurance of publications. These guidelines should take into account the different types and scopes of FAO knowledge products and consider not only the quality and integrity of technical content, but also other factors that influence the excellence of FAO’s knowledge, such as their consideration of environmental and social standards, equity and local/indigenous issues.
- ES14 FAO should strengthen the existing mechanisms to ensure technical excellence. In particular, it should pursue the implementation of the quality assurance framework that already exists for databases and consider strengthening the role of the Chief Statistician to enable the effective application of the framework. Similarly, it should strengthen its efforts to promote the application of good learning and publishing practices throughout the Organization. The newly established technical networks could support awareness of and compliance by promoting the adoption of relevant policies and standards. Guidance on how best FAO networks can fulfil this role is needed.

1. Introduction

1. The dissemination of knowledge is an essential responsibility of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO, the Organization). Article I of the Basic Texts¹ mandates that FAO "shall collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture". Publications, databases, networks and learning resources are principal means of meeting these requirements. The Organization produces hundreds of such knowledge products and services, and regularly includes them in its Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) as major outputs of its technical work.
2. In October 2011, the 108th Session of the Programme Committee² requested an evaluation on FAO's role in the dissemination of knowledge on food and agriculture to be conducted in 2014. Past evaluations, including the 2007 Independent External Evaluation of FAO³ and the 2013 Programme Evaluation Report⁴, have focused on different aspects of the production and dissemination of FAO's knowledge products and services. In 2013, FAO reviewed its Strategic Objectives (SOs)⁵ and established new functional objectives on **technical quality, knowledge and services** (O6) and **outreach** (O8). This was followed by changes to the institutional arrangements for knowledge dissemination, which included the abolishment of the Office for Knowledge Exchange, Research and Extension and the *de-facto* expiry of the 2011 Corporate Knowledge Strategy⁶. Core activities and responsibility for ensuring the excellence and dissemination⁷ of FAO's knowledge products and services are now established 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 (06/60101) | Deputy Director General for Natural Resources (DDN) & Economic and Social Development Department (ES) |
| High quality and internationally comparable data are produced and accessed by all countries (06/60203) | Chief Statistician |
| Advice and support provided to SO Teams to mainstream Capacity Development, including for knowledge sharing and learning , in FAO's work (08/M0103) | Office for Partnership, Advocacy and Capacity Development (OPC) |
| Development and promotion of corporate approaches, tools and methodologies in knowledge dissemination and improved management of information (08/M0203) | Office for Corporate Communications (OCC) |

Source: PWB 2014-15

3. Building on past evaluation findings and taking into account the progressive implementation of the new institutional arrangements, this evaluation has assessed the contributions of the wide array of FAO publications, databases, networks and learning resources relating to knowledge on food and agriculture, with a special focus on dissemination aspects

1 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/022/k8024e.pdf>

2 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/023/mc358e.pdf>

3 <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/012/k0827e02.pdf>

4 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/028/mg392e.pdf>

5 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/027/mg015e.pdf>

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

7 The Information Technology Division (CIO) also play a key role in knowledge creation and dissemination by providing solutions and services that enable the development of publications, databases, networks and learning resources.

2. Background and context

2.1 Description of FAO's knowledge products and services

4. FAO has responded to its constitutional mandate to provide information on food and agriculture mainly through the production and dissemination of publications, databases, networks and learning resources.
5. FAO **publications**⁸ cover a broad spectrum of topics related to food and agriculture, and have a wide range of geographical coverage (global, regional, national, sub-national) and purposes (advisory, advocacy, learning, scientific, normative). A recent audit of FAO publishing activity estimated that approximately 300 – 400 first language editions are published every year. Among those, the "State of the World" publications⁹ are some of 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).
6. FAO **databases**¹⁰ cover a broad spectrum of topics related to food and agriculture, and have a wide range of geographical coverage (global, regional, national, sub-national) and contents (statistical, analytic, geospatial, text). An inventory of FAO databases conducted as part of this evaluation identified 76 major depositories of statistics, maps, texts and photographs at FAO. This inventory includes databases from the FAO Statistical Programme of Work (SPW), and was reviewed by Technical Departments (TD)¹¹ and Regional Offices (RO) in late 2014.
7. Learning, both formal and informal, has been a key element in FAO's fight against hunger. In recent years, FAO has expanded the range of **learning resources** that it offers especially online. The evaluation identified 78 major learning resources, including 57 e-learning, 13 learning materials, 6 face-to-face training events, and 2 blended learnings. This non-exhaustive list was collected with OPC, TDs and ROs support in late 2014.
8. **Networks** 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. FAO has supported around 123 global networks, including 103 discussion groups, 14 technical and 6 informal networks. This non-exhaustive list was collected with support from DDN, OPC, TDs and ROs in late 2014.
9. The real number and scope of FAO's knowledge products and services is however much higher than those provided above. An unknown number of publications, learning resources and networks are indeed produced and operated outside corporate systems, mainly by Decentralized Offices¹² (DOs). Nevertheless, the above inventories capture those that the TDs, as owners of the resources, consider the most relevant and known.

2.2 Purpose and scope of the evaluation

10. The evaluation provides a formative assessment of the contribution of FAO's knowledge products and services towards the achievement of Member Countries' (MCs) and

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

9 Available 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).

10 <http://www.fao.org/statistics/en/>

11 TDs include the Agriculture and Consumer Protection, Economic and Social Development, Fisheries and Aquaculture, and Forestry Departments as well the Land and Water; and Climate Change, Tenure and Bioenergy divisions in DDN.

12 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. In two countries contacted for the evaluation (Peru and Ecuador) FAO reportedly developed over 90 learning initiatives and supported 50 networks. Two other countries (Zambia and Uganda) provided partial information. Pakistan and Papua New Guinea could not provide any data.

the Organization's development goals and strategic objectives. It is hoped that the assessment's findings and recommendations will inform the development of the policies and plans underlying the new functional objectives on technical quality, knowledge and services (O6) and outreach (O8).

11. The evaluation covers FAO publications, databases, networks and learning resources mostly issued in the period 2011-14. These are produced and disseminated by TDs and DOs using different funding sources and with a variety of geographical focuses and target audiences. Due to their sheer number and broad thematic range, only a sample was reviewed in detail as part of this evaluation. In selecting possible case studies, priority was given to major knowledge products and services for which there was no recent evaluative evidence, such as the "State of the World" flagships and FAOSTAT¹³. In cases where detailed information on the products and services under evaluation was not complete/available (such as on field-level publications, networks and learning resources), appropriate disclaimers were made.

2.3 Evaluation objective and questions

12. The evaluation assessed the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of FAO's knowledge products and services, including enabling factors such as quality assurance and dissemination mechanisms. In order to arrive to a common understanding on the main possible contributions of the FAO's knowledge products and services, a theory of change was developed to serve as the result framework for the evaluation (see appendix 1).
13. The key elements of the theory of change are captured in the evaluation questions as shown in box 1.

Box 1: Evaluation questions

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?
 2. Are FAO's 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 its knowledge products and services?
 4. How efficiently has FAO used its human and financial resources in the production and dissemination of knowledge products and services?
 5. Are there synergies, duplications or gaps in the knowledge products and services produced and disseminated by FAO?
 6. Have FAO's knowledge products and services reached the intended users and uses?
 7. What outcomes have FAO's knowledge products and services achieved, or contributed to achieving?
-

2.4 Methodology

14. The evaluation was undertaken in a consultative manner¹⁴ using theory-based approaches (such as contribution and SWOT analyses). To facilitate its conduct, the evaluation was divided into four separate components (see box 2). The evaluation's terms of reference (annex 1) provides further details on the methodology.

13 FAO flagship publications were last reviewed in 2005 (Evaluation of the cross-organizational strategy on communicating FAO's messages); whereas FAOSTAT went through an evaluation in 2008 (Evaluation of FAO's role and work in statistics). The exception is SOFO, which was assessed in 2013 (Evaluation of FAO's role and work on Forestry).

14 Focal points were designated in each core unit at HQs (DDN, OPC, ESS, OCC, OSP) and in all ROs to facilitate consultations and channel information requests throughout the evaluation process.

Box 2: Design of the evaluation components

Component (1): Inventory and survey of knowledge products and services owners. In order to determine the extent of FAO's knowledge work and lay the foundation for an assessment of the results, a detailed inventory was conducted on FAO's knowledge products and services in collaboration with OIG15, OCC, OPC, DDN, TDs and ROs. Based on the inventory, a sample of FAO staff¹⁶ responsible for the production of publications, databases, learning resources and networks were surveyed in order to gather initial information on the process for identifying, developing and disseminating knowledge products and services, as well as on outcomes attributable to them.

Component (2): Meta-evaluation (desk review). Since 2008 OED has conducted around 25 thematic evaluations, 15 country evaluations and 90 project evaluations. Several evaluation reports were analysed in order to identify past findings, conclusions and recommendations relevant to the present evaluation. Relevant corporate policies, plans and guidance materials were also reviewed¹⁷.

Component (3): Sectoral assessments. The evaluation carried out separate assessments of FAO publications (annex 2), databases (annex 3), networks (annex 4) and learning resources (annex 5), including case studies of a select sample of FAO's knowledge products and services. The sampling strategy included: i) products and services that have a global scope and were not recently evaluated; ii) diversity in terms of types and purpose of products and services; iii) feasibility of tracing use and influence; iv) products developed as part of joint activities; and v) examples with a specific focus on gender and human rights. The selected case studies were: FAOSTAT, Global Agro-ecological Zones (GAEZ) and the Food Price Monitoring and Analysis Tool (databases); SOFI, SOFA, SOFIA and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/FAO Outlook (publications); and Forestry Technical Network, Climate Change Study Circle, Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (networks). The sectoral assessments made extensive use of the documentation review, the meta-evaluation and the inventory and survey exercises above. Cybermetric analyses (annex 6) of the FAO knowledge products and services included in the sample were also conducted.

Component (4): Survey of FAO member countries and clients. These surveys were carried out in order to gather feedback on FAO's knowledge work from key users at country level, as well as information on unmet knowledge needs. The survey of member countries was administered to all FAO members and responded by 36 countries (annex 7). The client surveys were administered to 172 core users in thirteen countries selected in consultation with all the Regional Offices and the relevant Country/Liaison Office. The countries selected¹⁸ are from all the regions, and exclude those recently subject to, or planned for, a country programme evaluation (annex 8).

2.5 Roles and responsibilities

15. The evaluation was managed and led by an evaluation officer from the Office of Evaluation (OED). Four subject matter specialists were recruited to carry out the sectoral assessments. The evaluation officer and the sectoral specialists were supported by two evaluation analysts and one evaluation assistant from OED. The cybermetric analysis was outsourced to a specialized company with experience in this type of study. The client surveys were undertaken by national consultants working under the coordination of an evaluator with experience in field research. The OED knowledge management officer played an advisory role.
16. This evaluation faced several challenges in identifying generic findings, mostly due to the broad scope and variety of the subject under evaluation, and the limited availability of data on results (see sectoral assessments for further detail). With these caveats in mind, the present report was prepared on the basis of the analyses and assessments carried out (see components 1-4 above) and seeking to respond to the evaluation questions with the data collected by the evaluation team. The report was subject to internal peer review to ensure that it met FAO/OED quality standards, and benefited from suggestions and comments from Managers and staff of the units responsible for ensuring the excellence and dissemination of FAO's knowledge products and services.

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

16 The list of FAO staff and users consulted throughout the evaluation (over 380 people) is in appendix 1.

17 The list of documents, including evaluations, reviewed (over 280) is in appendix 2.

18 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).

17. This report, together with the Management response, will be presented to the Programme Committee in November 2015 and posted on the FAO website. A brief and other dissemination materials will be prepared for targeted 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 Programme Committee in November 2017.

3. Findings

18. The main findings of the evaluation are presented below, grouped by evaluation question.

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

Finding 1. FAO's knowledge products and services are largely consistent with the Organization's mandate. There is however limited involvement of users and potential partners at the design stage, especially from key target groups such as national governments. More consistent involvement of such users and partners would further enhance the relevance of FAO's knowledge products and services.

19. The evaluation found that most databases, publications, networks and learning resources are (or are in the process of) being explicitly linked to corporate organizational outputs, including Objective 6¹⁹. Some, such as the FSN Forum, are already included in the FAO results framework²⁰. Nevertheless, there is still room for strengthening such linkages. For instance, some FAO staff consider the main objective of their networks and databases to be acting as platforms for sharing information and data, and face difficulties linking them to corporate results. In addition, field-level publications and some learning resources appear to be mostly linked to immediate (project) needs, which are not always well-aligned with organizational objectives.
20. Most knowledge products and services are reportedly based on an expressed request or need of the Member Countries. In some cases, such as the "Núcleo de Capacitación de Políticas Públicas"²¹, the learning resource responds to the demand of both national governments and FAO staff (box 3). However, a sizeable number (i.e., about one-third) of network, database, learning resources and publication owners surveyed by the evaluation indicated that their products and services are designed without user consultation and instead originated from FAO's own initiative.

Box 3: 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 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.

Source: Assessment of FAO Learning resources, 2015

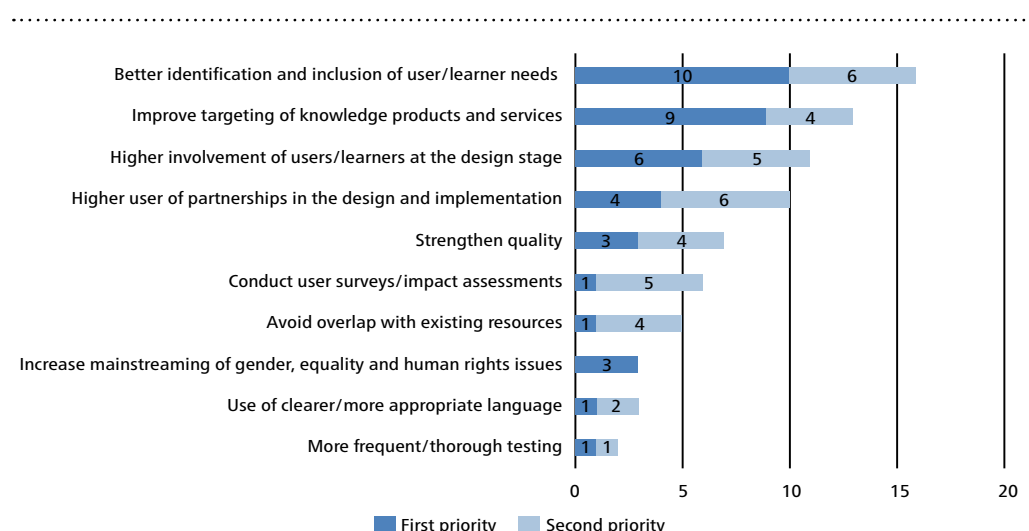
19 FAO data-related activities are aligned to, or being progressively planned under, corporate Strategic Objectives (SO1 to SO5) and/or under Objective 6 (O6). The 2015-16 planning process under O6 is reportedly putting emphasis on strengthening such linkages.

20 Under Output 10103, the 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 <http://www.fao.org/in-action/capacitacion-politicas-publicas/resumen/es/>

21. In the view of Member Countries, FAO could make its knowledge products and services more relevant by better “identifying and including users’ and learners’ needs” (figure 1).

Figure 1: Priorities to make FAO’s knowledge products and services more relevant and useful



Source: FAO Member Countries Survey, 2015

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

Finding 2. Most FAO knowledge products and services are frequently accessed and read, but some need to increase their visibility and accessibility, especially in terms of language coverage and online access. Furthermore, some knowledge products and services should be better designed and more user-oriented in order to enhance their utility.

22. The evaluation collected highly positive feedback on the utility of a sample of FAO databases and publications²², underlining their adequacy and relevance to the work of many target audiences, especially those from academia, research and international organizations. This demand is also shown by the number of visits to some products: FAOSTAT had more than 1 000 000 visits in 2014 alone, and the FAO flagship publications had between 50 000 and 200 000 per year. However, knowing that data and information is downloaded and read does not necessarily equate with it being properly designed or easily findable. Some knowledge products and services are not easily understood by, or applicable to, all sets of target users. Previous evaluations noted that some publications and learning resources²³ were inadequate for the purposes and target audiences they intended to serve. In some cases, jargon-free and purposively-adapted by-products developed as part of capacity development initiatives are *sine-qua-non* requirements to enable use (see box 4).

Box 4: The 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

²² See sectoral assessment reports.

²³ For example, in the evaluation of FAO’s work and role in Forestry, “many stakeholders criticized the majority of training guides for not being written with a clear audience in mind”.

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.

Source: Assessment of FAO Publications, 2015

23. In the case study's²⁴ surveys, the web portal's ease of use, language coverage, and user support and involvement have consistently received less positive rankings than the other usability criteria listed. According to clients and Member Countries, FAO should do more to "improve online access" and, as already noted in figure 1, "improve targeting and involvement of end-users and partners at the design stage".

3.3 How well does FAO ensure the technical excellence and quality of its knowledge products and services?

Finding 3. FAO's knowledge products and services are widely recognized for their technical excellence. The Organization provides guidance and mechanisms to ensure the quality of technical content. Some gaps exist, however, at implementation level, and when considering other factors that influence the excellence of FAO's knowledge products and services. Overall, end-users and experts have a positive opinion of (and high expectations for) the quality of FAO databases and publications. This should serve as an incentive to both strengthen and consistently apply quality assurance mechanisms for all knowledge products and services.

24. The Member Countries that responded to the evaluation questionnaire strongly agreed that FAO's knowledge products and services *provide technical excellence* (figure 2). Past evaluations and the case studies have indeed shown that users have a high regard (and expectations) for the quality of FAO databases and publications. More than 75% of the database users surveyed had a very favorable opinion of every quality criteria proposed (i.e. punctuality, timeliness, reliability and accuracy), whereas expert assessments of a sample of 472 publications gave a satisfactory score (4.3 out of 6) to the technical quality of the publications (table 1).
25. Although FAO has developed guidance and mechanisms to ensure the quality of technical content, some gaps exist, especially at implementation level. For instance, a robust Statistics Quality Assurance Framework²⁵ (SQAF) was developed in 2013, 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 SQAF has not been implemented yet due to financial constraints. Furthermore, it concentrates on only those activities under FAO's responsibility, without addressing quality at the source (i.e. improving official data).
26. According to FAO Publishing Policy²⁶, "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 review or other forms of quality assurance. Nevertheless, most of the partners consulted highlighted the need for additional external checks in order to enhance the credibility of key FAO knowledge products, such as the flagships vis-à-vis policy-makers, development partners and specialized media.
27. Finally, FAO has focused largely on ensuring the quality of technical content, while paying less attention to environmental, social and gender equality considerations. These

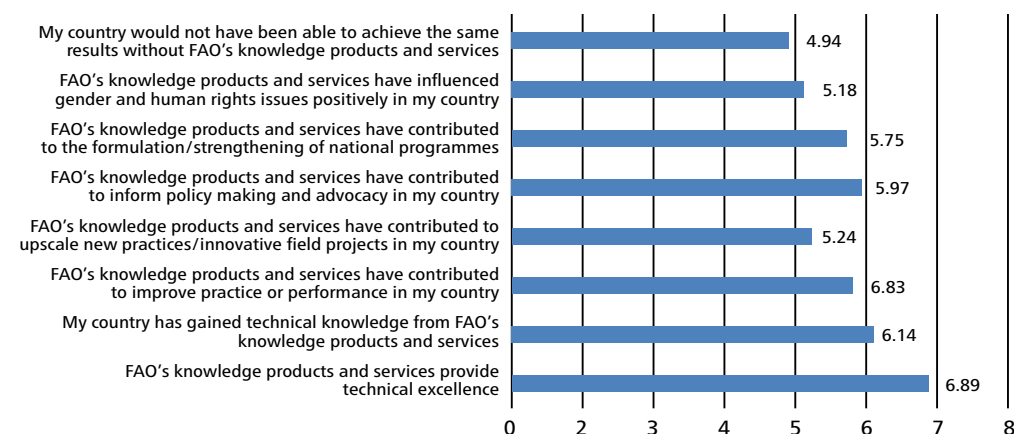
24 User support in particular is found to be weak when compared to other international organizations (e.g. World Bank). Language is a barrier to utilisation, for instance in Latin America for databases that are not yet available in Spanish (e.g. GIEWS FPMA Tool, GAEZ Data Portal).

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

26 FAO. 2013. *Publishing Policy*. Rome.

latter elements are equally important to ensuring the excellence of FAO's knowledge products and services. Some suggested measures to strengthen the credibility and comprehensiveness of FAO quality assurance measures include the establishment of independent advisory groups or panels (especially for "State of the World" flagships), and further promotion and monitoring of the application of relevant policies and guidelines²⁷ within the Organization.

Figure 2: Member Countries assessment of FAO's knowledge products and services (1: highly disagree-8: highly agree)



Source: FAO Member Countries survey, 2015

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

| Assessments | # 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) |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--|--|--|----------------------------|---|
| Evaluation Report | | | | | | | | |
| 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: Assessment of FAO publications, 2015

²⁷ Such as the FAO Environmental and Social Management Standards, available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4413e.pdf>; the FAO Gender Policy, available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3205e/i3205e.pdf>; the FAO Policy on Indigenous and Tribal People, available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1857e/i1857e00.pdf>, etc.

3.4 *How efficiently has FAO used its human and financial resources in the production and dissemination of knowledge products and services?*

Finding 4. FAO's knowledge products and services are produced in a decentralized manner, and generally operated on a shoestring budget. In particular, few resources are devoted to dissemination activities, which limit outreach to potential new users. Although cooperation with external partners has helped to cope with the lack of resources, there has been less cooperation between authoring and decentralized offices, between technical and communication experts, and among operators. Greater user-orientation as well as internal cooperation and coordination would enhance not only efficiency but also dissemination and outreach.

28. The production and dissemination of knowledge products and services in FAO is largely decentralized²⁸. Staff from TDs play a leading role in the development process, under the coordination or review of relevant committees (e.g. publications) or inter-departmental working groups (e.g. databases, networks and learning resources). Not every database, publication, network or learning resource, however, has a specific budget line to cover for their development or operational costs. With some exceptions²⁹, most FAO products and services are operated on a shoestring budget, with over half of database, publication, network and learning resource owners indicating budgets of less than USD 10 000 per year. As a result, many owners are unsatisfied with the resources at their disposal. Moreover, about one-third of owners do not have an outreach strategy³⁰ and most managers dedicate less than 10% of their time to promoting their knowledge products and services.
29. Some FAO managers work with internal and external stakeholders to pool resources for the development and dissemination of knowledge products and services that are of common interest (e.g. FAO works with the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) on GAEZ, and with OECD on the Agricultural Outlook; TDs work with DOs (and vice-versa) to establish Farmer Field Schools (see box 5).

Box 5: Farmer 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.

Source: Assessment of FAO learning resources, 2015

30. Although collaboration has increased in some ways, a more granular review shows uneven levels of cooperation overall, especially within FAO and with local partners. For instance, less than half of the databases involve DOs in dissemination and promotion activities. There also appears to be limited collaboration between technical staff and communication/knowledge management specialists, who could assist technical teams with outreach and dissemination strategies. Additionally, database and network managers could pool resources in order to lower costs and leverage synergies.

28 This means that TDs and DOs are largely free to develop knowledge products and services, following the guidance included in corporate policies, such as the 2013 Corporate Publishing Policy, and guidelines, such as the 2012 Good Learning Practices for Effective Capacity Development.

29 Only flagships classified as "Corporate Technical Areas", core databases under S06 and technical networks have earmarked budgets. The remaining are project-funded or included in the relevant S0.

30 Also noted in the Evaluation of FAO's role and work related to water.

31. Past evaluations recommended that FAO "should be more selective and give priority to quality over quantity in the planning and production of [knowledge and] normative [products]"³¹. At present, FAO is working on "standardization, improved access to and use of the FAO Document Repository, and prioritizing electronic distribution"³² as a way to streamline production of publications, and is considering measures to safeguard the development of results-oriented databases and networks. It is clear that the current situation needs to be addressed, as some knowledge products and services meet neither quality criteria nor user expectations, and remain largely unknown by target users. The efficiency of knowledge products and services could be improved by increasing the involvement of partners and target users (such as national governments, academia and the private sector), and strengthening existing coordination and planning mechanisms, including the IDWG on statistics.

3.5 Are there synergies, duplications or gaps in the knowledge products and services produced and disseminated by FAO?

Finding 5. Although there appear to be few duplications, knowledge gaps exist in some thematic areas, especially those addressing specialized topics. FAO data, analyses and learning resources are often disseminated through unrelated platforms and channels.

32. There are several stages at which synergies can be realized in the production and dissemination of knowledge products and services. As discussed in the preceding section, synergies can be achieved when operators collaborate with other FAO units or external partners to leverage their respective comparative advantages, or as a result of the joint delivery or dissemination of products and services, such as in the case of SOFA 2011-12; and the OECD/FAO Agricultural Outlook. This is an area in which FAO can do more to increase the value of its offerings, moving beyond the "silo-approach"³³ of presenting data, analyses and learning resources on unrelated platforms, by for example using new technologies to facilitate discoverability of FAO's products and services, and blending knowledge products and services with capacity development initiatives.
33. Although the thematic assessments did not find major overlaps, some discrepancies were highlighted among FAO's own databases (such as price data in FAOSTAT, FPMA and the Food Price Index), and with external sources (e.g. between FAOSTAT and external/national data providers). In terms of gaps, FAO knowledge products and services appear to cover all thematic areas under FAO's responsibility. For instance, most FAO publications and databases 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. Users and clients surveyed provided a long list of topics that need to be addressed, including knowledge gaps and discoverability of FAO's knowledge products and services.

3.6 Have FAO knowledge products and services reached the intended users and uses?

Finding 6. The extent varies to which user-groups are effectively reached by, and make effective use of, FAO's knowledge products and services. International organizations, national governments, research and academia benefit the most from FAO data and information. Country-level users, especially from developing regions with poorer internet connectivity and/or language coverage, face more problems accessing FAO data, analyses and resources, and demand context-relevant knowledge products and services.

34. The extent to which each target user is effectively reached by FAO's knowledge products and services varies, especially in developing countries. Based on the information

31 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/028/mg392e.pdf>

32 http://intranet.fao.org/fileadmin/filemanager/docs/CORPORATE_COMMUNICATION_STRATEGY_en.pdf

33 As noted in the 2014-15 FAO Statistical Programme of Work (SPW), "[internal] duplications are results of the fact that FAO datasets are constructed as independent silos each being self-contained".

collected³⁴, government staff, researchers, development partners, consultants, bloggers and media outlets appear to be the heaviest users of FAO data and information. Some learning programmes, such as the e-learning curriculum on food security, has reached more than 165 000 online learners worldwide (see box 6). However, about one-third of the country-level clients surveyed for this evaluation were often not aware of relevant FAO knowledge products and services, despite being identified as “core users”. Also, about one-quarter of the FAO staff surveyed was unable to identify the specific users of their products and services³⁵.

Box 6. E-learning curriculum on Food Security

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 workflows³⁶.

Source: Assessment of FAO learning resources, 2015

35. The extent to which FAO's wide array of knowledge products and services are being effectively used is difficult to assess. FAO data is used extensively for research and analyses. For example, 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 (see table below).

Table 3: Citations and web references of selected databases

| Knowledge Product | Owners | 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.worldbank.org | The World Bank | 353 | 191 | 21 400 | 4 752 |
| data.un.org | United Nations | 861 | 445 | 2 720 | 585 |

Source: Assessment of FAO databases, 2015

36. FAO global publications are used frequently at country level, sometimes more than regional or country specific publications, with a slight prevalence of advocacy (SOFA, policy briefs) over advisory and scientific papers (guidelines, research articles). However,

34 E.g. case studies, client surveys and cybermetric analysis.

35 This was more pronounced in databases and publications that did not require pre-registration.

36 E-learning methodologies: A guide for designing and developing e-learning courses.

publications produced by other international organizations are sometimes more used than FAO's³⁷. Users from developing countries provided in general a more favorable assessment of FAO's flagships than users from developed countries. In some cases, such as with SOFIA, there was strong uptake across the developed and developing world. However, the lack of partnerships and financial resources were often a limiting factor for the adoption of key messages.

37. Among the different types of learning resources and networks operated by FAO, those with **context-relevant content are the most demanded**. As noted in some case studies (Forestry Technical network, FSN forum), past evaluations and the client and Member Country surveys, several face-to-face learning events and online discussions³⁸ have been effective platforms for knowledge sharing.

3.7 *What outcomes have FAO's knowledge products and services achieved, or contributed to achieving?*

Finding 7. FAO knowledge products and services have contributed to enhancing technical knowledge and analyses, and strengthening the evidence base for policies and programmes. User feedback is not systematically collected, and the influence and results achieved by FAO knowledge products and services are rarely recorded, especially at organizational and policy levels.

38. As found in past evaluations, FAO data, information and learning resources are used in a range of programmes, analyses and studies on food and agriculture. According to FAO staff and Member Countries surveyed (see figure 2), the primary use of FAO's knowledge products and services is for enhancing technical knowledge. It is often not well understood, however, how the increase in knowledge has translated (in the medium-term) into better analyses and an improved evidence base for policies or programmes, or how the attitudes and practices of targeted users have changed. Very few FAO staff (one-quarter of those who responded to the surveys) regularly gather feedback from users or former trainees, and fewer still document the processes or factors that influence results at organizational/policy level (in the long-term). This is a missed opportunity for the Organization to maximize the value of its institutional knowledge and know-how (see box 6).

Box 7: Experience Capitalization in FAO

According to FAO³⁹, "Experience capitalization... is an iterative process through which an experience (with its successes and failures) is identified, valued and documented in various media... Thanks to the work of documenting and capitalizing of good practices, an organization can respond **more quickly and effectively** to different types of crises and changes that may arise." Efforts to promote capitalization of experiences at FAO are relatively recent; they formally started in 2011 under OPC⁴⁰ leadership. Some decentralized offices, such as the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RLC), have also undertaken initiatives to document successful experiences from policy and field interventions⁴¹. Several FAO counterparts met by the team in three Latin American countries (Chile, Peru and Panama) were familiar with RLC's systematization efforts⁴² under the FAO-Spain Initiative (especially the Special Programme for Food Security in Central America⁴³). Projects associated with this Initiative (such as PESA Centroamerica) reportedly benefited from "know-how" gathered through documentation of field experiences. Although FAO programmes and projects are expected to incorporate "lessons learned from past and related

37 One of the best performers, SOFA 2011-12 "Women in agriculture", was cited 20 times in Scopus. Comparable publications were cited six to three times more (The World Development Report 2012 on Gender Equality and Development was cited 134, and IFAD's Rural Poverty Report was cited 65 times, respectively).

38 Online and face-to-face discussions have been key drivers behind the growth of some FAO-supported networks. In the case of e-agriculture, membership went from 3 640 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 5 years.

39 FAO, 2013. Good Practices at FAO: Experience capitalization for continuous learning. External concept note. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/ap784e/ap784e.pdf>

40 OPC has developed learning modules, and supported the identification, dissemination and application of "good practices" at country and regional level as well as the holding of share fairs at HQ and field locations.

41 <http://www.fao.org/in-action/programa-espana-fao/lineas-de-trabajo/conocimiento-comunicacion/en/>

42 E.g. Colombia. Huertas familiares: Experiencia de Seguridad Alimentaria en el marco de la política pública municipal; Honduras. Apoyo a la mejora de los ingresos familiares a través de Huertos Urbanos (unpublished)

43 <http://www.fao.org/in-action/pesa-centroamerica/es/>

work" in their design⁴⁴, there is no consistent application of experience capitalization methods to capture such knowledge⁴⁵; nor are there easily accessible depositories in which to store and/or consult such information. FAO should take better advantage of its institutional knowledge, especially for advice on governance and policy issues.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

39. The analysis in the preceding sections examined several aspects of FAO support to Member Countries' development goals through the production and dissemination of knowledge products and services. Drawing from these findings, this chapter presents key conclusions and recommendations that are especially relevant to the work of FAO under O6 (technical quality, knowledge and services) and O8 (outreach).

4.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. FAO produces a broad range of knowledge products and services, which largely respond to the Organization's mandate and Member Countries' requests. Several are widely recognized and appreciated, such as the statistical databases. Some however, could be even better tailored to the specific needs of their target audiences. Also, not enough is done to ensure users' easiness of access to, awareness of and satisfaction with FAO's knowledge products and services, or to document and capitalize on successful experiences.

40. FAO's knowledge products and services are progressively being aligned to contribute to FAO's strategic objectives⁴⁶. However, users and partners are not consistently involved in the development process, and they are not provided with adequate support. This results in some FAO products and services being difficult to find and use, and therefore remaining unknown to key potential users. There are several knowledge gaps and unmet needs among FAO users, as well as increasing demand for context-specific knowledge products and services, especially to address capacity development and governance/policy issues.
41. At the same time, there has been an explosion of data and information sources in the past few years, which has increased the options available to prospective users and learners. Although FAO still has a privileged place as a provider of relevant knowledge on food and agriculture (especially in developing countries), without a more strategic approach to the creation and dissemination of knowledge it could lose its place as a reference centre. Currently, most knowledge products and services are created with limited budgets and are underfunded with respect to dissemination, user support and experience capitalization mechanisms.

Conclusion 2. FAO data and information are used to improve the relevance of research and analyses, and to support evidence-based decision making in governments and international organizations. However, quality assurance procedures are applied inconsistently.

42. Several FAO products, such as FAOSTAT and many flagship publications, have millions of visitors each year and are widely cited and referred to in academic publications, websites and the media. Clients and partners worldwide turn to FAO for specialized and high-quality advice. However, there is inconsistent application of quality standards, which poses a potential reputational risk to the Organization.
43. To facilitate their application, quality standards must be tailored to the needs and characteristics of the different types and purposes of FAO knowledge products and services. For example, the value of databases resides in their accuracy and methodological standardization. Publications instead rely on robust data, a clear and well-structured

44 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/ap105e/ap105e.pdf>

45 A review of twelve large projects undertaken in developing countries selected for the client surveys (as well as in Peru and Ecuador) showed that only one-quarter incorporated in their design institutional know-how from previous projects, and made provisions to share and document lessons learned.

46 FAO work planning for 2016-17, which has started at the country level by identifying country results which express country priorities, opens up the possibility to address concrete country needs during the design of new knowledge products and services.

presentation, and most importantly, the credible analysis and interpretation of facts. The latter requires intellectual capacity and innovative thinking. Thus the value of external reviews, advisory panels and other forms of human interaction to ensure the excellence of technical work and analyses.

4.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1. FAO could pay greater attention to users' and learners' needs, as well as the potential for improving ease of use and expanding the resources' influence to a broader audience.

44. Better assessing user's and learners' needs: FAO produces a wide range of knowledge products and services. Some are produced in response to global commitments and demands, such as the statistical databases and flagships, whereas others (especially at country level) are geared towards emerging or immediate knowledge needs. The diversity in the objectives, capacities, and means of the potential recipients of FAO knowledge products and services is very broad. At present, not enough is being done to assess users' and learners' needs, which is a limiting factor for their use.
45. Improving user experience: Some users look for different sets of data and information, which they expect to find with the minimum amount of effort. Others do not have time to search or are not aware of what FAO can offer; and even when they are aware, they require additional support to translate the knowledge gained into concrete actions. FAO may consider anchoring future online dissemination efforts on FAOSTAT, one of its most successful platforms, and facilitate greater discoverability and use of its knowledge products and services by providing greater user support and by "blending" dissemination activities with capacity development and experience capitalization initiatives.
46. Developing a corporate vision for FAO knowledge products and services: In an era of data and information overload, FAO should consider developing a corporate vision outlining how it intends to position itself to ensure that it continuously meets emerging and changing user needs and expectations, and facilitate accessibility and findability of its different products and services. Such a vision should also describe how the Agency will support users' capacities and skills to enable maximum use of FAO's data and analyses, and that the products and services disseminated by the Organization benefit from institutional knowledge.

Recommendation 2: FAO should continue to strengthen the mechanisms and measures in place to ensure technical excellence of its knowledge products and services.

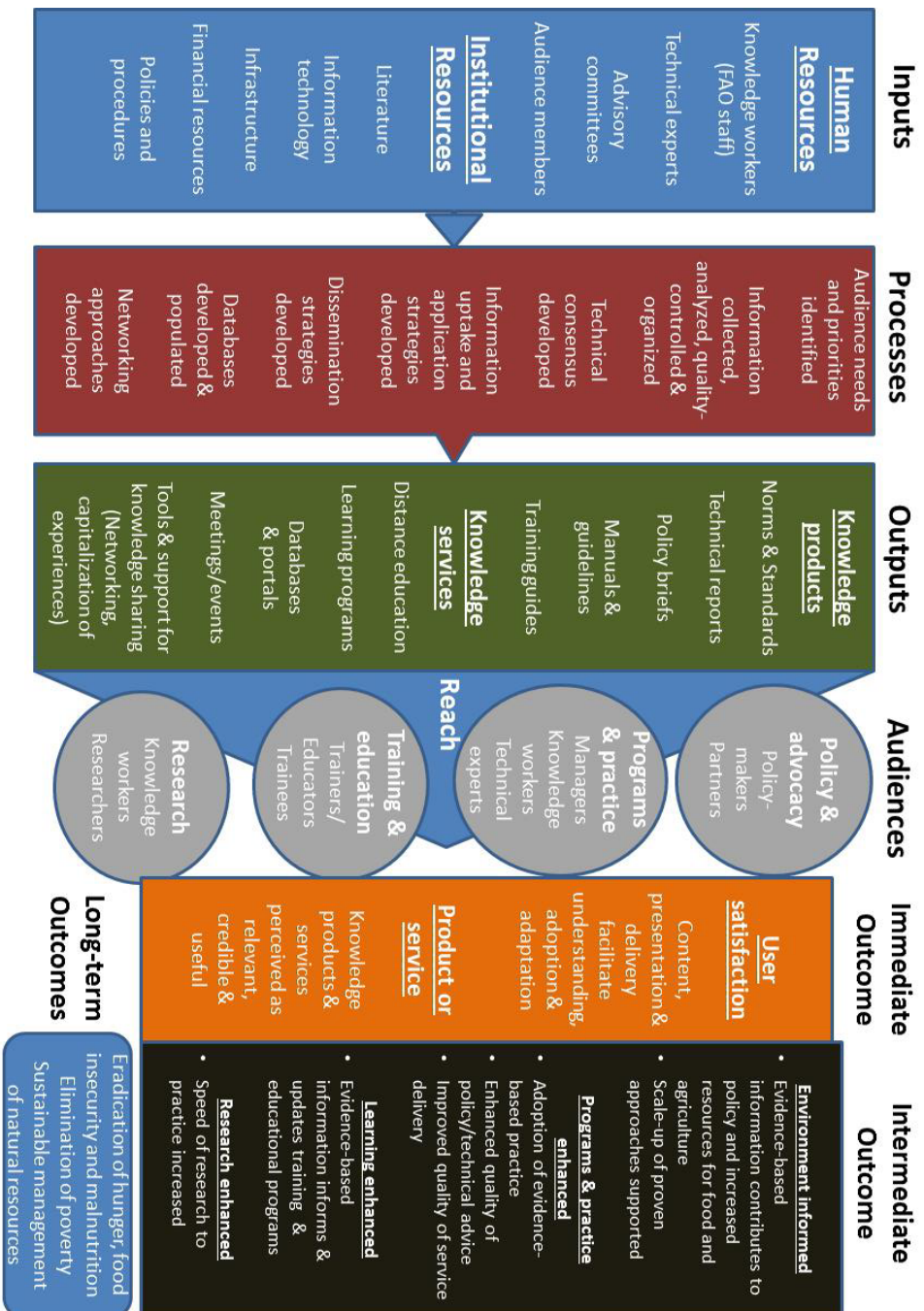
47. Improving quality standards: Building on the policies and guidelines that already exist for databases and learning resources, FAO should develop tailored guidance for quality assurance of publications. These guidelines should take into account the different types and scopes of FAO knowledge products and consider not only the quality and integrity of technical content, but also other factors that influence the excellence of FAO's knowledge, such as their consideration of environmental and social standards, equity and local/indigenous issues.
48. Strengthening the implementation of quality assurance systems: FAO should strengthen the existing mechanisms to ensure technical excellence. In particular, it should pursue the implementation of the quality assurance framework that already exists for databases and consider strengthening the role of the Chief Statistician to enable the effective application of the framework. Similarly, it should strengthen its efforts to promote the application of good learning and publishing practices throughout the Organization. The newly established technical networks could support awareness of and compliance by promoting the adoption of relevant policies and standards. Guidance on how best FAO networks can fulfil this role is needed.

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Appendix 1: Theory of Change



Appendix 2: List of people consulted

General

1. **Adnan Quereshi**, Senior Administrative Officer, FAO/RAP
2. **Alhaja Allow**, FAO Representative, Uganda
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4. **Alexandrova Nevena**, Agricultural Research and Biotechnology Officer, FAO/REU
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12. **Dominique Burgeon**, Director, TCE – SO5 Coordinator, FAO
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20. **Halka Otto**, Senior Adviser, DDND, FAO
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29. **Laurent Thomas**, Assistant Director General, FAO
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32. **Maria Helena H.Q. Semedo**, Deputy Director General (Natural Resources), FAO
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34. **Mark McGuire**, Programme Coordinator, ESD, FAO

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38. **Moujahed Achouri**, Director NRL, FAO
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Databases - general

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60. **Vatter Rubio Andres**, Legal Officer, Legal Division (LEG), FAO
61. **Vos Rob**, Director, Social Protection Division (ESP), FAO

Databases - case studies

FAOSTAT

62. **Avina Cervantes Francisco Luis**, SEMARNAT INECC, Mexico
63. **Diakosavvas Dimitris**, Senior Agricultural Policy Analyst, TAD/EP, OECD, France
64. **Eshragh-Tabary Mahyar**, Statistical Officer, Development Economics, The World Bank
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- 66. **Grylle Magnus**, Information Systems Officer, FAO
- 67. **Heyman Amy**, Statistician & Team Leader Dissemination Team (ESS), FAO
- 68. **Katz Steve**, Senior Coordinator for Statistics Governance (ESS), FAO
- 69. **Lebedys Arvydas**, Forestry Officer, FAO
- 70. **Mertens Esther**, GHG Inventory Officer CD-REDD, Coalition for Rainforest Nations, Italy
- 71. **Schmidhuber Josef**, Deputy Director Statistics Division (ESS), FAO
- 72. **Tabbara Hadi**, Consultant, Agriculture, Climate Change and Water Resources, Lebanon

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- 73. **Achouri Moujahed**, Director, Land and Water Division (NRL), Natural Resources Management and Environment Department, FAO
- 74. **Boffa Jean Marc**, Researcher and Agro-forestry consultant
- 75. **Cumani Renato**, Environment Officer, Land and Water Division (NRL), Natural Resources Management and Environment Department, FAO
- 76. **Fischer Guenther**, Senior Research Scholar, IIASA
- 77. **García-Galindo Daniel**, Project Manager, CIRCE. Research Centre for Energy Resources and Consumption, Natural Resources Area, BERA Group
- 78. **Latham John**, Senior Land and Water Officer (Geospatial Systems), Land and Water Division (NRL), Natural Resources Management and Environment Department, FAO
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- 80. **Monteduro Patrizia**, Metadata and Information Expert, Land and Water Division (NRL), Natural Resources Management and Environment Department, FAO
- 81. **Pradhan Prajal**, Researcher, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research
- 82. **Tian Zhan**, Head of climate change division, Shanghai Climate Center
- 83. **van Velthuis Harrij**, Associate, IIASA

GIEWS/FPMA

- 84. **Ahmed Shukri**, Senior Economist, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
- 85. **Alderighi Cristina**, Consultant, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
- 86. **Balbil Liliana**, Senior Economist, Team Leader Trade and Markets Division, FAO
- 87. **Baquedano Felix**, Economist, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
- 88. **Ben Belhassen Boubaker**, Director, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
- 89. **Calpe Concepcion**, Senior Commodity Specialist, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
- 90. **Contreras Shirly**, Agricultural & Commercial Information Assistant, Ministry of Agriculture, Guatemala
- 91. **Cuesta Leiva Jose Antonio**, Senior Economist, Poverty Practice, World Bank
- 92. **Flaemig Tobias**, Market Analyst, Economic & Market Analysis Unit, Analysis and Nutrition Service (OSZAF), WFP Rome
- 93. **King Richard**, Policy Research Adviser, Oxfam GB
- 94. **Kornher Lukas**, Researcher, Center for Development Research, University of Bonn

- 95. **Li Yanyun**, Data management Specialist, Trade and Markets Division, FAO
- 96. **Morales Cristian**, Economist, Agricultural Development Economics Division, FAO
- 97. **Myburgh James**, Editor & Publisher, Politicsweb.co.za
- 98. **Pérez Nery**, Agricultural Policies Officer, Ministry of Agriculture, Guatemala
- 99. **Pineda Iram**, Responsible Officer – Market Information, Ministry of Agriculture, Guatemala
- 100. **Racionzer Paul**, Agricultural Economist, FAO

Publications – General

- 101. **Anibaldi Stefano**, Knowledge and Information Management Officer, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RLC), FAO
- 102. **Arvanti Myrto**, Publishing Officer, Office for Corporate Communication (OCC), FAO
- 103. **Chisenga Justin**, Information Management Specialist, Regional Office for Africa (RAF), FAO
- 104. **Evans Patrick**, Representative, FAO Pakistan
- 105. **Gallagher Kevin**, Agricultural Officer, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP), FAO
- 106. **Hayat Nasar**, Assistant FAO Representative, FAO Pakistan
- 107. **Lubetkin Mario**, Director, Office for Corporate Communication (OCC), FAO
- 108. **Morgan Virginija**, Communications Officer, FAO Pakistan
- 109. **Nursinghdass Chaya**, Internal Auditor, Office of the Inspector General (OiG), FAO
- 110. **Peña Pedro**, Representative, FAO Ecuador
- 111. **Preissing John**, Representative, FAO Peru
- 112. **Quereshi Adnan**, Senior Administrative Officer, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP), FAO
- 113. **Ramirez Daniel**, Principal Auditor, Office of the Inspector General (OiG), FAO
- 114. **Servan Fernando**, Chief, Office for Corporate Communication (OCC), FAO
- 115. **Toha Juan**, Communications Officer, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RLC), FAO

Publications – case studies

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

- 116. **Arvaniti Myrto**, Communication Officer, OCC, FAO
- 117. **Coonrod John**, Executive Vice President, The Hunger Project
- 118. **Crowley Eve**, Deputy Regional Representative (former Deputy Director Gender Division), Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, FAO
- 119. **Goldstein Markus**, Lead Economist, Africa Region and Research Group, World Bank
- 120. **Grown Caren**, Senior Gender Specialist, World Bank
- 121. **Gustafsson Dan**, Deputy Director General, Operations (former Director, Liaison Office in the US), FAO
- 122. **Hartl Maria**, Senior Technical Specialist Gender and Social Equity, IFAD

- 123. **Kendrik Michelle**, Communication Officer, ES Department, FAO
- 124. **Meinzen-Dick Ruth**, Senior Research Fellow, IFPRI
- 125. **Raney Terri**, Senior Economist, Editor, The State of Food and Agriculture, Agricultural Development Economics Division (ESA), FAO
- 126. **Skoet Jakob**, Economist, ESA, FAO
- 127. **Stamoulis Kostas**, ESA Director, FAO
- 128. **Villareal Marcella**, OPC Director (former Director Gender Division), FAO

State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI)

- 129. **Arvaniti Myrto**, Communication Officer, OCC, FAO
- 130. **Bahalim Ammad**, Senior Consultant, Global Health Visions
- 131. **Byerlee Derek**, Consultant, World Bank
- 132. **Conforti Piero**, Senior Statistician, ESS, FAO
- 133. **Dawe David**, Senior Economist, RAP, FAO
- 134. **de Haen Hartwig**, University of Göttingen
- 135. **El-Helepi Medhat**, Regional Integration and Trade Division, Food Security, Agriculture and Land Section, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
- 136. **Gennari Pietro**, Director, ESS, FAO
- 137. **Green Duncan**, Senior Strategic Adviser, Oxfam House
- 138. **Kendrick Michelle**, Communication and Publications Coordinator, ESD, FAO
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- 143. **Stamoulis Kostas**, Director, ESA, FAO
- 144. **Sundaram Jomo**, ADG, ESD
- 145. **Willis Roxana**, Statistician, Editorial Research, The Economist
- 146. **Yarnall Kaitlin**, Deputy Creative Director, National Geographic

State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA)

- 147. **Ababouch Lahsen**, Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Economics Division, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
- 148. **Belal Emma**, Directeur des Pêches, de l'Aquaculture et des Industries Halieutiques, Ministère de l'Élevage, des Pêches et des Industries Animales (MINEPIA), Yaoundé, Cameroun
- 149. **Bertrand Jacques**, Directeur Adjoint, Département Ressources Biologiques et Environnement, IFREMER
- 150. **Farmer Tina**, Editor, Communications and Publications, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
- 151. **Grainger Richard**, Consultant, FAO
- 152. **Mathiesen Arni**, Assistant Director-General, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department (FI)

- 153. Plummer Julian**, Publications Coordinator, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
- 154. 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
- 155. Schmidt Carl-Christian**, Head of the Fisheries Policies Division, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, OECD
- 156. Soesilo Indroyono**, Director, Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use and Conservation Division, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
- 157. Soomai Suzuette S.**, Intern, PhD. Candidate, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
- 158. Subasinghe Rohana**, Chief, Agriculture Branch, Fisheries and Aquaculture Resources Use and Conservation Division, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
- 159. Taconet Marc**, Chief, Fishery Statistics and Information Branch (FIPS), Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Economics Division, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO
- 160. Tsuji Sachiko**, Senior Fishery Statistician, FIPS, Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy and Economics Division, Fisheries and Aquaculture Department, FAO

The OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook

- 161. Arias Pedro**, Economist (Commodities), EST, FAO
- 162. Ben Belhassen Boubaker**, Director, EST, FAO
- 163. Brooks Jonathan**, Head of Agro-food Trade and Markets Division, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, OECD
- 164. Charlebois Pierre**, Consultant, Canada
- 165. Davies Grant**, Economic Advisor, Agricultural Outlook & Projections, International Evidence and Analysis, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, UK
- 166. Hallam David**, Former Director, EST, FAO
- 167. Helaine Sophie**, Unit E2 - Agricultural modelling and Outlook, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission
- 168. Matthey Holger**, Economist, EST, FAO
- 169. Tallard Grégoire**, Agro-economist, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, OECD
- 170. Wensley Mitchel**, Economist, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

CODEX Guidelines for Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance

- 171. Aidara-Kane Awa**, Coordinator Foodborne and Zoonotic Diseases, Department of Food Safety and Zoonoses, Health Security and Environment (HSE), WHO
- 172. Bruno Annamaria**, Senior Food Standards Officer, Secretariat, Codex Alimentarius Commission, Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme
- 173. Bullon Carmen**, Legal Officer, Legal and Ethics Office (LEG), FAO
- 174. Clarke Renata**, Senior Food Safety and Quality Officer, Food Safety and Quality Unit (AGND), FAO
- 175. Erlacher-Vindel Elisabeth**, Deputy Head, Scientific and Technical Department, OIE
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Networks - general

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- 194. **Varas Samuel**, Director, CIO, FAO

Networks - Case study/boxes

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- 210. **Yazici Ekrem**, Deputy Chief, FAO/UNECE Joint Forestry and Timber Section, FAO

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- 216. Livinets Svetlana**, FSN Forum consultant, ESA, FAO
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- 220. Marras Stefano**, University of Milan
- 221. Lama Kanchan**, WOCAN, Nepal
- 222. Botir Dosov**, CACAARI and CGIAR, Uzbekistan

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- 224. Brossard Francine**, CEPAL (on REDAGROCHILE)

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Learning Resources - General

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- 229. de la Rosa Cecilia**, Capacity Development Officer, OPC, FAO
- 230. Jasinski Helene**, Senior Human Resources Officer, CSPL, FAO
- 231. Kalas Patrick**, Capacity Development Officer, OPC, FAO
- 232. Nadeau Andrew**, Senior Capacity Development Officer, OPC, FAO
- 233. Villareal Marcela**, Director, OPC, FAO

Learning Resources – Boxes

Farmer Field Schools

Non-FAO

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248. **Settle William**, Project Manager, AGP, FAO
249. **Poisot Anne-Sophie**, Technical Officer, AGPM, FAO
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Nucleo de Capacitacion en Políticas Públicas

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Experience capitalization

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255. **Alberto Bigi**, JPO Riesgos, FAO/SLC
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262. **Carlos Pulgarín**, JPO Pesca y Acuicultura, FAO/SLC
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265. **Christian Garay**, Director General - Monitoring and Evaluation of Policies, Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation Peru
266. **Christine Chaperon**, Senior Programme Coordinator, FAO
267. **Claudia Vargas**, Oficial de Comunicación, FAO/SLC
268. **Covadonga Juez**, Comunicadora del proyecto Agrocadenas Centroamérica , FAO/SLC
269. **Dalia Mattioni**, SO4 Strategic Planning Consultant, FAO
270. **Deyanira Barrero**, Animal health Consultant, FAO/RLC
271. **Domenico Gargamo**, Oficial Técnico, FAO/SLC
272. **Duclair Sternadt**, Partnership Officer, FAO/RLC
273. **Emma Siliprandi**, Consultant, FAO/RLC
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275. **Fanny Montellanos**, Consultant GCP/RLA/193/BRA, FAO/RLC
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282. **Jessica Casaza**, Plant Protection Consultant, FAO/RLC
283. **John Jorgensen**, Oficial Pesca y Acuicultura, FAO/SLC
284. **Jose Ayala**, Consultor Gobernanza, FAO/SLC
285. **Juan Luis Márquez**, Consultor Proyecto de apoyo al incremento en la producción lechera de Panamá, FAO/SLC
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287. **Kristin Kolshus**, Information Management Specialist, FAO
288. **Lars Marklund**, Oficial Forestal, FAO/SLC
289. **Laura Meza**, Climate Change Consultant, FAO/RLC
290. **Lavinia Lucarelli**, Strategic Planning and Monitoring Consultant, FAO
291. **Lucila Quintana**, National Convention of Peruvian Agriculture (CONVEAGRO)
292. **Luis Lobo**, Technical Officer, FAO/RLC
293. **Luis Pinto**, Coord. Proyecto Indígena Panamá, FAO/SLC
294. **María Acosta**, JPO Género, FAO/SLC
295. **Oscar Aquino**, National Center for Food and Nutrition (CENAN) Peru
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297. **Roberto De Andrade**, Fisheries and Aquaculture Consultant, FAO/RLC

- 298. **Rodrigue Vinet**, Senior Programme Officer, FAO
- 299. **Roger Argueta**, Comunicador del PESA, FAO/SLC
- 300. **Sara Troesch**, Coord. Proyecto Iniciativas Empresariales Panamá, FAO/SLC
- 301. **Soledad Bernuy**, Peruvian Agency for International Cooperation (APCI)
- 302. **Sophie Treinen**, Knowledge/Information Management Officer, FAO
- 303. **Sylvie Wabbes**, Liaison and Operations Officer - SO5 member, FAO
- 304. **Tania Santivañez**, Plant Protection Officer, FAO/RLC
- 305. **Vera Boerger**, Oficial Tierras y Agua, FAO/SLC
- 306. **Wahgorn Claudio**, Coordinator Development Area, Ministry of Economy - Chile

Client Surveys (Papua New Guinea, Uganda, Zambia and Panama only)

- 307. **Virginia González**, National Association for Reforestation and Associates, Panama
- 308. **Xalteva Zúñiga**, Nutritionist, Patronato de Nutrición, Panama
- 309. **Osiros Obrego**, CARITAS Panama
- 310. **Luis C. Mejía**, Institute of Scientific Research and High Level Technologies, Panama
- 311. **Gloria Olave**, Agricultural Research Institute of Panama
- 312. **Juan Jované**, Economist, Panama University
- 313. **Julio Lara**, Agricultural Research Institute of Panama (IDIAP)
- 314. **José M. Miselén**, DPN/PAN
- 315. **Eucaris Sáez**, Agricultural Development Bank of Panama (BDA)
- 316. **Karina Lince**, National Environment Authority (ANAM), Panama
- 317. **Ema de Caballero**, Ministry of Health (MINSA) Panama
- 318. **Eleonor Cárdenas**, Agricultural Development Bank of Panama (BDA)
- 319. **Arlene Villalaz**, United State Department of Agriculture (USDA), Panama
- 320. **Axel Villalobos**, Director, Agricultural Research Institute of Panama (IDIAP)
- 321. **Daniel Rangel**, National Secretary for the Food Security and Nutrition Plan (SENAPAN), Panama
- 322. **John Kendiga**, Acting Director, Policy Unit, Department of Agriculture and Livestock - Papua New Guinea
- 323. **Brown Konabe**, Director -Food Security Branch, Department of Agriculture and Livestock - Papua New Guinea
- 324. **Brian Wapi**, Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Department of Agriculture and Livestock - Papua New Guinea
- 325. **Merre D Unagi**, Monitoring and Evaluation Branch, Department of Agriculture and Livestock - Papua New Guinea
- 326. **Mika Andrew**, Senior Land Use Officer, Department of Agriculture and Livestock - Papua New Guinea
- 327. **Ruth Turia**, Director - Forest Policy & Planning Directorate, Papua New Guinea National Forestry Authority
- 328. **David Mowbray**, University of Papua New Guinea
- 329. **Augustine Mungkaje**, Associate Professor - Biology Discipline, University of Papua New Guinea

330. **Osia Gideon**, Associate Professor - Biology Discipline, University of Papua New Guinea
331. **Reuben Sengere**, Agronomist, Coffee Industry Corporation Papua New Guinea
332. **Wandamu Palau**, Research Associate – Livestock, National Agricultural Research Institute Papua New Guinea
333. **Peter C Dam**, Technical Advisor - National Level Program, FORCERT Papua New Guinea
334. **Gae Gowae**, Senior Lecturer - Environmental Science & Geography, University of Papua New Guinea
335. **Nime Kapo**, Chief Veterinary Officer, National Agricultural Quarantine and Inspection Authority Papua New Guinea
336. **Ghulam Ali Baloch**, Commissioner Sibi (former secretary forest), Divisional government Balochistan Pakistan
337. **Khalid Naeem**, Chief Scientific Officer, Animal Sciences Institute - Pakistan
338. **Uzair Ahson**, Assistant Professor, Government College University Lahore - Pakistan
339. **Anwar Sheikh**, Director General Agriculture Research - Pakistan
340. **Wajid Pirzada**, Executive Director Safwco Foundation - Pakistan
341. **Donneth Walton**, Principal Natural Resources Officer, Asian Development Bank - Pakistan
342. **Mohammad Munir**, Food Security Expert, ACTED - Pakistan
343. **Ali Akbar Somrow**, Director General, Livestock and Fisheries Department - Pakistan
344. **Wasim Khan**, Project Manager, Marine Fisheries Department - Pakistan
345. **A.Q. Mughal**, Vice Chancellor, Sindh Agriculture University - Pakistan
346. **Salahuddin Ayubi**, Assistant Professor, Foreman Christian College - Pakistan
347. **Asad Khan**, Monitoring and Evaluation Focal Point, Planning and Development Board, Punjab Gvernemnt - Pakistan
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373. **Elizabeth Kiboneka**, Consultant Pediatrician, Mulago Hospital Complex
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