
The FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) is launching the FAO South Sudan Response Evaluation and is seeking applications for various positions in the Evaluation Team.

Country Background

On 15 December 2013, violence broke out in South Sudan’s capital Juba, quickly spreading to Jonglei, Unity and Upper Nile states. To date, more than 2 million people fled their homes as a result of violence, including 1.55 million people internally and 552,000 refugees in neighbouring states. In the absence of a viable peace agreement or respect for the 23 January 2014 Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, conflict has raged unchecked in many parts of Greater Upper Nile.

People across South Sudan are struggling to manage the consequences and implications of multiple crises: political, economic and social. Even before the current crises, South Sudan was characterized by low human development indicators, nascent institutions, government austerity, and fundamentally non-existent transport infrastructure.

In 2015, violence and displacement had catastrophic effects on food security. The livelihoods of millions of people have been grossly disrupted: crops have not been planted, livestock are dislocated and traders have fled. In a country of some 11.6 million people, 7.9 million are expected to face food insecurity this rainy season (IPC levels 2, 3 and 4), including 3.3 million people in “stressed” food insecurity who will resort to negative coping strategies such as selling assets, skipping meals or foregoing health care. Some 4.6 million people are already facing “crisis” and “emergency” levels of food insecurity (IPC levels 3 and 4).

This represents an increase of 720,000 more people than the same period in 2014 and 3 million more people compared to July 2013. Critically, over one million people will be in IPC level 4, one level away from the combined levels of food insecurity, malnutrition and mortality that characterize famine. In half of the country, nutrition surveys indicate levels of global acute malnutrition in excess of the emergency threshold. Moreover, an estimated 610,000 people living in poverty in urban areas will be negatively impacted by economic stress.

FAO Response

After the events of December 2013 and the L3 declaration, the FAO Country Office revised its priorities to better adapt the programme to the new challenges. FAO’s response programme nests inside the previous assistance framework addressing immediate and medium-term needs in terms of food availability and accessibility, as well as taking into
account the long-term priorities for the country. FAO developed the Emergency Livelihood Response Programme (ELRP) to tackle the needs of different livelihood groups affected by the crisis, such as livestock owners, farmers, fisher-folk and urban populations, through a series of strategic multi-sectorial interventions.

In 2015, FAO continued to assist vulnerable households in all ten states of South Sudan by distributing livelihood kits (containing crop seeds, vegetable seeds and/or fishing equipment) with the aim of boosting food security and protecting the livelihoods of vulnerable households. FAO’s Programme takes into account the increased pressure caused by large numbers of displaced persons on natural resources and the environment and aimed to introduce practices and technologies, such as fuel efficient stoves, that minimize the consequences of such pressure.

Under the emergency pillar, FAO South Sudan is also addressing some of the consequences of non-traditional livestock migratory movements on food security and livelihoods, including increased animal mortality, loss of livestock assets, and reduction of livestock production. To do so, FAO is scaling up vaccination and treatment activities, improving availability of milk, and building the capacity of the partners operating in the sector.

In addition, FAO South Sudan continued its development programme. FAO’s ELRP includes resilience-oriented transitional activities creating linkages with FAO’s ongoing development projects. FAO South Sudan’s immediate objectives for development include: increasing market-oriented production and productivity, strengthening farmer-based organizations, and improving access to rural financial services for vulnerable farmers, herders and fisher-folk.

In 2014, with a budget of USD 62 million, FAO supported the livelihoods of more than 400,000 households, as well as vaccinated and treated more than 1.5 million animals. For the 2015 season, FAO has already dispatched more than 200,000 livelihoods kits (crop, vegetable and fishing kits), more than 10,000 Fuel Efficient Stoves, as well as vaccinated and treated 2.5 million livestock. By the end of the 2015 programme, FAO South Sudan aims to target 470,000 households and 6 million animals.

Evaluation

During May and June 2015, OED conducted a project evaluation of the “Agriculture and Food Information System” (AFIS) project in South Sudan and a qualitative impact assessment looking at the preliminary impact of FAO’s emergency activities on livelihoods and coping strategies of targeted beneficiaries.

The South Sudan Response Evaluation will focus on the results achieved by FAO in the response, using the following over-arching questions:

- Is FAO doing the right things vis-à-vis the national context, needs and priorities; FAO values and FAO’s comparative advantages?
- Is FAO making a difference considering its strategy and the achieved outcomes/results from its Response Programme?
The FAO South Sudan Response Evaluation will cover selected areas of FAO’s programme and a range of cross-cutting issues, building upon the findings of the aforementioned evaluations. The evaluation will aim to assess FAO’s performance in responding to the crisis in South Sudan, both looking at the 2014 and 2015 response plans. In particular, the evaluation will focus on:

- **Coordination** – Looking at the role of FAO as co-leader of the Food Security Cluster, and as part of the broader humanitarian architecture, both at national and state levels. Moreover, the evaluation will assess to what extent FAO projects have been coordinated with the work of other stakeholders involved in the response.
- **Connectedness and Coherence** – Assessing the coherence of FAO development strategy and looking at possible synergies between the emergency activities and the long-term projects.
- **Relevance** – Building upon the information collected from the impact assessment, the evaluation will aim to assess the appropriateness and timeliness of both FAO emergency and development projects.
- **Efficiency** – The evaluation will look at the systems and procedures FAO South Sudan put in place to implement the emergency programme – it will include the FAO work with the partners, the air operations and the projects directly implemented by FAO.
- **Cross-cutting issues** – The evaluation will assess to what extent gender issues have been mainstreamed and considered in FAO programme. The evaluation will look also at effectiveness of the capacity development activities carried out within the emergency programme. Lastly, the partnership relations will be reviewed in order to assess their efficacy and identify areas for improvement.

The evaluation will require also an analysis of the political economy of South Sudan and the relationship between agricultural activities and conflict in the country.

**Timeframe**

The engagement in the evaluation activities will start in September 2015 until February 2016, with an inception and/or main mission (main commitment) between November and December 2015, with some degree of flexibility, especially for the Lead Evaluator. The evaluation will require around 60 working days - including travel and work at home-station; the applicants are invited to submit their availability in the proposed timeframe in their application.

**Evaluation Team**

The Evaluation will be conducted by a multidisciplinary team of independent experts, national and international. Gender equity and geographical balance will be pursued in so far as possible in the team composition, to ensure diversity of perspectives. Good knowledge of the country and experience in managing/evaluating humanitarian responses in the context of complex emergencies will be important.

OED is currently seeking applications for the following posts:
- A **Lead Evaluator** with good experience in conducting complex evaluation, at least 15 years of experience in the humanitarian sector, and knowledge of the East African region.
- An **agricultural** expert, with experience in agricultural projects in emergency settings, capacity building and crop production in Africa.
- A **livestock** expert with proven experience in working in the East African region and excellent knowledge of pastoralist systems.
- An expert in **cash transfer** modalities, with in-depth knowledge of the operational challenges and most recent debates, especially in relation to the implementation of Cash programmes in complex settings.
- An **operations** expert, with particular responsibility for issues relating to programme operations and coordination of the emergency food security sector.

**How to apply**

International and national experts with expertise in one or more of the technical areas indicated above and experience in undertaking independent evaluations of complex programmes are invited to apply.

Please send your application with your CV, expected daily fee rate (exclusive of expenses), and availability between September and December 2015 to giacomo.laracca@fao.org by the 14th of July 2015.