



Food and Agriculture Organization of
the United Nations

Bioenergy and Food Security Rapid Assessment tool (GCP/GLO/357/GER)

Management Response

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Office of Evaluation (OED)

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For further information on this report, please contact:

*Director, OED
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 1, 00153
Rome, Italy
Email: evaluation@fao.org*

Management response to the Evaluation of the project Bioenergy and Food Security Rapid Assessment tool (GCP/GLO/357/GER)

1 Overall response to the evaluation

The Project Management Team based in NRC welcomes the positive evaluation contained in the Final Evaluation report, prepared for the “Bioenergy and Food Security Rapid Assessment tool - GCP/GLO/357/GER” Trust Fund project, and finds it informative and comprehensive. The Team congratulates the evaluators for the evaluation despite the complexity of the topic and the tight timelines

The global demand for bioenergy, and especially liquid biofuels, has been rapidly growing, driven mainly by climate change mitigation and energy security policies, and increasing oil prices. This can create both opportunities and risks for developing countries, with possible repercussions on food security.

In order to ensure that modern bioenergy development is sustainable and fosters rural development and food security, these opportunities and risks need to be properly considered when a bioenergy policy is designed or revised. In particular, the viability and sustainability of different biofuel development pathways, and the resulting effects on food security, need to be thoroughly assessed by policy makers.

At the country level, policies should build on country level evidence that can assist in understanding if and which bioenergy might be viable given the country context and for which energy purposes. FAO under the Bioenergy and Food Security projects has dedicated much effort and resources to setting up a assessment framework to assist countries in this. It was felt though that the analysis was too detailed and too cumbersome as a first step in the policy process and that a more rapid initial level of assessment would assist countries more as a stepping stone in defining the level of engagement in bioenergy. Secondly, it was felt that countries would need to have a clear port of call of where to obtain information and assistance on the BEFS approach and tools.

Due to this, the scope of the project was twofold. A first element was to develop a set of tools to undertake a rapid assessment of sustainable bioenergy potential and a second one was to set up a facilitation mechanism to support implementation of the BEFS Rapid Appraisal.

Three activities led to the delivery of the BEFS RA tools, namely , Activity 1.1 – Develop the RA approach and tools , Activity 1.2 – Test the RA in the field in two pilot countries and Activity 1.3 – Incorporate feedback and finalize country analysis and RA.

Four activities supported the development of the facilitation mechanism namely Activity 2.1 – Raise awareness, Activity 2.2 – Design the roadmap, Activity 2.3 – Set up a help desk system to support countries and Activity 2.4 – Explore funding opportunities.

Considering the scope and the activities of the project, the management team wishes to emphasize that the project was solely related to the development of the BEFS Rapid Appraisal tools (including testing of the tools) and of a support mechanism and therefore that the country uptake is not part of the project within the given timeframe.

In the period following the project, country uptake and utilization will become an important element of the efforts of FAO’s NRC Energy team. In fact, there has now been considerable off shoots of the project relating to country and other stakeholders uptake and capacity building.

With reference to four key recommendations, specific comments and inputs are included in the table below. In general there has been considerable interest in the project outputs since the end of this project. Within NRC, the Energy team has followed up and initiated a number of activities including partnerships and collaborations with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the World Bank, the International Energy Agency, the German Ministry for Food and Agriculture, the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE) and the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA).

2 Management response matrix¹

Response by recommendation

<i>Management response to the (Evaluation Title)</i>					<i>Date</i>
<i>Evaluation Recommendation (a)</i>	<i>Management response (b)</i> <i>Accepted, partially accepted or rejected</i>	<i>Management plan</i>			
		<i>Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)</i>	<i>Responsible unit (d)</i>	<i>Timeframe (e)</i>	<i>Further funding required (Y or N) (f)</i>
<i>Insert title of section, if any</i>					
<i>Recommendation 1</i> <i>Improving data cleaning and the training and outreach experience for future users of the BEFS tool</i>	<i>Accepted</i>	Following the initial development and pilot phase of the BEFS RA project, staff from the energy team is currently involved in training, outreach activities and in working with academic research institutes on data validation, mostly in relation to GCP/GLO/511/GER. We have now started to work on Turkey and Egypt and are in the process of establishing collaborations with agriculture research institutes with reference to data collection, training and analysis. This work is being carried out and co-funded by the EBRD.	NRC	2014-2015	Y and obtained for this time period
<i>Recommendation 2</i> <i>Strengthening future partnerships for BEFS RA tools including by building and reinforcing partnerships with advanced research institutes and through partnerships with multi-lateral organizations to ensure sustainability.</i>	<i>Accepted</i>	We are in the process of setting up partnerships with external institutions and carrying out trainer or trainer programmes. For example, under a sister project we have carried out training of trainers in Latin America and Asia and have set up a LoA regarding a training programme in the LAC region. Nonetheless further funds to be able to support this in the future would be required. We have established an agreement with the International Energy Agency on the development of the publication entitled “How2Guide on Bioenergy” (further discussed below). We have currently initiated and set up a Letter of Agreement with the Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center in Costa Rica. The aim of the	NRC	2015-2016	Y, some funds obtained

¹ Each column is cross-referenced to the bullet letters above.

		<p>collaboration is to review the BEFS RA tools and launch an online course for policymakers, also to be related to their university curriculum.</p> <p>We have had discussions and follow up on the use of the BEFS Rapid Appraisal tools by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) that used them in the context of assessing residue availability for energy production in Africa and Latin America.</p> <p>The World Bank has been interested in the BEFS Approach and the BEFS tools and asked for our assistance with a project in Pakistan. We have supported them for the initial phases of the their Pakistan project.</p>			
<p>Recommendation 3 <i>FAO should support the Strengthening of the bioenergy sector expertise in the regions also through filling key vacancies in the regions.</i></p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The content of the recommendation is accepted but with an addition.</p> <p>There are very few, if any, institutions or UN agencies that cover bioenergy specifically from the food security and agriculture angle. This is also proven by the number of external partners interested in the broader BEFS approach. For example the International Energy Agency is partnering with FAO on the production of the How2Guide for Bioenergy due to FAO's expertise and wealth of experience in this area and it's comparative advantage with respect to food security and agriculture. Note also that this is a first time partnership between the IEA and FAO.</p> <p>Due to the above, FAO should support the strengthening of the regional offices. There are currently two P3 positions being advertised in Ghana and Bangkok, the respective regional offices for Africa and Asia. In addition though, it will be important to ensure there is core HQ expertise to continue to support this comparative advantage of FAO and the needs in the various regions.</p>	NRC	2016-2017	Y
<p>Recommendation 4 <i>FAO should avoiding program conflict and overlap with existing UN activities by coordinating closely with similar UN programs in target countries and</i></p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The content of the recommendation is accepted but does not appear to apply to the scope of this project.</p> <p>We strongly agree that activities should be aligned and synergies supported at country level. What remains unclear</p>	NRC	NA	NA

<p><i>mainstreaming bioenergy in agricultural value chain work.</i></p>		<p>is the reason for this recommendation within the scope of this project at country uptake is beyond the scope of this project. In fact, as part of the BEFS Approach, when work in the country commences, the first step of the process is to undertake a stakeholder review and engagement process which also includes a review of ongoing activities in the country. Understanding what else is being done in the country, in particular with regards to bioenergy, is extremely important as it allows to better understand the country context and ultimately build on ongoing work and synergize projects activities as much as possible.</p> <p>This is what we are currently doing as part of our programme of work in Turkey and Egypt.</p>			
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