



Evaluation of FAO's contribution to SDG 6: Sustainable water management

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Why an evaluation?

At its 129th session¹, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Programme Committee requested an evaluation of FAO's contribution to Sustainable Development Goal 6 – Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (SDG 6 evaluation). FAO is the custodian agency for the two indicators under SDG 6 target 4, measuring water use efficiency and water stress, and an active member of UN-Water. The evaluation will offer an opportunity to take stock of the results achieved in the first five years of work towards SDG 6, and a chance to confirm or adjust strategies pursued towards the sustainable management of water.

What will the evaluation cover?

The evaluation will aim at offering an independent summative assessment of the contribution that FAO has made to date towards goal 6 of the 2030 Agenda, and with a forward-looking lens, it will propose recommendations to improve this contribution in the future. Considering that the 2030 Agenda has come into effect in January 2016, it will cover the period from 2016 to 2020.

The evaluation will undertake a complete analysis of all aspects of FAO's work in relation to SDG 6, using the standard evaluation criteria. Hence, it will examine how adequately FAO has positioned its work towards SDG 6 in relation to its comparative advantages and to opportunities for synergies with other institutions. It will also aim to measure results achieved after five years of implementation, and how these compare with initial commitments. Also looking at modalities of implementation, and their influence on results, the evaluation will seek to identify good or promising ways of operating, with a particular consideration to the need for inter-agency and cross-SDG coordination. As such, the evaluation will cover FAO's work directly and indirectly contributing to SDG 6.

Tentative Evaluation Calendar

February 2021–March 2022

Preparation phase:

February–May 2021

- i) desk review and preparatory phase of the evaluation;
- ii) initial consultations, identification of key stakeholders and of the evaluation team; and
- iii) drafting of terms of reference.

Assessment phase:

June–October 2021

- i) (possible) field visits;
- ii) case studies;
- iii) consultations; and
- iv) stakeholder workshop.

Report writing and dissemination:

November 2021–March 2022

- i) draft and final report;
- ii) presentation to stakeholders; and
- iii) report dissemination and management response.

What will the process be and who will be involved?

The FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) will manage and lead the evaluation with the support of independent external experts. FAO stakeholders will support this evaluation by providing comments on key deliverables.

The evaluation of SDG 6 will be the third SDG-oriented evaluation conducted by OED, and as such it will build on the methodological basis and some of the analytical work already availed by other evaluations conducted with an SDG lens.

It will extend over the period of February 2021–January 2022, and develop in sequence, as presented below:

1. Preparation and Design (February–May 2021)

During the preparatory phase, OED will undertake exhaustive desk reviews to scope the evaluation and consult with key stakeholders. This will include conducting portfolio analysis and review of relevant documents, including terminal project documents and SDG 6 monitoring reports. In addition to the project documentation, several derived products and services will be collected and analysed from the perspective of contributing to SDG 6. During this phase, the evaluation team will draft a first version of the evaluation terms of reference.

2. Assessment and analysis (June–October 2021)

To collect information during the assessment phase, OED will consult with FAO personnel at headquarters, regional and country levels as well as partners and relevant interlocutors of FAO including from countries' governmental counterparts, parliamentary forums, academia, civil society organizations or the private sector. This might include undertaking country case studies, depending on what the sanitary situation linked to COVID-19 allows and will build around on-going interaction with key stakeholders.

3. Preparation and Communication of results (November 2021– March 2022)

The evaluation team will summarize evaluation findings in order to draw overall conclusions and recommendations with a view of guiding FAO's future work in support of SDG 6. The lessons learned from the evaluation will be widely shared through different communication channels. The evaluation results are scheduled to be presented to the Programme Committee in the spring 2022.

Who will be the users?

The final users of this evaluation are multiple, and include FAO senior management, related FAO technical units, FAO Member States and decentralized offices. The evaluation also aims at providing lessons learnt to other UN agencies and international organizations, academia, donors, resource partners, civil society and other partners involved in implementing SDG 6.

All FAO evaluations and management responses are public documents and can be found at: