Real-time evaluation of FAO’s COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme

Annex 2. Programme theory of change (reconstructed)
A theory of change, in its simplest expression, describes the “change pathways” that lead to achieving the long-term goal of an intervention. The steps along the pathways are a series of “outcomes” with each representing a pre-condition to the one that follows; thus establishing a causal relationship. When reading a theory of change, starting at the bottom of the pathways, the step between outcomes should be read as “if [outcome 1] then [outcome 2]”.

The umbrella programme had no explicit theory of change therefore the real-time evaluation reconstructed it, based on how the evaluation team understood the programme’s logic. The theory of change of every Priority Area is presented separately for ease of reference but should all be seen as being part of the programme - all leading to the two overarching goals.
PA 1. Global Humanitarian Response Plan

The socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in PAO is minimal, and resilience is strengthened.

- Timely, robust, and targeted response by the humanitarian community and governments avoids a deterioration in food security.
- Food supply chain actors are at a reduced risk of virus transmission.
- Producers have stable access to food by assuring food-insecure populations.
- Levels of acute food insecurity do not re-emerge as a result of COVID-19.
- The most vulnerable have access to food.

- Continuity of the critical food supply chain for the most vulnerable populations ensured.
- Functioning of local food markets, value chains, and systems maintained.
- Areas that are critical to the food supply for vulnerable urban areas supported.

Ongoing, near real-time assessment and monitoring data on the food security impacts of COVID-19 available.

- Data on local food supply chains risk factors available.
- Local food supply chains emerging trends identified.
- Data on vulnerable population available.
- Awareness of food chain actors and government services on virus transmission related to WHO guidance.
- Agricultural inputs, distribution in full alignment with local health and safety guidelines.

- Partnerships, systems, resources and tools to deliver large, remotely managed programmes in place.

Data collection partnerships with local organizations/other stakeholders in place.
PA 2. Data for decision-making

The socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in FAO mandate areas is diminished.

Evidence informs a cross-spectrum of subnational, national, regional and global responses.

Stakeholders have timely access to relevant evidence.

Timely solid evidence available.

Evidence of the effectiveness of food and agriculture incentives available.

The long-term resilience of food systems and livelihoods is strengthened.

Medium-term post-COVID-19 recovery policy agendas, fiscal measures, trade policies and public investment initiatives developed.

Evidence-based policy support for post-COVID-19 economic and social recovery in place.

Policy proposals/guidance on post-COVID-19 recovery of the agri-food sector is available.

Joint national counterparts-FAO analytical reports on the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on food insecurity available.

National capacity for the analysis of food security enhanced.

Technical assistance and training on analysis of food security available to national counterparts.

Technical assistance and training needs on analysis of food security of national counterparts identified.

Continuous Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) data on the impact of COVID-19 on food insecurity available.

Technical assistance and training needs on agricultural surveys of national counterparts identified.

New, virtual data collection methods implemented.

A new module facilitating the collection of aid data at farm level on the impact of COVID-19 in FAO's Agricultural Integrated Survey (AGRISurvey) in place.

Methodological guidelines on supporting countries in collecting data on the COVID-19 impact at farm level adopted.

Innovative data sources to monitor the impact of COVID-19 identified.

Data collection approaches available.

Stakeholders' data needs identified.

Data domain gaps / uncovered geographical areas addressed.

New data sources for agriculture and food security tapped.
PA 3. Economic inclusion and social protection to reduce poverty
PA 3. Economic inclusion and social protection to reduce poverty - details

The sustainable economic inclusion of small-scale producers strengthened

Inclusive access to extension and market-oriented, gender-sensitive advisory services and rural finance enhanced

Long-term resilience and adaptive capacity for forest and farm producers, fisherfolk, pastoralists and their organizations increased

Access to land, forest and water resources and inclusion in natural resources management programmes enhanced

Dependency on child labour reduced

Inclusive access to innovative and diversified market channels, in compliance with food standards and trade requirements enhanced

BAROMETRO monitoring of the impact of COVID-19 on small-scale producers and farmers and the implementation of public and civil society response available

Rural women’s economic empowerment strengthened

Measures to safeguard rural women’s economic activities in agri-food value chains in place

Women-run agribusinesses and inclusive value chains strengthened

Rural women’s access to resources, services, jobs, financial services and market participation enhanced

Rural women and their organizations engaged in the design and implementation of COVID-19 response measures

Women small-scale producers have equitable access to land, productive resources, inputs and services for the next production season

Rural women and girls protected from gender-based violence
PA 3. Economic inclusion and social protection to reduce poverty - details

Informal rural workers and entrepreneurs protected and empowered

- Training on agri-food systems, value addition, online marketing, business resilience, innovation and green job skills implemented.
- Organizational capacity and coordination between the public sector, MSM-sized enterprises, producers and workers’ organizations to implement and guarantee COVID-19 preventive and protective measures strengthened.

Labour intermediation mechanisms adapted to rural settings

- Access to rural finance measures for maintaining or learning skills (including recovery grants, soft loans and insurance).

Start-ups connected to the private sector, incubation services, lucrative markets and virtual marketplaces

Advisory services for agripreneurs accessible

Protection and empowerment of migrant workers enhanced

- Migrant workers and their families included in COVID-19 response actions.
- Knowledge generated and awareness raised on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on migrants in agri-food systems.
- Subsector-specific guidance tools on the inclusion and protection of migrants in the COVID-19 response, their reintegration in rural areas and support for remittance-dependent households available.
- Dialogues and partnerships to coordinate responses to challenges faced by migrants strengthened.
PA 4. Trade and food safety standards

The socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in FAO mandate areas is diminished.

The long-term resilience of food systems and livelihoods is strengthened.

More resilient food safety systems

Improved evidence-based decision-making and policy coordination at national and regional levels

Trade facilitated

Regulatory cooperation at the regional level enhanced

Food safety and phytosanitary control systems enable regulatory coherence and stakeholder engagement

Trade infrastructure in place

Trade policy and trade agreements aligned with international instruments

International trade standards and requirements implemented

Digital solutions in place

Efficiency and transparency in the application of SPS measures and administrative procedures increased

National and regional programmes to address obstacles to trade implemented

Institutional implementation capacities strengthened

Empirically sound analyses of the challenges and opportunities faced by countries from their participation in international trade available

Informed management of limited resources in place

National and regional capacities to take appropriate policy and planning decisions to boost agricultural growth increased

Appropriate policies and strategies to avoid arbitrary trade restricting measures in place

Countries have the capacity to collect and analyse trade and market-related information

Mutual recognition and harmonization of food safety systems promoted

Trade policy coordination promoted

Trade barriers, challenges and opportunities identified

Regional trade agreements and governance frameworks assessments available

Food safety risk analysis principles implemented

Market intelligence and early warning systems established

Regional multi-stakeholder trade networks and platforms strengthened

Comprehensive trade assessments available

National and regional obstacles to trade addressed
PA 5. Boosting smallholder resilience for recovery

The socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in FAO mandate areas is diminished. The long-term resilience of food systems and livelihoods is strengthened.

- Green, resilient and sustainable growth promoted
- Transformative economic recovery is supported
- Resilient food systems and food and nutrition security boosted
- Capacities and institutions to build resilience enhanced

The most vulnerable people with agriculture and food-based livelihoods
- Recover from the effects of COVID-19
- Are more resilient to future crises
- Women's health and rights are safeguarded and their voices heard
- Extended access to risk-sensitive and shock-responsive social protection

Farming systems and practices are more inclusive, resilient and sustainable
- Small farmer cash flow, productivity, capacity, incomes and access to markets maintained
- Smallholder and community livelihood opportunities diversified
- Risk-informed local food value chains are enhanced
- Multi-risk governance and institutions strengthened

Smallholders have improved access to finance
- Concessional loans, micro-finance, insurance and other cash transfer mechanisms available
- Governmental integration of the management of food chain threats (including COVID-19), climate and disaster risks, conflict and socio-economic crises across their agriculture and food systems
- COVID-19-specific emergency preparedness and anticipatory actions are supported and implemented

Enhanced multi-risk monitoring, analysis and early warnings in place
PA 6. Preventing the next zoonotic pandemic

The socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in FAO mandate areas is diminished.

The long-term resilience of food systems and livelihoods is strengthened.

Zoonotic pandemics prevented

National and international preparedness and emergency response enhanced

National capacity to apply an extended One Health approach to prevent and manage spill-overs improved

Identified gaps and needs addressed at country level

Policy implementation strengthened

Follow-up interventions at the national level to address priority gaps implemented

Stakeholders adopt and ensure the implementation of evidence-based policies on the prevention of and resilience to future pandemics

Countries have greater capacity for

One Health interventions and capacity development policies in place

One Health platforms assessment reports available

Evidence-based decision-making in risk assessment and planning for risk interventions at the human-animal-environmental interface

Strategies and tools for policy advocacy are available and implemented

Three-dimensional capacity along with capacity for evidence-based decision-making is developed and strengthened in relevant ministries

Action plans based on policies available and implemented

Transition plans for sustainability available

Advocacy and communications strategy designed and implemented

High-risk countries supported:

Areas for improvement to increase global resilience to emerging threats identified

Reducing to policy implementation identified and addressed

Goals in national policies assessed

Coordination mechanism to jointly implement risk assessment and planning for targeted interventions in place

One Health approach in environment and natural resource sectors at every level mainstreamed

Priority scenarios (risks and drivers, potential geographical hotspots) compiled

One Health platforms extended at country and national levels

Stakeholders in national and local levels engaged in developing foresight reports

PAO’s OBHP and toolkit applied at national level

Preparedness performance improvement measures against baseline assessments in hotspot countries

Preventive measures against potential future pandemics are identified

Forecast reports based on priority scenarios for each region and country available

A progressive improvement plan is available for each country

Progressive preparedness improvement plans developed in each country

Performance reports on national pandemic preparedness and emergency response capabilities for hotspot countries available

Hotspot countries are better prepared to effectively respond to future pandemics