



Evaluation of FAO's cash and voucher assistance

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Why an evaluation?

The FAO Office of Evaluation is conducting a thematic evaluation of FAO's cash and voucher assistance (CVA). CVA modalities in recent years have become an important tool for FAO to deliver, especially in providing immediate relief, strengthening resilience of livelihoods, increasing agricultural production, and improving food security and nutrition. From 2016–2021, FAO transferred more than USD 287 million across 47 countries through CVA interventions.

These include both unconditional and conditional cash transfers, cash for work, service vouchers and input trade fairs. This evaluation will be the first comprehensive assessment of FAO's CVA portfolio and is conducted for both accountability and learning processes. It aims to assess the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the CVA interventions, and identify factors that facilitate or inhibit their use and effectiveness to develop lessons that will help in updating policy and programming.

The evaluation will be forward-looking and formative and will seek to provide insights for the future, to the extent possible.

What is the focus?

The evaluation scope will include the full range of CVA projects implemented in different contexts and with different objectives, including humanitarian, development and peace objectives. It will specifically focus on the period from 2018 to 2022. Given the increasing importance of social protection in not only poverty reduction, but also for disaster risk management, the evaluation will examine the coordination or collaboration through national social protection systems.

TENTATIVE EVALUATION CALENDAR

Inception phase: September–October 2022

- *Identification and recruitment of evaluation team members*
- *Scoping interviews*
- *Finalization of the evaluation design*

Desk phase: November 2022–March 2023

- *Desk review*
- *Portfolio analysis*
- *Meetings with selected global stakeholders*
- *Administration of a global survey*

Field phase: March–June 2023

- *Country case studies (field based)*
- *Country case studies (desk based)*
- *Meetings with stakeholders and partners (including government counterparts, resource partners, UN agencies, implementing partners and beneficiaries)*
- *Comparator organizations case studies*

Analysis and report: July–September 2023

- *Data analysis*
- *Presentation of preliminary findings*
- *Drafting of report*

QA / Dissemination: October 2023–May 2024

- *Comments / quality assurance report*
- *Dissemination workshops on findings*
- *Presentation to FAO Programme Committee – May 2024 session*
- *Report dissemination and management response*

The evaluation will explore both positive experiences from the use of CVA and situations where the use of CVA has not yet materialized to explore challenges in using them. It will examine the relevance of the various CVA modalities to FAO's mandate and the needs of beneficiaries, the comparative advantage of FAO in delivering CVA, and the role of partnerships in coordinating and delivering on CVA.

In particular, it will consolidate evidence on the effectiveness and efficiency of CVA and the factors influencing results. This will include examining the contribution of CVA to Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus approaches, gender equality and social inclusion. In addition, FAO's progress towards its grand bargain commitments will be examined.

How will it be conducted?

The evaluation is managed by the FAO Office of Evaluation and will adopt a consultative and transparent approach with internal and external stakeholders throughout the process. The evaluation methodology will include a desk review of relevant documents, a portfolio analysis of FAO projects, key informant interviews, and a global survey with FAO decentralized offices.

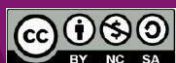
The evaluation team will also conduct case studies in selected countries with field visits and beneficiary focus group discussions in accessible locations to capture results at the national level of FAO CVA interventions. The evaluation is conducted by a team of two independent consultants. Nick Maunder (leader evaluator) and Gabrielle Smith (cash expert). The team will be managed and supported by evaluation specialists Renate Roels and Anne-Clémence Owen.

CONTACT

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

www.fao.org/evaluation



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