

43rd Session of the Conference

Introduction to Item 19: Programme Evaluation Report 2023

I am pleased to present the *Programme Evaluation Report 2023*. This Report provides a descriptive analysis of the 103 evaluations and three syntheses of evaluations conducted by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) in 2021-2022. These include 74 project and programme evaluations in 53 countries, 21 regional and country-level evaluations, and eight thematic evaluations that were mostly global. Through these efforts, OED covered all regions in which FAO operates, nearly USD 2 billion of FAO's portfolio of work, and the breadth of the Organization's areas of work, ranging from food security and climate resilience through sustainable agricultural production and value chains to natural resource management.

The analysis shows strong performance by FAO initiatives. FAO projects collaborated with the private sector and Rome-based Agencies, both of which enhanced implementation of interventions. These were often well-designed, contextualized to meet local needs, adapted to the local context and successful in targeting and involving women. Evaluations also helped identify areas for improvement in the coming years. Two stand out as recurring areas of focus. Improving procurement processes is a critical stepping stone to improving efficiency of operations. Similarly, strengthened monitoring systems are needed to promote results measurement, adaptive management and improved programming. To this end, OED will continue to support FAO Management and Members by providing robust evidence for decision-making.

FAO Office of Evaluation in the next biennium

The unprecedented events of the last few years – escalating conflicts, COVID-19, climate change and rising costs – underscore the vital role of FAO in leading international efforts to combat hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. FAO's rapidly evolving response to these challenges, and in particular the formulation of a new FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, placed new demands on OED during the biennium. So did the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited our ability to conduct field work and reach stakeholders. Realizing this is the “new normal”, OED is embracing these challenges as an opportunity to transform itself.

OED has developed a new Strategy (2023-2025) endorsed by the 172nd Session of the FAO Council (CL 172/REP). This Strategy focuses on strengthening OED capacity to conduct high-quality evaluations and measure the impact of FAO's work, while continuing to ensure accountability.

We look forward to continuing to work with FAO Management, Members and colleagues, inside and outside of FAO, to eradicate hunger, eliminate poverty and sustainably manage and utilize natural resources.

Ms Clemencia Cosentino, Director, FAO Office of Evaluation