FAO OFFICE OF EVALUATION

EVALUATION OF FAO'S ROLE AND WORK IN NUTRITION

FINAL REPORT

Rome, June 2011

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Acronyms

AED	Academy for Educational Development
AFSI	L'Aquila Food Security Initiative
ADG	Assistant Director-General (FAO)
AG	FAO Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department
AGA	FAO Animal Production and Health Division
AGS	FAO Rural Infrastructure and Agro-Industries Division
AGN	FAO Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division
AGNDA	FAO Nutrition Assessment and Nutrient Requirements Group
AGNDE	FAO Nutrition Education and Consumer Awareness Group
AGNDP	FAO Nutrition Security and Policy Group
AGP	FAO Plant Production and Protection Division
ALCSH	Iniciativa América Latina y el Caribe sin Hambre (Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative)
ANCHA	Alianza Nacional Contra el Hambre, Honduras
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CCNFSDU	Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Use
CEPAL	Comisión Económica para América Latina
CFA	Comprehensive Framework for Action (HLTF/CFS)
CFS	Committee on World Food Security (FAO)
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CISAN	Comisión Intersectorial de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional, Colombia
COAG	Committee on Agriculture (FAO)
COFI	Committee on Fisheries (FAO)
COFO	Committee on Forestry (FAO)
CONAN	Consejo Nacional de Alimentación y Nutrición, Bolivia (National Food and Nutrition Council)
CODAN	Consejo Departamental de Alimentación y Nutrición, Bolivia (Departmental Food and Nutrition Council)
COMAN	Consejo Municipal de Alimentación y Nutrición, Bolivia (Municipal Food and Nutrition Council)
CPF	FAO Country Programming Framework
CRN	Centros de Recuperación Nutricional, Colombia
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DDS	Dietary Diversity Score
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DG	FAO Director-General
ECOSOC	UN General Assembly intergovernmental Economic and Social Council
EFSA	European Food Safety Authority
ES	FAO Economic and Social Development Department
ESA	FAO Agricultural Development Economics Division
ESS	FAO Statistics Division
ESW	FAO Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FANTA	Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance (USAID)
FBS	Food Balance Sheet

FFS	Farmer Field School
FICA	Flanders International Cooperation Agency
FIVIMS	FAO Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System
FPMIS	FAO Field Programme Management Information System
FSIA	Food Security Information for Action (EC/FAO)
FSNAU	FAO Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit for Somalia
GAIN	Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
GAFSP	Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme
GAP	Global Action Plan (for Scaling-up Nutrition)
GIEWS	FAO Global Information and Early Warning System
GPAFSN	Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition
HCS	Household Consumption Surveys
HES	Household Expenditure Survey
HFIAS	Household Food Insecurity Access Scale
HKI	Helen Keller International
HLTF	High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (UN)
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICN	International Conference on Nutrition (1992)
IEE	Independent External Evaluation (of FAO)
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development (UN)
IFDC	International Food Database Conference
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute (CGIAR)
IHP	International Health Partnership
INFOODS	International Network of Food Data Systems
IPA	Immediate Plan of Action (FAO)
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
ISFNS	Information System for Food and Nutrition Security
IUNS	International Union of Nutritional Sciences
IYCF	Infant & Young Child Feeding
JANS	Joint Assessment of National Strategies (IHP)
JECFA	Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (FAO/WHO)
JEMNU	Joint Expert Meeting on Nutrition (FAO/WHO)
JFFLS	Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools
LSMS	Living Standard Measurement Survey
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MDER	Minimum Dietary Energy Requirements
MDES	Minimum Dietary Energy Supply
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (UNICEF)
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NMTPF	National Medium Term Priority Framework (FAO)
NR	FAO Natural Resources Management and Environment Department
NRC	FAO Climate, Energy and Tenure Division
NSO	National Statistics Office
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OED	FAO Office of Evaluation
PE	Programme Entity (FAO)
PESA	Programa Especial de Seguridad Alimentaria (Special Food Security Programme)

PRESANCA	Programa Regional de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional para Centroamerica (EU funded regional Food & Nutrition Security Programme for Central America)
PWB	Programme of Work and Budget (FAO)
RAF	Response Analysis Framework (FAO)
RBM	Results-Based Management (FAO)
RDA	Recommended Dietary Allowance
REACH	Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger
REOA	FAO Regional Emergency Office for Eastern and Central Africa
ReSA	Red de Seguridad Alimentaria, Colombia (Programme of the Presidential Agency for Social Action)
SCN	Standing Committee on Nutrition (UN)
SICA	Sistema de Integración Centroamericana
SIRSAN	Sistema Regional de Indicadores de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional
SMART	Standardised Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (UNICEF)
SO	Strategic Objective (FAO)
SOFA	State of Food and Agriculture in the World (FAO)
SOFI	State of Food Insecurity in the World (FAO/WFP)
SOFO	State of Forestry in the World (FAO)
SRFSN	Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Food Security and Nutrition
SUA	Supply Utilisation Accounts
SUN	Scaling up Nutrition
TC	FAO Technical Cooperation Department
TCE	FAO Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division
TCP	Technical Cooperation Project (FAO)
TCOS	FAO SPFS Management and Coordination Service
TCSF	FAO Integrated Food Security Support Service
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Fund for Children
UNJP	United Nations Joint Programmes
UPH	Urban and Peri-urban Horticulture
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
UTSAN	Unidad Técnica de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional, Honduras
UNU	United Nations University
WFP	World Food Programme (UN)
WFS	World Food Summit 1996
WHO	World Health Organization (UN)
WVI	World Vision International

DEFINITIONS

Food Security
Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life *(World Summit on Food Security, Rome, November 2009)*

Nutrition Security is achieved when secure access to an appropriately nutritious diet is coupled with a sanitary environment, adequate health services and care, to ensure a healthy and active life for all household members.

Hunger is usually understood as an uncomfortable or painful sensation caused by insufficient food consumption, specifically to insufficient food energy consumption. Scientifically, hunger is referred to as food deprivation. Hunger can lead to malnutrition.

Hidden Hunger
Situation when people meet their protein-energy needs, but not their micronutrient needs due to low dietary diversity and/or as a result of chronic disease

Under-nourishment is the measure for hunger compiled by FAO and refers to the proportion of the population whose dietary energy consumption is less than a pre-determined threshold. People suffering from under-nourishment are referred to as the undernourished.

Malnutrition refers to an abnormal physiological condition caused by inadequate, excessive or imbalanced intake in macronutrients - carbohydrates, protein, fats – and micronutrients. The condition includes all deviations from adequate nutrition including **under-nutrition** (a deficiency of proteins, carbohydrates and fats and/or vitamins and minerals), **over-nutrition** (an excess of certain food components such as saturated fats and added sugars in combination with low physical activity), and **specific deficiencies** (or excesses) of essential nutrients such as vitamins and minerals. In many developing countries under-nutrition and over-nutrition are occurring simultaneously among different population groups, a phenomenon referred to as the "**double burden**" of malnutrition. The consequence of malnutrition is poor infant and child growth and an excess of morbidity and mortality in adults and children alike.

Underweight is measured by comparing the weight-for-age of a child with a reference population of well-nourished and healthy children.

Stunting reflects shortness-for-age; an indicator of chronic malnutrition and calculated by comparing the height-for-age of a child with a reference population of well-nourished and healthy children.

Wasting reflects a recent and severe process that has led to substantial weight loss, usually associated with starvation and/or disease. Wasting is calculated by comparing weight-for-height of a child with a reference population of well-nourished and healthy children. Often used to assess the severity of emergencies because it is strongly associated with excess mortality.

Poverty encompasses different dimensions of deprivation that relate to human capabilities including consumption and food security, health, education, rights, voice, security, dignity and decent work (OECD).

DEFINING AREAS OF FAO's WORK

Normative work
Refers to indirect services provided by the Organization to its Members collectively such as: (i) collation and processing of statistical data on nutrition, food and agriculture; (ii) developing and managing information systems that provide global monitoring and alert systems with respect to food security and nutrition; (iii) providing information that help define common concepts and enhance knowledge management and understanding of nutrition, food and agriculture issues; (iv) documenting and disseminating good practices through knowledge exchange networks; (iv) developing norms, standards, policy and legal frameworks with respect to nutrition, food and agriculture; and (v) global advocacy work.

Operational work
Refers to services provided by the Organization directly to individual Member Countries and their sub-regional or regional Organizations. Operational activities apply in practice normative standards and approaches. Typical operational activities include: data collection and analysis at field level; household and community-level interventions; capacity building and strengthening of services and institutions; policy assistance and advocacy.

Stewardship role
Refers to a guidance and support role that FAO should play within the agriculture, food security and nutrition arena to ensure that: (i) knowledge relating to assessments, statistics, analysis, evidence, good practice, guidelines and evaluations are accessible and actively shared between both government and non-government actors; and (ii) where norms and standards have been established at national, regional or international level, they are complied with. The function of this role ensures that policies, strategies and plans of action are well informed, compliant and benefit from the experience and contribution of actors across all relevant sectors.

Food composition
Involves the generation, compilation, dissemination and use of data on the nutrient, bioactive non-nutrient and contaminant content of foods, and provides the basic information for assessing diets, setting nutrient requirements, developing dietary guidelines and many other nutrition-related activities.

Nutrient requirements
Are the minimum amounts of nutrients (energy, protein, minerals and vitamins) necessary to meet a person's life stage needs for basic maintenance, growth, reproduction, lactation or work.

Nutrition Education (from a food-based perspective)
Is any set of learning experiences designed to facilitate the voluntary adoption of eating and other nutrition-related behaviours conducive to health and well-being.[1]

[1] American Dietetics Association, 1969.

Executive Summary

Background

Introduction

i. Raising levels of nutrition and collecting, analysing and disseminating information on nutrition has always been a principal purpose and mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations. However, its place and role in the overall activities of the Organization have varied and in recent years has been severely constrained by budget cuts. With ever increasing concerns about the fight against hunger and the rising prominence of the "double burden" of malnutrition in the international agenda, an evaluation of FAO's role and work in nutrition was commissioned by the Programme Committee and accorded priority at its 103rd session in April 2010. The Evaluation encompasses all the work of FAO in nutrition since 2004 with the exclusion of work on Codex Alimentarius and food safety.

ii. The Evaluation was carried out from December 2010 to May 2011. The team visited a sample of 11 countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia where interviews were conducted with a wide range of stakeholders and FAO projects were reviewed. Other tools included a synthesis of previous evaluations, surveys of FAO staff and Member Countries, interviews with interlocutors from international actors involved in nutrition and a review of FAO nutrition-related normative products.

iii. This evaluation serves as a vehicle for accountability and learning by providing an evidence-based analysis of the current status of FAO's work in nutrition. The evaluation is forward-looking and formative, providing guidance and recommendations to improve the relevance and effectiveness of FAO's work in nutrition and clarify the role of the Organization in the international architecture.

FAO's Work in Nutrition

iv. For the purpose of the analysis, FAO's work in nutrition was categorised as: (i) scientific advice including food composition and nutrient requirements; (ii) information, assessment, analysis and statistics; (iii) integration of nutrition into field programmes including nutrition education and community-based nutrition; (iv) policy assistance; and (v) normative work. This work is principally undertaken by the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (AGN) of the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department (AG), which is the core unit responsible for nutrition; other departments are also involved to a lesser extent.

Findings

FAO's Mandate and Resources for Nutrition

v. Nutrition is not just integral to FAO's work, it is and always has been central to the Organization's mandate. At no time is this more important than the present day when the world is becoming increasingly aware of the global implications of malnutrition.

vi. However, whilst FAO's **strategic frameworks** covering the evaluation period give overall prominence to nutrition concerns within the goals, and the recognition of malnutrition

as a distinct issue, they analyse nutrition in terms of "under-nourishment" and they embed nutrition as a separate set of activities largely within one objective, focusing on vulnerable people rather than adopting a more integrated approach. There is virtually no reference to nutrition in other strategic objectives, nor how they will contribute to better nutrition expressed in the goals, so nutrition suffers from the "silo" effect within the Organization. Consequently, there is very little coordination across technical areas in relation to nutrition. This reflects the lack of vision FAO has for its role in nutrition and misrepresents the contribution nutrition should be playing across the Organization.

vii. A review of **financial resources** indicates that the FAO Regular Programme budget allocation to AGN's nutrition work (excluding Codex and food safety) has been consistently below one percent during the evaluation period, which is unacceptably low in view of FAO's mandate in nutrition. A review of **human resources** accorded to AGN during the same period shows a reduction of three posts at headquarters level (from 17 to 14) and one at a decentralised level (from 8 to 7). However, at the decentralised level, the posts may either be totally dedicated to Codex and food safety, or shared with nutrition, so the capacity is extremely limited and insufficient even to backstop and coordinate the limited resources accorded to field level nutrition activities.

Overall Assessment of FAO's Role in Nutrition

viii. The global and regional challenges affecting nutrition in the developing world are still substantial and in some areas falling short of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). There is a greater need than ever to develop a good understanding of the range of factors contributing to persistent levels of under-nutrition. The multi-sectoral dimensions of nutrition, the need to address these through both direct and longer-term solutions and the multitude of actors have made it more important than ever to achieve a convergence of views through the international nutrition architecture.

ix. Unfortunately, this architecture has long lacked any collective vision or "game plan" to address the broad range of underlying causes. Consequently, there has been competition among different actors striving to gain visibility for their "part" in nutrition and to secure resources from the very limited international funding available for nutrition. The dysfunction of this community and the lack of visibility in nutrition have to some degree reflected the lack of understanding of under-nutrition itself.

x. A principal mechanism for coordinating the UN system's work on nutrition and to provide leadership to others has been the **UN Standing Committee on Nutrition** (SCN). Many would argue that it has not done enough to rationalise and harmonise the respective roles of the principal UN players. At the same time, it has been accommodating an increasing number of players emerging on the global nutrition scene including the private sector and large philanthropic organizations like the Gates Foundation. FAO is currently chairing the SCN and is leading a reform process to determine a more credible and effective role for the Standing Committee. Nutrition has not featured prominently in the **Committee for World Food Security** (CFS), but the current reform process aims for it "to become the central United Nations political platform dealing with food security and nutrition".

xi. FAO has been an ambivalent player in the movement for **Scaling-Up Nutrition** (SUN) despite the international momentum it has now achieved. It has often adopted a quite defensive approach to the initiative and there has been no official endorsement or internal

communication from senior management about its engagement. This has not prevented some committed FAO staff from actively supporting the initiative, but it has created confusion and dismay from other quarters (especially the bilateral donors). Much of this relates to FAO not having the understanding, positioning and confidence to engage with developments on the international nutrition agenda other than those where it drives the agenda.

xii. FAO lacks the leadership on nutrition within senior management and has no clear vision and direction at this level despite the efforts of the nutrition team to itself identify FAO's comparative advantage and articulate priority issues in nutrition. There was recently tacit approval of the use of the term *food and nutrition security,* but without articulation of the conceptual thinking behind this. This situation is very much reflected in FAO's advocacy on nutrition, which is ad hoc and opportunistic and not contributing to any clear strategy.

xiii. FAO now has to demonstrate stronger leadership and articulate, in collaboration with others, how agriculture and food-based approaches can contribute to tackling hunger and malnutrition, taking into account the double burden of under-nutrition and over-nutrition. FAO has to be a much better informed, credible and influential player in the international development debate on nutrition whilst providing sound technical knowledge and advice on the ground.

Food Composition, Nutrient Requirements and Scientific Advice

xiv. Generating accurate and reliable information and analysis on food composition and nutrient and dietary intake provide the essential coordinates for food and nutrition security assessments (including food balance sheets, household and dietary surveys and dietary surveys) and critically informs FAO's *indicator of undernourishment* applied globally. Close technical collaboration on human nutrient requirements between FAO and WHO over the past 60 years has been important, but FAO's comparative advantage in determining food composition requires more attention.

xv. Many of the food composition tables in developing countries where such assessments are most critical are out-of-date and not sufficiently contextualised (incorporating local foods). Insufficient capacities have been built to generate new data and support the classification and management of that data at the field level. It is essential that FAO generates a far better understanding of what end-users require in areas where the need is greatest rather than pursuing the interests of a smaller scientific community.

Nutrition in Statistics, Information Systems and Assessments

Statistics

xvi. FAO is considered to be uniquely placed to collect and disseminate agriculture, food and nutrition statistics and information as a public good. Central to this is FAO's task to monitor global progress towards reducing hunger in the world by assessing the prevalence of under-nourishment on a country-by-country basis. Limitations to FAO's *indicator of under-nourishment* are that it does not indicate how hunger might be distributed within country; the assumption that food energy deficiency, rather than micronutrient deficiency is the most critical indicator of hunger; and reliance on the food balance sheet for compiling the dietary energy supply. A key concern is that FAO does not have the resources, in food security and especially in nutrition, to build sufficient national capacity to deliver the statistics and analysis

required. Confidence in FAO's stature as a "reliable source of unbiased data" cannot be sustained without developing this capacity and leading a broad consultation process amongst stakeholders to redefine the indicators attributed to global hunger and the MDG goals.

Information systems

xvii. FAO's support to information systems on food and nutrition security (ISFNS) is considered very relevant, but the focus is still more on collecting information on food availability and access than on nutrition information. Many stakeholders surveyed in the FAO/WFP Joint Evaluation indicated that ISFNS did not sufficiently address nutrition and gender concerns. Exceptions to this are the Technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SETSAN) in Mozambique and the long established Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) in Somalia. Both generate nutrition information and analysis on a regular basis. The FSNAU initiated the development of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), which includes indicators of nutrition, and has now evolved into a global initiative supported by FAO in collaboration with many other partners.

xviii. Systems such as the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) and products such as FAOSTAT, Food Outlook and the Report on the State of World Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI) are well acknowledged and used by governments, donors, UN agencies and INGOs and present real opportunities to more effectively include nutrition data and analysis into these. There is, however, a demand for such systems and products to be more easily accessed and for concise presentation of the information.

Nutrition assessments

xix. Building evidence of the link between agriculture and nutrition requires indicators that directly measure food consumption and dietary diversity. Adopting and validating the Dietary Diversity Score (DDS) and the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS), FAO has relatively low-tech and easily understood tools to assess the impact of interventions on diet nutritional quality. However, few assessments supported by FAO, which are widely acknowledged for their reliability and neutrality, take into account nutrition considerations. Furthermore, FAO has not sufficiently integrated these measures into monitoring and evaluation systems of nutrition-related projects to assess any reasonable degree of impact on nutrition outcomes. This is a major short-coming to FAO's contribution to a better understanding of how agriculture and food-based approaches can better nutrition.

Integrating Nutrition into FAO Programmes

xx. Developments during the evaluation period have included: (i) the introduction of Trials for Improved Practices (TIPs) into household food security and community nutrition projects; (ii) the integration of nutrition education into Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS); (iii) greater focus on urban horticulture (Food for the Cities projects); and (iv) food and nutrition security for people living with HIV/AIDS. Some of the work has been very innovative, effective and influential. Nutrition education and behavioural change are very much at the core of this work.

xxi. Often relevant to context, these activities tend to be very small-scale, ad hoc and determined more by funding opportunities and individual agendas than on strategic priorities. Due to lack of any causal analysis of under-nutrition, many of the nutrition interventions are

not well integrated into the original project design and appear as "add-ons" to mainstream agriculture or food security projects. There is often the assumption in the agricultural sector that increased food production will resolve nutrition concerns without understanding sufficiently how this production should diversify to address malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies of the target population. Much needs to be done to raise awareness both within both FAO and governments of the contribution agriculture and food-based approaches make to nutrition outcomes.

xxii. Major limitations of the projects are the reliance upon short cycle external funding, insufficient technical backstopping and lack of synergies between projects. Typically nutrition-related projects are 12 to 24 months' duration, many are trials or pilots and often are not continued. This is insufficient time to conduct baseline surveys, undertake formative research, develop community awareness, achieve behaviour change, conduct regular monitoring and evaluation, and document findings and lessons learned. Consequently, few of the projects sufficiently articulate how the evidence base and lessons learned from the projects will contribute to other interventions of FAO and partners, to policy assistance or normative objectives. Few demonstrate any degree of sustainability.

xxiii. Furthermore, with virtually no meaningful technical capacity at regional level, there has been considerable reliance on technical backstopping from headquarters level, which is unrealistic and insufficient in view of a scattered "patchwork" of projects across the three major regions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean. The consequence is that some projects get more attention than others, technical standards are compromised and synergies between projects are almost non-existent. The capacity to network and advocate on nutrition at national or regional level is very limited unless this is an explicit intention of the project with allocated resources to do this. This in part explains why FAO's leadership as a major player in nutrition has declined substantially, especially in Latin America.

Advocacy and Policy Assistance

xxiv. Central to FAO's work is providing technical assistance on policy principally within the agriculture and food security sectors drawing upon operational research, programme experience and linkages with ISFNS. FAO's advocacy work on the *Right to Food* and technical assistance in support of policies and legislation in food and nutrition security has been effective across the Latin America and Caribbean region.

xxv. Elsewhere, FAO's advocacy work through regional networks has been much less influential. In Africa, limited AGN technical assistance in support of National Nutrition Policy (NNP) and related action planning has been provided in Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Uganda to different degrees. In Asia, the AGN technical assistance to finalise the Lao PDR NNP and the National Plan of Action was variable. However, in Bangladesh, FAO has supported the development of the 2006 National Food Policy, which was followed through with a National Plan of Action 2008-2015 and a Country Investment Plan for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition to very good effect. In Afghanistan, FAO has provided technical assistance to the government for the integration of food security, nutrition and gender objectives into the government policies and strategies.

xxvi. Many stakeholders recognise that FAO has the capacity to bring together key players across sectors. FAO has achieved this very effectively in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Malawi

and Mozambique as well as Latin American countries in support of food security and nutrition policy development. Also critical has been the need to assess and build capacity across different line ministries at all levels in support of the effective implementation of policies, well demonstrated by the projects in Lao PDR and Malawi. In Latin America, nutrition considerations were not well integrated at the sub-national levels because of insufficient attention to awareness and capacity at this level.

xxvii. In some countries, FAO has adopted an "inclusive" approach to policy assistance (including donors, other UN partners, academic institutions and NGOs), which has made the work considerably more influential and effective. In other instances the "turf wars" of the international nutrition actors get played out at field level, which has been very detrimental especially to the efforts of governments.

Normative Work

xxviii. A substantial quantity of normative products relating to nutrition has been generated by FAO, including guidelines and manuals; knowledge sharing, best practices and lessons learned documentation; and policy guidance, strategies and legal frameworks. Only a few common central themes emerge and it is not clear how these are prioritised.

xxix. Most of the normative products are geared towards readership by government staff of Member Countries, yet are not demand-driven. Instead they are generated in response to current priorities among global food security agencies or key themes in FAO. Many documents adopt an academic format and are lengthy which is generally inappropriate for government policy-makers looking for key messages. The FAO Nutrition Country Profiles developed in the late '90s, which should constitute important reference materials, are now largely out-dated and therefore not known.

xxx. Some excellent handbooks and guidelines have been developed for practitioners based upon field experience; these are much appreciated by those few who have seen them. In the same category are the tools for scoring dietary diversity at household level. It is the flagship publications, which are best known, most notably the annual SOFI report that is widely publicised and distributed.

xxxi. A key role for FAO is to articulate the importance of linking nutrition and agriculture, but few normative products provide sufficient, clear evidence of how agricultural investments and practices can contribute to improved nutrition at household level. The importance of such linkages are emphasised, but what works and what does not work, is scarce. This research is what governments, donors and other international agencies working to combat hunger look to FAO to provide.

xxxii. Considerable investment goes into normative products and yet there is no clear strategy applied for their publicity or dissemination and very little evidence of the products being used by national governments nor to inform academic and research institutions. Furthermore, it is very difficult to trace or find certain normative products on the FAO website for those able to down-load.

Gender and Social Inclusion

xxxiii. FAO's nutrition-related work is very effective at including the participation of women at grass-roots level, but a common feature is that it is not based upon any gender analysis and so issues of gender are not sufficiently factored into the project design and project implementation. The Evaluation found that the gender concept was commonly misunderstood or misconceived by project staff. Many nutrition training activities (for example) were actually reinforcing the reproductive roles of women and failing to pay sufficient attention to the gender distribution of tasks/time at the household level.

xxxiv. It was noted that some FAO nutrition-related projects in Latin America had been very effective at including indigenous communities and taking into account indigenous foods. Other projects in East and Southern Africa have specifically included people living with HIV/AIDS.

Partnerships

xxxv. A distinct comparative advantage of FAO is a long relationship with Member Countries, normally through Ministries of Agriculture, which offers an effective channel through which to raise and focus on nutrition concerns with governments. A key element of the UN reform programme is to have UN partners more involved in joint programming, which provides the opportunity to address nutrition through a multi-sectoral approach. This approach has to some extent been supplemented by establishing the REACH mechanism in some countries. The tendency at field level though has been to factor FAO in through an implementation function, rather than assuming more of a "stewardship" role which would reflect its comparative advantage. There are few examples of FAO working strategically with other UN partners or research organisations on policy assistance at any level despite the opportunities to do so. Nor has FAO developed effective partnerships with NGOs to strengthen the operational dimensions of its work at community level and to generate broader evidence and knowledge of the contribution food-based approaches can make to nutrition.

Institutional Arrangements

xxxvi. AGN has very limited capacity and leadership to deliver on a wide range of responsibilities. AGN does not represent a strong and coherent focal point for nutrition despite the efforts of some very committed staff members. There are many strategic initiatives within FAO where AGN should be raising nutrition concerns, especially in the area of statistics, information systems, strategic planning and policy assistance, but is not sufficiently engaged to capitalise on these opportunities. Repositioning AGN within the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department (AG) since 2006 has been detrimental to the contribution that nutrition could be making to these areas.

xxxvii. Furthermore, while recognising the intrinsic links between food safety and nutrition, the Evaluation found that the cohabitation of Codex, food safety and nutrition did not translate into stronger linkages and a coherent entity. It has been a major distraction from generating a multi-dimensional understanding of the factors that affect human nutrition and an obstacle to developing an inter-disciplinary approach to address malnutrition.

Conclusions and Recommendations

xxxviii. FAO lacks the vision and corporate commitment accorded to nutrition in its original mandate. Furthermore, it falls short of the expectations of key stakeholders in addressing increased nutrition concerns worldwide from the perspective of agriculture and food-based interventions. FAO has the distinct advantage as a trusted knowledge Organization to contribute to a better understanding of nutrition through scientific advice, assessments, information systems and statistics; and the comparative advantage of its long-standing relationships with governments of Member Countries to mainstream this understanding through agriculture and food security policy and programmes. The Evaluation team believes strongly that unless FAO takes up the challenge of placing nutrition high on its agenda, and demonstrates how its contribution can make a difference to global malnutrition, the Organization will lose both its relevance and influence. It is upon this premise that the Evaluation makes the following recommendations.

Corporate position on nutrition

Recommendation 1: Senior Management in FAO has to commit to a **strong focus on nutrition** across the Organization requisite to its mandate. This commitment should be "championed" by the Deputy Director General Knowledge (DDK). There are six principal areas requiring urgent attention: (i) FAO's projection of key food and agriculture issues most likely to affect malnutrition over the next decades and a commitment to address these; (ii) stronger engagement in the international development agenda on nutrition; (iii) the mainstreaming of nutrition at all stages of the FAO planning cycle; (iv) establishing nutrition as an *Impact Focus Area* within the strategic framework; (v) strengthening nutrition's institutional links with information, statistics and policy work; and (vi) ensuring that FAO makes concrete achievements in addressing under-nutrition at country level.

Recommendation 2: A **vision and strategy** for FAO's contribution to *nutrition-sensitive* agricultural development should now be drawn up and articulated reflecting FAO's commitment to address both under-nutrition and over-nutrition. Key elements of the strategy should include: (i) an agreed conceptual framework for *Food and Nutrition Security*; (ii) identification of *focal countries* where FAO has the capacity to deliver interventions and there is a country-led commitment to address malnutrition; (iii) causal analysis of malnutrition to be undertaken in all *focal countries* which will inform Country Programming Frameworks (CPF); (iv) situation analysis of other nutrition-related interventions being undertaken in focal countries to be included in the CPF; (v) linkages between the field programme and normative work in nutrition; (vi) a communications strategy to develop awareness of FAO's strategy both within and outside FAO; and (vi) an advocacy strategy.

Focal areas for nutrition

xxxix. FAO's work in nutrition should be less focused on delivering nutrition-specific activities at community level and more orientated towards providing "stewardship" and a normative function to inform, guide and establish norms and standards for governments and development partners to deliver on and achieve improved nutrition outcomes. The following constitute key focal areas:

Recommendation 3: *Building the evidence and linking food and agriculture to nutrition outcomes*

- FAO's normative work to focus on the development of tools, methods and guidelines for food consumption surveys, assessments and monitoring including nutrition-related indicators in both rural and urban contexts.
- FAO to act as "knowledge broker" of good practice and lessons learned from *nutrition-sensitive* development work by a wide range of governments and development partners including evidence of the impact agriculture and food security interventions have on nutrition.

Recommendation 4: *Strengthening nutrition analysis in statistics and information*

- Undernourishment calculations to be updated and indicators developed that can be used to monitor food consumption trends, and the debate on how the undernourishment indicator can better reflect micronutrient deficiency opened to wider debate.
- Representatives of the Nutrition Team placed on the Steering Committee for ISFNS and to establish a strong working relationship with the IPC Global Support Unit.

Recommendation 5: *Mainstreaming nutrition into agriculture and food security interventions and prioritising focal countries*

- In focal countries, the CPF to be developed around stated nutrition objectives drawn from the causal analysis and programme interventions clearly linked to those objectives.
- Nutrition mainstreamed into agriculture and food security projects (including ISFNS and policy assistance) of *focal countries*. Projects to be of sufficient duration to assess impact on nutrition and thus generate evidence of the relevance and effectiveness of the intervention.
- Projects with nutrition mainstreamed to articulate clearly how they take into account issues of gender (with a particular focus on adolescent girls and women of reproductive age), social inclusion and climate change and how they link with other elements of FAO's nutrition work.

Recommendation 6: *Integrating nutrition into policy work*

- The Policy and Nutrition Team to develop normative guidelines for integrating nutrition into agriculture and food security policies at different level.
- The Policy and Nutrition Team to ensure that "knowledge" generated of good practice and lessons learned from nutrition-sensitive development work contribute to policy work.
- The FAO Nutrition Team to be engaged with the policy assistance "node" established by TCS and to contribute to the guidelines being developed for CPF and participate actively in policy events facilitated by FAO.

Recommendation 7: *Focusing on food composition and related scientific advice*

- FAO to build capacity at the regional and sub-regional levels, encourage regional collaboration to support countries (especially *focal countries*) to collect and analyse food composition data that is demanded by end-users for ensuring the nutrition sensitivity of policies and programme interventions.
- FAO to support the function of an international repository of the data, and provide quality control of that data, which should in turn be readily accessible to all potential users.
- Within FAO, the normative work in food composition should demonstrate its value added to assessments, statistics and policy assistance.

Strategic Framework

Recommendation 8: Mainstream nutrition into the strategic framework and planning and programming documents through: (i) in the immediate term, systematically identifying specific joint unit results linking nutrition with other areas of work of the Organization in particular (but not exclusively) statistics, assessments, policy, food security programming; and (ii) in the medium-term, taking account of the need to strengthen the linkages between the strategic objectives and organizational results within the Global Goal 1 relating to food and nutrition security in the upcoming revision of the strategic framework and the formulation of the MTP 2014-2017 and the PWB 2014-2015.

Institutional Arrangements

xl. The Nutrition Team will play more of a normative role at headquarters servicing other divisions and departments to generate and analyse food and nutrition security information and adopt *nutrition-sensitive* development. At a decentralised level, FAO will focus less on the delivery of interventions and assume more of a "stewardship" and technical assistance role across sectors and development partners. FAO should make changes to its own institutional arrangements for nutrition including:

Recommendation 9 (by January 2013): the "nutrition" element (AGND) of the current Nutrition and Consumer Protection (AGN) to disengage from Food Safety and Codex (AGNC) and have a clearly defined institutional home with a staff dedicated to a multi-sectoral service function. The new nutrition entity must operate as a "service provider" offering technical assistance and normative guidance to other relevant services of the Organization. A move back to the Economic and Social Development Department (ES) would empower and strengthen links with information, assessments, statistics, policy and gender, which are most strategic to nutrition work.

Recommendation 10 (by January 2013): the technical composition of the new Nutrition Team to be determined according to the priorities of the nutrition vision and strategy. It will be headed by a strong, internationally recognised, Director of Nutrition. Staff of the Nutrition Team should have the requisite experience and knowledge to interact effectively across the Organization. Core competencies will be required in: (i) food composition, (ii) dietary measurement and assessment, (iii) nutrition information and statistics; and (iv) nutrition policy and advocacy.

Recommendation 11 (by January 2013): Nutrition Officer posts (separate from Food Safety Officers) to be established in regions and sub-regions where there are nutrition *focal countries*. This team will provide technical backstopping for *focal countries* developing Country Programming Frameworks, which include agriculture and food security projects with nutrition outcomes. Opportunities should be sought to rotate staff between headquarters, regional, sub-regional and country offices to promote better synergies and more effectively address field concerns at all levels.

Recommendation 12 (by January 2013): given the trends of FAO's core budget over the past biennia, Nutrition Officers at country level to be resourced through extra-budgetary support and therefore resources will have to be mobilised for that purpose. A principal role of the Nutrition Officers will be to: (i) promote nutrition high on the agenda of governments and development partners through established or new networks; (ii) offer technical assistance and

guidance on food-based approaches to nutrition in national policies and programmes; and (iii) help mainstream nutrition in the agriculture and food security work of FAO.

Collaboration and partnership

Recommendation 13 (by January 2013): FAO needs to realign existing collaborative arrangements and develop strong multi-sectoral partnerships to deliver on its defined nutritional outcomes. Specifically this will include:

- FAO to phase out its leadership role on expert consultations concerning nutrient requirements (in consultation with WHO), but continue to maintain close technical collaboration with WHO on scientific advice pertaining to food composition and nutrient requirements.
- FAO to develop other strategic alliances to deliver more effectively on nutrition outcomes especially in the area of policy assistance (notably with WHO, UNICEF and IFPRI) building upon the model developed with WFP on ISFNS.
- FAO to build on its comparative advantage of working in collaboration with governments, in particular Ministries of Agriculture, and use the opportunity to promote and harness a multi-sectoral approach and platform for *nutrition-sensitive development* in *focal countries*.

Networking

Recommendation 14 (immediate): FAO should be constructively engaged in nutrition-related networks at all levels and its visibility in nutrition raised. Specifically, this will include:

- FAO to contribute to coordination mechanisms at all levels that relate to nutrition and effectively contribute to national agendas (including the IASC Cluster system and REACH where appropriate) thus facilitating broader engagement with partners in nutrition.
- FAO's contribution in the area of nutrition to the SCN and the CFS to be maintained and strengthened, provided that the SCN reform is ultimately successful in making the SCN an effective UN system nutrition coordinating body.
- FAO's commitment to SUN should be corporate, and FAO's engagement with its task forces should be clarified and communicated internally and externally to avoid any further confusion.
- The joint FAO/WHO initiative to convene an ICN+20 should have obvious relevance to others in the UN system and be inclusive of the SUN movement.

I. Background

A. Introduction

1. Background to the Evaluation

1. Raising levels of nutrition and collecting, analysing and disseminating information on nutrition has always been a principal purpose and mandate of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN). However, its place and role in the overall activities have varied and evolved, depending upon the priority given to this area of work by FAO Senior Management and its Member Countries. In recent FAO history, the resources for nutrition have been severely affected by budget cuts. Nonetheless, a programme of work has been maintained and thin resources are spread over a broad range of activities principally in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

2. The Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of FAO conducted between 2005 and 2007 commissioned a study of FAO's work in nutrition. The IEE made recommendations on specific priorities of work for FAO in nutrition taking into account the resource constraints. It identified areas that it considered of lesser priority to FAO such as nutrition education, home gardening and food composition[2] since these were undertaken by other international actors. Whist very comprehensive, the IEE did not review the work in nutrition in much depth. Therefore, with the exception of its work on the Codex Alimentarius and food safety[3], the work of FAO in nutrition has not yet been thoroughly evaluated.

3. With ever increasing concerns about the fight against hunger and the rising prominence of the "double burden" of malnutrition in the international agenda, it is opportune and timely to better understand and clarify FAO's role and work in nutrition. The pursuit of FAO's reform in the coming years is another justification for doing so. This evaluation was selected as a priority by the FAO Programme Committee at its 103rd session in May 2010.

2. Structure of the report

4. The findings of the report begin with the **place of nutrition within FAO** because it is so critical to the rest of the evaluation exercise to understand where nutrition 'stands' and the priority accorded to it within the Organization. Then there is an **overall assessment of FAO's role in nutrition** with particular reference to global and regional challenges and developments within the international nutrition architecture during the period 2004-2010, which is the period subject to the evaluation. This has been an area which generated considerable debate during the process of the evaluation with the actors engaged in the international nutrition agenda.

5. Sections II. C to G constitute 'technical areas' representing FAO's work in nutrition. As we discovered at the inception stage of the evaluation, there is no simple way to define technical fields within nutrition, so we have adopted the logic of looking first at the 'scientific work' which generates the fundamental data on **food composition and nutrient requirements**; then how this scientific knowledge and nutrition concerns contribute to **assessments, information systems and statistics** which in turn inform programming. The section on **integrating nutrition into FAO programmes** includes a broad range of

[2] Recommendation 3.18 of the Independent External Evaluation of FAO, 2008.
[3] FAO's work on Codex Alimentarius and food safety were subject to an external evaluation in 2002.

interventions, which are now initiated and supported by FAO through agriculture or food security projects. They include nutrition education, integrated horticulture, nutrition and HIV/AIDS, household food security and community nutrition. **Policy assistance** and advocacy draw substantially from the scientific advice, the information systems and programme work of the Organization. The **normative products** represent a wide range of outputs, which are derived from the previous technical areas and are generally considered to complement the "operational" activities. In each of these "technical areas" the Evaluation reports against the areas of inquiry set out in the Evaluation Matrix formulated against the OECD-DAC criteria.

6. A critical cross-cutting theme for the Evaluation is **gender equity and social inclusion** because these are fundamental to achieving better nutrition and furthermore, addressing malnutrition is an effective way to operationalize gender and social inclusion. The **partnerships** through which FAO collaborates with others in the area of nutrition and the **institutional arrangements** for nutrition at different levels within FAO are finally assessed according to the areas of enquiry set out in the Evaluation Matrix.

7. The overall **conclusions** to the report are structured according to the core cross-organizational functions (organised into four categories), which characterise FAO's work on nutrition and apply at all levels (global, regional and national)[4]. The **recommendations** follow through from the principal conclusions.

B. Purpose and Methodology of the Evaluation

1. Purpose and scope

8. On the basis that the programme area relating to "human nutrition" has not been covered in corporate evaluations so far, the purpose of this evaluation is to provide FAO Senior Management and Member Countries with (i) accountability of the Organization's performance and comparative advantage; and (ii) recommendations based on solid evidence and lessons learned on FAO's role and work in nutrition in the future. In that respect, the Evaluation is forward-looking and formative.

9. The Evaluation encompasses all the work of FAO in nutrition since 2004 with the exclusion of work on Codex Alimentarius and food safety as this has been well covered by previous evaluations.

10. The Evaluation considers nutrition-related work to be *any initiative and/or product that specifically aims at or targets nutrition concerns, irrespective of the source of funding (Regular Programme or extra-budgetary resources) and the location of their management (headquarters, Regional Office or the Representation in the country).* The Evaluation has not assessed any initiative or product that does not specifically aim or target nutrition concerns.

11. In this respect, the Evaluation encompasses all the work carried out in the technical areas outlined in section 2.3 of the Inception Report (dated 15 November 2010) and summarised below. It includes the work of the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (AGN) and nutrition-related work of other divisions.

[4] These core functions are based on FAO's Strategic Framework 2010-2019.

Information, Assessment, Analysis and Statistics	**Divisions**
• Nutrition assessment	AGN/ESA
• Nutrition and food security information systems (including early warning)	AGN/ESA/TCE/TCSF
• Statistics and data	AGN/ESS
Policies, Strategies and Legal Frameworks	
• Policies and strategies (national, regional and global)	AGN/ESA/TCSF
• Advocacy	AGN/ESA/ESW/TCSF
• Right to food	ESA
Scientific Advice	
• Food composition	AGN/AGP
• Nutrient requirements	AGN
Nutrition Programmes	
• Household food security and community nutrition	AGN/ESW/TCE/TCSF
• Nutrition education	AGN/TCSF/TCE
• Integrated horticulture	AGN/AGP/TCSF/TCE
• Nutrition and HIV/AIDS	AGN/ESW/TCE/TCSF

2. Methodology

12. Initially, a **Concept Note** for the evaluation was prepared by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) outlining the purpose and the scope of the exercise. The next step was for the team leader to develop an **Inception Report** principally to serve as a guide and reference document for conducting the Evaluation. The Inception Report helped to describe in more detail FAO's normative and operational work in nutrition and included a mapping exercise of nutrition-related projects implemented between 2004 and 2010. It also outlined the institutional arrangements, linkages with other key international actors and coordination mechanisms and the logic behind the evaluation methodology. Both documents are attached as Annex 1 and Annex 2 respectively to this report.

13. An important element of the Inception Report is the **Evaluation Matrix** which was structured to include key areas of enquiry concerning FAO's role and work in nutrition applying the evaluation criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, gender and social inclusion, impact and sustainability. In the matrix, FAO's work in nutrition has been categorised according to the four core functions of: (i) information and knowledge; (ii) policy and normative; (iii) implementation and technical assistance; and (iv) outreach and partnering; as well as FAO's organizational set-up and its resources and financing. The matrix is attached as Annex 3 to this report.

14. The Evaluation team conducted face-to-face **interviews** with senior staff in FAO headquarters concerned with nutrition principally in the Departments for Agriculture and Consumer Protection (AG); Economic and Social Development (ES); and Technical Cooperation (TC). Other face-to-face interviews were conducted at headquarters level with other UN organisations, coordinating bodies (HLTF, UNSCN, REACH), donors, INGOs, academic and research institutes based in Europe and North America. In some cases, interviews were conducted by telephone. A list of both internal (to FAO) and external interlocutors is provided in Annex 10 to this report.

15. The Evaluation team undertook **field missions** to Latin America (Bolivia, Colombia and Honduras), Africa (Kenya (for Somalia), Malawi, Mozambique and Senegal) and Asia (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Thailand) where further regional and country specific interviews were conducted with FAO staff, other UN organizations, governments, donors and other development partners (including NGOs, academic and research institutions). Countries were selected where FAO had a reasonable "body" of nutrition-related projects being undertaken which had not been evaluated recently and a desk review of the relevant documentation was undertaken prior to the missions. Project visits to the field were arranged where feasible. Kenya, Senegal and Thailand were selected to gain a regional perspective. Telephone interviews were conducted with FAO Regional Offices not visited during these missions.

16. A **desk review** was conducted of the nutrition-related work in **Afghanistan** given its significance, and account was taken of the project evaluations conducted concurrently with this evaluation. Furthermore, a **synthesis of evaluations** was undertaken of 30 past evaluation reports of FAO programmes, projects and thematic areas undertaken since 2004 of relevance to nutrition to draw upon a much larger body of evidence.

17. Two **surveys** were conducted of: (i) Permanent Representatives of 192 FAO Member Countries; and (ii) FAO professional staff seeking their views on the role FAO should play in nutrition. An additional survey was conducted on the relevance and utilisation of data on food composition and nutrient requirements targeting in particular Codex Committees, IFDC, INFOODS and IUNS. The questionnaire for each of these surveys is provided in Annexes 5, 6 and 7 respectively.

18. **Separate studies** were conducted by the Evaluation team specifically of: (i) strategic planning and resources allocated to FAO's work in nutrition; (ii) the relevance, quality and usefulness of FAO's normative work in nutrition including food composition and nutrient requirements (which was conducted separately); (iii) a review of nutrition in FAO's assessments, information systems and statistics; (iv) a review of integrating nutrition into FAO agriculture and food security programmes; and (v) the scope of FAO's nutrition work in advocacy and policy assistance. A list of the respective studies, including Country Aide-Mémoires and Regional Syntheses, are provided in Annex 4 to this report.

19. Finally, an **Expert Panel** meeting was convened at FAO Rome of seven external experts selected for their extensive knowledge, experience and unique perspective on the subject matter. The Panel reviewed the relevance of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the draft Evaluation Report, consulted independently with FAO senior management and provided their guidance for the finalization of the report. The observations of the Expert Panel are provided in Annex 12 to this report.

3. Constraints to the Evaluation

20. The following constraints and challenges were faced by the Evaluation:

- The number of stakeholders within the international arena is substantial and there are constantly changing agendas (even during the course of the Evaluation) influencing the structures and direction of the global debate on nutrition which have to be well understood by the team to ensure an informed and independent stance.
- FAO's attendance at international symposiums, conferences and workshops related to nutrition is not sufficiently or systematically documented for the Evaluation to accurately assess the contribution FAO may have made to the global (or in some cases regional) nutrition debate.
- The current corporate system for recording time inputs by staff for all normative work

is insufficient to conduct a rigorous and objective assessment of FAO's efficiency.

- FAO does not have a corporate system for recording specific requests by its Member Countries for assistance: the reports of FAO Committees and Regional Conferences are formulated at a global or regional level and can only represent a generic benchmark, unsuitable for assessment of performance at a more detailed level of analysis.
- Distinguishing "nutrition work" from everything else that FAO does has been particularly challenging for the Evaluation since nutrition concerns might be factored into projects which are not explicit about this in the project purpose or objectives, or (more commonly) explicit in the project objectives, but no activities incorporated to achieve the results.
- FAO's work in nutrition is spread thinly around the globe and a lot of travel was involved to visit/see relatively small-scale activities and insufficient time to see a representative cross-section of projects.
- Changes in two key personnel on the team during the course of the Evaluation.

C. FAO's Work in Nutrition

21. The nutrition-related work of FAO is conducted in a number of departments and divisions within FAO. The core unit responsible for the majority of nutrition-related work is the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (AGN). It is split into seven groups of which four deal with matters of food safety, food control and Codex Alimentarius-related work (not covered by this evaluation). The other three groups include: (i) the **Nutrition Assessment and Nutrient Requirements Group** (AGNDA) is made up of four professional staff (at headquarters) and is responsible for food composition, nutrient requirements, nutrition assessment and nutrition information systems; (ii) the **Nutrition Education and Consumer Awareness Group** (AGNDE) is made up of four professional staff (at headquarters) and is responsible for household food security and community nutrition, nutrition education and advocacy; and (iii) the **Nutrition Security and Policy Group** (AGNDP) made up of three professional staff (at headquarters) and is responsible for nutrition policies, strategies and advocacy both internal and external to FAO. AGN also has one professional staff person responsible for Inter-institutional Collaboration in support of the Director for AGN (currently vacant). Recently, the D1 post that is to oversee the three human nutrition groups has been filled.

22. Outside of AGN, there are a number of divisions and departments engaging in nutrition-related work, either in collaboration with AGN or independently. These include to a very limited extent the Animal Protection and Health (AGA) and the Rural Infrastructure and Agro-Industries (AGS) Divisions, but more so, the Plant Production and Protection Division (AGP), all within the same department. Also the Climate, Energy and Tenure Division (NRC) of the Natural Resources Management and Environment Department (NR). This principally relates to projects, which require agronomic input including rural and urban horticultural projects.

23. Of particular importance to nutrition are the Agricultural Development Economics Division (ESA) and the Statistics Division (ESS) of the Economic and Social Development Department (ES) with respect to nutrition assessment, information systems for food and nutrition security and statistics, which contribute to the flagship publications such as the State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI). Until 2005, the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (then named the Food and Nutrition Division ESN) was in ES.

24. Also of significance are (i) the Policy and Programme Development Support Division (TCS), because of its work in the area of policy assistance, strategic planning and its responsibility for National Programmes for Food Security (NPFS); and (ii) the Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) of the Technical Cooperation Department (TC). During the evaluation period, a significant proportion of nutrition-related projects have been integrated through NPFS technically supported by TCS and within the emergency and rehabilitation assistance operated by TCE in a broad number of countries.

25. For the purpose of the analysis, FAO's work in nutrition was categorised as follows: (i) Scientific advice including food composition and nutrient requirements; (ii) Information, assessment, analysis and statistics; (iii) Integration of nutrition into field programmes including nutrition education and community-based nutrition; (iv) Policy assistance; and (v) Normative work.

Scientific advice

26. The work on scientific advice is mainly covered by the AGNDA team and includes all the work on food composition and nutrient requirements. In the area of food composition AGNDA is the only group within an UN agency working in this field. Initially food composition tables were produced for major food items, whereas now assistance is provided to both countries and at regional level, in building their own capacity to produce data and tables. The International Network on Food Data Systems (INFOODS) secretariat is hosted in the division. Since its creation in 1984, it has grown considerably and now oversees a global network of regional data centres, which generate, compile and disseminate data on food composition.

27. The area of nutrient requirements includes the development of indicators and methodologies, the development of training materials and regular expert consultations in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO). In both areas, AGNDA is participating at conferences, meetings and workshops at all levels and serving as the FAO Secretariat to relevant Codex meetings.

28. In addition to the two larger sectors described above, the group is also involved in a number of initiatives related to biodiversity and sustainable diets. They have produced indicators for food composition and food consumption in collaboration with Bioversity International and promote the biodiversity theme at international conferences.

Information, assessment, analysis and statistics

29. This grouping includes the work in the areas of nutrition assessment, nutrition and food security information systems (including early warning) and nutrition-related statistics and data. Nutrition assessments and nutrition information systems are both areas that require high levels of internal collaboration.

30. In these areas listed above, AGN's role has been developing methods, standards and guidelines especially relating to data (such as energy content of foods, human energy and nutrient requirements etc.), which are generated and compiled by AGN and incorporated into the FAOSTAT databases by the Economic and Social Development Department (ES). Key initiatives include the Nutrition Country Profiles, Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS), nutrition-related data within FAOSTAT and the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) in Somalia. Currently, the Agricultural Development Economics Division (ESA) is the lead unit for these initiatives, and

also promotes coordinated action among partner agencies.[5]

The **Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems** (FIVIMS) initiative was established to support decision makers at sub-national, national, regional and global levels through a more reliable, accurate and timely source of information. It allows countries to carry out a more careful characterisation of the food insecure and vulnerable population groups, improving understanding through cross-sectoral analysis of the underlying causes, and using evidence-based information and analysis to advocate for the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes enhancing food security and nutrition.

31. Nutrition Country Profiles, for which the format has recently been updated, are developed with the assistance of a local consultant. The profiles follow the FIVIMS conceptual framework of food security and nutrition and the data from UN agencies' global databases and national institution are used. Currently, there are 72 completed Nutrition Country Profiles of which a limited number has been revised into the new format.

32. A large part of the nutrition-related work undertaken in the Statistics Division (ESS) is in relation to the under-nourishment indicator. Food balance sheets are developed by countries and provide the alternative to food consumption data, which is a costly exercise that often cannot be undertaken. The data for the annual publication SOFI is also compiled by ESS.

33. Work in this grouping is also undertaken on measuring dietary intakes, dietary assessments, human energy requirements, micronutrient deficiencies and food diversification. Composition indicators such as the Dietary Diversity Score (DDS) and Household Food Insecurity and Access Index (HFIA) have been developed in partnership with AED/FANTA (supported by USAID). The Organization and AGNDA in particular, is also active in anthropometry through the creation of a map of stunting and the provision of advice on this topic to Member Countries.

Integrating nutrition into field programmes

34. This grouping includes varied activities, spread across the Organization's departments. The areas of work include: household food security and community nutrition; nutrition education; integrated horticulture; and nutrition and HIV/AIDS.

35. Work on household food security and community nutrition is carried out in a broad combination of field activities and normative work. In the Organization's emergency field programme, this is the main area of work in nutrition-related projects. The types of activities in this area of nutrition-related work include technical support to Member Countries (including humanitarian partners), the development of training and resource materials and advocacy.

36. AGNDE has also been extensively involved in work on nutrition education. Activities include: technical support; capacity building in food and nutrition; the development of guidelines, tools and resource materials that promote nutrition improvement and raise awareness on healthy diets; and some advocacy work. The work done in this area is both normative, through a number of publications, guidelines and curricula, and executed through the field programme, particularly in the Latin America and Caribbean region.

[5] Following a joint FAO/WFP External Evaluation on Information Systems for Food Security (ISFS), the FIVIMS work of FAO is being integrated into the new joint FAO/WFP strategy on Information Systems for Food and Nutrition Security (ISFNS) to be endorsed by both organisations later in 2011.

37. FAO's work in urban and peri-urban horticulture (UPH) has been undertaken in collaboration with AGP, AGS, TCE and NRC. Adopting a Farmer Field School (FFS) approach piloted in cities in Africa and Latin America, AGP's projects have supported governments and city administrations in optimising policies and institutional frameworks to support UPH, production and marketing systems and to enhance the horticultural value chain. Out of these projects, as well as the 'Food for the Cities' initiative, a number of publications have emerged including nutrition-related components.

38. The Organization is also conducting some work, particularly in the field, with regards to nutrition in emergencies. This includes, but is not limited to, early warning, nutrition-related assistance in emergency situations and improved preparedness through sustainable food security policies.

39. After the World Food Summit (WFS) in 1996 reaffirmed the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, a number of initiatives have developed. Among these within FAO, methodologies and tools have been under development to ensure the above. Currently, a methodological toolbox has been compiled providing guidance in terms of legislation, monitoring, assessments and budgeting involving AGN and ESA. The FAO Right to Food work is led by the ESA division within the overall context of strengthening food security governance.

40. Nutrition-related work in the Rural Infrastructure and Agro-Industries Division (AGS) relates to the development of dairy industry programmes and nutrition. Currently there is collaboration between AGN, AGS and ESA on the publication "Milk and Dairy in Human Nutrition".

Policy assistance

41. This grouping includes the areas of nutrition policies, strategies and advocacy work at national, regional and global level, and activities related to the Right to Food. Nutrition policies and strategies, as well as advocacy support the development of food and nutrition security policies. More generally, the work aims to ensure the inclusion of nutrition concerns into policy considerations.

42. Within FAO, the AGNDP team promotes the mainstreaming of nutrition into the Organization's work. Their aim is to ensure that the necessity to look at nutrition is understood, as well as ensuring that nutrition's role in agriculture (and vice versa) remains eminent. Recently the group has been promoting the use of the expression 'food and nutrition security' in order to underline the need for nutrition to be explicit rather than implied and side-lined. A main message in this regard, is that food security is not sufficient for nutrition. The AGNDP group also supports the development of food security and nutrition policies at national, regional and global level. To this end, guidelines for policy support, strategy and implementation have been developed. Countries are assisted in developing and particularly the implementation on National Plans of Action for Nutrition (NPAN) and WFS Plans of Action.

43. Other nutrition groups have policy assistance dimensions. For example, AGNDA works to mainstream nutrition concerns into the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and is promoting the sustainable use of biodiversity in programmes contributing to food security.

Normative work

44. Normative outputs include publications, guidelines and manuals, databases and contributions to global processes. During the evaluation period, there has also been attendance at an extensive amount of conferences, workshops, expert consultations and meetings in a broad spectrum of nutrition-related topics.

45. According to the groupings mentioned above, the predominant nature of normative work differs. The grouping of *Scientific Advice* is the most versatile in terms of types of products, spanning across publications, guidelines and manuals, databases and contributions to global processes, as well as the publication of the Journal of Food Composition and Analysis, currently the only in-house scientific journal. In *Information, Assessment, Analysis and Statistics*, products include, guidelines and manuals for the compilation of data, the databases themselves and a number of publications resulting out of this said data. Under *integration of nutrition into field programmes* a diverse range of normative materials, predominantly publications or some limited guidelines and manuals (with the area of nutrition education being the most dominant). Finally, in the grouping *Policies, Strategies and Legal Frameworks* the normative work mainly comprises guidelines and manuals supporting policy makers in integrating nutrition concerns into national policies, as well as publications outlining success stories and lessons learned or advocacy materials.

46. A full list of nutrition-related projects as well as normative products is provided in Annexes 9 and 11 respectively.

II. Findings

A. FAO's Mandate and Resources for Nutrition

1. FAO's mandate for nutrition

47. An appropriate starting point of this report is to go back to the origins of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) which was the end-product of a series of conferences held during World War II. In 1941, the US Nutrition Conference for Defense, attended by 900 delegates, resolved that it should be a goal of the democracies to conquer hunger, "not only the obvious hunger that man has always known, but the hidden hunger revealed by modern knowledge of nutrition." In line with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's call in 1942 for the Four Freedoms, the Australian economist Frank McDougal proposed the creation of a "United Nations program for freedom from want of food" and urged the president that food be the first economic problem tackled by the UN system being proposed for establishment when the war ended.

48. President Roosevelt convened the UN Conference on Food and Agriculture at Hot Springs, Virginia, in May and June 1943. An Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture was established and tasked to draw up a draft constitution for FAO, thus paving the way for the first FAO Conference held in Quebec in October 1945. By the end of the conference, FAO comprised 42 Member Nations and significantly, the Organization was first headed by a nutritionist, Sir John Boyd Orr.[6]

[6] http://www.nationsencyclopedia.com/United-Nations-Related-Agencies/The-Food-and-Agriculture-Organization-of-the-United-Nations-FAO-CREATION.html

49. The preamble of FAO's constitution, which was finalised in 1947, states that ***raising levels of nutrition and standards of living*** is the first objective of Member Nations outlined in Article 1. Furthermore, it outlines within the principal functions of the Organization that FAO will *collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture* and *promote and recommend national and international action with respect to research relating to nutrition, food and agriculture*. It also refers to *the improvement of education and administration relating to nutrition, food and agriculture, and the spread of public knowledge of nutritional and agricultural science and practice*.

50. FAO's established mandate is ***to raise levels of nutrition[7], improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy.***

51. Over 50 years later, following the World Food Summit (WFS) in 1996, FAO Member Countries emphasised in the **Strategic Framework 2000-2015** the principal goal of *"access of all people at all times to sufficient nutritionally adequate and safe food, ensuring that the number of chronically undernourished people is reduced by half no later than 2015"*. The definition of Food Security contained in this goal was later modified at the World Summit on Food Security in Rome from 16 to 18 November 2009 to reflect a more holistic approach to food security and nutrition: *"Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life"*.

52. Following the outcome of the IEE, FAO launched its most recent **Strategic Framework 2010-2019** which acknowledges *"the main challenges facing food, agriculture and rural development are the large and increasing number of undernourished in the world, the prospect of rising inequality and problems of access to food by the most vulnerable populations, and the increased scarcity of natural resources worsened by climate change"*. In adopting the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO's renewal (IPA), the 35th (Special) Session of the FAO Conference in November 2008 approved a Vision for FAO as "*a world free of hunger and malnutrition where food and agriculture contributes to improving living standards of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner.* The first Global Goal of FAO Members in this strategic framework is the "*reduction of the absolute number of people suffering from hunger, progressively ensuring a world in which all people at all times have sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life".*

53. It is clear from the start when FAO was established as a United Nations organization right through to the present day that nutrition is not just integral to FAO's work, it is **central** to the Organization's mandate. Ninety percent of the respondents to the Member Country survey conducted by the Evaluation are positive that nutrition is an essential part of FAO's mandate. At no time more than today, when the world is becoming increasingly aware of the global implications of malnutrition, is this mandate more relevant, and the role of FAO more important.

[7] Whilst giving prominence to under-nutrition, FAO's mandate now dates back to a time when the world was more concerned with underweight. Nowadays there is increasing concern about overweight and obesity at the same time, as the numbers bypass the undernourishment problem.

2. FAO's strategic priorities for nutrition

Introduction

54. During the evaluation period, the Organization went through a major reform of its strategic and planning modalities and a new Results-based Framework (including a new results hierarchy and planning documents and cycle) started implementation in the current 2010-2011 biennium. For most of the period under review, the Evaluation makes reference to the Strategic Framework 2000-2015 based on the "old" strategic and planning model as a reference, but for current activities and future considerations, reference is made to the 2010-2019 Strategic Framework.

55. Another development during the evaluation period was the introduction of a country programming framework in FAO which formally started in 2006 when the National Medium Term Priority Framework (NMTPF) guidelines were issued. An evaluation was carried out in 2010 which found that while the NMTPF is a necessary and useful instrument to increase the effectiveness of the FAO field programme and a central element in FAO's new Planning, Programming and Accountability system, the quality and impact of the NMTPFs that had been developed were very variable and, in many cases, they did not meet desirable standards. New guidelines are being finalised now for the re-named "Country Programming Frameworks".

56. Finally, until 2010, FAO Regional Offices were not required to develop regional strategies. In the new Results-based Management (RBM) model, the planning and programming cycle begins with the identification of priorities at regional level through regional priority frameworks developed by FAO management, and discussed at the Regional Conferences. The guidance of the regional conferences is used as one of the key inputs to priority-setting for the preparation of the Programme of Work and Budget. These regional documents are still under development and were not therefore part of this review.

Key Findings

The Strategic Framework and Medium-Term Plan for the period 2004-2009

57. The Strategic Framework 2000-2015 (SF 2000-2015) takes the World Food Summit 1996 as its point of reference and starts with the recognition of an unacceptable level and widespread hunger, the latter being defined by the number of undernourished and linked to food insecurity.

58. In the Mission[8], the word "nutrition" does not appear. Instead, it refers to food insecurity and rural poverty, emphasising particularly aspects of sustainable food supply and availability and conserving and enhancing the natural resource base. Whether in the Mission or the Goals, nutrition issues are thus very much analysed in terms of "under-nourishment" and therefore, emphasis is given throughout the SF to the role of improving food supplies to address nutrition issues and inequalities.

59. Within the five corporate strategies and 12 strategic objectives, corporate strategy A: *Contributing to the eradication of food insecurity and rural poverty* is the closest to nutrition objective. The strategic objective A2: *Access to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to sufficient, safe and nutritionally adequate food* is the only strategy that explicitly aims to

[8] SF- paragraph 24.

address "under-nourishment" and "malnutrition"[9]. It recognises the need to adopt special measures aimed directly at achieving and sustaining nutritional improvements among the poor and socially disadvantaged. In effect, most of FAO's work in nutrition is contained in this strategic objective.

60. In none of the other strategic objectives, is there a clear mention or indication of the relationship between activities and nutrition objectives. Nutrition is treated as a separate set of activities, focusing on vulnerable people. The SF 2000-2015 does not reflect an integrated approach or a nutrition sensitive approach to agriculture and food issues. Furthermore, it makes the assumption that FAO has comparative advantages in food and nutrition without defining them clearly, nor providing a convincing rationale.

FAO's comparative advantages in the Strategic Framework 2000-2015

- Critical mass of experts in the areas of national nutrition policy and planning, nutrition assessment and programme development;
- FAO well situated to develop and adapt social safety net concepts and methods making use of multi-disciplinary approach that combines social and economic as well as technical and legal expertise;
- Strong capacity in measuring, monitoring and assessing food insecurity and vulnerability;
- FAO has long experience in promoting food-based improvements to nutrition at the household and community levels.

61. The review of the Medium-Term Plan (MTP) 2004-2009 shows similar findings. FAO's nutrition work is very much embedded in one Strategic Objective A2 and one Programme 2.2.1: *Nutrition, Food Quality and Safety* with limited linkages with other programmes.

62. The MTP remains vague about priorities within the programme: "the main thrust of Programme 2.2.1 is to promote access to and consumption of nutritionally adequate and safe food by all, with a high priority given to assuring the quality and safety of food. There is no significant change in the structure from the previous MTP. The programme will maintain emphasis on Codex Alimentarius and Codex-related issues of food safety and quality, nutrition information and education, household food security and nutrition interventions, as well as due reflection of nutrition aspects in national policies".

63. Indicators were introduced for the first time in the MTP 2002-2007. A systematic review of all indicators show that none of the objective-level indicators reflects any degree of measure of nutrition improvement and nutrition is mentioned only for Programme entities that relate to nutrition.

Strategic Planning and the Results-Based Framework from 2010

64. The Strategic Framework 2010-2019 reflects an important shift from the previous framework with the recognition of malnutrition as a distinct issue in its vision: *"FAO's vision is of a world free of hunger and malnutrition where food and agriculture contribute to improving the living standards of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner."*

65. Eliminating hunger remains part of the first goal of FAO with a more comprehensive definition of food security and nutrition: *"[...] ensuring a world in which all people at all times have sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food*

[9] SF – paragraph 42, page 13.

preferences for an active and healthy life". Human nutrition (mostly the work of AGN) is embedded in the Strategic Objective (SO) H: *Improved food security and better nutrition*, with some contribution to SO-D 1 and 2 (food safety and Codex).

66. However, other than in the background section, the vision and the goals, nutrition hardly appears in the rest of the document except in the SO-H, which relates explicitly to nutrition. In fact, only Strategic Objectives C and I make an explicit link to nutrition objective or link their organizational results to human nutrition.

67. Again, whilst fighting malnutrition is reiterated as part of FAO's core mandate, the linkages between FAO's first goal and the strategic objectives (other than H) are not explicit. The SF 2010-2019 reflects a vertical approach to the work of the Organization, with limited or no linkages or obvious coherence between the strategic objectives with respect to a nutrition goal.

68. The SO-H is structured around five Organizational Results (OR), including one specific "nutrition" result that aims at integrating nutrition concerns in food and agriculture policies of Member Countries, namely H3: *Strengthened capacity of member countries and other stakeholders to address specific nutrition concerns in food and agriculture.* In fact, H3 is a response to the IEE recommendation to focus the work of the Organization in nutrition on policy. It constitutes the core of nutrition work (principally focusing on policy) with the exception of nutrient requirements and dietary assessment.

69. This fragmentation within the SO-H has been well recognised by the team responsible for coordinating the work across this pillar: "in spite of its importance within the overall strategic framework of FAO, on the whole, SO-H is quite fragmented" with five Organizational Results and 67 Unit Results. The rationale for and the linkages among the five ORs are weak. A retreat of the SO-H team was organised in November 2010 to try to address the need for greater linkages and multi-disciplinary work among the SO-H team, through identification of opportunities for consolidation, and joint or shared Unit Results between divisions. While commendable, the retreat was not very conclusive in enhancing greater coordination and coherence within SO-H.

70. With regard to priorities coming out of the MTP 2010-2013, it is interesting to note the narrative on programmatic emphasis (and its corollary on "de-emphasis") in relation to SO-H which, again, reflects the IEE recommendation to focus on policy work and integrate nutrition into it while de-emphasising country-level project activities.

Extract from the Medium-Term Plan 2010-2013 and Programme of Work and Budget 2010-2011

103. Strategic Objectives G, H and K are closely related. During 2010-2011, priority will be given to work on: smallholders; rural development; statistics (for which four new positions have been created); and implementation of the voluntary guidelines to support the progressive realisation of the Right to Adequate Food in the context of national security. Nutrition policy is now more closely integrated with food security policy.

104. Increases in priority areas of work will be offset by some reductions related to work on commodities and perspective studies. Support to food composition work at national level has been eliminated with concentration on regional food composition capacity building. There will also be a de-emphasis of country-level project activities in favour of higher-level strategic policy work and more collaboration with implementing partners who have a stronger presence at country level (WFP, UNICEF, civil society).

Nutrition in Country Level Programming

71. A desk review of completed or drafted National Medium-Term Priority Frameworks (NMTPF) was conducted as part of the Evaluation of FAO Country Programming mentioned earlier in this section. One aspect reviewed was whether the NMTPFs had well defined their strategic priority areas for technical assistance to support government national priorities.

72. The review found that nutrition has been identified as a strategic priority in at least one quarter of the countries that developed a NMTPF**.** This is quite an important finding in itself indicating the fact that nutrition is seen as a key development challenge within countries.

73. The issue pointed out in the review is whether FAO has undertaken sufficient analysis of causes underlying malnutrition and identified appropriate strategies to effectively address those concerns at the country level. The NMTPF reviewed as part of the evaluation country visits would point to the contrary. While nutrition features in a few of the NMTPF, the underpinning causal analysis is weak and articulation with other areas of work of the Organization not explicit. Furthermore, it is the understanding of the team that the preparation of the NMTPFs in the countries visited did not benefit from inputs of nutritionists, neither from AGN, the Regional Office, nor necessarily from FAO nutritionists in country. Lastly, the nutrition country profiles are not referred to in these documents.

74. A consequence of this is that there may be a "disconnect" between the NMTPF and the reality of the country programming. This Evaluation found that some NMTPFs were very weak in identifying and articulating nutrition concerns and interventions that would address this dimension of food security, yet in practice, the programme was undertaking some very significant and innovative work on nutrition assessments, information, analysis and policy (Somalia and Bangladesh are classic examples). Similarly, there were good models of incorporating nutrition into the objectives of the NMTPF without any demonstration of this understanding in the programme of work.

3. FAO's resources for nutrition

Regular Programme financial resources

Introduction

75. Regular Programme resources represent the core budget of FAO financed through assessed contributions of Member Countries. The Evaluation reviewed resources that had been allocated to Programme Entities (PE) relevant to nutrition content[10] across the three biennia 2004-2005, 2006-2007 and 2008-2009. This will have captured most of the nutrition-related activities, if not all, associated with the Regular Programme resources.

76. For the review of **Regular Programme resources**, the Evaluation took into account: (i) the *FAO total* resources in Regular Programming which includes assessed contributions of Member Countries and external income in direct support to the Regular Programme; (ii) *AGN total* (including Food Safety and Codex which are not subject to this evaluation); (iii) *Nutrition* which corresponds to the funds allocated to PEs relevant to nutrition across the entire Organization; and (iv) *AGN nutrition* which corresponds to the funds (excluding Food Safety and Codex) allocated to AGN within the same PEs.

[10] In all three biennia, the PE relating to technical assistance was excluded from the nutrition-relevant PEs as it was difficult to distinguish how much would have gone to either nutrition or food safety and Codex activities. It is included in the figures for *AGN Total*.

Programme Entities on Nutrition in the PWBs 2004-2005, 2006-2007 and 2008-2009

The nutrition-related PEs in the PWB 2004-2005 are:

- **220A1** Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information for Better Policy Targeting (FIVIMS)
- **221A2** Nutrition Improvement for Sustainable Development
- **221A4** Community Action for Improved Household Food Security and Nutrition
- **221A5** Food and Nutrition Education, Communications and Training
- **221A6** Nutrition and Household Food Security in Emergencies
- **221P1** Nutrient Requirements and Dietary Assessment for Food Safety and Quality

The nutrition-related PEs in the PWB 2006-2007 and 2008-2009 are:

- **2DA05** Household Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods
- **2DA06** Food and Nutrition Education and Consumer Awareness
- **2DP02** Nutrient Requirements and Dietary Assessment in a Transforming Food Economy
- **3BA01** Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS)

Key findings

Table 1: FAO Regular Programme resources allocated to nutrition (in '000s of US Dollars)

	PWB 2004/05		PWB 2006/07		PWB 2008/09	
	Budget	***Actual***	***Budget***	***Actual***	***Budget***	***Actual***
FAO total	$830,627	$829,761	$856,831	$877,816	$1,033,253	$1,038,103
Nutrition	$10,850	$11,062	$10,046	$10,870	$11,966	$12,051
%	*1.31*	*1.33*	*1.17*	*1.24*	*1.16*	*1.16*
AGN total	$19,061	$19,726	$18,598	$20,186	$22,052	$23,190
AGN nutrition	$5,373	$5,749	$4,951	$5,547	$5,743	$5,940
%	*28.19*	*29.14*	*26.62*	*27.48*	*26.04*	*25.61*
FAO total	$830,627	$829,761	$856,831	$877,816	$1,033,253	$1,038,103
AGN nutrition	$5,373	$5,749	$4,951	$5,547	$5,743	$5,940
%	*0.65*	*0.69*	*0.58*	*0.63*	*0.56*	*0.57*

77. The table above shows that the Organization's resources allocated for nutrition have declined from around 1.3 percent of the Organization's total resources to about 1.15 percent over the three biennia. Actual expenditure has consistently exceeded budget by about 0.1 percent. *AGN total* resources over the three biennia have been just above 2 percent of the *FAO total*. The proportion of *AGN total* resources allocated to *AGN nutrition* during this period has been slightly below 30 percent and there has been a steady decline over the three biennia. *AGN nutrition* resources as a proportion of the FAO total are consistently below 0.70 percent with the largest decreases taking place between 2004-2005 and 2006-2007.

Table 2: Distribution of Regular Programme resources at different levels (in '000s of US Dollars)

	PWB 2004/05				PWB 2006/07				PWB 2008/09			
	Budget in US$	% of Total	Actual in US$	% of Total	Budget in US$	% of Total	Actual in US$	% of Total	Budget in US$	% of Total	Actual in US$	% of Total
Headquarters	8,299	77	8,646	78%	7,663	76	8,377	77	9,017	75	9,529	79
Regional and Sub-Regional Offices	2,517	23	2,416	22%	2,383	24	2,493	23	2,949	25	2,522	21
Nutrition Total	**10,816**		**11,062**		**10,046**		**10,870**		**11,966**		**12,051**	

78. The table above shows the distribution of *Nutrition* resources between FAO headquarters and both Regional/Sub-regional Offices. Over the three biennia, the distribution between Headquarters and Decentralised offices has been consistent with about 75 percent of resources being allocated to central level and about 25 percent allocated to the decentralised level. This distribution reflects the much higher staffing capacity at the central level. In terms of actual expenditure, the discrepancies have tended to favour headquarters, not the decentralised offices.

Table 3: Distribution of Regular Programme resources by areas of nutrition work (in '000s of US Dollars)

	PWB 2004/05				PWB 2006/07				PWB 2008/09			
	Budget in US$	% of Total	Actual in US$	% of Total	Budget in USD	% of Total	Actual in US$	% of Total	Budget in US$	% of Total	Actual in US$	% of Total
FIVIMS	4,384	40	4,074	37	4,294	43	4,123	38	5,298	44	5,126	43
Nutrition Education	1,437	13	1,558	14	1,459	15	1,781	16	1,858	16	1,923	16
Livelihoods, Household & Food Security	3,599	33	3,795	34	2,822	28	3,169	29	2,855	24	2,937	24
Scientific Advice	1,430	13	1,635	15	1,471	15	1,797	17	1,955	16	2,065	17
Nutrition Total	**10,850**		**11,062**		**10,046**		**10,870**		**11,966**		**12,051**	

79. The table above shows the resources of *Nutrition* divided by broad areas of work in nutrition as categorised by the PEs[11]. In all three biennia Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS) received the largest share of resources fluctuating between 40 and 44 percent; the next largest area of work is Household Food Security and Livelihoods, which has also received the most significant cut in resources during the course of the evaluation period from 33 to 24 percent in budgetary terms. Both the areas of Nutrition Education and Scientific Advice have received a similar level of resources and like FIVIMS have actually seen an increase in resources in terms of proportion and figures.

Field Programme financial resources

80. The Evaluation also undertook a review of FAO's field programme relating to nutrition with respect to budget, regional distribution and by donor. However, a major caveat of the analysis below is that it is based on projects' total budgets. Typically, only a few activities or components within these projects directly relate to nutrition, so this analysis certainly overstates the proportion of the field programme (in terms of budget) being dedicated by the

[11] In 2004/2005, the PEs 221A2, 22A4 and 221A6 were grouped into the Household Food Security and Livelihoods heading.

Organization to nutrition. What it does present is an indication of the proportion of FAO's field programme, which includes nutrition activities or components.

Table 4: Budget analysis of the nutrition-related Field Programme

Type of projects 2004-2010	Total budget (USD)	% budget of all projects nutrition related	Number of projects	% number of nutrition related projects	Average budget (USD)
All projects nutrition related	**231,381,308**		**134**		**1,726,726**
Technical Cooperation projects nutrition related	181,232,613	78.3	110	82.1	1,647,569
Emergency projects nutrition related	50,148,695	21.7	24	17.9	2,089,529
TCP projects nutrition related	7,947,197	3.4	34	25.4	233,741
EBF technical cooperation projects nutrition related	173,285,416	74.9	76	56.7	2,280,071
Projects nutrition related with budget above $2 million	178,232,436	77.0	34	25.4	5,242,130
Technical Cooperation projects nutrition related with budget above $2 million	140,078,814	60.5	29	21.6	4,830,304
Emergency projects nutrition related with budget above $2 million	38,153,622	16.5	5	3.7	7,630,724

81. During the six-year evaluation period, there were 134 nutrition-related projects with an overall budget of $231 million. Of these, 82 percent were Technical Cooperation projects[12] and 18 percent were emergency initiatives. There were 34 projects (25 percent) with a budget above $2 million which represented 77 percent of the overall budget.

[12] Technical Cooperation projects are those projects not classified as "emergency", they include Donor Funded Technical Cooperation (DFTC) and FAO Regular Programme (which includes TCPs and some Special Programme funding).

Table 5: Nutrition-related Field Programme in relation to FAO's total Field Programme[13]

Type of projects 2004-2010	Total budget (USD)	% budget of all projects nutrition related	% budget of total projects
Total FAO projects	2,343,906,629	-	-
Total FAO technical cooperation projects	1,251,497,954	-	-
Total FAO emergency projects	1,092,408,675	-	-
Total TCP Projects	179,801,322	-	-
All projects nutrition related	**231,381,308**		**10**
Technical Cooperation projects nutrition related	181,232,613	78.3	14.5
Emergency projects nutrition related	50,148,695	21.7	4.6
TCP projects nutrition related	7,947,197	3.4	4.4

82. A look at FAO's nutrition related field programme in relation to FAO's total field programme[14] shows that nutrition-related work is in fact limited to 10 percent of the total. The share of emergency projects and TCP projects which are nutrition-related is even less (each below 5 percent). Once again, the caveat outlined at the beginning needs to be kept in mind, which would only further exemplify the limited presence of nutrition-related work in the Organization's Field Programme.

Table 6: Regional distribution of the nutrition-related Field Programme

Type of projects	Total budget (USD)	% budget of all projects nutrition related	Number of projects	% number of nutrition related projects	Main donor (by budget)	Main donor (by number of projects)
Africa	96,626,464	41.8	60	44.8	Belgium	FAO
Asia and Pacific	63,107,972	27.3	27	20.1	EC	Spain
Europe and Central Asia	782,170	0.3	1	0.7	-	-
Latin America and Caribbean	55,736,279	24.1	33	24.6	Spain	FAO
Near East	2,652,507	1.1	5	3.7	Spain	FAO
Interregional	7,801,582	3.4	4	3.0	Germany	-
Global	4,674,334	2.0	4	3.0	Belgium	Belgium

83. The highest proportion of funding to nutrition related project (nearly 45 percent) goes to Africa, then to Asia and the Pacific (just over 27 percent), and then, Latin America and the Caribbean (just under 25 percent). The other regions have negligible levels of resourcing for nutrition-related projects.

84. FAO's Field Programme is principally supported by extra-budgetary resources. Only 6

[13] Percentages of total delivery are on the basis of each category's respective total.
[14] The total budget numbers for FAO's Field Programme are based on FPMIS delivery reports.

percent of FAO's Regular Programme budget reaches the field level through TCPs and National Programmes for Food Security, whereas 94 percent of extra-budgetary support is allocated to field operations. In a preliminary analysis of the major donors supporting FAO nutrition-related activities presented in Annex 8, Spain and Belgium emerge with a significant difference to others in terms of total budget ($53 million and $32.2 million respectively). The dominance of these two donors can be attributed to the large PESA projects in Latin America as well as the support to the MDGf (in the case of Spain), and the urban and peri-urban horticultural projects in both Africa and Latin America (in the case of Belgium). The next largest single donor[15] in budgetary terms is Germany ($21 million), closely followed by the European Commission ($20.9 million) with Colombia[16] and South Africa[17] being the largest, non-OECD donors, both totalling $13.8 million.

Human resources in nutrition

85. As described earlier in Section I (C) to this report, the nutrition-related work of FAO is conducted in a number of departments and divisions within FAO. It is difficult to take account of the nutrition capacity outside AGN because this capacity is not explicitly recognised by the Office of Strategic Planning (OSP) and at the project level the capacity is only temporary since it is resourced through extra-budgetary funds.

86. The Evaluation undertook an analysis of posts below based on the information provided by the OSP through the corporate information system PIRES. The posts analysis focuses on AGN[18] where the nutrition expertise has been concentrated during the evaluation period.[19] The analysis included posts held at headquarters (HQ), Regional (RO) and Sub-regional Office (SRO) levels. The table below sets out the evolution of posts during the evaluation period across grades and at the different levels.

Table 7: Evolution of ESN/AGN nutrition posts

	PWB 2004-2005				PWB 2006-2007				PWB 2008-2009			
	ALL	HQ	RO	SRO	ALL	HQ	RO	SRO	ALL	HQ	RO	SRO
D	3	3			1	1			1	1		
P5	7	4	3		7	4	3		6	3	3	
P4	8	5	1	2	7	4	2	1	9	6	2	1
P3	7	5		2	6	5		1	5	4		1
TOTAL	25	17	4	4	21	14	5	2	21	14	5	2

87. During the evaluation period, AGN has lost three nutrition posts at headquarters level and one at the decentralised level. There has also been a shift within the distribution of posts across grades, most significant being the loss of two senior D grade posts.

88. The Evaluation also undertook an analysis of the human resources allocated to each of the technical areas in nutrition. Within the corporate information system PIRES, each post within each respective PWB is attached to a percentage, which translates into budget of a particular PE. For the purpose of this analysis, the weight of each individual within each of

[15] Multilateral initiatives total $21.7 million.
[16] Funding UTF projects in Colombia.
[17] Funding a single regional project in SADC countries.
[18] ESN in the PWB 2004/2005.
[19] Post information was available for the three main biennia of the evaluation period: 2004/2005; 2006/2007; 2008/2009.

the PEs is as a proxy for showing the prioritisation in AGNs broader areas of work. The result of the analysis done by posts is similar to the case of the analysis on resource allocation in nutrition. In all three biennia, FIVIMS received the largest share of time allocation (i.e. resources). The next largest area of work is Household Food Security and Livelihoods, which has also received the most significant cut in resources in the evaluation period. Both the areas of Nutrition Education and Scientific Advice have received a similar level of resources and like FIVIMS have actually seen an increase in time/ resources in terms of proportion and figures.

89. Most significant to the findings is that the proportion of human resources allocated to nutrition activities (as opposed to Food Safety and Codex) at headquarters level has dropped from 31 percent to 27 percent during the course of the evaluation period. Whilst this drop is not reflected at the RO/SRO level, the percentage of time spent by post-holders at these levels on work related to nutrition is much lower than at headquarters. This is because Regional and Sub-regional posts are also responsible for work in the areas of Food Safety and Codex and the prioritisation of this time depends largely upon regional priorities set by the respective Regional Office.

4. Principal findings

90. Overall, whilst nutrition features at the highest level of FAO's Strategic Frameworks (vision and goals), this is not then articulated around a nutrition objective with the work of the Organization clearly linking to it. Nutrition disappears as a goal/ purpose to become another "technical area". This inconsistency is reflected in the lack of any explicit linkages between corporate strategies, strategic objectives and goal number one of FAO.

91. This indicates a lack of vision concerning what FAO should do in nutrition, and lack of clarity about how FAO's work can contribute to nutrition (FAO's goal one) throughout (from corporate to country levels) and the linkages required across the Organization. Consequently, nutrition work in FAO suffers from the "silo" effect, which has already been stressed by the IEE. This is a major issue that the current Reform is attempting to address, but which remains a challenge across the Organization. One of the main reasons for poor coordination among technical areas (in general) may be the budget allocation system linked to administrative units instead of strategic objectives and organizational results in a context of scarce resources.

92. The MTP 2010-2013 and the PWB 2010-2011 represent a step forward in clarifying FAO's priorities of work in nutrition. It reflects well the Organization's priorities for nutrition as recommended by the IEE with the work of FAO focusing on higher-level strategic policy work and, more specifically, nutrition policy being closely integrated with food security policy.

93. SO-H: *Improved food security and better nutrition* of the new FAO Strategic Framework 2010-2019 in particular supports "the generation and dissemination of FAO analysis, products and services on food security, agriculture and nutrition" as well as providing member countries with better access to FAO analysis and information products while also strengthening member country capacity to exchange knowledge on nutrition, food security and agriculture.[20]

94. A principal finding of the Evaluation is that in view of FAO's mandate, the resources allocated to nutrition have been and remain **unacceptably low**. The resources dedicated to nutrition through the PEs between 2004-2009 range from 1.6 percent to 1.3 percent of FAO's

[20] FAO 2009, Strategic Framework 2010-2019.

total Regular Programme, and only about half this amount contributes to AGN nutrition. So, to fulfil its mandate in nutrition, FAO is committing **less than 0.7 percent** of its Regular Programme funding to provide technical expertise in this core area.

95. Three quarters of AGN's nutrition budget resources are focused at Headquarters level, leaving just 25 percent available for the Decentralised offices. Typically a Regional Nutrition and Food Safety Officer has an annual core budget of about $14,000 to network, travel and support food safety and nutrition related activities in a region the size of Africa. Funding trends indicate that resources are likely to decrease further if no action is taken on this. There is no clear indication through the allocation of resources that FAO is particularly prioritising any element of nutrition work over another, but food safety and Codex have been "protected" from the budget cuts that took place during the evaluation period.

96. The field programme of nutrition-related projects is also very poorly subscribed. Just 10 percent of the resources for the field programme globally support nutrition-related projects. Remarkably less than 5 percent of each the TCP and emergency projects are nutrition-related, which is a very low proportion. Interesting that Spain, Belgium and Germany are the three most significant donors to nutrition, yet internationally they are not the principal donors associated with nutrition. This indicates (and was borne out during the interviews conducted by the Evaluation) that if FAO was to establish itself more effectively as a credible player in nutrition, there is considerable potential for FAO to generate higher levels of funding for its field programme from principal donors, especially those associated with the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative.

B. Overall Assessment of FAO's Role in Nutrition

1. Global and regional challenges in nutrition 2004-2010

97. Between 2006 and 2008, the world food crisis pushed the prices of basic staples beyond the reach of millions of poor people. This strained the already limited ability of poor households to buy food. Whilst higher food prices can be beneficial for some smallholders and provide the incentive for long-term investments in agriculture, often the rise in food prices do not always translate into an increase in farmers' incomes due to ill-functioning markets. Besides, many smallholders, landless labourers and other poor households use much of their income to purchase food. The 2008 spike pushed food prices beyond the purchasing power of many and women are generally disproportionately affected.

98. The subsequent financial and economic crisis in 2009 affected all nations but impacted most on developing countries with limited resources and highest levels of poverty to address. They experienced the effects of economic contraction, reductions in exports and a shortage of credit. Perhaps most critical to poorer populations were the drop in remittances from citizens living abroad and lower levels of development aid. Faced with the effects of economic contraction, households have adapted by consuming less nutritious foods, eating less, selling productive assets, foregoing health care or education.[21]

99. For the first time since 1970, FAO and WFP reported in "The State of Food Insecurity in the World" (SOFI) 2009 that more than one billion people (around one-sixth of the world's population) were hungry and undernourished because of calorie-deficient diets. At the same time as many as two billion people suffer from a range of micronutrient deficiencies, including lack of iron (an estimated one billion affected), vitamin A (an estimated 40 million affected) and iodine. Most of these people live in developing countries.

100. In 2010, the number and proportion of people estimated to be undernourished declined to 925 million, attributed to the increased economic growth foreseen in 2010 and strong global cereal harvests, but food prices remain volatile. In 2010, the SOFI Report focused on 22 countries in protracted crisis where the incidence of hunger is particularly high and persistent. These countries are characterised by long-lasting or recurring crises, both natural and human-induced, and limited capacity to respond. The most recent data shows that nearly 40 percent of the population of these countries are undernourished representing nearly 20 percent of all undernourished people in the world.

[21] Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action, High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, September 2010.

101. The region with the most undernourished people continues to be Asia and the Pacific with 578 million, but numbers are declining[22]. While the World Food Summit (1996) goal is to reduce by half the *number* of people who are undernourished, MDG1 seeks to reduce by half the *proportion* of undernourished people by 2015. Some progress has been made towards MDG1 with the prevalence of hunger declining globally from 20 percent undernourished in 1990-92 to 16 percent in 2010. The proportion of undernourished people still remains highest in sub-Saharan Africa at 30 percent.

102. The MDG, and earlier the World Summit for Children (1990), set a 50 percent reduction in child underweight by 2015 as another indicator related to hunger and malnutrition. Of the 86 countries being surveyed globally, 44 percent are improving and 21 percent are deteriorating, with significantly more improvement in Asia than Africa. Trends from 1990 towards 2007 show that Africa is making insufficient progress in reducing underweight (with no progress in Southern African countries) to attain MDG1. Stunting (which is considered more an indicator of chronic malnutrition) is following similar trends.[23] One in three developing-country children under the age of five (178 million children) suffer from stunting due to factors such as poor maternal health during pregnancy, repeated illness, poor infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices and overall low quality diets. 80 percent of these children live in just 20 African and Asian countries[24]. Stunting or chronic malnutrition is associated with higher rates of illness and death, reduced cognitive ability and school performance in children and lower adult productivity and lifetime earnings. Chronic malnutrition has long term and intergenerational effects as well. Mothers with short stature are more at risk to deliver low birth weight babies. In turn, these smaller infants are more apt to become stunted, thus the cycle repeats; and as adults they are at greater risk for obesity and chronic disease.

103. Hunger among the poor also increasingly manifests itself through consumption of energy-rich but nutrient-poor foods. The result is a double burden of under-nutrition (deficiencies of energy, micronutrients, or both) and "over-nutrition" (poor diet quality leading to obesity and other diet-related chronic illnesses). Due to rapid economic transition in the last 20 years, more people world-wide live in urban than rural environments, a huge proportion in slums and informal settlements especially in developing countries. This has forced people to adapt to dietary changes and in turn affected the nutritional status and disease burden of a significant proportion of the world's population. This nutrition transition and the "double burden" of malnutrition is an increasing phenomenon in the developing world, which needs to be better understood and taken into account.

104. Furthermore, there is now increasing recognition that a range of factors (all inter-dependent) are impacting adversely on food insecurity and malnutrition.[25] First and foremost, there is a rising world population estimated to be 9 billion in 2050 with an increasing demand on agricultural and food resources. There are the considerable implications of climate change leading to extreme events, such as longer droughts and frequency of heavy precipitation events over land areas which will reduce overall agricultural output (estimated to decline by 10-20 percent in developing countries by 2080), food availability, food consumption, diminish dietary diversity, increase exposure to diarrhoeal and other infectious diseases.

[22] Between 2009 and 2010, there was a 12 percent decline from US$ 658 million to US$ 578 million.
[23] Sixth Report on the World Nutrition Situation, 2010, UNSCN.
[24] Bryce J, Coitinho D, Darnton-Hill I, Pelletier D, Pinstrup-Andersen P, for the Maternal and Child Undernutrition Study Group, (2008) Maternal and child undernutrition: effective action at the national level. The Lancet, series on Maternal and Child Undernutrition, article 4, 371:510-26.
[25] M.J. Cohen, C. Tirado, N-L. Aberman, B. Thompson, 2010. Impact of Climate Change and Bioenergy on Nutrition IFPRI/FAO.

Added to this is the promotion of biofuel production and increasing commercialisation of farmland in developing countries which compete for available land for food production, and inflates the cost of essential foods. These factors make water resources for agricultural and domestic purposes scarcer and lead to more widespread land degradation and deforestation. The on going HIV/AIDS pandemic further undermines many of the gains achieved.

2. Developments in the international nutrition architecture 2004-2010

105. The global nutrition architecture involves many actors. The *Lancet* series on maternal and child under-nutrition in 2008 identified at least 14 UN agencies, five international and regional development banks, five major regional cooperation organizations (such as the African Union), more than 20 bilateral aid agencies, at least five major charitable foundations and the 15 or so implementing agencies created by them, over 30 international NGOs, some 35 universities and research centres (including the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research) with international scope, 12 major nutrition companies and several hundred academic journals.[26]

106. With so many actors, agendas and priorities and the lack of any collective vision or "game plan" to address a broad range of underlying causes, there has inevitably been competition between different actors striving to gain visibility for their "part" in nutrition and to secure resources from very limited international funding available for nutrition. The funding, technical, executing and opinion-shaping institutions that make up the global nutrition community have not coalesced into the same policy, funding and implementation bodies that exist for other priorities such as HIV/AIDS, immunisation or tuberculosis. In part the dysfunction of this community and the lack of visibility accorded to nutrition in the international development agenda, has reflected the lack of understanding of under-nutrition itself.[27] Increasingly though the international community is recognising both the multi-sectoral dimensions of under-nutrition (health, sanitation, care practices, food security) and the importance of addressing the phenomenon through both short-term interventions (food aid, fortification, distribution of iron and vitamin A capsules) and longer-term, more sustainable solutions (behaviour change, women's education, improved care practices, and encouraging biodiversity, dietary diversity, local foods, income generation, and access to local markets and natural resources).

107. Below is a summary of the main elements of the international nutrition architecture and the role they have played in recent years, starting with the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition which has for some time played an important role as a forum for the discussion of nutrition-related issues and a platform for assessing the status of nutrition globally.

108. The **UN Standing Committee on Nutrition** (SCN), inaugurated in 1977, has the mandate from the UN General Assembly Intergovernmental Economic & Social Council (ECOSOC) to coordinate the UN system's work on nutrition and provide leadership to others. The SCN has a programme of work, which includes assessing the status of world nutrition, advocacy on the impact factors like climate change have on nutrition and seeking policy coherence. The SCN membership is made up essentially of three constituencies, namely the UN agencies (WFP, UNICEF, FAO, UNDP, World Bank, UNFPA, IFAD, UNHCR, WHO, UNU and IAEA), the bilateral partners (donor and recipient countries together representing

[26] Morris S.S, Cogill B, Uauy R, for the Maternal and Child Under-nutrition Study Group (2008), Effective international action against under-nutrition: why has it proven so difficult and what can be done to accelerate progress? The Lancet, series on Maternal and Child Under-nutrition, article 5, 371, 608-21.

[27] R. Levine, D. Kuczynski, Global Nutrition Institutions: Is there an Appetite for Change? Center for Global Development, August 2009.

their governments) and the non-governmental and civil society organizations (NGO/CSO). Over the past ten years there has been increasing representation from governments of developing countries, NGOs and the private sector.

109. A key challenge to the SCN has been the "accommodation" of an increasing number of players emerging on the global nutrition scene than ever before including the private sector[28] and large philanthropic organisations like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). In 2008, the Lancet published a series of papers on Maternal and Child Malnutrition with funding from the Gates Foundation. The aim of these papers was to catalyse the international community to bring nutrition more squarely on the international agenda. The series, probably with good reason, criticised the current international nutrition system as being fragmented and dysfunctional and found that current processes for producing normative guidance are laborious and duplicative. The issues and priorities outlined in the Lancet Series then influenced the agenda of the SCN (and resources) much to the chagrin of those organizations (FAO in particular) who sought attention for agriculture and food-based approaches to nutrition. These organizations felt that there was too much emphasis on health solutions targeting infant and young child nutrition to the exclusion of more sustainable approaches.

110. So the relationship between stakeholders has been fraught in recent years because agencies have disagreements over the place of nutrition in development work, not helped by the lack of understanding and interest at the "top level" of the organisations: "everybody's business, but nobody's responsibility". Added to this is the clear "discontent" of the bilateral donors that the UN partners have simply not done enough in a UN-led forum to address the "turf wars" between the agencies and to rationalise and harmonise their respective roles. There have also been very divergent views within the SCN on the inclusion of the private sector. The SCN was in a very fragile state until the end of 2010, unsure that contributions would be sufficient to maintain the Secretariat and of its future. Consequently, for much of his tenure, the incumbent chair has been leading a reform process of the SCN to assume a more effective and credible role for the SCN. There have been no full sessions of the SCN since 2009.

111. The World Bank decided that it was not prepared to continue trying to work within the SCN arrangement and sought an alternative route for intensifying action that achieved nutritional outcomes. In 2008, The World Bank initiated the **Global Action Plan** (GAP) for scaling-up nutrition. The principal reason for the plan was to create a movement and a mechanism to influence leadership and commitment at all levels to scale-up nutrition interventions and to contribute to a more pragmatic vision and a common agenda among those promoting investments in nutrition. The GAP adopted a public health focus (along the lines of the Lancet Series) and in FAO's view lacked "legitimacy" with Member Countries, so it remained disengaged.

112. By November 2009, disagreement came to the fore (at a meeting called by the European Commission in Brussels) with some European governments, rights-based NGOs and UN organisations (especially FAO and WHO) wanting to see a strong and reformed SCN bringing the agencies together for coherent support to country-owned programmes. They were also anxious that the World Bank initiative would lead to increased private sector involvement and too much focus on direct health interventions. The World Bank, with the support from service delivery NGOs, and to some degree UNICEF and WFP, wanted a more pro-active arrangement to ensure the delivery of critical interventions needed to improve nutrition

[28] The SCN acknowledges the private commercial sector, and especially the food and drink and associated industries as important actors engaged in nutrition related activities. The SCN has developed guidelines for interacting with the private sector.

especially from conception to two years of life (1,000 days). The Bank (as the custodian of the GAP) was asked to rethink the plan, make it less "top-down" and more sensitive to other drivers of under-nutrition.

113. A series of meetings were convened by different agencies between November 2009 and March 2010 at which stakeholders worked hard to redraft the action plan. It was re-named "**Framework for Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)**: a Policy Brief" and endorsed by over 100 entities, including national governments, bilateral agencies, research groups, UN agencies and NGOs, but not FAO. The Framework was officially released at the set of World Bank/ International Monetary Fund annual meetings in April 2010. At a nutrition meeting in Rome convened by WFP, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Food Security and Nutrition (SRFSN) was asked to lead the process to develop a Road Map for Scaling Up Nutrition in time for the MDG Summit in September. The Road Map Task Team was composed of individuals who could reflect the interests of different constituencies, rather than representatives of organizations. The emphasis was on placing countries at the centre, establishing multi-stakeholder platforms to implement nutrition actions in pursuit of goals established at the highest level in government, with donors and the UN agencies working to back the implementation of the country plan in a well aligned way with an agreed results framework. There was no appetite for a global nutrition fund, rather an opportunity to align donor efforts at the country level.

114. At the UN General Assembly in September 2010, a nutrition event was organised at which the US and Ireland launched their own 1,000 days initiative in collaboration with SUN. All the four principal UN agency heads were invited, but the FAO Director General declined. The SRFSN and the Chair of the SCN have worked hard in recent months to ensure that the SUN movement and the SCN reform process are compatible despite resistance to any such fusion. The SCN is now linked to the SUN Road Map implementation and may, once the reform process is completed, assume a leadership role later this year. This could help re-establish the credibility of the SCN. Six task forces are active (with backing from the SCN Secretariat) supporting country-led action[29]. UN agencies and REACH are at the centre of implementation support. The co-existence of both SUN task forces and SCN task forces and working groups (even though the SCN groups have been relatively dormant for some time) does create confusion. This will have to be reconciled through the SCN reform process.

115. **The Committee for World Food Security** (CFS) was established in 1974 as an intergovernmental body to serve as a forum in the UN system for review and follow-up of policies concerning world food security including production and physical and economic access to food. There have been seven CFS plenary sessions during the evaluation period, but nutrition has not had so much prominence until the last two sessions in 2009 and 2010. During 2009 the CFS embarked on a reform process to make it more effective through a vision of becoming the most inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for all stakeholders to work together to ensure food security and nutrition for all and "to become the central United Nations political platform dealing with food security and nutrition".[30] The role of CFS in the first phase is to promote coordination at the global level, encourage policy convergence and provide support and advice to countries and regions. In a second phase, the CFS will take on coordination at national and regional levels, promote accountability on food

[29] Six inter-linked Task Forces have been developed by the SUN "Transition Team" to ensure sustained and focused support for SUN actions in-country; they include: (i) TFA country capability development; (ii) TFB Communication for Scaling-up Nutrition; (iii) TFC Civil society participation (co-chaired by FAO); (iv) TFD Engagement of development partners; TFE Engagement of the business community; and TFF Monitoring and reporting on in-country progress.

[30] Report of the 35th Session of the Committee on World Food Security, October 2009.

insecurity and malnutrition, share best practices at all levels, and develop a strategic framework for food security and nutrition.

116. The CFS now has a structure that allows input from all stakeholders at global, regional and national levels. The Bureau is the executive arm and is made up of 12 member countries. The Advisory Group is made up of UN bodies, civil society and NGOs, international agricultural research institutions (including CGIAR), international financial institutions (including the World Bank and IMF) and private sector associations. The Advisory Group also now includes the Executive Secretary of the SCN. There is also a High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) from a variety of food security and nutrition-related fields for which AGN acts as coordinator and focal point in FAO. The goal of the HLPE is to ensure the regular inclusion of advice based on scientific evidence and knowledge including analysis of the current state of food security and nutrition and its underlying causes.

117. At the 36th Committee on World Food Security in October 2010, nutrition was "mainstreamed" into the agenda and there were notable side events organised by SCN which focused on SUN Road Map and the 1,000 Day Initiative (introduced by the US and Irish Governments) as well as a session on "Food for the Cities" convened by FAO. The reformed CFS will be a central component of the **Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security and Nutrition** (GPAFSN), which was initiated to provide a response to soaring food prices in 2007-2008.

118. The **High Level Task Force** (HLTF) on Global Food Security was established in 2008 under the leadership of the UN Secretary-General to coordinate the response of UN agencies and Breton Woods institutions in the face of soaring food prices. The HLTF developed the **Comprehensive Framework for Action** (CFA), which sets out actions to respond to the food price rise, create policy changes to avoid future crises and contribute to country, regional and global food and nutritional security. The SRFSN who coordinates the HLTF has played a key role in steering the development of the SUN Road Map and the establishment of the related task force groups.

119. The **Inter-Agency Standing Committee** (IASC) was created in 1992 as a unique inter-agency forum for coordination, policy development and decision-making involving the key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners. It is the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance. As part of its coordination function, a **Nutrition Cluster** (lead by UNICEF) was set up in 2003 to address gaps and strengthen the effectiveness of the humanitarian response in nutrition. In 2010 a Food Security Cluster (co-lead by FAO and WFP) was also established and defining principles have been drawn up to outline the complementary roles of both clusters. FAO has been an active member of the Nutrition Cluster and has regularly contributed technical inputs to the Assessment Working Group and the Capacity Development Group.

120. **Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger** (REACH) is a "rebrand" of the ECHUI initiative which was earlier initiated by WFP and UNICEF to promote scaling up a package of public health interventions (identified as the most effective in the Lancet Series). REACH is a partnership, which now includes FAO and WHO, aiming to accelerate country progress towards MDG1, target 3 (to halve the proportion of underweight children under five). REACH is intended as a country-led approach to scale-up proven and effective interventions addressing child under-nutrition through the partnership and coordinated action of UN agencies, civil society, donors and the private sector under the leadership of national governments. It was first piloted in two countries, Mauritania and Lao PDR, it is now established in Bangladesh and Senegal and expanding to ten other countries.

121. It is the view of the Evaluation that in some contexts, REACH can usefully focus energies and attention on specific issues or processes relating to infant and child malnutrition in country, but there is also the threat that it duplicates existing mechanisms and can create a degree of confusion when stakeholders are not clear on its purpose. REACH is still perceived by both government and non-governmental organizations as more of a UN-led mechanism than a "country-led" approach in some contexts, and its added value against established national level coordination (including clusters) and other UN joint programming mechanisms is not always apparent.

3. FAO's positioning and role in the international agenda on nutrition

FAO's positioning on nutrition

122. FAO's positioning on nutrition both within and outside the Organization has not been clear for a long time now. There has been a distinct lack of vision and direction with respect to nutrition within the Organization despite attempts within the AGN division to address this. As a result, it has been very difficult for FAO to be an active contributor to the international debate on nutrition other than to "defend" areas of work in nutrition with which it is engaged. Even this has been challenging because FAO has not been generating sufficient evidence on the impact food-based approaches have had on nutrition outcomes (a constant theme in this evaluation). Consequently, FAO's contribution has been modest, and what it has achieved on the international agenda over the past seven years has been more due to the endeavour and commitment of certain individuals than it has been through corporate positioning.

123. External interlocutors to this evaluation are particularly critical of FAO not providing sufficient direction or guidance on how agriculture and food security can contribute to nutrition, which they consider to be the mandate and normative function of the Organization. A consistent view is that FAO should be better informed of how different agriculture and food policies, systems and practices impact on nutrition. Many consider that FAO has for too long assumed that increased agricultural production of staples will translate into raising levels of nutrition, that the indicator of under-nourishment reflects the situation of under-nutrition, and that FAO's work in nutrition (since the "Lupien" era in the 1990s) has become more associated with food safety than other aspects of the Organization's work.

FAO's role in the international agenda on nutrition

124. The principal engagement of FAO in the international debate on nutrition has been through the CFS and the SCN. The CFS was established as an inter-governmental body in 1974 with its secretariat in FAO. In 2009, the CFS underwent reform and now includes a much broader group of stakeholders including, notably, civil society. It has taken unnecessarily long for nutrition concerns to be adopted on the CFS agenda, but this is now happening, and some countries, such as Bangladesh are presenting national initiatives for food security and nutrition to very good effect (linked to FAO technical support at country level). FAO was very supportive of having the SCN represented within the Advisory Group of the CFS in the latter part of 2010, which is an important development and will promote nutrition concerns within the CFS agenda. A consequence of this was for the SCN to organise a side-event at the 36th CFS in October last year and FAO to present its work on "Food for the Cities" which is technically supported by AGN.

125. FAO currently holds the chair of the SCN, although this is assumed very much in an individual capacity by the Assistant Director-General (ADG), Natural Resources Management

and Environment Department (NR), particularly as he no longer represents the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (AGN) within the Organization. However, his chairmanship has generally been widely appreciated by the SCN membership because he has adopted a "neutral" and conciliatory function and not pushed the Organization's agenda (unlike his predecessor). The Chair's principal role has been to steer the reform process of the SCN (which inevitably takes time in view of the breath of the membership and the issues at stake) and to keep the SCN financially solvent at time when the donors are more intent in seeing the delivery of interventions and tangible results achieved on the ground. Individual staff members of FAO have been active within the SCN and have chaired two of the working groups on Household Food Security and Nutrition, and Ethics and Human Rights as well as the cross-cutting task force on Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation (AME). The staff of AGN has played a key role in maintaining the agenda on food-based approaches to nutrition within the SCN despite their participation being restricted due to budgetary and management constraints.

126. The SUN movement depends on consistent and coordinated engagement of the UN system agencies. WFP, UNICEF and WHO have played vital and pivotal roles. FAO as an Organization has been an ambivalent player in SUN. In part this is because FAO is governed by its Member States and is cautious about moving forward on an agenda with which they are not fully engaged; in part it is because FAO has not been a "driver" of the process and has fears that the health lobby will dominate and detract from the food security agenda; but it is also because FAO has not had the understanding, positioning and hence political commitment to keep up with fast-moving developments on the international nutrition agenda. Consequently, FAO has adopted a somewhat defensive (even at times "obstructive") attitude, much to the frustration of others, who see SUN as a real opportunity for promoting agriculture and food-based approaches to nutrition. This, however, has not prevented some FAO staff from being tireless campaigners for the cause particularly in recent months as the initiative has picked up international momentum. There are now as many as twenty "early-riser" countries where governments are committed to achieve effective and sustainable results in improving nutrition.

127. The SUN initiative was presented to the FAO Council in November 2010, but since then there has never been any official communication advising senior management of the corporate engagement with SUN. There are FAO senior professional staff in the field who are not aware of SUN even where it is becoming strategically important.

128. In February 2011, IFPRI convened an International Conference on Leveraging Agriculture for Improving Nutrition and Health in New Delhi, India, which was widely attended (including principal UN agencies, donors, governments and research centres) and opened by the Prime Minister of India. The schedule also included a meeting of SUN Development Partners. Only two persons from FAO headquarters (AGN and ESA) were authorised to travel to this event and the staff person who provided the only FAO presentation on Working with Community Institutions in Afghanistan and Mauritania was financed by the organizers. No-one from FAO senior management (including the Chair of SCN) was able to attend. This reflects to some degree the level of commitment and engagement that the Organization is prepared to make to the international agenda on nutrition on a theme that FAO should normally be driving.

4. FAO's leadership, advocacy and guidance on nutrition-related issues

129. It is apparent from the previous two sections that FAO lacks leadership on nutrition-related issues and as a result, currently undertakes a diverse range of nutrition activities,

which are poorly resourced and not sufficiently linked. No-one in FAO seems to see the "bigger picture", everyone is striving to work in their distinct fields and unfortunately, some very good work is not contributing to a broader strategy.

130. In November 2008, AGN organised a two day in-house retreat on the role of nutrition in FAO. The overall objective of the Retreat was to discuss the direction and scope of AGN's future work in nutrition, taking into consideration the specific remarks and recommendations made by the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) on nutrition and the draft Immediate Action Plan for implementing FAO's Reform programme. The purpose of the retreat was to: (i) identify emerging priority issues in nutrition for FAO to address in the short and long term; (ii) elaborate an enhanced definition of the comparative advantage of nutrition in FAO; and (iii) explore how to better integrate AGN work on food and nutrition assessment, policy and programmes and stronger collaboration with relevant technical units in FAO.

131. Clearly these were worthwhile intentions and the papers presented at the retreat (including external participants) represented a very solid contribution towards generating a common vision and strategy for the division, but unfortunately without a "champion" in senior management to take the initiative forward, these endeavours achieve little in a large bureaucracy.

132. More recently AGN has promoted the term *"food and nutrition security"* in-house and outside to better articulate the links between food security and nutrition, because it is argued that referring to food security and nutrition separately reduces the importance of nutrition's role in sustainable food security. It is not clear to the Evaluation how far this has been accepted across the institution, nor what the implications are with respect to the FAO Food Security Framework applied by FIVIMS.

133. Without a common advocacy strategy for nutrition, activities are inevitably conducted in a very ad hoc and opportunistic way. The indicator of achievement appears to be the number of international or regional conferences, workshops, seminars attended, rather than the results achieved from the participation and, more important, the follow-up actions. It has been very difficult for this evaluation to gauge the effect and impact of this work because it is not clear what the collective efforts are aiming to achieve. Furthermore, there is little evidence from the country missions that the Evaluation conducted that they have any real relevance to the field context.

134. The table below outlines many of the conferences, workshops and events at global and regional level which AGN has contributed towards since 2004 (many more were attended) which would be considered core to its advocacy function. These do not include events specific to food composition, nutrient requirements and scientific advice which are included under Section II (C) of this report.

Global Advocacy

- "Negotiating the Future of Nutrition" - presentation at the Pre-International Congress of Nutrition Urban Safari, Johannesburg, South Africa 18 September 2005.
- "Community Nutrition and Intervention Programmes – what works and what doesn't work: Experience from the FAO/Belgian Survival Fund Partnership Programme". 18th International Congress of Nutrition, Durban, South Africa, Symposium 3.4, 19-23 September 2005.
- Protecting and Improving Food and Nutrition Security of Orphans and PLWHA in Lesotho and Malawi. Presentation at World AIDS Day, FAO Rome, 1 December 2006.
- Food-based strategies are essential for combating iron deficiency anaemia. Viewpoint in "Nutrition", December 2006.
- "Food based approaches for combating iron deficiency", Sight and Life, Chapter 20, January 2007.

- Fortification of food with micronutrients and meeting dietary micronutrient requirements: role and position of FAO. Intervention at the 2nd Technical Workshop on Wheat Flour Fortification "Practical Recommendations for National Application", Atlanta, GA, USA, 30 March to 3 April 2008.
- Prepared the publication "Impact of Climate Change and Bioenergy on Nutrition" for the High-Level Conference on World Food Security: The Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy, Rome, June 2008.
- "More Technology, Safety and Quality – Less Hunger. From Post-Harvesting in Emerging Countries to Consumption" at the FieraMilano, 25 March 2009.
- Paper "Narrowing the Nutrition Gap: Investing in Agriculture to Improve Dietary Diversity" (Working Draft, 14 January 2010).
- High-level side meeting on scaling-up nutrition. World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings, Washington, DC, 24 April 2010.
- FAO statement on the Global Agenda Council on Nutrition proposal for a Global Food, Agriculture and Nutrition Redesign Initiative (GFANRI). World Redesign Summit, World Economic Forum, Doha, Qatar, 31 May 2010.
- Chapter 4 "Sustainable Food and Nutrition Security", in 6th Report of the World Nutrition Situation, UNSCN.
- "Ensuring Access to Food and Nutrition in LDC's" at the FAO organized pre-conference event leading up to the IV UN Conference on Least Developing Countries (LDC's) "Enhancing Food Security Through Agricultural Development and Access to Food and Nutrition", UN Headquarter's New York, December 2010.
- Organised a Side-Event on Nutrition at the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, Bali, March 2011.
- Organised an International Symposium on Food-based Approaches for Improving Diets and Raising Levels of Nutrition – recognising the need to document evidence-based results that clearly demonstrate the benefits of food-based approaches, Rome, December 2010

Europe Regional Advocacy

- Expert Meeting on Inequalities and Obesity, London, December 2005
- Contribution to the preparation of WHO Regional Office for Europe Ministerial Conference on counteracting obesity, Istanbul, November 2006
- Co-organised and hosted WHO Regional Office for Europe Consultation "How can agriculture and trade policy contribute to a healthy diet?", Rome, May 2006
- Presentation "Linking Agriculture and Public Health: joining forces to fight malnutrition" at the WHO Meeting of Nutrition and Food Safety Counterparts on the 2nd European Action Plan for Food and Nutrition Policy, Paris, June 2007
- Presentation "Promoting safe and healthy diets in Europe: what role for agriculture?" 10th European Nutrition Conference, Paris, July 2007

Africa Regional Advocacy

- Presentation "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals: the role and perspective of FAO, joint ADB/FAO technical coordination meeting, Tunis, February 2005
- Inputs into the Declaration of the Abuja Food Security Summit, December 2006
- Inputs into the Brazzaville meeting on the Revised African Regional Nutrition Strategy (ARNS) 2005-15 recommending the Revised ARNS be used as a guide for the development and implementation of National Plans of Action on Nutrition (NPANs)
- Presentation "Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods: a prerequisite for improving nutrition and reaching the MDGs", WAHO/Bioversity International Regional Policy Advocacy Workshop, Ougadougou, September 2007
- Technical assistance to the 11th ECOWAS Nutrition Forum "Food and Nutrition Security in West Africa: opportunities and challenges", Freetown, September 2008
- Attended the two AUC organised meetings in Addis Ababa of the revitalised African Task Force on Food and Nutrition Development (ATTFND), the sole inter-agency coordination mechanism on issues of nutrition development in Africa, the first in February 2009 and the second in November 2009.
- Organised the Sub-regional Workshop for Southern and East Africa on "Increasing National Capacity to Reduce Hunger and Malnutrition", Cape Town, South Africa. 11-14 November 2008 with NEPAD for assisting countries translate the ARNS into national actions.

- Presentation "Harnessing Investments in Food Security for Improving Nutrition" ECOWAS Nutrition Forum, Grand Bassam, September 2010
- Presented a paper at the sub-Regional seminar on Programmatic Actions to Address High Food Prices (global), held in Addis Ababa, March 2011.
- Presentation "From Food Security to Food and Nutrition Security – what's the difference?" International Symposium, Niamey, March 2011.

Asia Regional Advocacy

- The Contribution of Nutrition to Achieving the Millennium Development Goals. FAO's Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division. 9th South-East Asia Regional Scientific Meeting of the International Epidemiological Association, Dhaka, Bangladesh, 9-12 February 2008.

Latin America Regional Advocacy

- Iniciativa América Latina y el Caribe sin Hambre (ALCHS) is an initiative by countries of the region to reduce malnutrition by 2025. The technical secretariat of ALCSH is hosted by the FAO Regional Office. The initiative works to: (i) raise awareness of hunger and the Right to Food; (ii) enhance national capacities to carry out public policies and programmes aimed at eliminating hunger; and (iii) promoting monitoring of food and nutrition security.
- Organised the Regional Symposium on "analysing and Strengthening Food and Nutrition Programmes" as part of the XV Congress of the Latin American Nutrition Society, Santiago, November 2009
- FAO/RLC Panorama de la Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional en América Latina y El Caribe
- FAO joined the Pan American Alliance for Nutrition and Development (a UN system-wide regional initiative) in 2010.

5. Principal findings

135. The **global and regional challenges** affecting nutrition, especially in the developing world, are substantial and increasing, there is no room for complacency and there is a need to develop a good understanding of the range of factors (bio-fuel production, expansion of commercial farming systems, climate change and urbanisation amongst others), that are contributing to persistent levels of under-nutrition and an increasing incidence of over-nutrition.

136. The multi-sectoral dimensions of nutrition, the need to address these through both direct and longer-term, sustainable solutions, and the multitude of actors involved, have made it particularly challenging to achieve a convergence of views through the **international nutrition architecture**. However, the SCN has not achieved sufficient harmonisation between the UN actors (for which FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO have to assume direct responsibility) and should do much more to generate information and analysis on nutrition, identify gaps and advocate for investments and interventions in key areas. As part of this harmonisation, FAO through its leadership role in the SCN, should advocate for definition and agreement on the roles of the UN agencies along with opportunities for collaboration and shared responsibility with respect to nutrition and food security in all contexts. These should be key areas of review during the SCN reform process.

137. In this respect the SUN movement can do much to complement the SCN. Both can be mutually supportive of each other, but SUN will make the difference on the ground where governments "buy-in" to the initiative and drive the process. FAO's ambivalence to SUN so far (at the senior management level) is not helpful to this international initiative and reflects to a large extent FAO's lack of confidence about what it has to contribute to nutrition from an agriculture and food-based perspective. Similarly, FAO has not been pro-active or consistent in its approach to REACH, nor has it been influential in determining where the mechanism is appropriate to the context.

138. FAO's contribution is more noteworthy through its efforts in recent months to accommodate nutrition within the CFS and in driving the reform process of the SCN to maintain some degree of credibility in the forum and a relevance to other international initiatives on nutrition. However, the recent FAO/WHO move to schedule an International Conference on Nutrition (ICN) for 2012 is really premature until its relevance to other important initiatives such as SUN and a "reformed" SCN are made clear. There is only value in an ICN that is inclusive of other UN actors and development partners. Right now, there is more interest across development partners for a better analysis of the causes of malnutrition, understanding of how malnutrition can be addressed in a sustainable manner and practical action on the ground than more international debate that lacks these specific ingredients.

139. **FAO's** own understanding and **position on nutrition** has been very unclear for many years and appears to be more influenced by individuals than through a common strategy or vision. The assumption that increased agricultural production will address hunger and malnutrition is being challenged consistently at all levels outside the Organization. FAO now has to demonstrate stronger leadership and articulate how agriculture and food-based approaches can contribute to tackling hunger and malnutrition, taking into account the double burden of under-nutrition and over-nutrition. Furthermore, FAO has to demonstrate considerably more flexibility and adaptability to the changing global context and become a much better informed, credible and influential player in the international development debate on nutrition.

140. FAO's role should be to generate and collate evidence of how improved food and agricultural practices can reduce poverty, hunger and malnutrition and advocate for investments in these areas to be scaled up especially in areas of persistent hunger and under-nutrition. FAO should be the leading organization to formulate the information and guide the response in close collaboration with governments and other development partners. In view of its limited resources, FAO will have to be much more strategic in its approach.

C. Food Composition, Nutrient Requirements and Scientific Advice

1. Key outputs 2004-2010

141. Over one hundred normative outputs have been produced during this period and were evaluated. Amongst these were the in-house bi-monthly publication of Journal of Food Composition and Analysis (JFCA). Also included were the FAO Expert Consultations on: (i) Food Energy, and (ii) Protein Quality; joint FAO/WHO Expert Consultations on: (iii) Vitamin and Mineral Requirements in Human Nutrition; (iv) Human Energy Requirements; (v) Carbohydrates in Human Nutrition; (vi) Fats and Fatty Acids in Human Nutrition; joint FAO/WHO/UNU Expert Consultation on: (vii) Harmonizing Nutrient Requirements; and joint FAO/Bioversity International on: (viii) Nutrition Indicators for Biodiversity, for which reports and proceedings have been published. An Expert meeting on upper tolerable limits for vitamins and minerals based on Codex principles of risk assessment also took place in 2005; and an Expert Consultation on the risks and benefits of fish consumption was held in early 2010.

142. Additionally, a total of 54 scientific articles, publications and reports have been produced, including an updated publication of amino acid composition of foods; basic human nutrition requirements and dietary diversity in rice-based aquatic ecosystems; harmonising approaches for developing nutrient-based dietary standards; indigenous people's food systems; biodiversity and sustainable diets for food and nutrition; and positions on energy value of dietary fibre. Many of these publications have been produced in collaboration with other organisations.

143. As part of scientific advice, FAO has contributed to a broad range of meetings, workshops and training events conducted by collaborating partners including EuroFir, the United Nations University (UNU) and local training institutions. These include meetings of INFOODS Regional Data Centre Coordinators (a worldwide network of food composition experts); 19 international and regional training courses relating to the production and use of food composition data; assistance to Regional Data Centres with the implementation and management of international standards for their food composition databases; and the development of biodiversity indicators. During the evaluation period, capacity-building in the use of standardised methodology and development tools for dietary intake surveys in various contexts was also undertaken. An international scientific symposium on Biodiversity and Sustainable Diets was also held.

144. In 2010, FAO produced a publication "Composition of Selected Foods from West Africa", a "Food Composition Study Guide" and the "Food Composition Database for Biodiversity", which contributes to global capacity development in food composition.

2. Relevance to Member Countries and FAO

145. The stakeholder survey[31] conducted by the Evaluation indicated that over 80 percent and 60 percent of respondents require food composition data and nutrient requirement resources respectively and that they play a role within their research and programming activities. Almost all respondents (96 percent) expressed the need for food composition tables and particularly improved tables which stress the importance of this work. FAO's role in harmonising protocols for generating data and providing training was considered important. Whilst the survey was only conducted amongst primary users, rather than end-users, these findings were to some degree corroborated by the Asia mission of the Evaluation. The team learned that the ASEAN food composition table was in the process of being updated and two of the countries visited (Bangladesh and Thailand) were updating their food composition tables. In the two other countries visited (Cambodia and Lao PDR) without food composition tables, stakeholders identified this as a need and role for FAO. FAO's role in harmonising protocols for generating data and providing training was considered important.

146. Food composition information is needed at country, regional and global levels to capture variation in the nutrient availability within specific foods and the food supply. FAO plays a significant role in translating foods into nutrients and in supporting the work on developing nutrient requirements (international and at the country level). Once all the evidence has been reviewed, the recommended nutrient requirements are translated back to country specific dietary guidance and linked with agriculture policy to ensure that adequate quantities of the recommended foods are produced. The demand for updated nutrient requirements is driven by Member Countries through Codex, the Joint Expert Meeting on Nutrition (JEMNU) and the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU), or evidence of new science available through expert consultations. During the evaluation period, the global nutrition focus shifted to local foods and their potential contribution in addressing nutrient deficiencies as well as biodiversity. Therefore, since 2007, FAO has started to highlight the relevance of biodiversity.

147. Data relating to both food composition and nutrient requirements are used by governments for: (i) planning, assessing and monitoring the adequacy of the national diet

[31] Stakeholders who responded included INFOODS/IUNS task force, Journal of Food Composition editorial board, IFDC advisory board, Codex contact points (across different countries) and the INFOODS Listserv (a network of nutritionists and food composition scientists).

through calculating food and nutrient availability; (ii) developing country-specific dietary guidance; (iii) planning and implementing national health and nutritional intervention programmes; (iv) guidelines to formulate food regulations; and (v) food safety studies. They provide information including Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) and nutrient reference values (NRV) for food labelling and nutrient claims (e.g. Codex and EFSA). Furthermore, they are used by humanitarian organizations to determine food ration requirements and more generally for public health and consumer education.

148. Food composition and nutrient requirement activities within FAO contribute to monitoring of food and nutrient availability through: (i) *food balance sheets* which determine cereal food availability for consumption by country; (ii) *household expenditure surveys* which convert food expenditure/purchases to nutrient availability, so that comparisons of access to food and nutrients within a population can be made by income group or other household parameters over time; (iii) *dietary surveys* where the conversion of food consumption data to nutrient intake data requires food composition data; and (iv) *Nutrition Country Profiles*. To take advantage of this linkage, staff are co-located within one team in AGN, the Nutrition Assessment and Nutrient Requirements Group (AGNDA).

149. Food composition and nutrient requirement information should be contributing more than only energy values for foods to the FAOSTAT database, which in turn contribute to FAO's *Indicator of Nourishment, the State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI)* and the FAO *Nutrition Country Profiles.* This however has not been effective in recent years because the technical collaboration between AGN and ESS has been weak. This is discussed further in the next section of this report on statistics, information systems and assessments. As this technical link is not made, the contribution of such scientific advice to the policy level remains quite limited.

3. Effectiveness of FAO's scientific advice

150. Food composition tables compiled for regions across the world have in many instances not been updated for 60 years. Consequently, the data is insufficient (especially at country level), in some cases out of date (given the introduction of new seeds and hybrids) and not sufficiently contextualised (including local foods) to contribute effectively to the programme areas highlighted in the previous section. There is a critical need for updating especially in Africa where there are limited resources in country to achieve this. Furthermore, there is a recognised need for more regular updates in nutrient requirements as requested by Member Countries through Codex in 2010 to update all mineral and vitamin requirements for labelling purposes. At the moment, the capacity in FAO cannot meet the present demand for updated and new information.

151. The system of Expert Consultations on nutrient requirements has been guided by WHO/FAO since 1949.[32] WHO assumes the principal role with respect to human health whilst FAO contributes a food-based and agricultural perspective. These consultations have been requested by Member Countries through Codex, or as needed when new significant scientific evidence becomes available. Consultation reports, together with partner organizations, are convened at global level and are adopted in virtually all countries as a reference base to inform legislation for labelling. A systematic guideline has been developed[33] supporting the process. During these consultations experts in their fields are

[32] Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Nutrition, Report of the First session. Geneva, 24-28 October 1949.
[33] FAO/WHO Framework for the Provision of Scientific Advice on Food Safety and Nutrition, Rome, 2007. ISBN 978-92-5-105807-7.

invited to discuss and come to a global consensus on a specific topic. Until 2010, the experts were mutually proposed by WHO and FAO, but now WHO have introduced new guidelines for the selection procedures with which FAO does not agree. This issue needs urgent resolution as the technical partnership in this area is important. However, since nutrient requirements are principally a function of both the physiological age and health status of an individual, it is the view of the Evaluation that WHO should progressively assume a leadership role in the long-term, with the nominative technical collaboration of FAO whose knowledge on food sources to meet an individual's nutrient requirements remains an essential element of the debate.

152. FAO's comparative edge through its knowledge of food composition and nutrient requirements are used to little advantage in its own field programmes. A separate survey conducted by the Evaluation of FAO staff confirms that within AGN the group they have least contact with is that working on scientific advice. Many projects or programmes planned from the perspective of an agricultural economy do not consider the health status of the population, nutrient content of the local foods and the specific nutrient requirements of the population group. Yet the importance of using macro and micronutrients composition data to choose the foods to promote through home gardening and agricultural programmes has been documented. This can play a significant role in terms of alleviation of micronutrient deficiencies such as vitamin A. There is clear evidence that food-based approaches that promote dietary diversification and include the production of B-carotene-rich crops, such as green leafy vegetables and orange-fleshed sweet potato (OFSP) have improved the vitamin A status of 2-5 year old children in South Africa[34]. There is also evidence that indigenous foods, which may be more palatable to local populations, have considerable potential to address micronutrient deficiencies, but are not promoted in part because no compositional data was available[35]. Food biodiversity can play a key role in this respect because the nutrient composition between varieties/cultivars/ breeds of the same species can differ significantly.

153. Food composition is an area of technical expertise which involves specialised laboratories and training that can be spread from country to country more effectively with the support of an international organization to set standards, ensure quality and provide start-up funds. Since similar foods are being consumed in regions and sub-regions, developing ways of addressing gaps in the knowledge of the nutrient composition of foods at these levels is much more cost effective. The role FAO plays in providing seed money to countries without food analysis capacity, so that they can develop food laboratories, was found to be important during the mission to Asia. This has been facilitated by the INFOODS coordinator or through regional/sub-regional meetings.

154. The stakeholder survey conducted by the Evaluation indicated that over 54% of respondents recognised that FAO contributed to the quality of food composition data, but that its support was insufficient in areas such as data classification, organisation, management and archiving at the field level. FAO participated in fourteen training courses in food composition globally from 2004-2010. Half of the respondents indicated that they consider FAO's contribution to capacity building important, but currently not sufficient.

155. The FAO evaluation mission was also made aware, through country visits to Africa and Asia in particular, that FAO project staff responsible for the implementation of nutrition-related interventions need appropriate food composition data and are not aware of where to source this information. It is very apparent that this work is simply not linked to many FAO country offices and more critically to staff on the ground (including nutritionists outside

[34] Faber et al. 2002. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition 76:1048-54.
[35] Engelberger et al. 2006. International Journal of Food Science & Nutrition, 57(5-6): 399-418.

FAO) who require reference to this information since this work underpins the development of dietary guidelines, energy requirements and the promotion of indigenous foods.[36]

156. The Evaluation considers that developing the capacity at both regional and country level is critical for the future development and revision of food composition tables. FAO is well placed to set standards, ensure quality and where necessary build capacity. FAO has for example provided technical assistance and capacity building for the elaboration and management of national food composition tables that are implemented in collaboration with the Latin America Network of Food Data Systems (LATINFOODS). Likewise, at a recent FAO sponsored food composition meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries, interest was expressed in developing sub-regional food composition data and linkages between countries with more capacity such as India. FAO should be playing a much stronger facilitation role linking countries with regional INFOODS coordinators and identifying where appropriate capacity could be built.

4. Visibility, dissemination and utilisation

157. In view of the fact that food composition tables have not been revised over many decades in some countries, FAO's role in supporting the availability of food composition data is not well recognised and yet there is now a considerable demand to review existing data and incorporate local foods.

158. The FAO/WHO nutrient requirements have been adopted globally and are used in virtually all countries as an important resource and in some cases the international requirements have been contextualised. Scientific advice on nutrient requirements has become the international standard adopted by Member Countries. However, the activity of FAO in terms of nutrient requirements is not very visible and therefore not much appreciated. The evaluation missions to both Africa and Asia found that nutrition stakeholders were even surprised to learn that FAO was involved in such technical nutrition research.

159. Approximately one third of respondents to the stakeholder survey indicated that they use food composition resources by FAO, but there were issues with respect to availability and updating of such resources. These resources are generally accessed electronically or through the Journal of Food Composition and Analysis (or other publications) and INFOODS. The USDA is considered more extensive (food composition data, retention factors and nutrient bioavailability) and is easier to access and understand, but is directed towards western food items, whereas FAO provides global orientation. EuroFir is more comprehensive, has current web-links and information on methods of analysis, offers proficiency programmes, quality evaluation, data interchange and technical assistance and as such is seen as complementary to FAO's work.

160. In an effort to include available data at country level, a web-based tool for compiling food composition tables was developed by FAO. This is available on the INFOODS website of FAO and any person can contribute. The web-based tools for food composition need constant updating and support by training activities.

5. Principal findings

161. Generating accurate and reliable information and analysis on food composition and nutrient and dietary intake provides essential scientific coordinates for food and nutrition

[36] This was evidenced in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Mozambique where food composition tables were not available or outdated.

security assessments (including critically the indicator for undernourishment applied globally), information systems and statistics. FAO's comparative advantage is to focus on the composition of foods and the implications of dietary quality on human health (especially as excess energy intake and obesity rise in prominence on the nutrition agenda). Human nutrient requirements fall very much within the mandate of WHO as it pertains to obtaining optimal health. Close technical collaboration across both scientific areas between both organizations is critical, but the Evaluation finds that FAO's lead engagement in consultations relating to nutrient requirements is an inappropriate use of scarce resources.

162. Food-based dietary guidance has been part of FAO's domain over the years and is a critical area in all regions, given changes in the food supply, high rates of under-nutrition and the emerging issues of obesity, overweight and chronic disease. Information and analysis on food composition is essential for developing dietary guidelines, which inform both nutrition-specific interventions and nutrition-focused development[37] being undertaken by FAO, WHO, governments or other humanitarian and development partners.

163. The biennial targets set out in FAO's work in food composition appear to be more determined by the Codex and food safety agenda than the human nutrition concerns. Consequently, the work in food composition is not achieving the degree of relevance or usefulness to the other elements of FAO's nutrition work supported by FAO nutritionists of AGN or the wider international community and their principal nutrition concerns.

164. FAO should develop a much better understanding of what the end-users requirements are, where the greatest needs are and assess the impact this data and information have in addressing malnutrition. This would mean prioritising the limited investment available in areas where food composition data can make a meaningful difference rather than serving the interests of the smaller scientific community. Capacity-building should also target countries where the needs are greatest and systematically promote regional or sub-regional partnerships between countries with similar agro-ecology and food habits.

165. FAO should continue to maintain its normative role with respect to setting international standards and quality control with respect to tools, methodology and food composition data. Furthermore, it should ensure that the web-based tools and information on food composition are part of FAO's global repository of data for wider sharing and dissemination.

D. Statistics, Information Systems and Assessments

1. Key achievements 2004-2010

166. Important recent accomplishments have been achieved under each of these components since 2004. In terms of statistics, FAO nutritionists have re-established a working relationship with ESS to improve the estimates of Minimum Dietary Energy Requirements (MDER) and Minimum Dietary Energy Supply (MDES). In addition, they are working with ESS on identifying a suite of food consumption indicators for incorporating into periodic household surveys carried out by governments (e.g. for PRSP monitoring). There is also work to introduce and validate a dietary diversity measure (DDS) into on-going food security assessments being carried out by governments with support from FAO. Finally, AGN was a strong advocate for incorporating nutrition into the new FAO corporate strategy for Information Systems for Food and Nutrition Security (ISFNS).

[37] Terms used for the twin-tracked approach in the Road Map for Scaling-Up Nutrition (September 2010).

2. Relevance to FAO and other users

Nutrition in statistics

167. Respondents to the Evaluation's survey of Member Countries identified FAO's work in statistics, information systems, policies and strategies as the most significant. FAO is the world leader in collecting and disseminating agriculture, food and nutrition statistics and their work remains highly relevant. FAO statistics and databases are utilised to a high degree internally to produce 'state of the' publications (e.g. SOFI, SOFA, SOFO), hunger maps, nutrition country profiles, food security analysis and early warning projections. According to external stakeholders, FAO's statistics are widely quoted and used in global analysis by academics, researchers, economists, institutions, governments and the private sector.

168. Whilst FAO's work in statistics is considered highly relevant, it also needs to be flexible and quickly shift focus in response to changing data needs of users. FAO's history of, and continued work with, dietary diversity, food composition tables, and nutrient requirements is recognised as critically important in the calculation of under-nourishment. Emerging needs include expanding this role to include analysis of more local food and food products. According to a survey of users conducted as part of the Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Statistics (FAO 2008), users also agreed on the emerging need for more current data and information related to use of food for bio-fuels, global warming which can affect availability and access to food, land and water use, food pricing, and household food consumption/food intake.

Information systems

169. FAO support to information systems on food and nutrition security (ISFNS)[38] remains highly relevant at national, regional and global levels for food and nutrition security related activities, although nutrition information is not collected in a systematic way in many of these systems. Traditionally, these systems have focused more on collecting information on food availability and access and have not focused on collecting nutrition information. This orientation is still the dominant approach used in FAO.

170. The functions of some ISFNS are considered more 'highly developed' and widely utilised by stakeholders than others, suggesting various ISFNS functions may not be equally relevant. This may be due, in part, to lack of comparative analysis or assessment of priorities in terms of ISFNS support, including geographic (i.e. countries or regions) or technical (i.e. support to baselines versus early warning systems) needs.

171. Two examples of ISFNS visited by the Evaluation at country level include the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) for Somalia managed by FAO and the technical Secretariat for Food Security and Nutrition (SETSAN) in Mozambique which used to receive technical assistance from FAO (both EU-funded). Both undertake regular seasonal assessments and analyse information on food security and nutrition that is widely used for both humanitarian and development planning purposes. SETSAN has lacked technical assistance and resources in recent years and has become somewhat marginalised. The FSNAU on the other hand is now multi-donor funded and has long been established as the principal source of food security and nutrition information to all development partners and government institutions in Somalia.

[38] Major functions of ISFNS include providing baselines, early warnings, needs assessments, monitoring of food security and monitoring and evaluation of activities promoting food security (e.g., emergency food aid, agricultural development assistance, market interventions, social safety net programmes).

172. The relevance of FAO's activities in ISFNS is also evident in the level of external funding to ISFNS work, such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's (BMGF) support to establish CountrySTAT in seventeen African countries, continued EC funding for the third phase of Food Security Information for Action (FSIA) to support use of food and nutrition security information for decision-making and response planning, and EC funding for Global Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) work.

Assessments

173. FAO is well-respected among Member Countries and institutional partners for supporting governments in reliable data collection at the provincial and national levels. Unfortunately, the work carried out by AGN on dietary diversity measures has not been incorporated consistently into all of these assessments. This may change now that the dietary diversity indicator is being promoted as a monitoring indicator for pillar III of CAADP, thus encouraging countries in Africa to monitor dietary diversity at the national level.

174. Unbiased and transparent contributions to ISFNS rely on continued engagement in joint assessments and analysis with member states, UN agencies and INGOs. However, several recent evaluations of FAO's nutrition work have noted a general lack of – and need for better – integration of nutrition considerations into assessments. This may be due, in part, to its nutrition-related work being conducted in isolation from social, food policy, and economic work within FAO. In particular, interlocutors to this evaluation stated consistently that a "high priority for FAO as a global organization should be on examining the nutritional impact of global food systems and agriculture."

3. Making statistics more relevant

175. Tasked with monitoring global progress towards reducing hunger in the world[39], FAO uses as its main hunger indicator estimates on the prevalence of under-nourishment on a country-by-country basis. In addition to serving as the baseline for the World Food Summit goal (1996), FAO's under-nourishment indicator has been, and remains, widely used for education, advocacy, policy, and raising awareness of food insecurity across the globe. It serves as the basis for FAO's projections of global hunger, currently estimated at nearly 1 billion people.

176. FAO's measure of under-nourishment reflects the proportion of the population that has access to sufficient dietary energy supply and is based on Food Balance Sheets (FBS) derived from Supply Utilisation Accounts (SUA), which measure the amount of food available for consumption.[40,41] Indicators used by other FNS practitioners (e.g. WFP, IFPRI, WHO) to gauge hunger include household consumption surveys (HCS), anthropometric measurements (e.g., weight, height, age) and composite indicators such as the Global Hunger Index published jointly by IFPRI and German Welthungerhilfe.[42] The hunger maps generated by these various measures are all different, and this has created a need to improve the under-nourishment measure using household expenditure data.

[39] WFS and MDG targets of eradicating hunger in the world overall and specifically to reducing the number of undernourished people by half by 2015.
[40] FAO, 2008. State of Food Insecurity in the World. Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome.
[41] Sibrián R. 2009. Indicators for monitoring hunger at global and subnational levels. Statistics Division Working Paper Series No: ESS/ESSG013e. Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome.
[42] de Haen H, Klasen S & Qaim M. 2011. What do we really know? Metrics for food insecurity and malnutrition. Paper prepared for the workshop on Measuring Food Insecurity and Assessing the Sustainability of Global Food Systems, February 16-17, 2011, Keck Center of the National Academies, Washington, D.C.

177. Limitations to FAO's under-nourishment indicator include: focus on national levels of food security rather than on how hunger might be distributed within a country; the assumption that food energy deficiency, rather than micronutrient deficiency, is the most critical indicator of hunger; the assumption that food availability represents food consumption; and reliance on the FBS for compiling the dietary energy supply. The accuracy of these calculations is critically dependant on the quality of the FAOSTAT database and is sensitive even to small changes in key parameters of the measure.

178. Research conducted by the International Food Policy and Research Institute (IFPRI) suggests that Household Expenditure Surveys (HES) can improve the accuracy of FAO's estimates of under-nourishment.[43] The study includes measures of diet quantity and diet diversity as food insecurity indicators and notes the richness and depth of socio-economic characteristics provided through use of HES, such as urban/rural distinctions, economic status and sex-disaggregated data, all of which were identified by stakeholders as important but lacking in existing under-nourishment calculations.

179. Consensus exists that "no single method can capture all aspects of hunger while at the same time providing policy-makers with relevant and timely information in a cost-effective manner". However, FAO should play a lead role in bringing together stakeholders from the statistical, nutritional, agricultural and economic sectors to address and agree on a standard set of core indicators, critical to monitoring meaningful progress on MDG goals. There is some recognition of this now within FAO and major steps are being taken to revisit the methodology of the FAO hunger indicator.

180. AGN is currently working with ESS to improve the estimates of Minimum Dietary Energy Supply Requirements. Given that this input was not there in the recent past due to measurement disagreements, with the coming of a new director, ESS now recognises the importance of the specialised knowledge that AGN staff bring to the work of ESS. Currently two AGN staff are assisting to update height measurements and food nutrient content information which has not been updated for some time, and are being supported by ESS.

181. AGN's assistance is also required to calculate Dietary Energy Requirements for normal activity and determine thresholds for over-nutrition. ESS plans on developing a suite of indicators that help determine food consumption patterns that can be incorporated as modules for on-going national surveys such as HES, Living Standard Measurement Surveys (LSMS) supported by the World Bank, and Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) carried out by UNICEF.

4. Technical quality and accessibility

Nutrition statistics

182. The Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Statistics[44] conducted in 2008 noted that FAO simply lacks sufficient staff to build sufficient national capacity and provide the quantity and quality of statistics to meet the high expectations from countries and partners. This is especially true in the area of nutrition. Stakeholder groups consider FAO to be uniquely placed in providing global food and nutrition security information as a public good, though

[43] Smith LC, Alderman H & Aduayom D. 2006. Food Insecurity in Sub-Saharan Africa: New Estimates from Household Expenditure Surveys. Research Report Abstract 146. International Food Policy and Research Institute, Washington, D.C.

[44] Dunmore J and Karlsson J. 2008, Independent Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Statistics, Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome.

some concern exists about their ability to maintain this level of global leadership in the face of continued organizational funding challenges.

183. FAO statistics are generally easily accessible through web-based applications such as FAOSTAT and Nutrition Country Profiles, 'state of the world' publications on food insecurity and agriculture, and other normative products. FAOSTAT is widely recognised as a source of available data, but it is not easily accessible, nor user-friendly. In recent years the nutrition profiles have not been updated on a regular basis and many are as much as ten years' out-of-date.

Nutrition in information systems

184. FAO support to ISFNS is generally considered to be of high technical quality. This is demonstrated through the considerable reliance on FAO supported initiatives such as the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) by governments, UN agencies, INGOs and donors, and by the importance of FAO's global ISFNS products such as FAOSTAT, Food Outlook, and SOFI in helping to build general awareness, provide food security analysis and support advocacy work by relevant stakeholders. The IPC work, which evolved from the food security and nutritional analytical framework developed by the FSNAU in Somalia, is also highly valued by many organizations and Governments especially within the Greater Horn of Africa Region.

185. FAO's technical support to national and regional ISFNS, such as SETSAN in Mozambique, SIFSIA in Sudan and the FSNAU in Somalia, have been critical in developing national ISFNS capacity. SETSAN has been instrumental in introducing nutrition indicators into monitoring tools used by the PRSP process in Mozambique and is currently integrating DDS into the regular socio-economic household survey. The FSNAU works where it can to develop institutional capacity within local government authorities where the situation permits (e.g. in Somaliland). However, FAO's project-based approach may put the long-term sustainability of national ISFNS programs at risk once external funding ends.

186. Many stakeholders surveyed in the FAO/WFP Joint Evaluation[45] indicated that ISFS did not sufficiently address nutrition and gender concerns, nor did they take account of increasing urbanisation. A draft of FAO's newest five-year corporate strategy on information systems incorporates nutrition into the acronym (e.g., ISFNS) - evidence of the importance of nutrition to FAO's ISFNS support. AGN's initial involvement in the strategy development is reflected in the change of acronym. However, AGN has not been engaged recently and is not represented on the steering committee that will oversee on-going ISFNS implementation. One consequence of this may be that nutrition will not be integrated into ISFNS work as much as it should be.

187. FAO's ISFNS products are easily accessible to the public (with the caveat of a reliable internet connection) though there is limited awareness by both actual and potential users regarding the range of global ISFNS products available (e.g. SOFI). Demand by actual and potential users for key food and nutrition security information (e.g. related to nutrition, gender and urban issues) will help ensure utilisation of ISFNS products and services.

188. There is widespread demand from donors, governments, INGOs and other stakeholders for more concise presentation of ISFNS information, including short, targeted policy briefs for decision-makers. Stakeholder analysis also indicated a need for more integrated

[45] FAO/WFP, 2009, Joint Thematic Evaluation of FAO and WFP: Support to Information Systems for Food Security, Final Report.

information and information on nutrition, gender and urbanisation. While integration of various secondary data is generally desirable, large integrated data collection systems are not. National and regional ISFNS should not strive to include all aspects of ISFNS and focus instead on development of coordinated platforms ensuring the availability of comprehensive food and nutrition security information whether generated from single-source or integrated systems.

Assessments

189. Building evidence of the link between agriculture and nutrition requires inclusion of relevant indicators for monitoring and evaluation food and agriculture-based projects, particularly indicators that directly measure food consumption and dietary diversity. Adopting and validating the Dietary Diversity Score and the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale that were originally developed by AED/ FANTA, FAO now has tools that are widely considered of high quality and provide appropriate assessment of the impact of interventions on diet nutritional quality. AGN has been working closely with TCS for the past two years to incorporate these tools into an e-learning course for measuring impact of food security programmes. This will help generate evidence of the nutrition impact of food-based approaches, which is seen as a very positive development.

190. FAO's new Corporate Strategy for ISFNS calls for better integration of issues related to gender, nutritional status and urban food security, into food and nutrition security instruments and tools. Consensus-driven responses to food and nutrition security assessments and strengthened capacity of national and sub-national governments and development partners to conduct them will also contribute greatly to an overall increase in the quality of assessments being produced and used to inform decisions.

191. FAO-supported food and nutrition security assessments are conducted in response to member state demands for support to carry out such assessments and are implemented in collaboration with existing programmes (e.g. 2-3 year TCPs) at the national and regional levels, distinguishing between the information needs at the two levels. Targeting countries in which programs already exist adds value to existing local resources and systems.[46]

192. In some countries, the dietary diversity measure used by FAO may compete with the measure used by WFP, which is the food consumption score (FCS). In Kenya, the government replaced the DDS with the FCS because WFP provided more resources for the data collection and analysis. In other countries both measures are used (e.g. in Palestine). There is an urgent need to harmonise these two approaches and it should be the role of SCN to facilitate this process.

5. Innovation and adaptation

Statistics

193. As noted in the recent statistics evaluation, FAO's leadership role in development of new methods and best practices in statistics and data collection, as well as their contributions to statistical science and publications, has greatly diminished since the 1980s. The most recent publication of the Statistical Development Series was released by ESS in 1998[47] and a statistical methods handbook for fisheries was released in 2005.[48]

[46] EC/FAO. 2009. EC/FAO Joint Evaluation: Food Security Information for Action Programme. GCP/GLO/162/EC.

[47] Multiple Frame Agricultural Surveys: Volume 2. Agricultural Survey Programmes Based on Area Frame for Dual Frame (Area and List) Sample Designs. FAO Statistical Development Series No. 10. 1998.

[48] Guidelines for designing data collection and sharing systems for co-managed fisheries. FAO Fisheries

194. At a time of increasing demands for new statistics and the need to integrate data from multiple sectors, there is a widely-recognised need for leadership and innovation in statistics and statistical methodologies related to agriculture, fisheries, and forestry in order to understand their interrelated effects on health, nutrition, livelihoods and environmental issues.

Information systems

195. FAO's online e-training programmes (developed under the FSIA initiative) offer a number of innovative "hands-on-training" modules, including courses on Food Security Information Systems and Networks, Reporting Food Security Information, Nutritional Status Assessment and Analysis, and Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis. These distance learning opportunities are well recognised by various stakeholders and utilised both as a source for general information and as capacity development materials for trainers.

196. In conjunction with WFP, FAO is widely recognised for adapting to emerging food security information needs during the global food price crisis by launching a series of highly relevant price impact analyses at national and regional levels. Trend analysis of national, regional, and global information related to the influence of a wide diversity of ever-changing interdependent factors (e.g. social-economic, political, trade policy, trans-border, environmental) on food and nutrition security should be expanded and institutionalised in order to help identify potential risks or threats ***before*** they impact food and nutrition security at national, regional or global levels.

197. In response to donor interest in more credible ISFNS products, FAO has played a critical role in the creation of several multi-stakeholder national ISFNS partnerships supported by consensus-building processes at the country level, such as the Kenya Food Security Steering Group, SETSAN in Mozambique, the Food Security Information System (SISA) in Burkina Faso, FSNAU in Somalia and the Council on Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) in Cambodia. These partnerships are perceived by donors to foster information sharing and result in more appropriate responses to food and nutrition security challenges.

Assessments

198. FAO is utilising both a "nutrition lens" and a "Disaster Risk Management lens" in a variety of emergency projects involving nutritional outcomes/impacts. By applying a nutrition approach to DRM, FAO is helping to raise awareness of the importance of nutrition within the community of food security practitioners; has incorporated nutrition-related objectives and indicators for targeting and monitoring (e.g. diet diversity among adults, diversity of complementary foods among children); has built a base of evidence on the linkages between agriculture and nutrition through appropriate monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and lessons learned; supported inter-agency planning at the country level; has enforced the mainstreaming of nutrition goals in program/project design, implementation and evaluation; and incorporated a "right-to-food" approach in support of sustainable food-based interventions in emergencies and protracted crises.[49]

199. A Response Analysis Framework (RAF) is under development by FAO and has been initially trialled in Indonesia and Somalia. RAF provides a shared conceptual framework, bringing together food, agriculture and nutrition sectors. It identifies underlying causes of nutritional issues and develops inter-sectoral and inter-institutional responses based on an

Technical Paper 494 Parts 1 and 2. 2005.

[49] Marsland N. 2011. Food and Agriculture Based Approaches to Safeguarding Nutrition Before, During and After Emergencies: The experience of FAO (DRAFT).

informed understanding of how each sector can affect nutrition outcomes and how this response can be strengthened through collaboration between sectors and institutions alike.

6. Principal findings

Nutrition statistics

200. FAO's normative role in the area of statistics for food, agriculture and nutrition is recognised by Member Countries as very significant and highly relevant. However, reductions in funding for statistical activities have affected national capacities in statistics as well as FAO's provision of quality data to the global community of end-users. Confidence in FAO's stature as a 'reliable source of unbiased data' cannot be sustained without a significant recommitment on the part of FAO and donors to prioritise and fund statistics.

201. Coherence among UN agencies and INGOs involved with assessing global hunger needs to be reached on whether FAO's measure of under-nourishment as its main hunger indicator is the most appropriate across all user needs. FAO should play a lead role in bringing together stakeholders from the statistical, nutritional, agricultural and economic sectors to address and agree on a standard set of core indicators related to nutrition, food security and agriculture, especially those used to monitor global hunger and MDG goals. Furthermore, FAO should play a lead role with others to measure nutrition outcomes of agriculture and food security activities.

202. FAO nutritionists have an important role to support ESS in updating under-nourishment calculations and developing a suite of indicators that can be used to monitor food consumption trends on a regular basis through national surveys. Currently there is a real need for increasing these inputs.

Nutrition in information systems

203. FAO should strongly advocate for and promote activities that maintain the quality of nutrition data and information entering into ISFNSs, as it forms the basis on which subsequent analyses and decisions are made. For example, nutritionists must be engaged to determine how nutrition fits into the meta-analysis used by the IPC. In the Acute and Chronic scales used in IPC, nutrition indicators are heavily relied upon. Wasting and dietary diversity are measures used in the Acute scale and stunting and dietary diversity are used in the Chronic scale. AGN needs to be more engaged in the development of thresholds for each of these scales.

204. FAO must be flexible enough to respond to growing demand for in-depth analysis of structural and emerging factors underlying chronic food insecurity and malnutrition: age and gender disparities in food security status, infringements of the right to food, the potential food security impact of global market volatility and food trade rules, inequitable access to resources and markets, and the effects of climate change on household food security. All of these issues are to be addressed in the new ISFNS strategy. Therefore, nutrition staff need to work with other FAO staff to ensure that the nutrition implications of these issues are adequately taken into account.

Assessments

205. Monitoring and evaluation systems applied by FAO are weak and do not capture evidence of food-based approaches to improving nutrition. FAO should now focus much more attention on addressing this linkage. The development of dietary diversity measurements applying the DDS tool meets the need for a simple, low-tech solution that is easily understood

by the majority of stakeholders and its promotion as a potential application for measuring the impact of National Programmes for Food Security demonstrate a good model of technical collaboration across divisions/departments within FAO. In addition, changes in policy that result from decisions based on better information provided by ISFNS should also be captured. In this way the impact of ISFNS on decisions and the decision-making process can be noted.

E. Integrating Nutrition into FAO Programmes

1. Key developments 2004-2010

206. The project activities which integrate nutrition related activities into agriculture and food security projects are broad ranging and very limited in scope. The areas of work include household food security and community nutrition; nutrition education; integrated horticulture; and nutrition and HIV/AIDS.

207. Principal developments during the evaluation period have been: (i) the introduction of Trials for Improved Practices (TIPs) into household food security and community nutrition projects; (ii) the development of guidelines and resource materials to integrate nutrition education into the school curriculum and establish school gardens; (iii) the integration of nutrition education into Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS); (iv) greater focus on urban horticulture (Food for the Cities projects); and (v) food and nutrition security for people living with HIV/AIDS. However, these activities have continued to be very segregated and isolated from each other, driven more through funding opportunities than part of an overall strategic plan.

208. Nutrition education relating to food-based approaches to improved nutrition has been central to most of the field activities of FAO in nutrition. This has been demonstrated in the Latin America and the Caribbean region through FAO's technical support to the development of food-based dietary guidelines and nutrition education in the primary schools; the incorporation of nutrition education into the FFS and JFFLS curricula principally in Africa and Asia; the TIPs approach adopted in Asia and Africa which promotes healthy eating habits and behavioural change driven by communities themselves; and nutrition work with marginalised and indigenous groups.

2. Relevance to context

209. For the most part, the relatively small-scale nutrition-related interventions that FAO is undertaking at country level are integrated into a select number of FAO emergency and food security projects and are relevant to context. FAO, with very few exceptions[50], does not operate nutrition-specific interventions. Rather, it attempts to incorporate a "nutrition lens" on agriculture and food-based activities that it is undertaking. Respondent's to the Evaluation survey of Member Countries unanimously considered FAO as best suited in the area of integrating nutrition into agricultural programmes. Below is an outline of the principal fields and their relevance, where FAO has integrated a stronger focus on nutrition, with a particular reference to projects in countries that the Evaluation team visited.

[50] FAO support to rehabilitation centers for acute malnourished children in Colombia is one example of a nutrition-specific intervention.

Nutrition education at school and community level

210. A significant area of FAO's nutrition work is in food-based nutrition education at school and community level. There are good examples in Honduras and Mozambique where FAO is providing assistance to integrate nutrition considerations into primary school curricula, or in Afghanistan, where FAO in collaboration with UNICEF's Healthy Schools Initiative has developed a three-year intervention through which teachers are trained in teaching nutrition and how to work with children to set up and manage school gardens. This project overlaps in areas where FAO technically supports NGOs in implementing home gardening along with nutrition, food preparation and processing classes in order to improve household food security and nutrition and to build synergy with the school project.

211. Another area of support is the school garden initiative, which, like the work in Afghanistan, intends to implement school gardens as a learning space. The home gardening project implemented both in Lao PDR and Bangladesh each included a school component through which children learned how to grow fruit, vegetables, raise small animals, make good food choices, conserve and care for the environment and acquire marketing and income generating skills. The two projects demonstrated that school gardens support skill-based learning including nutrition education, and contribute to the overall education of rural and urban children and support spread of these skills to other family members. The same initiative, however, failed in Honduras and Mozambique, as the support from agricultural staff was inadequate and teachers were not sufficiently committed.

Nutrition education through extension

212. The Farmer Field Schools (FFS), which is now a well-established mechanism for agricultural extension in some countries, and the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) approach, provide very good opportunities to promote greater nutrition awareness through training, education and practical demonstrations. The relevance of this is to raise nutrition awareness amongst farmers who decide what to produce, store and process. This has been applied in a number of countries including Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Indonesia, Malawi, Mozambique and Sri Lanka amongst others.[51] In Bangladesh, a module has been incorporated into the pilot Integrated Farm Management Course including nutrition education, food preparation, cooking and food preservation skills, recipe preparation, infant and young child feeding (IYCF) and hygiene specifically for women. There is also a module on nutrition training for men as part of the same project. The training is based on the lessons learned from the *Integrated Horticulture and Nutrition* project (IHNP) implemented in Bangladesh several years ago. Also in Bangladesh, an MDG-funded project will target women farmers' training groups which includes a module similar to the one conveyed through the Integrated Farm Management Course with additional focus on feeding and rehabilitating malnourished children. Similarly in Cambodia, the MDG-funded project will incorporate a nutrition module into the FFS curricula and through the FICA funded *Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach* project in Malawi.

Home gardens for improved nutrition

213. FAO has significant experience with home gardening for improved nutrition in Bolivia, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Lao PDR and through the IHNP in Bangladesh. The Laos and

[51] An article on incorporating nutrition into FFS through an SPFS pilot was drafted by K. Callens and K.D. Gallagher, *Incorporating nutrition into farmer field schools*, FNA, pg 62-67; FAO, 2003.

Vietnam programmes had a strong nutrition focus and were well designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated. Both projects showed improvements in child nutrition status, food consumption, nutrition knowledge, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices and hygiene. The IHNP was more focused on technology transfer, but also demonstrated improvements in consumption of fruits and vegetables and improved IYCF.

214. In Bolivia, FAO supported in close partnership with the local government, a micro-garden programme for low-income families in peri-urban areas. This contributed to fresh vegetables and fruit all year round and was seen as being very relevant. Thus, FAO was requested to replicate the experience in other areas of Bolivia. The project included a nutrition education component to promote consumption of these products. It is one of the examples where FAO had a baseline and regular monitoring on anaemia levels.

HIV and AIDS

215. The links between HIV/AIDS and nutrition are very important especially in African countries. The FICA funded *Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach* project in Malawi systematically included HIV/AIDS support groups and included them in FFS and through the JFFLS approach. The FAO Regional Emergency Office for East Africa (REOA) in Nairobi has incorporated nutrition education material for HIV/AIDS affected people within a regional programme covering six countries and recognises that this has proved a very good entry point for broader nutrition education initiatives.

Urban nutrition

216. Urban nutrition and horticulture programmes are gaining in importance as an increasing proportion of the population in developing countries live in cities and the urban poor become more vulnerable to soaring food and fuel prices. In this context, FAO developed horticulture projects, which include training of families, teachers and institutional staff in gardening techniques, provision of inputs and technical assistance. FAO has also developed the "Food for the Cities" programme with resource materials. However, they do not include any guidance or materials on developing a nutrition education component for such projects. In Cambodia, FAO is planning to implement a gardening programme in poor urban areas and plans to use the TIPs[52] materials developed for rural areas in Cambodia. Home gardens in cities as well as rural areas have shown a great potential to ensure better access to vegetables as an important source for micronutrients.

217. In Mozambique, FAO's component in the joint MDG funded programme on 'Children, food security and nutrition' is concentrated in the urban areas of Maputo and Nampula, addressing small-scale urban gardening in response. The intervention exceptionally is based on an assessment that was conducted of the impact high food prices had on poor urban households and a good example of ensuring relevance. Training of trainers is included and training material is adapted, for the use of doorstep gardens, raised gardens, hanging baskets, hydroponic gardens and gardening in plastic bags. In addition, there is a component with the aim of planting fruit trees as well as the accompanying capacity building.

[52] The TIPS methodology has been adapted by AGN staff/consultants from the "Designing by Dialogue: A Program Planner's Guide to Consultative Research for Improving Young Child Feeding" Kate Dickens and Marcia Griffiths, the Manoff Group and Ellen Piwoz, Academy for Educational Development 1997.

Key dimensions

218. Most of the project work carried out has been *ad hoc*, small-scale and very opportunistic, determined more by funding opportunities, country requests and individual's agendas than based upon strategic priorities. With respect to relevance, more attention needs to be paid to the following dimensions of the nutrition work being implemented.

219. The work should be based upon a more rigorous **causal analysis** of malnutrition linked with issues that relate to food production and the availability of and access to a sufficiently diverse and nutritionally balanced diet. Many of the nutrition interventions are "add-ons" to agricultural or food security projects without sufficient field analysis which is then reflected in a poorly integrated project design and insufficient budgets, resulting in activities which are inadequate to achieve results or objectives which address nutrition concerns. Very much the exception to this are projects in Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Lao PDR which have been designed based on community participatory assessment and problem analysis.

220. There is often a "**disconnect**" within the projects because major activities related to agricultural production generally target one community (predominantly male), whilst the nutrition component targets another community (predominantly female) through the promotion of vegetable gardens, small livestock and fish production and nutrition education. Often agricultural projects do not reflect the required production diversity that corresponds with the targeted population's identified macro- and micronutrient requirements.

221. FAO's close working relationship with Ministries of Agriculture offers an excellent opportunity to include agriculture and food-based approaches to achieve nutrition outcomes, but is hampered by the lack of nutrition staff now in the agriculture sector[53] and are heavily weighted toward the **assumption that increased food production will resolve nutrition concerns**. Furthermore, there is considerable reliance upon the Ministry of Agriculture extension staff to deliver nutrition education at the community level, which they may not consider a priority for their Ministry, do not have the capacity or orientation to do, and are not well linked to other line ministries, such as health. FAO has achieved better results in community-based nutrition education through other sector services as in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Zambia.

222. Few of the project documents (other than Afghanistan) articulate how the **evidence base** generated by the projects and the **lessons learned** from the project will contribute to the work of other partners in country (or to FAO's programming more broadly), to policy assistance in country (or at regional level) nor to normative objectives being prioritised within FAO. Consequently, the Evaluation noted that practices which can contribute to nutrition outcomes, such as improved post-harvest management, nutrition education and home gardening are not being sufficiently incorporated into policies and strategies at the national level.

3. Effectiveness of the programmes

223. Whilst nutrition-related projects at field level might be quite relevant to context, there are many issues concerning the efficiency and effectiveness of the projects themselves and much relates to the fact that: (i) there is still very poor understanding within FAO of the contribution agriculture and food-based approaches to nutrition outcomes; (ii) there is extremely limited technical capacity across the Organization to achieve this; (iii) there is

[53] Due to Structural Adjustment Programmes, Malawi government was forced to scale down on staff members within ministries. Nutrition posts were the first to be abolished during this time.

almost a total dependence upon short project cycle funding from outside the Organization; (iv) synergies between projects and across countries are very limited; and (v) FAO has diminished visibility in the field over the past ten years.

Lack of understanding on nutrition within FAO

224. This remains a considerable constraint within FAO amongst senior level professional staff at project and national level. Nutrition cannot be effectively integrated into projects without staff with management or technical responsibilities for the projects that understand how agriculture and food-based approaches can contribute to nutrition outcomes. Symptomatic of this are cases of NMTPFs not representing nutrition concerns within countries as has been mentioned in an earlier section of this report. Furthermore, this understanding has to be developed through counterparts in line ministries and partner agencies who often have responsibility for the delivery of services and implementation of projects.

225. It is due to this lack of knowledge and capacity that nutrition concerns have not been systematically and effectively integrated into the FFS and JFFLS approaches despite the opportunity and willingness to do so. There is also evidence that a change in FAO management in country can quite simply result in a successful nutrition-related project (backed by AGN and government) being "dropped" through lack of interest and commitment; the provision of key technical services to a project being blocked (despite being factored into the project design); and new initiatives proposed by government (such as home-grown school feeding) or advocacy opportunities not being pursued.

Insufficient technical capacity

226. There are good examples of AGN technically backstopping projects, most notably: education manuals for teachers and pupils for primary schools (Mozambique), a food processing and other training manuals (Afghanistan), and complementary feeding recipes/guides (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Afghanistan and Zambia). There are other examples of initiatives, which have been implemented without any backstopping at all (for example training in food processing and nutrition in Mozambique) and are completely detached from other similar AGN normative products. Whilst backstopping support by AGN at headquarters level is recognised as being important, it is totally insufficient (given the other responsibilities of the AGN team) to support the broad "patchwork" of project activities under implementation. Furthermore, there has been virtually no capacity at regional level upon which AGN could depend except in the Asia and Pacific Region which is mentioned further below.

227. Technical backstopping, whether from global or regional level, can only initiate ideas and activities, which need to be taken up by the staff team inside the respective countries. Networking and advocacy relating to clusters, food security and nutrition working groups, REACH and other multi-sectoral mechanisms require a technical competence and time flexibility in country to attend these meetings and follow-up. Where FAO has nutritional expertise at country level for a number of years (for example Afghanistan and Bangladesh), FAO has benefited from additional funding and expanded its work in nutrition and is well recognised for its leadership in this area.

228. Lack of appropriate technical capacity at both country and regional level can significantly reduce the efficiency and effectiveness of work in nutrition. Since many of the nutrition-related activities are being operated on a "trial" or "pilot" basis to probe methods

and strategies, and potentially need to contribute to other areas of work including policy and normative functions, the lack of appropriate technical support accorded to these projects affects the technical quality of delivery and the knowledge gained. Two examples of this are: (i) the field component of *Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach* in Malawi, one of FAO's more significant nutrition-related projects, which for two years has been integrating nutrition education and other elements into FFS, JFFLS, HIV/AIDS groups without nutritional expertise at field level; and (ii) the recently initiated MDG funded project in Cambodia which is also integrating nutrition into the FFS curricula; the technical quality of such projects is compromised by not fielding the essential expertise.

Short project cycles

229. Typically nutrition-related projects are of short duration between 12 to 24 months and are discontinued on completion either because they are not prioritised by the Member Country, or the FAO country team, opportunities for an extension of funding do not exist, or opportunities for the follow-on funding are not actively pursued. A consistent finding of the Evaluation across all continents is that the technical quality of the work in nutrition has been severely compromised by very short project cycles. Nutrition interventions to be effective have to be based upon a good causal analysis, formative research over different seasons[54], community participation in the project design, baseline assessments, raising community awareness, achieving behaviour change, effective collaboration with local partners, regular monitoring and evaluation and documenting findings and lessons learned.

230. Often, this is unrealistically packaged with project cycles as short as 18 months, which may benefit agricultural production, but generally achieve little in terms of improved nutritional outcomes. Invariably insufficient attention is given to understanding the context, or generating baseline information. Nutrition education needs much longer time to achieve intended behaviour change for improved dietary consumption and better nutritional status. Project staff are obliged to proceed with implementation often without the requisite capacity, and projects are completed without core elements being addressed. There are few examples of nutrition-related projects that have benefited from extended funding other than in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Malawi. Without a continuation in funding the negligible achievements and knowledge gained by both the community and the project were quickly lost over time.

Lack of synergy

231. Another critical finding was the lack of synergy between countries integrating nutrition into agriculture and food security projects, between nutrition initiatives in country and even within FAO projects themselves. The Evaluation would have expected Regional Offices (or Sub-Regional Offices) to play a key role across countries, but then many do not have the capacity since there is no Nutrition Officer, or where there is, the task of Nutrition Officer is often combined with Food Safety Officer for which there is equal if not higher demand upon their time. Generally, it is more likely that AGN will provide a technical linkage between countries than the Regional Office.

232. The one exception has been the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) where, until two years ago, the Nutrition Officer was very active in networking across the region. Very recently (April 2011) RAP convened a workshop for representatives of ten FAO

[54] Trials in Improved Practices (TIPs) which has been applied by FAO in Afghanistan and Lao PDR requires complex formative research at community level during both the wet and dry seasons.

nutrition projects from countries across the region to share practical lessons learned and best practices, identify constraints, promote effective collaborations and explore mechanisms to facilitate cooperation between projects. This is an important development particularly in the light of the lack of interaction between similar projects (MDG funded, TIPs and policy assistance in particular). However, there is now no regional nutrition or nutrition-related programme in the Asia region to link initiatives and no plan to initiate any.

233. The technical quality of the work in nutrition is undermined by the tendency to implement a range of widely dispersed projects which do not sufficiently link or feed into each other. The only time that the synergy is effective is where the same AGN staff from headquarters provides the "link" across the projects, but this tends to be limited. Consequently, it is difficult to understand how different project initiatives can contribute to the development of normative products and policy advice. In terms of nutrition education, the Evaluation Team did not see efficient and effective linkages between the use of FAO normative products and the development of manuals in the Africa and Latin American region; this seems to be better in Asia, where food-based nutrition education materials have been developed collaboratively (Afghanistan, Cambodia and Laos) facilitated by AGN.

234. The reason why this has not been applied in the Latin America region is the fact that most of the material is based on African examples. In Africa, the reason is mainly seen in lack of FAO nutrition expertise in countries and regions. In addition, there is not much cooperation with other implementing partners (with a few exceptions).

235. As yet, the field contribution of nutrition work to policy is still very much limited by the lack of sufficient evidence of food-based approaches on nutrition outcomes. This link has been achieved effectively in Afghanistan, but not in some other countries, notably Malawi, where the project: *Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach* was implicitly expected to achieve just this. The project, despite the longer time-frame, has disappointingly generated very little documentation on best practice which demonstrates the agriculture-nutrition links.

236. FAO is weak at all levels (country, regional and headquarters) in fulfilling a role as a repository of project knowledge which compounds the situation. There is little "institutional" memory of FAO's work at country and regional levels available on the FAO website and so much of the learning from the past is not available to current project implementers[55]. Particularly disappointing in some of the projects in the Asia region (Cambodia, Lao PDR) was learning of problems faced by current projects that previous ones, or ones in neighbouring countries, had surmounted[56]; and learning from FAO's innovative work in Afghanistan is limited to a small number of people and a review of this work in order to draw lessons learned and share best practices has not been undertaken.

Lack of visibility

237. There is a common feeling among stakeholders that the leadership of FAO as a major player in nutrition has declined substantially at the regional level in Latin America, but also in

[55] It was very evident to the Evaluation that FAO's work on home gardening and animal food production in Asia previous to 2004 contributed significantly to community-based nutrition programming and now would be providing significant evidence to the international 'discussion' on linking agricultural production to improved nutrition outcomes if FAO had built on this experience.

[56] For example in Lao PDR, a current project in nutrition (including a home gardening pilot and complementary feeding) has not sufficiently capitalised on the lessons learned from earlier interventions (such as the home gardening for nutrition-wellbeing project) because of the time lapse between interventions.

Asia and Africa. FAO is no longer taking part in important regional networks in Asia, in inter-sectoral coordination platforms like CISAN in Colombia, nor the nutrition roundtable for the definition of UNDAF nor UTSAN in Honduras, and it now has reduced visibility at field level. Government institutions also stressed that lack of clarity on FAO's mandate and role in nutrition affected its visibility in comparison to other UN organisations.

4. Innovation and adaptation

238. FAO has demonstrated some degree of innovation and adaptation in its nutrition-related work that is important to note. A good example is the introduction of Trials of Improved Practices (TIPs), a specific formative research approach, designed to produce IYCF feeding recommendations, messages and recipes through formative research that form the basis for a broader behaviour change strategy to be up-scaled through existing service providers (i.e. agricultural extension, health assistants, community development staff), and volunteer nutrition promoters. The complementary feeding recipes are based on trials with mothers and young children and locally available foods. To date, the projects implemented have not been of sufficient duration to get beyond the formative research phase. Based on FAO's experience with TIPs in four countries (Afghanistan, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Mauritania), a paper and training materials for field staff on how to conduct the trials, analyse the responses and develop messages and recipes is under development.

239. This approach, if the evidence is collected, could support the numerous community-based global initiatives to improve infant and young child feeding (IYCF) which, for the most part, lack such a food-based approach for complementary feeding based on formative research, and locally available foods and recipes. Further, it would provide low-cost nutrient dense complementary feeding options for poor families and potentially enable local communities to become independent of commercially provided complementary foods and specialised foods that treat and prevent acute malnutrition.

240. Furthermore, in Afghanistan, where project work has been sustained over a number of years, participatory and formative research has informed the development of a multi-sectoral community nutrition intervention implemented through both government and non-governmental partnerships which is linked to capacity building and policy assistance. This model has been influential in determining approaches elsewhere such as Lao PDR, Mauritania and a regional project in sub-Saharan Africa, but not to the same effect.

241. In Colombia, another innovative solution was found in the promotion and utilisation of multiple and innovative information and communications technologies to deliver nutrition messages, including mobile phone messages, TV shows, social networks and online courses. This approach was found to be very effective particularly to promote behaviour changes in urban areas.

5. Sustainability and impact

242. There are some examples of projects in the Asia region such as The *Pilot Project for the Promotion of Home Gardens for Improved Nutritional Well-being* 2002-2004, based on similar work in Vietnam, which have conducted baselines, interim and end of project surveys which demonstrated impact including decreases in children with severe underweight. This was very small-scale, with a small sample size and over a short period. Another was the *Integrated Horticulture & Nutrition Project* 2000-2006 in Bangladesh, but this did not have as strong a nutrition component and the control households were not comparable to those selected for the intervention which compromised the project's positive findings.

243. Otherwise, and until very recently, FAO has not placed sufficient emphasis on generating evidence against results in its project cycle management. Consequently, most of the projects reviewed are not able to demonstrate impact with respect to nutritional outcomes, or like the EU/FFP *Improving the Food Security of Farming Families Affected by Volatile Food Prices* 2009-2011, which includes baseline, interim and final surveys, the projects are still to new to demonstrate impact.

244. Furthermore and as previously mentioned, most of the projects which have included nutrition-related activities are short-term projects of 12 to 24 months (determined by TCP or emergency funding) which cannot be expected to achieve nutrition outcomes let alone impact assessments and lessons learned within that time-frame. Many have been labelled "pilot" projects to pioneer nutrition-related interventions yet they have not instituted baselines and are not subject to regular monitoring and evaluation. Few projects qualify for second cycle funding and the "institutional" memory of these projects often depends on FAO staff members being retained within the team (or on other projects), which is rarely the case.

245. Interestingly, one Regional Project in East Africa focusing on HIV/AIDS and gender has recently included the Dietary Diversity Scores into the baseline and monitoring and evaluation system. It is the first time that the Evaluation saw evidence of this being integrated into the project design. DDS is also to be systematically incorporated into the National Programmes for Food Security being managed through TCS and has been established as a core results indicator within TCE's new project monitoring system.

246. A recent evaluation of an FAO project: *the Belgium Survival Fund/Food and Agricultural Organization (BSF FAO), Improving Nutrition and Household Food Security Project (BSF FAO) project in Ethiopia* found that FAO work had contributed to improved nutrition-related outcomes and created a model that could be replicated at local, provincial and national level. The project targeted the most vulnerable and follows a multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approach for addressing food security and nutritional challenges through four inter-linked approaches: community empowerment, market and enterprise development, health and nutrition, and agriculture and natural resources management. The project created and expanded local service provision capacity in the areas of rural financial, agricultural extension, health care and social protection services for the poor. The assessment found these combined approaches, and that the project interventions (together with other programmes such as the PSNP, health extension services, and agricultural extension services) have helped improve food security among targeted vulnerable groups. In terms of linking agricultural interventions with nutrition, the dietary diversity of the beneficiaries showed some improvement as a result of intensive trainings, access to credit, improvement in agricultural production and increased income opportunities supported by the project.

247. With respect to sustainability, the integration of nutrition education into official primary school curricula and the adoption of home gardening and nutrition education by local governments (especially Latin America) can be seen as one of the most successful examples. Furthermore, earlier work in Asia with integrating nutrition in home gardens and raising livestock in the 1990's and early 2000's, although this is not now continued by FAO, contributed to others learning in this area since knowledge sharing documents were prepared and in at least one country (Bangladesh) a close relationship with Helen Keller International (HKI), who also worked in this area, existed at that time. Further, the Government of Bangladesh has, over the past five years, continued the FAO initiated integrated horticultural project with its own funding in select areas, but it has not been well monitored. Interestedly, aspects of FAO's early work, such as training in livestock raising and targeting families with young children eventually found its way into HKI homestead food production programme.

6. Principal findings

248. FAO is operating a range of nutrition-related activities, which for the most part have been integrated into agriculture and food security projects. Member Countries consider FAO best suited to fulfil this role. These interventions however are not based upon any causal analysis which would identify the underlying reasons for food and nutrition insecurity; nor are they based upon any situation analysis which outlines strategic gaps in technical support, what government and non-governmental partners are undertaking or planning, and where there might be opportunities for collaboration.

249. There is still a very limited understanding throughout FAO (but particularly at country and regional levels) about nutrition and the links between agriculture and food security even amongst staff who have responsibility for managing or technically supporting the projects. Furthermore, there is insufficient technical capacity within FAO at all levels (but particularly in the field) to ensure that the projects are relevant, effective and deliver on better nutrition outcomes.

250. FAO has introduced some innovative and adaptive practices that have been very relevant and effective including home gardening, the introduction of Trials of Improved Practices (TIPs) to improve complementary feeding practices at the community level and the introduction of nutrition education through the FFS and JFFLS approach. However, the Evaluation Team has real concerns whether FAO is best placed to be conducting this work, rather than providing the normative guidance to others to implement.

251. Since most of the projects are operating within short project cycles, there is insufficient time to trial or pilot nutrition practices and generate meaningful outcomes, which questions the validity of the intervention in the first place. Consequently, there is little evidence generated through the fieldwork of FAO of how agriculture and food security interventions can impact positively on nutrition outcomes. As a result few of the "pilot" projects have been scaled-up as intended and worse still, there is little known documentation on lessons learned.

252. The FAO nutrition-related projects are generally very small-scale, widely spread and do not contribute to a broader strategy at the regional or global levels so there are no obvious synergies between projects. Furthermore, the linkage between the field work, policy assistance at the national level and the production of normative outputs is not clear, nor is it considered strategically except in the case of one or two projects.

253. FAO does not demonstrate comparative advantage as an "operator". It is much better placed as a "normative" organization "brokering" knowledge, sharing information and providing technical guidance rather than being at the cutting edge in delivering nutrition related projects. The Evaluation Team is convinced that FAO would more effectively serve Member Countries and development partners by investing its time and resources in generating a better understanding of agriculture, food security and nutrition links across government ministries and the development community at large.

254. FAO should only get directly involved in nutrition-related projects where: (i) the nutrition work is based upon causal analysis; (ii) nutrition outcomes are part of and fully integrated into agriculture and food security intervention; (iii) the intervention is of sufficient duration to generate evidence and lessons learned; (iv) it contributes towards a broader strategy addressing nutrition concerns at national, sub-regional or regional level; and (iv) it is linked to FAO's normative priorities. Partnerships for implementation of such projects should be based upon a situation analysis of actors and services at all levels without necessarily depending upon Ministry of Agriculture extension services who might not be best placed to deliver.

255. Considerable evidence is being generated by other organizations (especially research institutes and NGOs) and yet this "knowledge" is not being harnessed by FAO as a normative organization for the benefit of others and to contribute to policy assistance. In this respect, FAO should be forming strategic alliances with other key players like IFPRI, HKI and other INGOs to consolidate on initiatives and form a more effective "knowledge" network on food-based approaches to nutrition.

F. Advocacy and Policy Assistance

1. Advocacy and policy assistance 2004-2010

Regional level

256. In the **Latin America and Caribbean** region, FAO has made a notable contribution to position food security high on the political agendas of national governments and regional entities such as PARLATINO and CARICOM. The result of this work has translated into national policies and strategies for food and nutrition security in Colombia, Bolivia and Honduras and enactment of laws such as the law of food sovereignty in Bolivia. Also by working with policy makers, FAO was influential in increasing public expenditure on food and nutrition security demonstrated through the ReSA project in Colombia. In the Caribbean, a Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy developed with FAO technical assistance was approved by CARICOM Member States in 2010, and now FAO is working with these states to translate the policy into programmes at national level.

257. In **Africa**, FAO supported the 11th ECOWAS Nutrition Forum on Food & Nutrition Security in West Africa in September 2008; and a NEPAD Sub-Regional Workshop for Southern & Eastern Africa on Increasing National Capacity to Reduce Hunger and Malnutrition in November 2008. The NEPAD workshop was attended by representatives from 14 countries and a number of development partners. It explored how to exercise effective leadership to develop national and regional capacity to address hunger and malnutrition with respect to delivering on the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

258. FAO has participated in two meetings of the Revitalised African Task Force on Food and Nutrition Development (ATFFND) hosted by the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa in February and November 2009. The main purpose of the Task Force is to assist countries implement the African Regional Nutrition Strategy (ARNS) and to sensitise Africa's policy-makers on the role of food and nutrition security as a basic input in socio-economic development of the continent.

259. AGN is currently participating in a series of sub-regional workshops for national level policy-makers on the impact of high food prices organised by TCS (the most recent workshop being in Addis Ababa at the end of March 2011).

National level

260. In Latin America, FAO has convened different players to establish inter-sectoral round-table and coordination platforms for food and nutrition security debate and policy development which has then provided the foundations for the establishment of food and nutrition security institutions like CISAN in Colombia, UTSAN in Honduras and CONAN in Bolivia. In both **Colombia** and **Honduras**, FAO has provided technical assistance in the development of national food and nutrition security policies and plans. In **Bolivia**, FAO has played an influential role for the adoption and integration of the right-to-food approach on the national and sub-national policy-making and planning process.

261. FAO policy assistance has led to the formulation of legal frameworks: at least four of the six national food and nutrition security laws in the region (Nicaragua, Ecuador, Venezuela and Mexico's Federal District) have resulted from FAO's advocacy work, in particular under the ALCSH initiative (the other two, Guatemala and Brazil, were enacted earlier).

262. FAO has also promoted the creation of Food and Nutrition Security Commissions at the municipal and district levels (Guatemala, Honduras, Colombia and Bolivia) and sponsored the establishment of regional platforms such as the Parliamentary Front against hunger.

263. In Africa, FAO was involved in the development of two phases of the **Mozambique** National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy (ESAN1 and 2) as well as supporting food and nutrition security analysis within strategic planning at a decentralised level. Through SETSAN, FAO also supported the mainstreaming food and nutrition security into the PRSP and the right-to-food legislation. FAO supported the finalisation of the National Nutrition Policy and Strategic Plan 2007-2012 in **Malawi** and has helped to coordinate the implementation of the multi-sectoral strategy headed by the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS under the Office of the President and Cabinet. In **Lesotho,** on-going FAO technical assistance is being provided to finalise the National Nutrition Policy, which was drafted in 2009. FAO has also been engaged with the process to develop the Food and Nutrition Policy and Strategy in **Kenya**, the draft **Uganda** Nutrition Action Plan and supported the revision of the agriculture component of the National Nutrition Programme in **Ethiopia**.

264. In Asia, through the National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme (NFPCS) in **Bangladesh**, FAO has supported the development of the 2006 National Food Policy, which was followed through with a National Plan of Action 2008-2015 and a Country Investment Plan for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition. In **Afghanistan**, FAO has provided technical assistance to the government for the integration of food security, nutrition and gender objectives into the government policies and strategies. Outputs include the Master Plan for the Ministry of Agriculture, the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and the Inter-Ministerial Action Plan for Nutrition.

265. In **Lao PDR**, the National Nutrition Policy was prepared with technical and financial support from FAO (in collaboration with other UN agencies) and approved by the Prime Minister's Office in December 2008. A National Nutrition Strategy and Plan of Action (NPAN) 2010-2015 was subsequently developed by the government in partnership with the four UN agencies constituting the core membership of REACH.

2. Relevance of advocacy and policy assistance

266. Central to FAO's work is providing technical assistance on policy principally within the agriculture and food security sectors drawing upon operational research and programme experience and increasingly linked with its work on ISFNS[57]. FAO provides policy assistance at different level in all aspects of agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries, food and nutrition, rural development and natural resource management. The recent Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of FAO found that policy support was one of the two areas of greatest priority for the FAO Member Countries (the other being capacity building) and the survey of FAO staff undertaken by this Evaluation identified policies and strategies as the most important element of FAO's nutrition work. Ever since the International Conference on Nutrition (ICN) 1992, which was convened jointly by FAO and WHO, FAO has been

[57] The contribution of information systems to policy development is now being reflected more and more in ISFNS project design; the SIFSIA project in Sudan is a good example.

involved in supporting the development of National Nutrition Policies and National Plans of Action on Nutrition or integrating nutrition into Food Security Policies, Strategies and related plans of action.

267. Advocacy and technical assistance for the formulation of policies and legislative initiatives in food and nutrition security is one of the most recognised activities of FAO in the Latin American and Caribbean region. The policy advice was perceived as of high quality and coherent with other national policies and strategies. Particularly relevant was FAO's advocacy work on the Right to Food that has been strengthened across the region under the Iniciativa América Latina y el Caribe sin Hambre (ALCSH) that aims at: (i) raising the profile of the problem of hunger and the right o food in the national, regional and sub-regional agendas; (ii) building capacities in the countries to carry out public policies and programmes to eradicate hunger and guarantee the right to food; and (iii) to supervise the state of food and nutrition security of the countries involved in the framework of the MDG until 2015. Several actors acknowledged that the work of FAO in this area has significantly influenced the food and nutrition planning and programming at country level obliging states to guarantee, protect and promote the rights to food of their populations.

268. In both Colombia and Honduras, FAO has provided technical assistance in the development of national Food and Nutrition Security policies and plans which include multi-sectoral interventions within the framework of the social welfare system to achieve greater impact of the policy on populations most vulnerable and at risk and promote sustainable and stable production of foods. FAO has also supported the strengthening of institutions at different levels responsible for the delivery of policy and implementation of the plans.

269. Elsewhere, FAO's advocacy work through the framework of Right to Food and regional networks has been less influential, it has been much more dependent upon national government agendas and the links between different initiatives have not been so cohesive. There are few examples where the policies have been particularly relevant to the nutrition context. Bangladesh however is one model where the factors affecting food and nutrition insecurity seem insurmountable. Bangladesh developed a multi-sectoral National Food & Nutrition Policy and Plan of Action back in 1997, which integrated nutrition, health and food security. This very much laid the foundation for the development of the 2006 National Food Policy,[58] which has been supported by FAO technical assistance (the Technical Lead is ESA) through the EU and USAID funded *National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme (NFPCSP)*. This was followed through with a National Plan of Action 2008-2015 and a Country Investment Plan for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition. These later documents have become more inclusive of the complementary health-related nutrition interventions reflecting the interest of government and stakeholders to address malnutrition through a multi-sectoral approach.

270. The FAO technical assistance to the NFPCSP is accommodated within the Food Planning and Monitoring Unit (FPMU) of the Ministry of Food. The FPMU has played a pivotal role with the Government of Bangladesh in bringing together as many as 11 different line ministries, numerous donors and development partners, in support of a comprehensive plan of action and a major investment plan amounting to $10 billion. Interestingly, the FPMU has demonstrated considerable versatility and has been able to raise funds to revise and update the food composition tables for Bangladesh, which were developed in the 1960s and to fund research to contextualise dietary requirements. This information is needed prior to conducting the national level food consumption and anthropometric survey planned for 2012. The results

[58] The Bangladesh Food Policy 2006 has survived two changes of government in Bangladesh which speaks to its importance and relevance within a volatile political context.

of this survey and related work will inform efforts to address the high level of under-nutrition and emerging issue of over-nutrition as well as inform the development of dietary guidance and support critical initiatives to improve dietary balance and diversity.

271. A complementary model is the one in Afghanistan where FAO has demonstrated how strong and effective linkages between field-based interventions and government decision-makers at the national level can contribute relevance to policy formulation and strategic planning. The outputs of this work have included a very comprehensive Master Plan for the Ministry of Agriculture, the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and the Inter-Ministerial Action Plan for Nutrition.

272. In Lao PDR, the National Nutrition Policy was prepared with technical and financial support from AGN (in collaboration with other UN agencies) and approved by the Prime Minister's Office in December 2008. The policy is very brief (and arguably insufficient) outlining the principal causes of malnutrition and listing ten specific objectives to address the causes including food availability, access and improved nutrient intake. A National Nutrition Strategy and Plan of Action (NPAN) 2010-2015 was subsequently developed by the government in partnership with the four UN agencies constituting the core membership of REACH. Whilst the plan itself incorporates multi-sectoral dimensions, the interventions have been better translated into the health development strategy than they have in education or agriculture within the draft National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) VII 2011-2015 for Lao PDR.

3. Effectiveness of policy assistance

273. FAO has historical links to the Ministries of Agriculture within its Member Countries, which often means that FAO's access to government processes is only through this line ministry. The consequences of this with respect to accessing policy-setting ministries (finance, planning, economy, development etc.) and non-agricultural line ministries with an impact on nutrition (health, education, social services, women and children, etc.) are considerable and require FAO to play a much more versatile role.

274. The effectiveness of FAO's policy advice related to nutrition depends significantly on the technical engagement across sectors. Stakeholders in Latin America recognise that FAO has the capacity to bring together different players to establish inter-sectoral roundtables and coordination platforms for food and nutrition security debate and policy development which has proved very effective and has led to the setting up of councils or institutions such as CISAN (Colombia), UTSAN (Honduras) and CONAN (Bolivia) which incorporate a range of actors concerned with nutrition. Bangladesh and Malawi are also countries where FAO has adopted a broader multi-sectoral role and has not been constrained by its traditional linkages to agriculture.

275. In Bangladesh, this has been particularly challenging in view of the number of line ministries that address nutrition concerns, but the FPMU, despite being located within the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, has achieved this by establishing a common platform for all concerned ministries to discuss nutrition policy, plans of action and related investments. This has proved to be a particularly effective model in a complex governance environment, not least because it has developed a comprehensive country investment plan (CIP), which has broad ownership and is recognised as very credible by the donor community. The CIP was developed with technical support from FAO's Investment Centre Division (TCI). On the basis of the CIP, Bangladesh was the only country in Asia selected in the first round of applications to receive a 5-year GAFSP grant for $52.5 million.

276. In Malawi, the Government has established a distinct Department for Nutrition, HIV and AIDS reporting directly to the Office of the President and Cabinet through which AGN provides technical support. The challenge is to ensure that effective linkages are made through other ministries such as agriculture, health, education and gender which it has achieved through identifying and capacitating "focal persons" in each of the line ministries. Less successful has been the "inclusion" of all development partners in support of the strategy, which has resulted in some animosity between the principal UN partners in Malawi.

277. In Lao PDR, AGN is exceptionally working principally through the Ministry of Health to support policy and strategy formulation, and partly as a consequence of this, FAO has lost a strong technical relationship with the Ministry of Agriculture. The links with agriculture have become insufficient and are not drawing upon the Organization's comparative advantage, so FAO's effectiveness at supporting the process of translating key elements of policy into strategies and action plans within this sector have not been achieved.

278. The prominent role FAO plays through the *Supporting the Improvement of Household Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods* project in Afghanistan has helped to shape the development of policy. Of note was the role that the first phase of the project played in advocating that food security, nutrition and gender objectives were integrated into government policies and strategies at various levels. Project staff participated in consultative groups on relevant topics and advocated at the inter-ministerial level.

279. In many countries, however, the focus has been principally on policy assistance at the national level. There has not been sufficient attention paid to the dissemination and application of that policy at decentralised levels. In Latin America, FAO's advice on food and nutrition security did not adequately integrate nutrition considerations especially at the sub-national levels (Colombia and Bolivia) with too much focus on food availability and access. Moreover the gender perspective was poorly addressed.

280. The quality of technical assistance in support of FAO policy advice has been variable. In some cases, international consultants have been deployed who are not familiar with the context and have been very ineffective despite long time periods allocated to their missions. This can be a demoralising experience for national project staff who often have to deal with the implications of poor technical delivery (as was the case in Lao PDR). Generally, the most effective technical assistance is that built into a medium or long-term FAO engagement with government, such as the FPMU in Bangladesh or the DNHA in Malawi, where the Advisers are generally better qualified, experienced and can develop strong professional relationships across government and development partners.

4. Sustainability and impact

281. Often, the capacity requirements of ministries and decentralised government structures are overlooked during the process of policy development. Yet, this capacity is critical to deliver and sustain the key elements of policies, strategies and action plans. FAO has recognised this in some countries and has played an important role in assessing the capacity needs, as well as facilitating the allocation of resources to build capacity across different sectors.

282. FAO undertook a *Nutrition Capacity Assessment* in Malawi in 2009 to provide a basis for enhancing nutrition actions at all levels in support of the Malawian National Nutrition Policy and Strategic Plan. It not only assessed the capacity of government across different sectors, but also decentralised structures at provincial and district level, training institutions and NGOs. The exercise has been well recognised by other development partners who are now committing resources to provide relevant training.

283. Similarly in Lao PDR, FAO has managed a project *Capacity Building for Improved Food and Nutrition Security* since 2009 which strengthens the capacity of both government and its partners to implement the National Nutrition Strategy and Plan of Action for Nutrition and to incorporate nutrition objectives into the seventh 5-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan. The project initiated a comprehensive needs assessment of government staff from the ministries of agriculture, health and education, academics and beneficiaries from poor communities. This work resulted in a comprehensive capacity-building framework and a 10-year implementation plan along with the development of modules on basic nutrition and the management of community-based nutrition programming. However, the realisation of the plan will be subject to additional funding which remains uncertain at this stage.

284. The Afghanistan project *Supporting the Improvement of Household Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods* has strengthened the Home Economics Department within the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) and has built the capacity of government staff (ministries of public health, education, women's affairs, culture and youth) at multiple levels in nutrition and food security. These strong collaborative relationships have very much laid the foundation for a UN joint project.

285. FAO's publication *Incorporating Nutrition Considerations into Development Policies and Programmes* produced in 2004 recognises that policies on agriculture, health, safe water and sanitation, education, infrastructure and gender equality can all impact on nutrition, but there is still a substantial gap in knowledge of how this impact on nutrition outcomes can be assessed. This is a key consideration for FAO since such assessments will be important contributions to future policy assistance.

5. Principal findings

286. Providing technical assistance on policy principally within the agriculture and food security sectors is central to FAO's work. It is an area of considerable demand by Member Countries and has been identified by FAO staff as the highest priority in nutrition-related activities. FAO has a distinct comparative advantage in this area drawing upon its broad operational and normative experience and increasingly linked with the strategic work it is undertaking on ISFNS. It is one of the most recognised of FAO's activities.

287. Advocacy and policy work at the regional level has worked most effectively in the Latin America and Caribbean region where it has led to institutional capacity being established at national level to further the initiative to integrate nutrition into mainstream policies. The Right to Food framework has been very instrumental in raising the profile of nutrition concerns and ensuring that new legislation addresses these concerns in a number of countries. Elsewhere, there has been very limited engagement by FAO at the regional level in Africa or Asia and it has been very difficult to gain a measure of what this has achieved at national or sub-national level.

288. Given the strategic importance of this work, FAO's contribution to nutrition policy assistance has been very limited to a small number of countries. What has been achieved has been very relevant to context and has been inclusive of those ministries and departments in government most concerned with nutrition outcomes.

289. AGN does not have the capacity or orientation to work on policy assistance in isolation. The policy assistance that has been most effective is that which has drawn on technical collaboration across FAO departments/divisions including ESA, TCS and TCI as well as AGN.

290. Each FAO country experience has a lot to offer to other initiatives in policy advice: in Afghanistan, the community-based work on food-based approaches and collaboration with NGOs has been instrumental in informing policy at national level; in Bangladesh, establishing an inter-ministerial platform and including principal development partners in the process of developing policy, a plan of action and a country investment plan has ensured broad ownership of a comprehensive framework with requisite resources; and in Malawi the capacity to deliver on a national policy for nutrition has been assessed and is in the process of being built across sectors. These are all important lessons learned that need to be documented, shared and incorporated into other project initiatives.

291. The challenge for FAO in moving forward on its policy work is: (i) to mainstream nutrition in its agriculture and food security policy work; (ii) to improve on the quality of its technical expertise in the area of nutrition policy advice; (iii) to integrate in a more systematic manner, lessons learned, evidence and outcomes from field projects into policy assistance; (iv) to strengthen links between ISFNS and policy assistance; (v) to work more effectively across sectors outside agriculture; (vi) to collaborate more effectively across departments and divisions concerned with policy assistance within FAO; (vii) to collaborate with other organizations that can work effectively in tandem with FAO (e.g. UNICEF, WFP, WHO and IFPRI on policy research); (viii) to support the translation and implementation of policies at a decentralised level; and (ix) to assess and monitor the impact of policies on nutrition outcomes where it matters most.

G. Normative Work

1. Normative work 2004-2010

292. Several hundred examples of normative work in nutrition have been generated since 2004 (Annex 11), of which the Evaluation reviewed a cross-section sample of forty. The quantity of work is impressive, but it is not clear to the Evaluation how these products have been identified and prioritised and except where a series is produced exactly how they complement each other. The forty products reviewed have been categorised into three broad groups: (i) guidelines and manuals; (ii) knowledge sharing, best practices and lessons learned documentation; and (iii) policy guidance, strategies and legal frameworks.

293. The review does not include work on food composition and nutrient requirements, which are addressed separately in this report, as is the review of FAO's nutrition work relating to statistics, information systems and assessment.

2. Relevance to FAO and Member Countries

294. Although FAO has generated a number of normative products that are relevant to a wide range of food security and nutrition issues, there are few common central themes or messages that emerge from this normative work, reflecting a lack of clarity as to how priorities are set for developing normative products.

Guidelines and manuals

295. Most of the guidelines and manuals reviewed appear to be written primarily for government officials, including policy makers and mid-level staff who are responsible for implementing programmes based on those policies. The purpose of many of the guidelines reviewed is to provide policy makers with practical strategies ranging from responding to new challenges like the food and fuel price increases, incorporating nutrition strategies into development policies, to supporting agricultural extension services to improve the food and nutrition security of households and communities through education.

296. Some of the publications are also useful to NGOs and other development organizations, such as the manuals relating to Farmer Field Schools (FFS), the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS), the nutrition education materials and the guide to developing community nutrition programmes. The Evaluation particularly noted at the field level that FAO had a niche on producing more practical, normative guidance when compared to other UN agencies. There are also a number of academic papers, presented at various conferences that would be of interest to university researchers in Member Countries who may also play a role in advising government on policy.

297. Whilst FAO is best placed to promote food-based approaches to nutrition, much the investment in this area appears to be related to utilisation, such as the extensive work done on nutrition education. This work is important to consumer knowledge, as demonstrated by the *Family Nutrition Guide for Nepal* for community mobilisers and for households. Other nutrition education outputs reviewed were technically up to date and well produced. However, they tend to be produced in isolation without including staff of similar projects in other countries and not including project partners (although this collaboration was clearly achieved in Afghanistan and Mozambique).

298. Guidelines on nutrition education provide in general clear messages and objectives, and respond to the needs of practitioners in countries requiring practical guides that are designed for particular cultures and diets that may be suitable for adaptation to other countries.

A good example of a normative product in nutrition education is the document the *Zambia Basic Education Course, Nutrition Education, Teacher's Book Grade 2 Supplementary Material.* This document is relevant as malnutrition among school-aged children in Zambia is high, and this group is often not directly targeted by food security interventions. In addition, many nutrition problems in Zambia are related to dietary habits as well as access, and the methodologies used are aimed at strengthening the link between school and the home.

299. One of the best normative products reviewed for demonstrating how the process of integrating a food and nutritional security focus into national policies can be carried out is *Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition Policy Assistance: Lessons from Experience*. It is a highly useful document that responds to demands from countries to establish coherence between global and national level frameworks in order to better integrate food security and nutrition policy and mechanisms of food security governance. The paper shows how effective policies must be linked to social investment, poverty reduction, development policies and good data. It illustrates common steps in successful policy assistance while showing how each country situation is different. Its main lessons and case studies are well laid out and linked to key themes throughout.

One of the few documents reviewed that demonstrates how FAO can use agriculture and food policies to promote home-based food production with the explicit goal of increasing household consumption of micronutrient-rich food is *Food-Based Nutrition Strategies in Bangladesh.* This is in line with FAO's comparative advantage in promoting nutrition through agriculture, and it fills a need from the viewpoint of other global actors in nutrition for more evidence-based understanding of what works in food-based nutrition approaches. The document provides practical guidance along with policy implications, and a very useful and detailed presentation of approach, methods and results. The study found some positive outcomes to diet in protein and micronutrient intake especially for women and girls. However, the report itself notes some methodological shortcomings, including the absence of any baseline data, the short duration of the intervention, and a small number of control samples, which raises questions about whether the effectiveness of the approach has been thoroughly tested. This is a drawback to an otherwise useful publication, and reflects an area of weakness in that FAO has not gathered a substantial body of evidence that food-based approaches work to reduce malnutrition.

300. Other normative products are similar to the one cited above in Bangladesh, such as *Home Gardens Key to Improved Nutritional Well-Being* (2006) which provides practical guidance on home gardening from experience in Lao PDR, along with policy recommendations, and shares two of the authors.

301. By contrast, *Incorporating Nutrition Considerations into Development Policies and Programmes: Brief for Policy-makers and Programme Planners in Developing Countries*, while an earlier publication (2004) has some useful points but many are too general to provide real guidance, or have been stated many times previously in other publications. As a guideline, it does not present much evidence of what works and where the challenges lie.

302. *Educating Consumers to Cope with High Food Prices* is a 2008 publication that would seem to be very timely and useful to government officials seeking to reduce the impact of food prices on the food security and nutrition of vulnerable populations. However, it provides little content that is new or specific to high food prices and it would benefit from better organization, such as breaking out suggestions by location (e.g. urban, peri-urban, rural) and according to the different needs of nutritionally at-risk groups.

303. Otherwise, there are few guidelines that demonstrate food-based approaches, which work in support of improved nutrition or that focus on preventing malnutrition by, for example, promoting improved food and nutrition security as an integral part of improved agricultural productivity. Guidelines of this nature could really help agricultural extension workers support households and communities to achieve better nutrition outcomes through crop selection, improved production techniques, better crop storage, and food processing that help conserve nutritional value. Documents present well-tested approaches like kitchen gardens and keyhole gardens for the HIV-affected, but do not link these practices with improved nutrition as it relates to livestock production, or post-harvest management.

304. Another type of guideline written for the staff of government ministries, NGOs, and local community organizations is the comprehensive, step-by-step guide to *Getting Started Running a Junior Farmer Field and Life School*. This is a good example of a document, though long, that provides a detailed explanation of how to implement a programme that is relevant to FAO mandate; many other documents repeatedly mention important steps but few provide such detailed guidance. Developed through a partnership between FAO and WFP, the guidelines are in response to the growing numbers of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) affected by HIV.

A good example of a normative product that demonstrates how a short, glossy document can deliver relatively sophisticated messages in a brief, clear format accessible to policy-makers is the document entitled *Bridging the Gap: FAO's Programme for Gender Equality in Agriculture and Rural Development*. The discussion recognises the role of power relationships in gender dynamics and how they are being affected by modern market forces, often to women's detriment. It provides some credible examples of how FAO is supporting gender equity in its work, though most examples involve men and women, and do not necessarily address women's specific needs and constraints.

305. FAO has undertaken some good quality work on nutrition and HIV. However, this is an area that many agencies and NGOs are deeply involved in, and thus it is questionable whether this is an area of comparative advantage for FAO. For example, the article on keyhole gardens is well done, but was published in 2008, while NGOs and other organisations had already published similar work by the mid-2000s.

Knowledge sharing, best practices and lessons learned

306. The *Nutrition Country Profiles* produced by FAO in particular target Member Countries. At the time of production, they were considered a useful, comprehensive document for governments that includes statistical information and interpretation of a country's basic indicators on demography, economic status, infrastructure and services, and the food and nutrition situation. They were considered particularly useful in countries such as Uruguay, Paraguay and Guyana amongst others, which lacked statistical information. However, many are now very out-dated, of little relevance to the situation and staff are generally unaware of their existence. FAO should review its role in such work and establish if such profiles are still needed and whether this be undertaken in collaboration with others. The Evaluation learned for example that the World Bank is now producing shorter, summary versions in the absence of FAO updates.

307. Some of the best normative outputs produced by FAO are the *State of Food Insecurity (SOFI) Reports.* These publications are meant to highlight and explain key issues and trends for a global audience of government policy-makers, UN and bilateral agencies, academics. They are comprehensive and timely, and hence highly relevant to Member Countries. The 2008 SOFI acknowledges the difficult choices and limited options facing governments of poor countries in trying to mitigate the effects of food and fuel price increases. The SOFI Report also demonstrates its relevance by offering constructive responses to the food price crisis that can assist smallholder farmers while promoting food security.

308. However, the 2009 SOFI Report on Economic Crises - Impacts and Lessons Learned - does not emphasise supporting nutrition-based agriculture. It does discuss food and nutritional security responses in the context of the Right to Food (e.g. Brazil). The 2010 SOFI Report on Food Insecurity in Protracted Crises identified the nutrition dimension, but given the significance of this aspect, it should have been accorded a chapter in the report.

Policies, strategies and legal frameworks

309. For the most part, the length and format of most normative documents do not meet the needs of policy makers for concise documents that summarise key issues and present solutions and recommendations. In those areas where FAO aims to persuade government officials of the merits of a particular approach, or is advocating for a change in outlook, more concise documents that are attractively designed have a greater likelihood of reaching the target audience.

310. FAO has made progress in its publications since the 2004 *Incorporating Nutrition Considerations into Development Policies and Programmes Brief for Policy-makers and Programme Planners in Developing Countries.* The Objective of this paper was to: (i) provide policy-makers with practical strategies for incorporating nutrition considerations into relevant development policies; and (ii) provide health and nutrition workers with a tool to advocate for nutrition at the policy level. The report emphasises that agriculture is the most opportune sector for enhancing nutritional status and makes some useful points; many are too general or have been stated many times before. Its examples were not supported by evidence of what works and where the challenges lie.

311. The realm of policies, strategies and legal frameworks is one where FAO is perhaps uniquely positioned to undertake innovative thinking and encourage forward-thinking policies and programmes among Member Countries. FAO's work on the Right to Food is an example of this. The *Right-to-Food Guidelines* series attempts to fill a knowledge gap by addressing

the needs of Member Countries interested in legislative protection of the Right to Food. It provides comprehensive guidance on how to interpret and fulfil the concepts underlying the Right to Food, encompassing economic, social and cultural rights. The series provides detailed guidance and examples of how to undertake assess vulnerable groups and the reasons for their vulnerability; how to craft national legislative action, how to conduct training and advocacy with stakeholders, and how to monitor right-to-food activities.

An example of a very informative brief is *Promises and Challenges of the informal food sector in developing countries.* This is a good summary on how informal food markets operate, the niche they fill for people, why they are important. It presents statistics on the economic contribution of the informal food sector in various cities. The format is short (30 pages), comprehensive and well designed, and points out the economic and livelihood value of this sector, which is useful to inform and persuade government officials who may consider informal food markets more of a nuisance to be regulated than an asset that merits official support.

312. A good example of where FAO has taken a lead in thinking about nutrition and food security challenges in new areas which require better attention by policy-makers is the challenge of growing urbanisation in the developing world. FAO helped to highlight this subject in 2004 in an FAO paper on *Emerging Challenges for Food and Nutrition Policy in Developing Countries*, in an edition of the electronic Journal of Agricultural and Development Economics Special Issue on "Globalization of Food Systems: Impact on Food Security and Nutrition." The edition discusses the effect of shift in dietary patterns on food production, retailing, and distribution systems, and describes how this will affect rural poverty and food security, food safety and quality, and diet-related non-communicable diseases. Work in this sector contributes to global knowledge about the impact of changing urban diets, its implications for both urban and rural diets, and how to respond to it. The present review of normative product shows that this message continues to be promoted in some publications, but since the 2004 publication this does not appear to be a focus of FAO.

313. Another example is the *Impact of Climate Change and Bioenergy on Nutrition*, a joint paper by IFPRI and FAO. Meant for audience of high level multilateral, bilateral and government policy makers, researchers and academics, it presents comprehensive summary of the potential impacts of climate change on food security. The paper examines the consequences of climate change and rising bioenergy demand for sustainable development, food security and nutrition. It provides information that can help governments and multilateral agencies strategize on how to address the newest threats to achieving global food and nutrition security. This paper is indicative of the type of work that FAO can expand upon to provide greater value-added to the global debate on nutrition while helping frame the discussion about issues and solutions. The policy recommendations can help FAO craft an organizational focus in this area.

3. Design and quality of products

314. Obviously, visibility is linked to many factors, including among others, the relevance, the quality and the user-friendly design of the product.

Guidelines and manuals

315. The basic guideline for validation of a household Dietary Diversity Score (DDS) is a widely used guideline that has proven to be much valued in the field. The DDS tool is highly relevant as it meets the demand for simple, low-tech solutions that are easily understood by the majority of stakeholders. One of the tool’s major strengths is that it predicts change in

food security status of households and individuals early on. There has been considerable effort in getting these tools incorporated into national food security information systems (e.g. West Bank/Gaza, Malawi and Somalia), project baseline assessments (in Malawi) and monitoring frameworks of policy documents (in Mozambique). In addition, a strong global-local partnership has formed between FAO and local service providers around piloting and promoting of the tools among the FSIS community members and training in the tools aimed at local stakeholders.

Knowledge sharing, best practices and lessons learned

316. The *Progress in Nutrition 6th Report on the world nutrition situation* (SCN 2010) to which FAO staff made a contribution is a very comprehensive discussion of issues and options in nutrition on a global scale, with a large audience interested in global food and nutritional security. The report points out the need for an explicit focus on "nutrition security" in promoting food security and reducing malnutrition, as increases in food intake and/or income do not guarantee improved nutrition. This is a point that FAO should emphasise more in its publications, while providing policy and programme guidance to address it.

317. Flagship documents such as the SOFI Reports are well produced, with good design, and clearly presented graphics, they have a wide distribution and good visibility. Other important contributions such as the *Right to Food* series are well designed, presenting comprehensive material in a format that is easy to follow. Conversely, the official reports of SCN meetings are so densely written and closely formatted that they are difficult to read, and key points do not stand out.

318. Many of the documents reviewed were of good technical quality and well written. However, their length often runs from 70 to over 200 pages. The time required to read and consider the ideas presented in even a single key document makes it unlikely that many will be read by FAO's prime audience, who are busy government officials at various levels. Hence, while the visibility and use of these documents is likely to be high in other food security agencies and in academia, readership among policy-makers is likely to be low. Many of the glossy briefs designed for an informed audience of decision-makers, such as *Bridging the Gap: FAO's Programme for Gender Equality in Agriculture and Rural Development* are good examples of well presented briefs, with graphics that enhance the message and writing that is concise yet does justice to the multifaceted nature of the subject.

319. Evidence from the country visits of the Evaluation are that a number of documents on lessons learned are generated by the field and adopted as regional publications (e.g., the *Pilot Project for the Promotion of Home Gardens for Improved Nutritional Well-being* 2002-2004 in Lao PDR, based on similar work in Vietnam; the *Integrated Horticulture & Nutrition Project* 2000-2006 in Bangladesh; and *Trials for Improved Practices* in Afghanistan, Cambodia and Lao PDR), have the potential to be extremely useful, but simply do not have visibility within the Organization and remain little known and consequently little used. Other projects that offer important lessons learned (such as FAO's work in Afghanistan which links community-based nutrition programming to policy assistance) have never been produced for important information sharing across the Organization.

Policies, strategies and legal frameworks

320. The *Impact of Climate Change and Bioenergy on Nutrition* is a paper produced by IFPRI and FAO for the 2008 FAO special event on Climate Change and Bioenergy held during the High Level Conference on World Food Security. Although a highly relevant and

useful document, it is presented like an academic paper, at 86 pages it is unlikely to be read by many government policy-makers in its present form.

4. Visibility, dissemination and utilisation

321. The Evaluation has not seen any communications or dissemination strategy for the different categories of documents. The evidence from the country level missions is that dissemination of normative products depends entirely on the interest and commitment of different FAO offices or individuals how they distribute the documentation. Consistently, stakeholders at country level were unaware of the breadth of FAO normative products even where the FAO platform and presence was strong. They reported thinking that FAO produces only agriculture related nutrition products rather than the full range available and they found the webpage very difficult to navigate in order to find products. Individuals met were surprised by the breadth of the materials produced and especially did not know of FAO's more technical work, such as establishing dietary requirements with WHO.

322. Many stakeholders, including government offices and academic institutions expressed interest in receiving relevant normative products which they had often heard of, but did not know how to access. Downloading electronic versions of documents in developing countries can be a challenge, so the provision of normative products, especially to universities where they can influence the studies of students and future professionals, is really important.

323. Many documents that appear to target government policy-makers and government staff responsible for programme implementation carry no indication of how the document was disseminated and to whom. The Evaluation Team visiting at country level also witnessed occasions where government offices had received packages of publications without any introduction or orientation as to their content or application.

324. The FAO website and corporate document library is a comprehensive passive repository that contains a wealth of documents for those who are seeking information on specific subjects. Major FAO publications, such as the State of Food Insecurity reports, are disseminated in hard copy and are available from the internet. These are well known annual or periodic reports that have a ready audience. Furthermore, many key documents are not available in a single file in PDF format but are listed as a series of links or parts of documents, and thus are not easy to download or otherwise access.

325. The nutrition website is no longer on FAO's homepage which reduces its visibility and accessibility. Also many of the nutrition-related documents provided for this review could not be located either on the website or in the corporate document library through either a title search or a search by author. Some documents could be accessed only as links that were not readily identifiable, whilst others were represented by a much more easily recognised representation of the report's cover. Papers prepared for conferences were presumably made available at those conferences and in any subsequent reports. People other than conference participants are not likely to be aware of these documents or necessarily have access to them.

326. Furthermore, there is not an active, centralised web-based repository for useful materials developed by projects that can be shared with other projects being planned or designed which would be invaluable to many field practitioners. It also appears that there is demand and potentially wider dissemination for the nutrition education materials (such as the complementary feeding guidelines developed in conjunction with UNICEF in Afghanistan and Zambia) and the IYCF and capacity building materials developed in Afghanistan and Lao PDR, which are being reproduced and utilised by the World Bank, UNICEF, USAID and NGOs.

5. Principal findings

327. FAO's nutrition-related normative products are wide-ranging and reflective of the many facets of the Organization and its mandate. They include a very broad range of areas, encompassing agriculture, horticulture, gender, nutrition, consumer education, trade, and urban food security topics. There is little normative work linking nutrition with livestock production or fisheries, which appears to be a gap in FAO's normative work. Generally, the products are about nutrition concerns within the realm of food security and appropriately, very little look at nutrition in isolation.

328. Certain themes are evident in FAO's normative work capturing lessons learned and aimed at knowledge sharing. However, only few common central themes or messages emerge strongly from the review, reflecting a lack of strategic emphasis in corporate products on nutrition.

329. Most of the normative products are geared towards the needs of the governments of Member Countries, yet some practical manuals are very applicable to NGOs. Most do not appear to be demand-driven by Member Countries, but instead generated in response to current priorities among global food security agencies or key themes in FAO.

330. Many relevant normative documents that could be used by policy-makers are too lengthy (70-300 pages) and presented in an academic type format. Others such as the Nutrition Country Profiles proved very useful in their day, but are now out-dated and no longer of such relevance. These do not meet the needs of policy makers for concise and current documents that summarise key issues and present solutions and actionable recommendations.

331. There are, however, some FAO products such as the household DDS tool, which meet a need for simple, low-tech solutions that are easily understood by the majority of stakeholders. Other types of products, such as the SOFI reports, showcase FAO's technical expertise in a comprehensive, highly readable and attractive format that receives wide distribution. FAO's contribution to the *Progress in Nutrition* report also highlights important concepts promoted by FAO in a highly visible publication.

332. Other than the flagship publications and some other key products, the wide array of normative work produced is not widely known. In addition, it is difficult to find documents on the FAO website and the presentation of certain documents are not user-friendly. There is no clear communications or dissemination strategy evident for the different categories of nutrition-related normative products.

333. In its normative products, FAO discusses the importance of linking nutrition and agriculture, but does not provide enough clear, evidence-based normative work on how higher-level agricultural investments can contribute to improved nutrition, which essentially occurs at a household and individual level. The importance of such linkages are emphasised, but evidence-based normative work on how these linkages can be made, what works and what does not work, is scarce. On the basis of the inventory of normative products, and the specific review of a cross-sample, it appears that FAO has not captured a substantial body of evidence that food-based approaches work to reduce malnutrition. This sort of normative work and research is what donors and other international agencies working to combat hunger look to FAO to provide. Examining at a significant scale the outcomes of efforts to integrate nutrition into agricultural policies and programmes, even at the early stages, would allow FAO to make an important contribution to global processes in an area that others are not addressing.

334. There is a need for FAO to develop a more explicit focus on "nutrition security" as part of its work to reduce malnutrition, as increases in food intake and/or income do not guarantee improved nutrition. This is a point that FAO should emphasise more in its informative briefs targeted to government decision-makers, as well as provide policy and program guidance to address nutrition security.

335. Other than the flagship publications and some key products, the wide array of normative work produced is not widely known. In addition, it is difficult to find documents on the FAO website and its presentation of some key documents is not user-friendly. There is no clear communications or dissemination strategy evident for the different categories of nutrition-related normative products.

H. Gender and Social Inclusion

1. Mainstreaming gender into nutrition work

336. The degree to which FAO achieves gender mainstreaming in its nutrition-related work varies significantly. On a positive note, the work in Afghanistan during this period included a strong gender focus and produced numerous results. Most notably the projects supported the development of a gender strategy for the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) that has been well supported and adopted by the government, including establishing and staffing a gender unit. A training package on gender was developed and used to train partners. The evolution of FAO's work in gender can be seen through more tentative initial activities to a broader mainstreaming focus that has spread to involving men and providing leadership to the agricultural ministry and FAO's other projects. From the outset, activities were structured and special accommodation made so that women could participate and more recently men and men's institutions have been targeted.

337. In Bangladesh, an innovative pilot, integrating skill-based nutrition education into a farm management curriculum represents an attempt to overcome gender bias in Bangladesh, by targeting men as well as women from the same households for nutrition education in their respective groups; an approach that has been shown to be more effective in facilitating behaviour change. In Cambodia, the TIPs IYCF intervention community leaders identify the community nutrition educators, and in many cases, men in leadership have been selected and have turned out to be effective educators and promoters of improved child nutrition practices.

338. However, a common feature of FAO's nutrition-related work is that it is not based upon any gender analysis and so issues of gender are not sufficiently factored into the project design and therefore project implementation. The Evaluation found that the gender concept was commonly misunderstood or misconceived by project staff and many nutrition training activities (for example) were actually reinforcing the reproductive roles of women and failing to pay sufficient attention to the gender distribution of tasks/time at the household level. The absence of a gender specialist in the FAO country team was identified as one factor hindering the integration of the gender dimension into nutrition programming and policy advice. Moreover the gender approach of some projects was not even harmonised with the government strategies on gender (Honduras was such an example).

339. It has been mentioned earlier in the report that a lot of FAO's nutrition-related work is channelled through ministries of agriculture and their extension services which are long-standing, traditional partners of FAO. Furthermore, FAO project staff often consists of personnel who previously worked in the Ministry of Agriculture or have been seconded to the project. These staff are predominantly male and generally have little if any training in

nutrition. Consequently, whilst the projects may be effective in targeting women (who have most influence in determining the household diet), the projects are in large delivered and managed by men, and in most cultures this is neither relevant nor effective. It was also found to be much more effective using volunteer community nutrition promoters (men and women) in nutrition-related activities than government staff because they are integrated and respected within the communities where they work and have a higher commitment to change the situation for children in their communities.

2. Taking account of social inclusion

340. Generally, the design of FAO projects does not take into account the most vulnerable groups whose livelihoods are still directly dependent upon the local agricultural economy but do not have access to sufficient land or are socially marginalised. For example, the Evaluation found that where nutrition concerns were integrated into the Special Food Security Projects (PESA) in Latin America, it was not necessarily appropriate to the most vulnerable households (for example women headed households and families with very small areas of productive land) who often lack access to enough productive assets such as land, water and labour. In such situations, FAO really needs to look at other enabling environments needed for food and nutrition security through production, livelihoods, income-generating, caring capacities and promotion of healthy food habits through the life cycle. To effectively apply this approach, FAO needs to pro-actively pursue other strategic alliances such as working in collaboration with NGOs and local governments.

341. Also, channelling nutrition-related project activities through ministries of agriculture excludes these groups because government services are notoriously weak at targeting the more vulnerable sectors of the community. This was very evident to the Evaluation in Bangladesh where agricultural extension services which are not well integrated at community level depend very much on focal persons who are "influential" within the community and probably in least need of support.

342. On a positive note, in Latin America, FAO was credited for working closely and effectively with indigenous populations in remote and isolated rural areas. There was for example, clear evidence of the intentional inclusion of indigenous and afro-descendant communities both in the design and the implementation of the MDG-funded Chocó intervention in Colombia (in collaboration with other UN agencies) and FAO was also pro-active in promoting the revaluation of indigenous foods. Other nutrition-related projects in East and Southern Africa have specifically included people living with HIV/AIDS, the elderly and other marginalised groups.

I. Collaboration and Partnerships

1. International partnerships

343. FAO's role in nutrition and its contribution to elements of the international nutrition architecture including the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN) and the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) movement has earlier been discussed in section 5 of this report. This section relates more to the collaboration and partnership related to FAO's work in nutrition at different levels.

344. There are a number of strategic partnerships relating to human nutrition with which FAO is engaged at the international level. Most relate to FAO's work in assessments,

information and statistics and are very much driven by the ESA division of the Economic and Social Development (ES) Department of FAO. FAO has long and extensive experience working with WFP on Crop and Food Security Assessment Missions (CFSAM) intended for responding to early warnings of impending food crises. This effective and strategic partnership has resulted in a number of other food and nutrition security collaborative assessments, including Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment Missions (CFSVAM), the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and market profile assessments. Additional interagency assessments include Joint Assessment Missions (JAM), assessments by the Needs Assessment Task Force (NATF), Post Disaster Needs Assessments, Post Conflict Needs Assessments, and Emergency Management Applications (EMMAs).

345. More recently, FAO and WFP have agreed a joint five-year strategy on Information Systems for Food and Nutrition Security (ISFNS). This commits both partners to draw upon their comparative strengths to increase the synthesis of food and nutrition security data collection and analyses and create a 'seamless data stream' over time.[59] The strategy calls for harmonising global public goods allowing for more effective analysis of food security trends, cross-country and cross-regional analyses, and meta-analysis, and ensuring greater consistency, coherence and integration while simultaneously reducing duplication. FAO will continue acting as a repository of macro-level statistics and provide meta-analyses of food and nutrition security trends across regions or over time.

346. For many years FAO failed to recognise the limitations that other organisations raised in the methods for calculating the measure of under-nourishment. FAO was not receptive to alternative suggestions and was reluctant to collaborate on hunger statistics with other external organizations. Currently, FAO is beginning to collaborate with the World Bank, WFP, and IFPRI in strengthening the under-nourishment measure using household expenditure surveys.

347. However, FAO has had a successful collaboration with AED (FANTA) focusing on developing tools to measure dietary diversity and food access. The funding was provided through the Food Security for Action Programme financed through the EC. FAO spent time field-testing and evaluating the tools. The technical collaboration between FAO and AED has been very effective in building the capacities of government authorities to apply the tool and to ground-truth the tool at field level. However, there still remains the issue that DDS applies a different recall period and scoring system to WFP's Household Food Consumption Score, which is also a measure of dietary diversity and food frequency and the two approaches need to be harmonised.

348. The Evaluation noted that where FAO had collaborated with other organisations in the development of normative products (e.g. IFPRI, WFP and UNICEF) the relevance and quality of the products was generally enhanced through the complementary strengths of the different organisations, thus presenting a range of perspectives, rather than repeating one point of view.

349. FAO's partnerships with WHO in leading and guiding the Expert Consultations at the global level on nutrient requirements has been on-going since it was established in 1949. This partnership is of considerable importance in view of the mutual need to understand the nutrient requirements of individuals of different age and health status as well as the food source that provides those nutrients, which FAO generates through its work on food

[59] FAO-WFP Joint Strategy on Information Systems for Food and Nutrition Security, March 11, 2011 (draft).

composition. However, the respective roles and responsibilities of each organization need clarifying in view of their mandates and comparative advantage so that FAO can better focus its limited resources and capacity.

2. Regional level partnerships

350. The degree of collaboration and partnership on nutrition by FAO at regional level is very limited because of low prioritisation and capacity constraints. There used to be, for example, an Asian Food and Nutrition Network, a group of MoH and MoA representatives from Asian countries, initiated by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) to foster knowledge sharing and cross-learning, but this has not met for a number of years. In Latin America, regional programmes such as ALCSH used to provide ad-hoc support to country projects in Bolivia and Colombia. FAO's involvement in other initiatives supported by other agencies and donors in Latin America and the Caribbean (like the UNDP-led *Compromiso Caribe Contra el Hambre,* PRESANCA, NUTRINET) in general was found not to be visible.

351. FAO's role in ISFNS work at sub-regional and regional levels is evidenced in initiatives such as development of the Regional Vulnerability Assessment Committee (RVAC) in Southern Africa, the 2006 assessment of sub-Saharan early warning systems for the African Union (AU), coordinating the regional Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG) in Eastern and Central Africa, and the regional Food Nutrition Surveillance System Network (SISVAN) in Central and South America. FAO's regional ISFNS support in Asia has operated as much through FIVIMS as with the regional Food Security Information System (AFSIS).

352. Since the inception of the International Network of Food Data Systems (INFOODS) in 1984 as a United Nations University (UNU) project, FAO has actively supported its promotion and acts as the Secretariat. It is now an effective network of 18 Regional Data Centres, of which the most active and productive are LATINFOODS, ASEANFOODS and the West African and Southern African Sub-regional Data Centres of AFROFOODS.

353. Otherwise, the extent to which FAO's work partnered with relevant regional initiatives in nutrition has been and remains very limited; it has been more opportunistic than strategic.

3. National level partnerships

Government

354. FAO has a long and traditional partnership with governments of Member Countries normally through the Ministries of Agriculture. Many respondents cite this relationship as a strong comparative advantage of FAO because it provides a very effective channel through which to convey key messages to government's institutional framework. The focus of Ministries of Agriculture is inevitably on agriculture and livestock production. Taking into account the four dimensions of food security and a greater emphasis on addressing nutrition concerns, there is increasingly an expectation that FAO will adopt a more multi-sectoral approach to food and nutrition security. Other line ministries of increasing relevance to this work include health, education, gender and social welfare.

355. All FAO nutrition-related project activities in country require good collaboration across government departments at national, provincial and/or district level. A good example of inter-departmental collaboration at project level has been through the German Government funded *Support to Household Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods Project* in Afghanistan where the project built partnerships across the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Culture and Youth with the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (including the home economics and extension departments); this collaboration (which included other development partners) was reflected from the local through to national level.

356. Another significant nutrition-related project is the FICA funded *Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach Project* in Malawi, which technically sits within the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS (reporting to the Office of the President and Cabinet) at national level, but has very limited capacity at a decentralised level and no other line ministry or department has nutritionists working at this level[60]. Here, like in many countries where FAO supports nutrition-related project interventions, there is considerable reliance upon agricultural extension staff who have virtually no training on the links between agriculture and nutrition.

357. In many countries like Bangladesh, the agriculture extension staff are predominantly male and the Evaluation would question the appropriateness of relying exclusively on such services to determine and target beneficiary households and to provide nutrition training to women as has been done in the Integrated Farm Management component of the Emergency Cyclone Response and Recovery Project (ECRRP). Furthermore, in the case of Bangladesh, the Department of Agriculture at this level is not well engaged with District Development Committees, nor other mechanisms which encourage an inter-sectoral approach inclusive of both government and non-governmental actors.

United Nations

358. There remains a distinct competitiveness between UN organizations at the national level in the area of nutrition reflecting the rivalry and to some degree the dysfunctionality that have characterised the international architecture in nutrition over recent years. FAO is as much responsible for protecting its "turf" as others. Respondents to the Evaluation's survey of Member Countries indicated that FAO is making insufficient effort to collaborate with other UN agencies. The Evaluation was frequently made aware of instances where one UN organization had failed to credit others of their contribution to a policy, plan of action, assessment or research, and in one instance FAO was encouraged by the UN Resident Coordinator to reprint a national publication on a food and nutrition strategy reflecting the contribution of other agencies.

359. The consequence of this is that there are areas where there should be much more collaboration than exists at the moment. Despite this, there are examples of sound collaboration with useful normative outcomes which include, through collaboration with UNICEF, the complementary feeding guidelines for Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) from Afghanistan and Zambia and the *Healthy Harvest: A Training manual for community workers in good nutrition and the growing, preparing and processing of healthy food* developed in Zimbabwe.

[60] The Evaluation understands that all nutritionist posts across different technical departments were phased out at the time of Structural Adjustment.

360. A key element of the UN reform programme is to have the UN organisations and agencies engaged more effectively in joint programming. The UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) has been the principal planning mechanism to achieve this. The UN System in Lao PDR has gone one step further to develop joint action planning. Other initiatives such as REACH (only just starting to take effect in a small number of countries including the pilot countries of Lao PDR and Mauritania) and the MDG funding facility (now operational in 24 countries) have built on this development focusing in particular on the four principal UN actors addressing nutrition concerns: FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO.

361. For now, there is a strong feeling that joint programming is principally a budget-sharing exercise rather than deriving value added from the complementary expertise of the four UN organisations. This appeared to be the case in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Mozambique. In both Bangladesh and Cambodia, delays in implementing the MDG project meant that screening of beneficiaries was undertaken separately for different elements of the project by different agencies and hence the food security and public health dimensions of the project took effect at different times and likely be disconnected. In Mozambique, there is some degree of coherence as the four agencies are jointly responding to the effects of soaring food prices. The agencies worked closely together in identifying the urban poor and malnourished families who subsequently received support in supplementary feeding on the one side and complementary support from FAO for horticultural production on the other.

362. Similarly in the case of Colombia Chocó Project, agencies established an integrated action plan to reach isolated indigenous populations in a coordinate manner. The action plan was also based on the main comparative advantages and expertise of each agency. FAO's added value was visible in: (i) strengthening local/community organisations and capacities for FNS; (ii) designing and implementation of home vegetable gardens and activities to diversify and increase household food production; and (iii) capacity development for the implementation of centres for the rehabilitation of children with moderate and severe acute malnutrition and piloting a community based model.

363. Rarely at the operational level is the nature of collaboration between FAO and other UN partners that strategic in relation to nutrition work. One would expect for example the work on nutrition education, the Right to Food and nutrition policy to be developed through strategic collaboration with WHO and UNICEF, who also focus on these fields more from a maternal and child health perspective. There are however some exceptions. These would certainly include the National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme (NFPCSP) in Bangladesh, where FAO has played a strong stewardship role within the UN system to ensure all agencies are "on the same page" with respect to Bangladesh's policy framework and investment plan for food and nutrition security (a role now supplemented to some degree by REACH since a National Coordinator has been appointed); and the *Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit* (FSNAU) in Somalia which enjoys broad collaboration with UNICEF, UNOCHA and WFP/VAM in particular.

Non-governmental organisations

364. FAO has traditionally worked in close partnership with Member States which places it in a strong and influential position with governments of those countries. This represents a significant comparative advantage, but at the same time this has been to the detriment of a working relationship with other relevant actors outside the government system. FAO has not always found it easy to relate or work in collaboration with NGOs. Even the instruments for

defining this collaboration through projects (Letters of Agreement) convey more a sub-contractual relationship rather than a partnership agreement. For many NGOs, the relationship is simply not conducive, nor does it reflect a meaningful and compatible partnership. Consequently, much depends on the FAO Representative and the country team to encourage and nurture such partnerships.

365. In some countries, a good working relationship has developed. FAO in Afghanistan has demonstrated the value of working with NGOs and civil society organisations (CSOs) at the community level. In Lao PDR, FAO is now working with local NGOs in a country which previously has not encouraged the activities of civil society organizations. In Honduras, the PESA project was a very good example of scaling-up NGO best practices. Through the MDG-funded projects in Bangladesh and Cambodia, NGOs are assisting the UN partners complete essential baseline work. In Mozambique, FAO is working through nine local NGOs to deliver urban interventions through the UN Joint Programme.

366. However, there are many situations where FAO is quite simply not engaged with non-governmental "bodies" that are generating evidence of agriculture and food-based approaches to nutrition in country, which could contribute significantly to normative work including policy assistance. Some respondents to the Evaluation's survey of Member Countries go as far as to say that the implementation of nutrition activities should be left to "other actors" whilst FAO concentrates at a more strategic level. In many of the countries the Evaluation team visited, there were consortia of NGOs working on better understanding the links between agriculture and nutrition through impact assessments of their interventions which FAO was not taking account of. This was certainly the case in Malawi and in Bangladesh. One prominent actor is Helen Keller International with whom FAO has collaborated in the past and still does on an ad hoc basis (Bangladesh and Mozambique) but with whom one would expect a much more strategic partnership in view of the evidence they have generated over many years on the impact of homestead gardening on nutrition. Instead FAO seem more inclined to hire HKI staff (Cambodia) than work in collaboration.

Academic and research institutions

367. There are a number of examples where FAO collaborates with universities and training institutions. In Bangladesh, the Institute of Food Science at Dhaka University is compiling an updated version of Bangladesh's food composition tables. In Lao PDR, FAO has engaged both Mahidol University and the Institute of Nutrition at the University of the Philippines to support capacity-building activities in the area of nutrition policy and strategic planning. In Honduras, FAO has collaborated with the national university to support the creation of a nutrition faculty. The FSNAU Somalia works closely with universities in Kenya and Somaliland through internships and the incorporation of food and nutrition security into appropriate teaching curricula with a focus on generating a stronger nutrition capacity in the region.

368. In Malawi, FAO has a long-standing collaboration with Bunda College of the University of Malawi. FAO has worked with the Natural Resources College on incorporating the Dietary Diversity Score (DDS) and the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) into their assessment tools. In turn Bunda College have undertaken project baselines and reviews as well as providing capacity training for frontline staff (Natural Resources College). Currently under the FICA funded *Improving Food Security and Nutrition Policies and Programme Outreach Project*, research on TIPs is being conducted by Liebig University in Germany in collaboration with Bunda College.

369. In general, there is scope for much more collaboration in the area of nutrition. FAO normative products are very little known at the University level, yet academic institutions provide a significant opportunity for such publications to be used in teaching and capacity building. One component of the *Capacity Building for Improved Food and Nutrition Security* project in Lao PDR is to strengthen capacity at universities and research extension so that nutritionists can earn bachelor's, master's and PhD degrees in country and that nutrition and food security research can be conducted locally.

370. Links with research organisations have been relatively limited and the lack of collaboration between FAO and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) at country level is stark. Combined efforts in generating further evidence of agriculture and food-based interventions on nutrition seems an obvious area for collaboration and an important contribution to set standards and policy. Instead there seems to be a degree of unprofessional suspicion between both organizations and little has been achieved jointly at country level with respect to nutrition-related programming. The Evaluation was made aware for example, of an initiative in Mozambique undertaken by IFPRI in collaboration with HKI and World Vision International (WVI) to assess the impact of the introduction of orange-fleshed sweet potatoes on food consumption and nutrition. This is an excellent example of how organizations can provide evidence for scaling up, but unfortunately, FAO was not part of this initiative.

371. It is more likely that FAO and IFPRI's work converge through government's own planning mechanisms such as the thematic papers which were prepared as background papers to the Bangladesh Country Investment Plan (CIP) on agriculture and food security with the technical assistance of IFPRI and the Bangladesh Institute for Development Studies (BIDS); or the work on the CAADP Compact in Mozambique.

372. There has, however, been good, but limited, collaboration with another CGIAR organization, Bioversity International (formerly IPGRI), in support of training and projects in Benin, Kenya and Uganda and most notably, the joint FAO-Bioversity Scientific Symposium on Biodiversity and Sustainable Diets held in Rome in November 2010. Both organisations are pursuing food-based agendas to tackle malnutrition and if more scientific data could be generated on local foods, the research undertaken by Bioversity International could lead to improved dietary choices and positive health impacts in many developing countries.

Private sector

373. Increasingly the private sector is becoming a key player in the fight against poverty and food insecurity. Interesting and promising partnerships and alliances between FAO and private sector foundations were found in Colombia to fund and facilitate the extension of the project coverage. Another interesting aspect of similar partnerships with private sector foundations was their interest and role in funding research in food, nutrition and agriculture.

374. Otherwise, FAO has had very limited engagement with the private sector indeed with respect to nutrition-related projects. Yet it is more and more recognised that food and nutrition solutions (and in some cases, threats) require engagement with the private sector especially local food manufacturers, farmer associations, agricultural and food industries, multinational companies, as well as mobile technologies and social networks to provide access to information.

4. Principal findings

375. At the international level, FAO has developed some strategic partnerships relating to nutrition including with AED/FANTA on tools to measure dietary diversity and food access, with WFP on assessments and ISFNS, with a range of development partners on the Integrated Food Security Classification (IPC) and with WHO on nutrient requirements. Other areas of FAO's nutrition work lack strategic partnerships that could improve the quality and scale of both normative outputs (especially in nutrition education) and technical assistance (notably through policy support). FAO also urgently needs to open up the global debate on strengthening the under-nourishment indicator.

376. FAO has been much more active networking at regional level on nutrition in the past than it is currently. This is a refection of capacity and resource constraints at this level due to low prioritisation of nutrition. The principal engagement is through FAO's work in ISFSN and its support to INFOODS relating to food composition data and capacity building. The only nutrition-related network at regional level which FAO actively supports is the regional Food Security and Nutrition Working Group in East Africa which has been an important mechanism to oversee the roll-out of the IPC. Otherwise FAO remains very much disengaged from the nutrition agenda at regional level.

377. FAO's comparative advantage is the strong partnership it has with Member States largely represented through respective Ministries of Agriculture. In some countries this has provided an appropriate entry point for FAO to facilitate a more multi-sectoral approach to its nutrition-related work. This approach has worked more effectively at the national level than it has at a decentralised level where an over-reliance on agricultural extension services has compromised the effectiveness of the projects.

378. With the introduction of UNDAF, UN joint programming and the REACH mechanism, opportunities exist within the UN system for more effective collaboration between organisations to address malnutrition. There are few examples where FAO has adopted a joint strategic approach with other UN organisations in support of nutrition education, the Right to Food or nutrition policy at the national level. Outside the UN framework, FAO is not sufficiently pro-active in understanding what other actors are planning or undertaking in the area of nutrition. FAO rarely takes advantage of the increasing experience of NGOs, research and academic institutions in food security and nutrition work which are often better placed to generate the evidence linking agriculture to nutrition and promote innovative practices.

J. Institutional Arrangements

1. Institutional set-up

379. As outlined in Section I (C) to this report, the nutrition-related work of FAO is conducted in a number of departments and divisions within FAO, but the core unit responsible is the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (AGN). There are currently 14 posts assigned to nutrition work at headquarters level. Technical capacity in nutrition is built into the Regional and Sub-Regional Offices in support of the field programmes. However, FAO has Food Safety and Nutrition Officers in five FAO Regional Offices globally and of these, only one is a Nutritionist (recently appointed to the Regional Office for Africa). There are two posts at Sub-Regional level, both filled by Food Safety Officers (in the Pacific and

Southern Africa). All other nutrition staff in the field are project-funded so can only contribute to the institutional capacity for a limited time; furthermore they generally have terms of reference specific to the project which do not include duties on behalf of the FAO country team. This compares with WHO which has 30 staff at headquarters level, 11 staff in Regional Offices and 19 in country offices dealing with nutrition as their primary responsibility (plus approximately 100 additional staff - most of them in country offices - who have nutrition among their duties).[61]

2. AGN as the focal point for nutrition

380. As described earlier in Section I (C) of this report, nutrition is not positioned strategically within FAO, nor does it have the resources or the capacity to fulfil an influential role within FAO, let alone in the external context. Consequently, AGN operates largely its own agenda of relatively small-scale normative inputs, whilst trying desperately to provide technical backstopping to operations (principally through TCP facilities, emergency projects and NPSF) and also to link with the broader international agenda on nutrition and related scientific advice.

381. The situation is further compounded by the fact that: (i) the Director of AGN, who can have a strong personal influence over the work priorities of the division, has invariably been a professional with a food safety background; (ii) the Deputy Director post responsible for overseeing the three nutrition groups has long been vacant; (iii) there is a distinct lack of understanding, cooperation and coordination between the AGN groups responsible for nutrition resulting in work being undertaken in a piecemeal manner disconnected from other relevant activities; and (iv) many of the professional staff of AGNDA, AGNDP and AGNDE have been in the post for a long time, some are close to retirement, and there is little attempt (with one or two strong exceptions) to bring the field dimension into headquarters which would make AGN much more relevant and effective.

382. Whilst recognising the significant commitment of some AGN staff within this somewhat dysfunctional frame, external interlocutors to this evaluation (in particular donors) expressed dismay that they do not know who "represents" nutrition in FAO at a senior level; they meet different professional staff, each with their own individual perspective on the institutional position. This has undoubtedly limited the degree of collaboration at the international level and is one of a number of reasons why FAO finds it very difficult to secure interest and external funding for its nutrition work.

383. It is the view of the Evaluation that the nutrition team in AGN is to a large degree preoccupied with its own survival and is not in a position where it has the capacity, cohesion and confidence to act as an effective focal point within FAO. Rather than being a pro-active focal unit, it is more responsive to the needs of others who drive the agenda, and unless some radical institutional change is achieved, this will continue to be the case.

3. Collaboration across FAO on nutrition

384. Generally, collaboration relating to nutrition across departments and divisions within FAO has been very limited. Where internal collaboration has taken place, it depends considerably upon the degree of understanding staff of different divisions and departments have of nutrition, and where they recognise opportunities to link with AGN. There are good

[61] An agenda for nutrition and health in the 21st century: Recommendations for WHO action in nutrition 2009-2010, Francesco Branca (Draft 15th March 2009).

examples of where this has worked very effectively, most notably: (i) introducing and adapting nutrition-focused tools and materials within emergency projects operated by TCE; (ii) collaboration with AGS on urban and peri-urban horticulture projects including the "Food for the Cities" initiative; (iii) incorporating the work on dietary diversity scores (DDS) into the impact assessment tools for large-scale food security programmes; (iv) integrating nutrition into FIVIMS, some food security information systems and the IPC; and (v) most recently, contributing to the policy seminars focusing on high food prices initiated by TCS at the sub-regional level.

385. There are no mechanisms within FAO that AGN drives itself to mainstream nutrition. There are however, a number of inter-departmental working groups in place where there are real opportunities to include nutrition. One group for example is the CAADP task force, which focuses principally on the country compacts under development and strategies (including investment plans) to deliver on these. In Africa, this is a critical area where nutrition concerns can be addressed and AGN does attend most of these meetings at the FAO headquarters level, but is rarely involved in the missions undertaken at country level (this was for example identified as a critical gap by the Evaluation Team in Mozambique).

386. Another inter-departmental mechanism has been set up to address high food prices and policy seminars. These are being conducted by FAO in collaboration with other development partners for policy-makers at the sub-regional level. AGN is contributing to these, most recently at a policy seminar in Ethiopia. TCS is also in the process of developing a Policy Assistance node within FAO, which is expected to include AGN. This is important because AGN's technical support to policy assistance could be much more effectively channelled through TCS than through the direct technical support of AGN at country level. A task force is engaged to develop guidelines for the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF), which now replaces the National Medium-Term Priority Framework (NMTPF). AGN should be more directly involved in this, because it provides a real opportunity to have country programmes identify causes of malnutrition and to prioritise interventions where FAO has a comparative advantage and capacity to deliver (see Section II.E (3) of this report).

387. There are other areas where the gaps are very obvious. These include: (i) identifying and articulating how food composition, nutrient requirements and related scientific advice can contribute to other elements of AGN's work in particular assessments, information systems and policy advice; (ii) working with ESS to identify how nutrition data and information can contribute more effectively to FAOSTAT and the flagship publications such as SOFI; and (iii) strengthening the nutrition dimension to information systems on food and nutrition security by having AGN on the steering committee overseeing ISFNS implementation. These links were a lot more effective when the Food and Nutrition Division was located in ES and are of critical importance to the future priority areas of work identified by the Evaluation.

4. Links between central and decentralised structures in FAO

388. As indicated earlier in the report, 75 percent of the FAO Regular Programme budget for nutrition is allocated to headquarters, 25 percent to the regions/sub-regions and 6 percent to the field. This demonstrates where FAO prioritises a "core" nutrition technical capacity within the Organization. At the regional level, priority has been accorded to Food Safety and Nutrition Officers who principally have a food safety background; consequently the technical capacity in nutrition has largely been subsumed, a concern raised in the Evaluation's survey of FAO staff. Perhaps most notable is the almost total absence of nutrition technical capacity in Latin America at all levels. At the same time the limited capacity of AGN compared with the rest of the Organization at headquarters level leaves it overstretched. It represents less than

half the staff that WHO has at headquarters level whose primary responsibility is dealing with nutrition. The consequence is that technical backstopping at the point of delivery at national or field level is desperately insufficient.

389. Furthermore, there is no clear mechanism for providing technical backstopping between headquarters and the country offices. Principally, technical backstopping is allocated to the AGN group that is most relevant to the project. This may mean that in one country there were multiple trips by AGN staff to different projects, such as the Evaluation found in Cambodia, which represents a very inefficient and ineffective way of working. Afghanistan on the other hand, had one focal point in AGN backstopping the projects, which ensured greater consistency and better quality of technical assistance.

390. The Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) has recently decided to assume responsibility for the backstopping of all nutrition and food safety work in the region. Consequently, RAP will decide as and when AGN technical backstopping is required. Whilst, this is very much in line with decentralisation policy within FAO and could be an effective approach if there was a full-time Nutrition Officer for the region, the Evaluation is concerned that whilst the post is assumed by a Food Safety Officer, there will be insufficient understanding of the technical support requirements. It comes also at a time when there has been a decline in RAP nutrition backstopping capacity across the region when there is some very prominent work on going in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and a multitude of new nutrition-related work initiated in Cambodia and Lao PDR.

391. Key weaknesses identified with respect to headquarters support of the field are: (i) lack of coordination of technical backstopping; (ii) headquarters is not sufficiently pro-active in sharing and disseminating normative products and knowledge with the field; (iii) some international consultants identified by AGN were not matched to the knowledge and skills needed by the project; and (iv) headquarters was not sufficiently engaged in some key project policy and advocacy work.

392. Regional support to the field has been virtually non-existent in recent years due to the lack of technical capacity and orientation of the Nutrition and Food Safety Officers at this level. The RAP is the one exception until two years ago when the incumbent retired. Recently, however, RAP convened a workshop for representatives of ten FAO nutrition projects from countries in the region to share practical lessons learned and best practices, identify constraints, promote effective collaborations and explore mechanisms to facilitate cooperation among different projects. This is an important development, particularly in light of the lack of interaction between similar projects (MDG, TIPs, policy and capacity-building) in the region.

5. Principal findings

393. FAO has less than a third of the staff (at all levels) that WHO has whose primary responsibility is nutrition. The Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (AGN) now has very limited capacity and leadership to deliver on a wide range of responsibilities partially due to the steady decline in staff numbers over a period of years. Furthermore, there is poor understanding, communication and cooperation between the groups responsible for nutrition within the division. Consequently, AGN does not represent a strong and coherent focal point for nutrition despite the efforts of some very committed staff members. This adversely affects FAO's credibility and visibility as an organization to external players including principal donors.

394. AGN is more responsive than pro-active with respect to collaboration within and outside the Organization. Collaboration depends more on individual contact than strategic priorities. There are many strategic initiatives within FAO for AGN to promote the integration of nutrition, especially in the areas of statistics, information systems, country strategies and policy assistance, but it is not sufficiently engaged to capitalise on these opportunities.

395. Repositioning nutrition within the AG Department since 2006 has been detrimental to the contribution nutrition should be making to statistics, information systems and assessments; it has also made AGN's policy work more isolated from other initiatives within the Organization. These are priority technical areas, which FAO should be focusing on where nutrition has to be better integrated.

396. FAO's technical capacity is concentrated at headquarters level. This capacity is not used efficiently or effectively in support of the field activities, nor is the limited nutritional capacity at regional level complementing or facilitating that backstopping. Key technical capacity in nutrition needs to be established at a decentralised level to support strategic activities in nutrition and ensure better information flow between operational and normative work. This is a requirement borne out by the Evaluation's survey of FAO staff.

III. Conclusions

1. The place of nutrition in FAO *(Recommendations 1, 2 and 3)*

397. FAO lacks the vision and clarity of how the Organization's work can contribute to nutrition. Whilst FAO's mandate has always been *to raise levels of nutrition,* and its vision for 2010-2019 is *a world free of hunger and malnutrition where food and agriculture contributes to improving the living standards of all,* nutrition is then denigrated within the strategic planning frameworks to a "technical area" with insufficient linkages across the Organization and accorded unacceptably low human and financial resources.

398. The current strategic planning for FAO helps to clarify FAO's priorities of work in nutrition, but the isolation of nutrition principally within one of eleven strategic objectives, the institutional setting of nutrition within the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department (AG), and the lack of resources and capacity accorded to nutrition, have left it marginalised within the Organization. Furthermore, nutrition has no leadership or "champion" within the senior management of the Organization. It has been left to flounder without clear political commitment to its role from the top.

399. There has to be a radical change in FAO's political commitment to nutrition. Defining and developing FAO's potential comparative advantage on nutrition-sensitive agriculture is fundamental for the Organization to achieve its goal. This requires a shift in emphasis in policy, overall approach, measurement and programming to accommodate dietary quality alongside agricultural productivity, processing and marketing.

400. Across the Organization at all levels, there is only a very limited level of understanding of how agriculture can contribute to improving nutrition outside the staff of the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (AGN); this severely limits the extent to which FAO can effectively engage in nutrition-related work, especially at the critical advocacy and policy level. The credibility of the Organization depends on it becoming a better informed and more influential player in the area of nutrition.

2. FAO's position in the international agenda on nutrition *(Recommendations 1, 2 and 14)*

401. The global and regional challenges affecting nutrition, especially in the developing world, are substantial and in many countries will fail to realise their MDG1 targets. The multi-sectoral dimensions of nutrition, the need to address these through both direct and longer-term interventions, and the multitude of actors, have made it particularly challenging to achieve a convergence of views and efforts through the international nutrition architecture. The link between agriculture, food and nutrition is still not well understood.

402. FAO has focused much of its attention on promoting nutrition within the Committee for World Food Security (CFS) and its contributions to the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN) and the IASC global Nutrition Cluster, which are incremental, but insufficient to meet the urgency of the global situation. The SCN has not been effective in recent years at harmonising and focusing the attention of the UN system and the broader international community. FAO's ambivalence to the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement reflects to some extent the Organization's lack of confidence about its own positioning on nutrition and reluctance to engage with a movement that it is not driving.

403. FAO's recent initiative, in collaboration with WHO, to schedule an International Conference on Nutrition (ICN) for 2012 is ill advised and premature until FAO clarifies and commits to the place of nutrition within its own house and until the relevance of such an event to SUN and the reformed SCN are made clear.

3. Comparative advantage of FAO *(all Recommendations)*

404. The principal comparative advantage of the UN system is that UN agencies: (i) are a trusted and neutral partner especially to governments in developing countries; (ii) offer intellectual leadership over time; (iii) a provider of global public goods; and (iv) fulfil a normative function in setting laws, rules and conventions. These certainly apply to FAO within the food and agriculture domain and as such the Organization is uniquely placed to lead on a food-based approach to nutrition.

405. Distinct to FAO and WHO is the normative role they have played in determining nutrient requirements and providing related scientific advice. Distinct to FAO, WFP and UNICEF is the role they have played in contributing to food security and nutrition assessments, information systems, statistics and global status reports. Distinct to FAO uniquely, is a strong and long-standing relationship with the ministries of agriculture of governments of developing countries which can potentially counter-balance the emphasis on health and short-term solutions to malnutrition.

406. Based on wide representation from its 192 member countries, FAO's organizational structure provides a neutral forum for food and nutrition security governance through the reformed Committee on World Food Security (CFS) as well as a variety of technical committees, which convene regularly. These fora provide a platform to encourage member countries to adopt long-term, sustainable approaches to food and nutrition security.

407. FAO manages a large body of historical statistical datasets relating to agriculture, food security and nutrition and is custodian of one of the two main hunger indicators used to monitor MDGs. FAO also provides global food and nutrition security information as a public

good as well as analysis and dissemination of data on global monitoring (e.g., climate, prices, markets, food security at the national level). The Organization is also recognised by the international community for conducting reliable and politically neutral food and nutrition security assessments at regional and national levels. FAO is in the unique position of being able to encourage and support action by Ministries of Agriculture to integrate governance and policy actions to reduce food and nutritional insecurity into national development policies and programmes.

408. FAO also has distinct scientific knowledge in food composition and through its collaboration with WHO a good understanding of nutrient requirements. It has potential through its operational experience to link agricultural production towards improved dietary intake and thus contribute to improved nutritional status in the longer term on a sustainable basis. Furthermore, it has demonstrated its adaptability to apply this approach in different situations including urban environments where the double burden of malnutrition is of increasing concern.

409. FAO has contributed to an increased knowledge of the nutritional value of foods; influenced behaviours, attitudes and beliefs; and developed personal skills and motivation to adopt healthy eating practices. This work has begun to influence public policies.

410. However, FAO has very limited capacity at country level to undertake much needed formative research or to deliver projects which require a strong and continuing technical presence in the field. It can only develop such a capacity through significant emergency operations, which are generally not long-term nor sustainable. There are others such as INGOs, research and academic institutions much better equipped to undertake this work.

4. FAO's work in nutrition

Overall nutrition work *(Recommendations 2 to 7)*

411. Improving the quality of people's diets taking into account age, sex and health status in different contexts (both rural and urban) from an agriculture and food-based perspective is central to FAO's work. Consequently, much of FAO's nutrition-related work is integrated into agriculture and food security projects, which is seen as a very positive development rather than operating nutrition specific projects which become "isolated" from FAO's core agenda. Nutrition-sensitive agriculture with the widespread application of nutrition indicators, approaches and tools will enable FAO to provide the much needed stewardship given the global challenges of climate change, resource degradation, political and financial upheavals.

412. However, this work is not currently based on sufficient analysis of the causes of malnutrition, nor sufficient exploration of what other development partners are engaged in, and largely does not contribute to broader policies of governments, nor to strategic priorities set by the Organization at national or regional level. Consequently the work is very disjointed, there are few synergies between projects and few benefit sufficiently from institutional knowledge.

413. Whilst the National Programmes for Food Security operated by TCS are now incorporating nutrition-related indicators into their work and helping governments to establish national M&E systems, most other FAO projects which conduct nutrition-related activities are

short-term in nature and do not benefit from baselines, monitoring or impact assessments. Consequently, during the evaluation period, very little information or evidence is gained from these interventions on how agriculture or food-based approaches have contributed to nutrition outcomes. Neither is there an obvious link between operations and the normative work.

414. Furthermore, there is insufficient sensitivity to issues of gender, in particular the implications of malnutrition on adolescent girls and women of reproductive age, and little account taken so far of the double burden of malnutrition, which is a growing phenomenon as an increasing proportion of the population in the developing world become urbanised.

Information and knowledge *(Recommendations 3 and 4)*

415. FAO statistics and databases relating to agriculture, food and nutrition are widely recognised and utilised most notably for its flagship publications such as the State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI). However, FAO's leadership role in the development of new methods and best practices in statistics and data collection has diminished since the 1980s. The quality of statistics is very dependent upon the capacity of National Statistics Offices, which vary, and key data on nutrition incorporated into Nutrition Country Profiles are now recognised to be out-dated. Access to the data on the FAOSTAT website is also very problematic.

416. Furthermore, there is increasing international concern that FAO's under-nourishment indicator, the basis for FAO's projections of global hunger, does not consider how hunger might be distributed within a country, and since it is based on food energy deficiency, it does not take into account micronutrient deficiency. Nutritionists have an important role to play in supporting the Statistics Division (ESS) in updating under-nourishment calculations and developing additional indicators that can be used to monitor food consumption trends. FAO should be playing a more pro-active role in bringing international stakeholders together to agree a standard set of core indicators critical to monitoring meaningful progress on MDG goals.

417. FAO's support to Information Systems on Food and Nutrition Security (ISFNS), whilst varied, is considered to be of good quality. FAO assisted food security information systems have traditionally focused on food availability and access, but FAO's most recent corporate strategy on information systems now calls for better integration of issues relating to nutrition, gender and urban food. Institutionally, the contribution from AGN has been very limited except where the project has resources to build in that technical capacity as modelled by the FSNAU in Somalia and SETSAN in Mozambique.

418. Building evidence of the link between agriculture and nutrition requires a measure of food consumption, biodiversity and dietary quality. The dietary diversity score (DDS) is a tool that allows such information to be captured. Much more use needs to be made of this and other complementary tools developed by other organizations. However, there is a need to harmonise the two sets of tools to measure dietary diversity being applied by WFP and FAO. FAO should play a lead role with others to measure nutrition outcomes of agriculture and food security interventions, policies and systems at different levels.

Policy and normative *(Recommendations 3, 6 and 7)*

419. Providing policy assistance within the agriculture and food security sectors is central to

FAO's work. It is an area of considerable demand by member countries and where FAO has a distinct comparative advantage drawing upon its broad field and normative experience. It presents a unique opportunity for FAO to incorporate nutrition concerns into national development agendas addressing poverty.

420. Given the strategic importance of this work, FAO's contribution to nutrition policy assistance has been relatively limited. It gained more momentum in Latin America where the Right to Food framework has been instrumental in raising the profile of nutrition concerns in a number of countries, but elsewhere in countries which have not made sufficient progress towards the MDGs, it has been very limited.

421. The nutrition policy assistance that has been undertaken present good models on which to build including: (i) community-based work on food-based approaches which has been instrumental in informing policy at national level in Afghanistan; (ii) establishing an inter-ministerial platform and including key development partners in the process of developing a policy, a plan of action and a country investment plan in Bangladesh; and (iii) assessing the capacity needs to deliver on a national nutrition policy in Malawi. The challenge for FAO is to better document its good practice in nutrition policy assistance, to improve on the quality of technical assistance through stronger institutional collaboration within FAO, to work more effectively across sectors outside agriculture, and to collaborate more with other relevant development partners.

422. Information and analysis on food composition and nutrient intake provides essential scientific information for dietary guidelines, food and nutrition assessments, information systems and statistics. Unfortunately, much of the food composition data is very much out-dated, especially where there is no capacity within the region to review data and include local and indigenous foods. A review of other normative products undertaken by the Evaluation provide good analysis of how nutrition can be integrated into agriculture, horticulture, trade and urban food security, but insufficient attention paid to nutrition benefits derived from livestock production or fisheries. The products emphasise the importance of linking agriculture to nutrition, but lack the evidence on how policy, investments and food-based approaches contribute to reduce malnutrition.

423. Despite the relevance and quality of most FAO normative products relating to nutrition, knowledge of these products both within and outside FAO (most notably at country level) is remarkably limited, except the more notable flagship publications like SOFI. This is particularly the case among government decision-makers for whom many of the products are designed, and universities who are producing future professionals in this field. Some products such as the Nutrition Country Profiles, which were considered very useful in their day, are now out-dated and no longer so relevant. The products are not demand-driven, nor is there a clear communication or dissemination strategy, and therefore utilisation remains limited.

Implementation and technical assistance *(Recommendations 2, 3, 10, 11 and 12)*

424. FAO's technical capacity is concentrated at the headquarters level. This capacity is not used efficiently or effectively in direct support of field implementation, nor is the limited nutritional capacity at regional level complementing or facilitating that backstopping. Resources are principally orientated towards Codex and food safety rather than achieving nutrition outcomes. The quality of project implementation therefore varies considerably depending upon the nutrition capacity that can be resourced and mobilised in support of the

project. It was clear to the Evaluation that where projects were operating under the guidance of an FAO Representative and country team who understood FAO's mandate on food security and nutrition, those interventions were more relevant and effective.

Outreach and partnering *(Recommendations 2, 13 and 14)*

425. There are a number of important and strategic partnerships in which FAO is engaged which are influential to the Organization's role and work in nutrition. These have included collaboration with WHO on food composition and nutrient requirements, with AED/FANTA on tools to measure dietary diversity and food access, and with WFP in undertaking assessments and the development of ISFNS. There are other areas where FAO has had remarkably little engagement such as with relevant research institutions and INGOs in generating evidence of agriculture and nutrition linkages, nor with UNICEF, WHO and IFPRI in the area of nutrition policy.

426. Generally, FAO does not make it its business to understand sufficiently what others (in particular non-governmental and private sector actors) are doing in nutrition especially at regional and country level. Nor is FAO very good at communicating its own work to others. This is very much a missed opportunity since FAO could capitalise on sound evidence being generated by others. FAO should assume more of a role as knowledge "broker" in key areas of scientific advice, measurement, evidence of good and effective agriculture practices and food-based approaches which impact on nutrition outcomes and lessons learned. This could be achieved through existing coordination mechanisms (including Clusters and REACH) and would contribute as much to policy assistance as it would to scaling-up operational activities of governments and development partners.

5. Organizational set-up *(Recommendations 9, 10 and 11)*

427. The Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (AGN) currently has very limited capacity and leadership to deliver on a wide range of responsibilities. AGN does not represent a strong and coherent focal point for nutrition despite the efforts of some very committed staff members. There are many strategic initiatives within FAO where AGN should be raising nutrition concerns, especially in the area of statistics, information systems, strategic planning and policy assistance, but it is not sufficiently engaged to capitalise on these opportunities. Repositioning AGN within the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department (AG) since 2006 has been detrimental to the contribution that nutrition could be making to these areas.

428. Furthermore, whilst recognising the intrinsic links between food safety and nutrition, the Evaluation found that the cohabitation of Codex, food safety and nutrition has been to the detriment of the nutrition team generating a multi-dimensional understanding of factors that affect human nutrition and an obstacle to developing an inter-disciplinary approach to address malnutrition. It is the view of the Evaluation that if the nutrition team is to function effectively as a "service provider" in support of more nutrition-sensitive assessments, analysis, policies and strategies, taking into account issues of gender, it should be separated from Codex and food safety (which logically should remain in the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department) and linked more strategically with the Economic and Social Development Department. The nutrition of an increasing proportion of the population in developing countries is more affected by trade and markets, than by food supply, and FAO is uniquely placed to assess and understand these linkages.

IV. Recommendations

429. The recommendations below are set out in a logical sequence. The first three recommendations are fundamental to establishing FAO's "agenda" for nutrition and to determine strategic priorities for that agenda. Subsequent recommendations are essential for the delivery of FAO's better defined role and work in nutrition. The timing of achieving each recommendation is specified against each recommendation from the date of the session of the Programme Committee (October 2011) at which this Evaluation will be presented.

430. All recommendations are principally addressed to FAO's senior management with Recommendation 12 addressed to donor Member Countries as well. The recommendations, if accepted in their entirety, would have cost implications in view of the need to build sufficient capacity to deliver on the strategy. However, the Evaluation team has received indication that with a greater strategic focus on nutrition, FAO will be in a better position to mobilise funding necessary to bring its agenda forward.

1. Corporate position on nutrition

Recommendation 1 (by January 2012)**:** Senior management in FAO has to commit to a **strong focus on nutrition** across the Organization requisite to its mandate. This commitment should be "championed" by the Deputy Director General Knowledge (DDK). There are six principal areas which require the urgent attention of senior management:

- a clear articulation of FAO's projection of the key food and agriculture issues most likely to affect malnutrition in the 21st Century and the Organisation's commitment to addressing nutrition insecurity;
- a clear indication of FAO's commitment to the international development agenda on nutrition including the Organization's engagement in Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) as a global initiative;
- recognising nutrition as an overall outcome for FAO which has to be reflected across different stages and levels of the planning and budgeting frameworks with appropriate indicators and measurement of nutrition;
- establishing nutrition as an *Impact Focus Area* within FAO's global strategic framework for which it should be accorded requisite resources;
- separating Nutrition from Codex and Food Safety and re-establishing "Nutrition" within FAO's institutional structure to service and strengthen the clear strategic links with information, statistics and policy assistance; and
- ensuring that FAO make concrete achievements in addressing malnutrition at country level.

Recommendation 2 (by mid-2012)**:** A **Vision and Strategy** for *nutrition-sensitive* agricultural development should be drawn up and articulated reflecting FAO's commitment to address both under-nutrition and over-nutrition. In view of current capacity constraints, an external senior expert reporting to the DDK will be hired to lead/develop the process specifically for the duration of this exercise. Key elements of the strategy must include:

- an agreed conceptual framework for the recently adopted term of *Food and Nutrition Security* within the Organization;
- identification of *focal countries* where there is capacity within FAO to deliver relevant and effective interventions and there is a country-led commitment to address levels of malnutrition which are high and persistent;

- causal analysis of malnutrition to be undertaken (preferably through national government initiatives and including other development partners) in all *focal countries* which should be factored into Nutrition Country Profiles and Country Programming Frameworks (CPF);
- situation analysis of where and how governments and other development partners are actively engaged in addressing nutrition concerns which should also be factored into the CPF of *focal countries* to ensure FAO plays a complementary role;
- linkages between the field programme in these *focal countries* and the normative work in nutrition (and visa versa);
- a communications strategy (both internal to FAO and external) which in a first phase would raise awareness and understanding of the new vision and strategy on nutrition across FAO professional staff at regional, sub-regional and country levels (including Heads of Office and FAO Representatives)[62] starting in the *focal countries*, and in a second phase include governments of Member Countries and relevant development partners; the strategy should also take into account greater prominence of nutrition on FAO's website, lines of communication for better learning between *focal countries* and modalities for the effective dissemination of normative products on nutrition; and
- an advocacy strategy to promote broader understanding and application of the linkages between agriculture, food security and nutrition; FAO's advocacy work should be pro-active rather than responsive, based upon explicit goals against strategic priorities that relate to the nutrition *focal countries* and its contribution to the international development agenda.

2. Focal areas for nutrition

431. FAO's work in nutrition should be less focused on delivering nutrition-specific activities at community and household level and more orientated towards providing a distinct "stewardship" and normative role to inform, guide and establish norms and standards for governments and other development partners to deliver on and to achieve improved nutrition outcomes. The following recommendations constitute focal areas around which FAO's strategy on nutrition should be built:

Recommendation 3: *Building the evidence and linking food and agriculture work to nutrition outcomes*

- FAO's normative work to focus on the development of tools, methods and guidelines for food consumption surveys, assessments and monitoring including nutrition-related indicators (food consumption, biodiversity and dietary diversity) in both rural and urban contexts.
- FAO to act as "knowledge broker" of good practice and lessons learned from *nutrition-sensitive* development work by a wide range of governments and development partners including evidence of the impact agriculture and food security interventions have on nutrition in different contexts.

[62] Guidelines primarily for internal use will be developed to upgrade the knowledge and awareness of all staff in focal countries on what FAO's work contributes to nutrition (the EC has recently developed a Reference Document on Addressing Under-nutrition in External Assistance targeting aid administrators working within delegations of the EU and offices of Member States with very much the same intentions).

Recommendation 4: *Strengthening nutrition analysis in statistics and information*

- Undernourishment calculations to be updated and indicators developed that can be used to monitor food consumption trends, and the debate on how the undernourishment indicator can better reflect micronutrient deficiency opened to wider debate through the frameworks of the SCN and the CFS.
- Representatives of the Nutrition Team placed on the Steering Committee for ISFNS and to establish a strong working relationship with the IPC Global Support Unit.

Recommendation 5: *Mainstreaming nutrition into agriculture and food security interventions and prioritising focal countries*

- In focal countries, the CPF to be developed around stated nutrition objectives drawn from the causal analysis and programme interventions clearly linked to those objectives.
- Nutrition mainstreamed into agriculture and food security projects (including ISFNS and policy assistance) of *focal countries*. Projects to be of sufficient duration to incorporate baselines and monitoring of nutrition-related indicators to assess impact on nutrition and thus generate evidence of the relevance and effectiveness of the intervention. Opportunities sought to include nutrition outcomes in projects including livestock and fishery activities.
- Projects with nutrition mainstreamed to articulate clearly how they take into account issues of gender (with a particular focus on adolescent girls and women of reproductive age), social inclusion and climate change and how they link with other elements of FAO's nutrition work.

Recommendation 6: *Integrating nutrition into policy work*

- The Policy and Nutrition Team to develop normative guidelines for integrating nutrition into agriculture and food security policies at different level.
- The Policy and Nutrition Team to ensure that "knowledge" generated of good practice and lessons learned from nutrition-sensitive development work and nutrition information and analysis generated through ISFNS contributes to policy work at all levels.
- The FAO Nutrition Team to be engaged with the policy assistance "node" established by TCS and to contribute to the guidelines being developed for CPF and participate actively in policy events facilitated by FAO.

Recommendation 7: *Focusing on food composition and related scientific advice*

- FAO should shift from ad-hoc country support to work strategically to build capacity at the regional and sub-regional levels, encourage regional collaboration to support countries (especially *focal countries*) to collect and analyse food composition data that is demanded by end-users for ensuring the nutrition sensitivity of policies and programme interventions.
- FAO to support the function of an international repository of the data, and provide quality control of that data, which should in turn be readily accessible to all potential users.
- Within FAO, the normative work in food composition should demonstrate its value added to assessments, statistics and policy assistance.

3. Strategic framework

Recommendation 8: Mainstream nutrition into the strategic framework and planning and programming documents through:

- In the immediate term, systematically identifying specific joint unit results linking nutrition with other areas of work of the Organization in particular (but not exclusively) statistics, assessments, policy, food security programming; and
- In the medium-term, taking account of the need to strengthen the linkages between the strategic objectives and organizational results within the Global Goal 1 relating to food and nutrition security in the upcoming revision of the strategic framework and the formulation of the MTP 2014-2017 and the PWB 2014-2015.

4. Institutional arrangements

432. FAO needs strong stewardship and a critical mass of nutrition competence positioned strategically across the Organization. The Nutrition Team will play more of a normative role at headquarters servicing and supporting other divisions and departments to generate and analyse food and nutrition security information and adopt *nutrition-sensitive* development. At a decentralised level, FAO will focus less on the delivery of interventions and assume more of a "stewardship" and technical assistance role across sectors and development partners. To achieve this FAO needs to make changes in its own institutional arrangements for nutrition. Specifically, this will include:

Recommendation 9 (by January 2013): The "nutrition" element (AGND) of the current Nutrition and Consumer Protection (AGN) to disengage from Food Safety and Codex (AGNC) and have a clearly defined institutional home with a staff dedicated to a multi-sectoral service function. The new nutrition entity must operate as a "service provider" offering technical assistance and normative guidance to other relevant services of the Organization (most notably all divisions within ES as well as AGA, AGP, TCS, TCI and TCE) in accordance with agreed strategic priorities. A move back to the Economic and Social Development Department (ES) would empower and strengthen links with information, assessments, statistics, policy and gender, which are most strategic to nutrition work.

Recommendation 10 (by January 2013): The technical composition of the new Nutrition Team to be determined according to the strategic priorities of the nutrition vision and strategy when it is developed. It will be headed by a strong, internationally recognised, Director of Nutrition. New job descriptions to be developed for the team with emphasis on staff having the requisite experience and knowledge to interact effectively with staff of other divisions in the Organization. Core competencies will be required in: (i) food composition, (ii) dietary measurement and assessment, (iii) nutrition information and statistics; and (iv) nutrition policy and advocacy.

Recommendation 11 (by January 2013): Nutrition Officer posts (separate from Food Safety Officers) to be established in regions and sub-regions where there are nutrition *focal countries*. This team will provide technical backstopping for *focal countries* developing Country Programming Frameworks, which include agriculture and food security projects with nutrition outcomes. Technical backstopping to support the development of baselines and monitoring systems to assess those nutrition outcomes based upon work already completed by AGN and TCSF. Opportunities should be sought to rotate staff between headquarters, regional, sub-regional and country offices (where feasible) to promote better synergies across the nutrition team and more effectively address field concerns at all levels.

Recommendation 12 (by January 2013): Given the trends of FAO's core budget over the past biennia, Nutrition Officers at country level to be resourced through extra-budgetary support and therefore resources will have to be mobilised for that purpose. A principal role of the Nutrition Officers will be to: (i) promote nutrition high on the agenda of governments and development partners through established or new networks; (ii) offer technical assistance and guidance on food-based approaches to nutrition in national policies and programmes; and (iii) help mainstream nutrition in the agriculture and food security work of FAO. Information exchange across countries will be facilitated through annual workshops for nutrition staff at either regional or sub-regional level (as recently conducted in the Asia and Pacific Region).

5. Collaboration and partnership

Recommendation 13 (by January 2013): FAO needs to realign existing collaborative arrangements and develop strong multi-sectoral partnerships to deliver on its defined nutritional outcomes. Specifically this will include:

- FAO to phase out its leadership role on expert consultations concerning nutrient requirements (in consultation with WHO), but continue to maintain close technical collaboration with WHO on scientific advice pertaining to food composition and nutrient requirements.
- FAO to develop other strategic alliances to deliver more effectively on nutrition outcomes especially in the area of policy assistance (notably with WHO, UNICEF and IFPRI) building upon the model developed with WFP on ISFNS.
- FAO to build on its comparative advantage of working in close collaboration with governments, in particular Ministries of Agriculture, and use the opportunity to promote and harness a multi-sectoral approach and platform for *nutrition-sensitive development* in *focal countries* as it has already achieved successfully in some countries (e.g. Afghanistan and Bangladesh).

6. Networking

Recommendation 14 (immediate): FAO should be constructively engaged in nutrition-related networks at all levels and its visibility as an international partner in nutrition raised. Specifically, this will include:

- FAO to contribute to global, regional and country coordination mechanisms that relate to nutrition and effectively contribute to national agendas (including the IASC Cluster system and REACH where appropriate) thus facilitating broader engagement with development and humanitarian partners in nutrition.
- FAO's contribution in the area of nutrition to the SCN and the CFS to be maintained and strengthened, provided that the SCN reform is ultimately successful in making the SCN an effective UN system nutrition coordinating body.
- FAO's commitment to SUN should be corporate, and FAO's engagement with its task forces should be clarified and communicated internally and externally to avoid any further confusion.
- The joint FAO/WHO initiative to convene an ICN+20 should have obvious relevance to others in the UN system and be inclusive of the SUN movement.