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منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
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PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Hundred and Twentieth Session

Rome, 7 - 11 November 2016

Indicative rolling work plan of evaluations 2017-2019

Executive Summary

- This document contains an indicative work plan proposed for 2017-2019, which updates the current work plan for 2015-2017 (PC/116/5) reviewed by the Committee in 2014.
- The plan is to continue evaluations of each Strategic Objective, to be discussed at each Committee session.
- A number of country programme evaluations, and similar programme evaluations, will be conducted to examine FAO's contribution at the country level.
- The Office of Evaluation continues to provide evaluation service to programmes and projects funded through voluntary contributions.

Action Requested from the Programme Committee

- The Committee is invited to comment on the proposed plan 2017-2019, and endorse the plan.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Office of Evaluation (OED) has been conducting evaluations under the Indicative Rolling Work Plan 2015-2017 (PC 116/5) approved by the Committee at its 116th session in November 2014. The main objective of this Work Plan was to examine results achieved by the Organization in line with its Strategic Framework. Its core elements were hence to evaluate FAO's contributions to each of its Strategic Objectives (SOs) and to the programmatic objectives identified in the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs).
2. Starting from the current 120th session, the evaluations of FAO's contribution to SOs are in turn presented to the Committee for its discussion.¹ The plan is to present one SO evaluation at each session. After the five SO evaluations are completed, it is proposed to present a synthesis report on findings and lessons learnt from these evaluations, as well as an evaluation of FAO's work on gender as requested by the Council at its 154th session for consideration by the Conference in 2019².
3. The new Country Programme Evaluation series, introduced in 2014, focuses on contributions made by FAO in the achievement of agreed CPF objectives, as well as FAO's strategic relevance to the needs and priorities of the country. The aim is to advise the Organization in its formulation of CPFs and their implementation. When completed, the report is presented to its main users, namely FAO programme managers at the country and regional offices, as well as relevant national government officials and other programme partners. Once a sufficient number of Country Programme Evaluations are conducted, OED proposed to present a synthesis of lessons learnt in application of the CPFs for discussion in 2018.
4. In addition, OED continues to provide evaluation services of programmes and projects that are funded by voluntary contributions. These evaluations not only support the Organization's accountability on these programmes and projects, they also provide an important evidence-base for thematic and country programme evaluations.
5. Table 1 in the Annex provides a list of proposed evaluations and related reports to be presented to the Committee. Table 2 provides a list of Country Programme Evaluations, as well as programme evaluations conducted in territories and for a group of countries. The list includes those that were completed, are underway and are planned for the current cycle (2016-2017). Explanations of the reasons for the selection of planned country programme evaluations are also provided in Table 2.
6. It is suggested to review the indicative working plan every two years; the next review in the second half of 2018 for the 2019-2021 period.

II. PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF EVALUATIONS

Evaluations presented to the Committee

7. For the period of 2017-2019, it is planned to continue evaluations of FAO's contributions to the Strategic Objectives. In addition, the evaluation on FAO's work on gender, as requested by the 154th session of the Council, and synthesis reports on findings and lessons learnt from country programme are proposed. For the Committee's session in autumn 2019, it is tentatively proposed to conduct an evaluation on selected themes to be decided at a later stage. The intended scope of each evaluation is presented below:

¹ The order of the SO evaluations was re-adjusted in 2015 based on the initial assessments made on the evaluation readiness of each SO work, as endorsed by the Committee in CL153/6.

² CL 154/REP (2016), paragraph 15 d), endorsing the request made by the Programme Committee at its 119th session.

8. **Evaluation of FAO's contribution to reduction in rural poverty (SO 3):** Hunger and food insecurity are in large part a manifestation of rural poverty. At the same time, addressing rural poverty requires a broader range of interventions than measures focused on eliminating hunger and food insecurity. In most cases, they entail looking integrally at improving access to productive resources, services, and markets for poor farmers and other producers, strengthening their organizations, diversifying their employment opportunities and income earning capacities for the rural poor, and improving their capacity to manage risks, including through social protection. The rural poor also tend to be more vulnerable to be affected by natural disasters, erosion or depletion of natural resources, or income losses caused by animal or plant diseases. Thus, many aspects of FAO's work are relevant to efforts aiming at reducing rural poverty. This evaluation aims to examine how FAO has been contributing to rural poverty reduction, where the gaps were and how the poverty reduction effects of various strands of FAO's work can be enhanced.

9. **Evaluation of FAO's contribution to inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems (SO 4):** With increasing trade and urbanization, value chains and consumption patterns are becoming more complex and challenging for small-scale farmers, forest-dwellers and fishermen to adapt and benefit from. In addition, agriculture is becoming more science and capital intensive, which further risk excluding small-scale producers and other vulnerable groups. This evaluation will examine how FAO has been contributing to inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems through policy, normative and capacity development initiatives aimed at improving the livelihoods of the rural poor.

10. **Evaluation of FAO's contribution to elimination of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition (SO 1):** Hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition are complex problems that require combined action by different actors and sectors to address. At the international level, FAO works to raise awareness, understanding and political commitment of decision makers in governments and development partners. Building on this, FAO at the regional and country levels, focuses on helping countries to create an enabling environment for and support the capacity development of governments and other stakeholders to bring about policy changes, increase investment and intensify actions to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. This evaluation aims to examine the effectiveness of FAO's approach, how its combined work at global, regional and country levels has led to positive outcomes at the country level and how it could further enhance its contribution in the fight against hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

11. **Evaluation of FAO's contribution to sustainable agricultural development through integrated natural resource management (SO 2):** With intensifying competition for natural resources and shifting social and economic profile of rural communities, sustainable agricultural development is increasingly under threat. Integrated natural resource management, encompassing water, forestry, land, fisheries and their associated ecosystems, is considered to be a key response in ensuring sustainability of agricultural development. While previous evaluations examined FAO's contributions to a single natural-resource sector, this evaluation aims to assess the degree to which FAO's support has met the multi-sectoral nature of the challenge and provided integrated ecosystem services needed for enhancing sustainable agriculture development.

12. **Synthesis of lessons learnt in application of the Country Programming Framework:** The CPF offers a unified approach towards common development goals between FAO and the host government. This synthesis aims to examine the quality and usefulness of CPFs from the Country Programme Evaluations conducted in the period 2014-2017 and subsequently draw conclusions on how this approach contributed to FAO development effectiveness. It also intends to identify the challenges related to planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating CPF activities with a view to advising how CPF could be strengthened as a mechanism for FAO programming at the country level to promote cooperation, partnership and sustainable results.

13. **Synthesis of findings and lessons learnt from the Strategic Objective evaluations:** The implementation of FAO Strategic Framework 2010-2019 has been a continuous learning process, innovation and adaptive management. This synthesis aims to extract key findings and lessons learnt from the five Strategic Objective evaluations and to extrapolate, overall, whether and how the FAO Strategic Framework was effective as a programming tool in support of greater development contribution by the Organization since 2014. The synthesis further intends to study how FAO has applied results-based management under this framework and whether further improvement would be needed in this regard in order to build a more robust results-based governance mechanism.

14. **Evaluation of FAO's work on gender:** This evaluation was proposed by the Programme Committee at its 119th session, and was endorsed by the Council at its 154th session for consideration by the Conference in 2019. It intends to synthesize from the five Strategic Objective evaluations how the gender dimension has been effectively mainstreamed in various strands of FAO's work as per Objective 6 and through gender-related work within each Strategic Objective. It further intends to make suggestions *inter alia* on how FAO could further integrate the gender roles in the agricultural society in the analysis and programme design with a view to enhance its programme effectiveness and development contribution.

15. **Evaluation of FAO's contribution on selected themes:** For the Autumn session of the Committee in 2019, it is proposed to present an evaluation on selected themes to be identified later on, based on the discussion on issues emerged from the Strategic Objective evaluations and at the Conference in 2017.

16. The Committee will also be presented with follow-up reports to previous evaluations prepared by Management after two years of implementing the actions contained in the respective management responses. These are also included in the schedule (Annex Table 1).

Country Programme Evaluations

17. OED conducts Country Programme Evaluations (CPEs) which focus on the CPF outcomes achieved by FAO country programme, as well as results-level contributions by global and regional initiatives in the country. The CPE methodology was also applied to FAO programmes for a territory and a group of countries.³

18. In principle, OED conducts CPEs in countries at the penultimate/final year of the CPF cycle with a view to maximally contributing to the formulation of the forthcoming programme. Among the countries thus selected, general preference is given to countries with larger needs for FAO assistance (e.g. higher agricultural dependency) and with larger FAO presence. Further consultations are held with respective regional offices and strategic programme teams to identify country programmes with strategic importance from their perspective. OED has also received requests for CPEs from national governments or country offices, to which serious consideration is given. Finally, consultations are held with respective country offices to ascertain the desirability and feasibility of conducting CPEs in the particular year, for instance in consideration of a national election or an unexpected natural disaster.

19. In addition, OED conducts programme evaluations in countries where system-wide Level 3 emergency was declared and FAO made large-scale humanitarian response. While these evaluations look at humanitarian response in particular, they analyse findings in the broader context of FAO's resilience programmes. It is not always possible however to indicate these evaluations in the proposed work plan because of their emergency-triggered nature.

³ Although CPE methodology was applied in evaluation of programmes for a territory or a group of countries, it does not imply that the territory or the group was considered as a country.

20. The Committee may wish to suggest how it wishes to receive information on findings from these evaluations at the country level.

Other evaluations and activities

21. OED intends to continue providing evaluation services of programmes and projects funded through voluntary contributions. These evaluations are firstly carried out for programmes and projects over USD 4 million, in accordance with the 2007 Council decision and subsequent requests made by the Committee.⁴ Separate project evaluations, independently of the budget size, are also carried out in response to specific requirements of resource partners and stakeholders. Further, this type of evaluations are conducted when they were deemed useful as a component of thematic or country programme evaluations. OED has been conducting or supporting on average 30 to 40 such evaluations per annum. OED wishes to explore ways to expand the coverage of these evaluations in lieu of fully decentralized evaluations.

22. OED participates in Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations (IAHEs), conducted jointly among member agencies of Inter-Agency Standing Committee for humanitarian response. These evaluations are normally commissioned to external evaluation teams. OED is represented in the IAHE Steering Committee, and participates in the management groups of selected evaluations. Since IAHEs often cannot cover sectoral aspects in sufficient depth, OED normally conducts sector-specific programme evaluations⁵ subsequent to IAHEs at the recovery stage.

23. Finally, during the past two years, OED introduced measures to enhance communications to potential users of evaluations through: upgrading and modernizing its website; creation of Evaluation Digests, which summarizes key messages and findings of evaluations in two pages for each evaluation; creation of some video messages from selected evaluations, which are considered to be of interest to wider audience; and extensive engagement with key stakeholders throughout the evaluation process, and stakeholder workshops to discuss the reports and the recommendations therein. The Committee may wish to provide any suggestion for further improvement in the communication aspect to enhance the utility of OED evaluations.

⁴ The “*Procedures for financing the evaluation of initiatives funded by voluntary contributions*” issued in November 2013 have been integrated in the Project Cycle Guide and are increasingly taken into account in new project formulations.

⁵ See the explanation in the section on country programme evaluations.

ANNEX

Table 1. Evaluations and associated reports for the Programme Committee

Session of the Committee and evaluations to be presented	Year(s) conducted
Spring 2017 session	
Evaluation of FAO's contribution to reduction in rural poverty (SO 3)	2016
Autumn 2017 session	
Evaluation of FAO's contribution to inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems (SO 4)	2016-2017
Follow-up report on the evaluation of FAO's contribution to climate change adaptation and mitigation	2014-2015
Follow-up report on the evaluation of FAO's contribution on knowledge on food, agriculture and natural resources	2014-2015
Spring 2018 session	
Evaluation of FAO's contribution to elimination of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition (SO 1)	2017
Synthesis of lessons learnt in application of the Country Programme Framework	2017
Follow-up report on the evaluation of FAO's contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture	2015-2016
Autumn 2018 session	
Evaluation of FAO's contribution to integrated natural resource management for sustainable agriculture (SO 2)	2017-2018
Follow-up report on evaluation of FAO's contribution to increase the resilience of livelihoods to disasters (SO 5)	2015-2016
Indicative Rolling Work Plan of Evaluations 2019-2021	
Spring 2019 session	
Evaluation of FAO's work on gender	2018
Synthesis of findings and lessons learnt from the Strategic Objectives evaluations	2018
Follow-up report on evaluation of FAO's contribution to reduction in rural poverty (SO 3)	2016-2017
Autumn 2019 session	
Evaluation of FAO's contribution on selected themes	2018-2019
Follow-up report on evaluation of FAO's contribution to inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems (SO 4)	2016-2017
Indicative Rolling Work Plan of evaluations	2019-2021

Table 2. Country Programme Evaluations, and Programme Evaluations in countries, territories or for groups of countries (the asterisk indicates those with a resilience programme focus)

Evaluations	Status/timing
Africa	
<u>Completed</u>	
Burkina Faso	Published December 2015
Central African Republic*	Published May 2016
Somalia*	Published May 2016
South Sudan*	Published August 2016
Niger	Publication expected November 2016
Côte d'Ivoire	Publication expected December 2016
<u>Underway</u>	
Tanzania	Main mission July 2016 Publication expected 2017 I
<u>Planned</u>	
Kenya	2016 IV - 2017 II
Malawi	2017 I – 2017 III
Guinea	(under discussion)
Cameroon	(under discussion)
Asia & the Pacific	
<u>Completed</u>	
Lao PDR	Published October 2015
Philippines*	Publication expected December 2016
Underway	
Myanmar	Main mission October 2016 Publication expected 2017 I
Bangladesh	Main mission September 2016 Publication expected 2017 I
<u>Planned</u>	
Pakistan	2016 IV – 2017 III
Nepal	(under discussion)
Latin America & the Caribbean	
<u>Completed</u>	
East Caribbean States	Publication expected 2016 IV
Trinidad & Tobago	Publication expected 2016 IV
Guyana	Publication expected 2016 IV
Guatemala	Publication expected December 2016
<u>Underway</u>	
Honduras	Main mission October 2016 Publication expected 2017 I
Planned	
Nicaragua	2017 I – 2017 IV
Ecuador	(under discussion)
Near East & North Africa	
<u>Completed</u>	
Saudi Arabia	Publication expected September 2016

<u>Underway</u>	
West Bank & Gaza	Main mission April 2016 Publication expected 2016 IV
Planned	
Egypt	2016 IV – 2017 III
Europe & Central Asia	
<u>Completed</u>	
Kyrgyzstan	Publication expected December 2016
<u>Planned</u>	
Azerbaijan	2017 III – 2018 II

Reasons for selection of some planned CPEs

Kenya: Suggested by the recently appointed FAOR. This is a country with a large and complex FAO programme, and the evaluation would help the next CPF formulation in 2017. With the high-level of government engagement in the programme, the evaluation intends to involve the government intensively in the process.

Malawi: Suggested by the regional office, because the country office is moving towards a programme approach and it would provide an opportunity to analyse results in a Delivering as One Country. The CPF is expected to end in April 2018.

Guinea: Suggested by the regional office. It is a low-income country without much donor presence, and currently with a limited prospect for resource mobilization. The evaluation could provide a basis to identify the potential of a country programme. The CPF ends in 2017.

Cameroon: Suggested by the regional office. It is a middle-income country formulating a new programme as a Partnership and Liaison Office. The evaluation could identify future direction for this new programme approach. The CPF ends in 2017.

Pakistan: Proposed by the Minister for National Food Security and Research of Pakistan. It is a country with a complex programme and the evaluation would help not only FAO but also the government to examine the future direction of the programme.

Nicaragua: Suggested by the regional office. The current CPF was jointly developed with the Government, and there is a strong interest in taking stock of programme achievements and identifying lessons learnt for future joint programming. The new programme will be prepared from mid-2017.

Ecuador: Suggested by the regional office. The country has a profile that could benefit from further collaboration with FAO. The evaluation will support the new FAOR and the new Government to set the course of future cooperation in 2017 during the final year of the current CPF.

Egypt: Suggested by the regional office. The current CPF will be completed in early 2017 and the consultation process for the new CPF with the Government has started. The evaluation will provide a basis for the newly appointed FAOR to assess the strategic direction of the programme in this process.

Azerbaijan: Suggested by the regional office. This evaluation will analyse the new model of cooperation through the Partnership and Liaison Office established in the country and support the new FAOR and the Government in identifying the future strategic direction of the partnership programme.