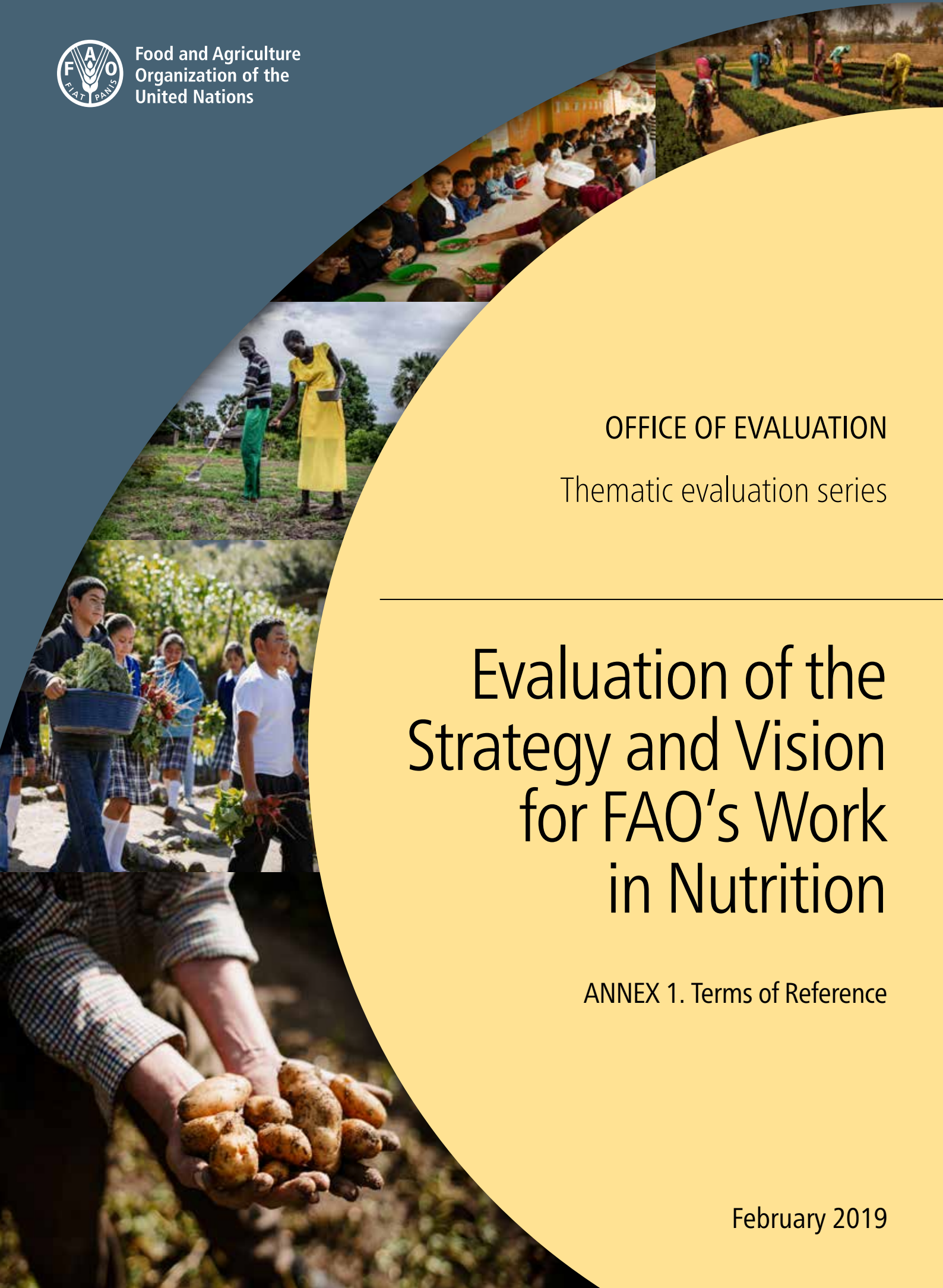




Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



OFFICE OF EVALUATION

Thematic evaluation series

# Evaluation of the Strategy and Vision for FAO's Work in Nutrition

ANNEX 1. Terms of Reference

February 2019



**THEMATIC EVALUATION SERIES**

# **Evaluation of the Strategy and Vision for FAO's Work in Nutrition**

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**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE OF EVALUATION  
February 2019**

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## Terms of Reference

# Evaluation of the Strategy and Vision for FAO's Work in Nutrition

## 1 Introduction

1. These Terms of Reference (TOR) are meant to guide the Evaluation of the Strategy and Vision for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO's) Work in Nutrition (hereafter referred to as 'the Nutrition Strategy' or 'the Strategy'), as requested by the Programme Committee,<sup>1</sup> to take stock of progress achieved by the Organization in implementing the Strategy since 2012.
2. The Nutrition Strategy was developed in response to the 2011 evaluation of FAO's work in nutrition, to directly contribute to the achievement of FAO's Strategic Objective (SO) 1 "eradicate hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition". Therefore this exercise will be closely coordinated with the evaluation of Strategic Objective 1, currently ongoing. However, FAO's work in nutrition also contributes to achieving all its Strategic Objectives, and these need to be taken into careful account.
3. The TOR were developed as part of the initial scoping phase that started in November 2017. They are based upon: i) an extensive literature review (including other relevant evaluations); ii) consultation with staff from the FAO Nutrition and Food Systems Division (ESN) and Office of Evaluation (OED); iii) interviews with FAO staff (including former staff) as well as key actors within the international nutrition architecture from UN and independent experts working on the distinctive relationship between agriculture, food and nutrition; iv) a preliminary screening of FAO's nutrition-related projects operational in 2012-2017 using the Field Programme Management Information System (FPMIS); v) a preliminary screening of the FAO normative products and key events relating to nutrition developed in the past six years; and vi) a "kick-off meeting" held on 15 December 2017 during which participants from ESN, Strategic Programmes representatives and nutrition staff in decentralized offices were consulted to define the focus and specific questions for the evaluation and collect suggestions for key partner organizations and informants.
4. The evaluation is scheduled for implementation during 2018. This document outlines the scope of the evaluation, methodological options and operational modalities for a team of two consultants who will be conducting the evaluation under the guidance of a Senior Evaluation Officer at the Office of Evaluation (OED). The team will have significant interaction with an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) that will be engaged in the evaluation throughout the evaluation process.

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<sup>1</sup> FAO/OED: [Proposal for Evaluation of Thematic Strategies](#), PC 121/7, March 2017.

## **2 Background**

### **2.1 Origins of the Strategy**

5. In 2011, the first-ever evaluation of FAO's role and work in nutrition was carried out setting a fundamental benchmark of the status of FAO's work in nutrition. Its main conclusion was that FAO lacked the vision and corporate commitment accorded to nutrition in its original mandate. Nutrition had been distressingly absent in FAO's thinking and mindsets, resulting in FAO's leadership in nutrition to decline over time. During that same time, the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement was initiated and the importance of nutrition was rising on the international and national agendas. The evaluation concluded that, unless FAO was able to take up the challenge of placing nutrition high on its own Agenda, and demonstrating how its contribution can make a difference to global malnutrition, the Organization was going to lose both in relevance and influence.
6. The 2011 evaluation put forward 14 major recommendations to improve the relevance and effectiveness of FAO's work in nutrition and to clarify its role in the international nutrition architecture.
7. Since then, FAO Management has reinforced the Organization's commitment to nutrition in the reviewed Strategic Framework, restructured the FAO technical unit in charge of Nutrition (ESN, formerly AGN) and committed to a more visible engagement of FAO in the global nutrition architecture. As a first step, the Organization embarked in a year-long participatory process to formulate a new vision and strategy for nutrition in FAO that would guide the implementation of the subsequent recommendations made by the evaluation team (Management Response, PC 108/6 Sup.1). The Strategy and Vision for FAO's Work in Nutrition was endorsed at the end of 2012 (PC 112/2). Since then, the Organization embarked on a review of its Strategic Framework and preparation of the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 through a Strategic Thinking Process launched by the Director-General.

### **2.2 Major developments during the evaluation period**

8. Recent data shows that malnutrition rates remain alarmingly high: 815 million people were undernourished in the world in 2016 (SOFI 2017). Globally in 2016, 155 million children under the age of five are affected by stunting (chronic malnutrition), 52 million by wasting (acute malnutrition), nearly 41 million are overweight, 2 billion affected by micronutrient deficiencies, and almost 2 billion people are overweight or obese, increasing the risk of non-communicable diseases (NCD) (Global Nutrition Report 2017; UNSCN).
9. Over the 2012-2017 period, major policy developments have taken place both internal and external to FAO, with a renewed focus on a food systems approach to address malnutrition in all its forms. There is a growing awareness of the need to confront hunger and malnutrition on a global scale, and an increasing recognition that health-focused interventions are not sufficient to make progress on nutrition. Effective and sustainable strategies to address malnutrition must be multi-sectoral, with food and agriculture playing a key role. National and international actors have gone beyond nutrition-specific initiatives, placing a new focus on mainstreaming nutrition in sectoral interventions, and markedly on planning and implementation of agricultural policies.



10. With today's renewed interest to nutrition and food systems, it is opportune and timely to take stock of FAO's progress in nutrition since 2012. It is worth noting that the Strategy was formulated prior to these developments. Moreover, the relatively short period of time over which these changes happened is an important factor to consider in this evaluation so as to contextualize FAO's work in nutrition, including both opportunities and challenges. These recent global policy changes are summarized in the timeline provided below.
11. During the last five years, many new actors have entered the nutrition 'landscape' such as the SUN Movement, the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) and the Global Nutrition Report (GNR). Multiple private initiatives also emerged.
12. Other well-established intergovernmental actors revamped or repositioned their activities towards nutrition, e.g. the World Health Assembly.. In FAO, nutrition was also increasingly being addressed in **FAO Council** and **FAO Conferences**, as well as FAO technical committees on Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry and Commodities Problems. The **Committee on World Food Security (CFS)** endorsed in 2016 a strategy and vision to step up its contribution to the global fight against malnutrition. Prior to 2013, nutrition was not featured at the CFS; since then it has become a major stream of work, discussed around ICN2 implementation and the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition, seen in side events and analysed in reports such as the High Level Panel of Experts Report on Nutrition & Food Systems presented at CFS44 (Oct. 2017). This increased focus on nutrition asks for a renewed and strengthened governance role of countries, supported by the UN system.
13. The body of literature on the role that agriculture plays in improving nutrition has increased exponentially, as have the calls from high-level panels for a stronger link between agriculture and nutrition.<sup>2</sup> Since 2013-14, a growing number of initiatives, networks and partnerships for nutrition have been strengthened, especially around sustainable food systems, with new emerging actors in the area.

### 2.3 Elements of the Strategy

14. Developed alongside the new Strategic Framework, the Nutrition Strategy has a five-year time frame (2012-2017). It quotes FAO's vision of "*a world free of hunger and malnutrition, where food and agriculture contribute to improving the living standards of all, especially of the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally-sustainable manner*", and adds: "*In focusing this vision on nutrition, FAO seeks to help improve diets and raise levels of nutrition of the poorest and most nutritionally vulnerable in gender-sensitive and sustainable ways*". **The focus is hence clearly on the poorest.** While the Strategy states that FAO will address malnutrition in all its forms (undernutrition, micronutrient deficiency, overweight and obesity), it also says that undernutrition, including micronutrient deficiencies, should remain FAO's primary focus.
15. The Strategy's focus is to impact on households and diets and the nutritional status of individuals through policies, programmes and investments of governments and their development partners. It is people-centred, with a particular focus on the following groups:

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<sup>2</sup> E.g. from the International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (2015); the GLOPAN (2016) Foresight Report: Diets and Food Systems; or the report of the CFS High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) on food systems for nutrition (2017).

- infants and young children, women of reproductive age including girls, preschoolers/school-aged/youths, and vulnerable households.
16. The Strategy describes a unique role for FAO in support of efforts by its Member Nations and their development partners to make food and agricultural systems deliver improved nutrition across the life cycle of their populations, and articulates comparative advantages such as being a knowledge leader, provider of global public goods and capacities, trusted presence at country level, and potential convener of key nutrition stakeholders. It highlights as particularly significant FAO's work to strengthen the capacity of countries to evaluate and monitor their nutrition situation, through capacity building, statistics, analyses, the development of new indicators, etc.
  17. The Strategy aligns with FAO's constitutional mandate and organizational goals. It states to have been "formulated to directly contribute to the achievement of FAO's Strategic Objective 1 to *"Eradicate hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition"*, although it is expected to "also contribute to achieving all its SOs".
  18. The Strategy is to be achieved through **three main outcomes**:
    1. *Increased knowledge and evidence.*
    2. *Improved food and agricultural systems' governance for nutrition.*
    3. *Strengthened national, regional and local capacities.*
  19. Although it does not list anything close to the "minimum standards" of the FAO Policy on Gender Equality, the Nutrition Strategy pays some attention to implementation issues. It elaborates five broad criteria that FAO's work in nutrition should meet<sup>3</sup> and articulates **four principles for FAO's engagement**, as follows:
    - Shape food and agricultural systems to be more nutrition-sensitive so to produce good nutritional outcomes. This implies the potential to take action across the entire system, from production to marketing, storage, processing and consumption. Increasing food diversity and dietary balance in consumption and raising consumer awareness are two ways to improve nutrition sensitivity.
    - Have greater impact at country level by harnessing knowledge and experience across the Organization, and by aligning its work to build upon and serve country initiatives, policies, programmes and projects.
    - Work in partnership, as well as across sectors among stakeholders.
    - Promote economically, socially, environmentally-sustainable and gender-sensitive policies, programmes and investments.

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<sup>3</sup> 1) coherence with FAO's Strategic Objectives; 2) feasibility; 3) focus on improving diets and nutritional outcomes through better food and agricultural systems; 4) relevance to specific nutrition priorities identified by countries and regions; 5) taking environmental, economic and social sustainability and gender equity into account.

## 2.4 Nutrition in the FAO Strategic Framework

20. The revision and subsequent refinements of FAO's Strategic Framework<sup>4</sup> between 2012 and 2017 have progressively integrated nutrition, translating the intentions of the Nutrition Strategy in the result framework of the Organization.
21. In 2012, nutrition was covered under 2 of the 11 Strategic Objectives defined along sectoral lines in the original Strategic Framework 2010-2019 (food quality and safety, food security and better nutrition). The reviewed Strategic Framework, endorsed in 2013, brought substantial changes to the way FAO operates. A new approach to programming and associated resources was introduced to promote inter-disciplinarity, and five Strategic Programmes were designed in 2014 to provide the four-year results-based for delivering results against each Strategic Objective.
22. Nutrition was reflected in the reviewed Strategic Framework both as a part of SO1 on the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, and as of January 2016 as a cross-cutting theme (along with governance, climate change and gender) mainstreamed in the work of all Strategic Objectives<sup>5</sup> (Figure 1) and described in organizational Outcome 6.5.
23. The Medium Term Plan 2014-17 identified six focus areas for nutrition work, three of which are directly linked to ICN2 implementation follow-up:
  - a) support UN-system policy and operational coordination on nutrition;
  - b) support Member Countries through the Strategic Objectives in implementing the ICN2 Rome Declaration on Nutrition and Framework for Action;
  - c) monitor and report on implementation of the ICN2 Rome Declaration and Framework for Action;
  - d) collaborate with the relevant Strategic Objectives to strengthen corporate communication on nutrition and mobilization of resources for implementation of ICN2 Rome Declaration and Framework for Action;
  - e) promote the implementation of 'actions' and corporate approach for mainstreaming nutrition in the implementation of the reviewed Strategic Framework;
  - f) contribute to the establishment and maintenance of a corporate food security and nutrition policy intelligence system to strengthen FAO's support to evidence-based policy dialogue at global, regional and national levels.
24. During 2016-2017, further refinements to the Strategic Framework were made in light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Nutrition featured more prominently in the updated Strategic Framework and in FAO's Medium Term Plan for 2018-2021.<sup>6</sup> The emphasis changed to "*all forms of malnutrition*", as reflected in the five Strategic Objective-level Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators<sup>7</sup> as well as in the updated Outcome and Output statements. Explicit guidance was provided on how nutrition was to be mainstreamed in each of the 'Strategic Programmes' (SP), i.e. the FAO programmes backing the Strategic Objectives.

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<sup>4</sup> SF 2010-2019 (C 2009/3); Reviewed SF 2010-2019 (C 2013/7); updated SF and Outline MTP 2018-21 (CL 155/3).

<sup>5</sup> See Outcome 6.5 of Objective 6 in the FAO Medium Term Plan 2018-2021: *Mainstreaming of nutrition in the Strategic Framework & Strengthening FAO's contribution in the international nutrition architecture*.

<sup>6</sup> Extract from CLL155/3- Reviewed Strategic Framework and Outline of the MTP2018-21 (pp 39/40).

<sup>7</sup> Two additional SO-level indicators : the prevalence of wasting and overweight in children under the age of five (SDG 2.2.2); and the mortality rate due to non-communicable diseases (SDG 3.4.1).

25. At regional level, the **Regional Initiatives** serve as a mechanism to ensure effective delivery and impact of FAO's work on the key priorities of each region contributing to the Strategic Objectives. Several Regional Initiatives incorporated a specific focus on nutrition such as the Zero Hunger Challenge in three regions principally (Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia and the Pacific). Nutrition features also more prominently in regional priorities identified at the 2016 Regional Conferences and to be addressed in the 2018-2021 biennium.
26. At country level, a number of **Country Programming Frameworks** (CPFs) have explicitly addressed nutrition outcomes and reported progress on nutrition-related indicators. As yet, there is no corporate mechanism in place to consolidate the reporting of FAO nutrition-related work across all country programmes.

## 2.5 Normative work in nutrition

27. Normative work in nutrition differs across collaborations with Strategic Programmes and technical divisions encompassing several areas of work. Based on a preliminary analysis, over 167 knowledge products related to nutrition were identified, two-thirds of which produced in 2016-2017, and one-third produced by decentralized offices as lead technical unit, possibly indicating greater attention to adapting products to specificities at country and regional levels. A notable area of normative work in nutrition to be reviewed in this evaluation relates to the **tools to build capacity of FAO staff to include nutrition within FAO's work**. The core of this integrated package of guidance and training modules are the [FAO toolkit](#) and the [E-learning modules on nutrition sensitive-agriculture and food systems](#) launched in April 2017.
28. In the 2012-2017 period, nearly 400 **key events and seminars related nutrition** were identified to which ESN contributed towards and/or attended in a broad spectrum of nutrition-related topics, of which 60 ca. were identified at (sub)regional levels. A preliminary analysis shows that the number of events increased (from 10 in 2012 to 130 in 2017), the majority were held in Europe (followed by Africa and other regions) and, out of the 52 regional level trainings, most were organized in the Regional Office for Africa (RAF). Besides the ICN2 in 2014, the main highlights on events include: i) the **International Symposium on Nutrition 'Symposium on Food Systems for Healthy Diets and Improved Nutrition'** (co-hosted by WHO and FAO, Rome, on 1 and 2 December 2016) targeting country nutrition technical officers in Health and Agriculture; ii) the **Five Regional Nutrition Symposia** organized under the same theme in all five FAO regions between September and December 2017. Each regional symposium focused on the nutritional challenges of the region and showcased how a food systems approach can be implemented to address these. Each region developed key follow-up steps to be implemented to address nutrition. Finally, iii) **ESN Seminars (2016-2017)** with a total of 32 bi-monthly seminars organized, 8 of which jointly conducted with other technical divisions, with the aim to provide FAO headquarters staff understanding of what nutrition entails and how nutrition can contribute to their work.

## 2.6 Organizational set-up for nutrition

29. The FAO organizational set-up for nutrition was restructured twice during the evaluation period, in 2013 and 2016. In 2013, the former Nutrition and Consumer Protection division (AGN) separated from the Codex and food safety group and moved to the Economic and Social Development Department (ES). In January 2016, following the decision to mainstream nutrition across the Organization (as laid out under Objective 6, Outcome 6.5 of the Strategic

Framework), the Nutrition Division merged with the agribusiness specialists, food technologists and food value chains professionals from the ex-AGS division and became Nutrition and Food Systems Division (current ESN). These two significant and recent structural changes are still being absorbed by the division.

30. The division is currently organized into six groups covering specific areas of expertise, as follows: ESND (ICN2/ICN2 follow-ups/Others), ESNA (food composition, nutrient requirements and scientific advice); ESNE (nutrition education); ESNP (nutrition policies and programmes); FLW (agro-food Industries/food loss and waste), and MLVC (market linkages and value chains). Furthermore, ESN collaborates with at least 14 other technical divisions engaged in nutrition work, in the following result domains: i) Nutrition and Food Systems Governance and Accountability; ii) Healthy Diets; iii) Nutrition-Sensitive Social Protection; iv) Nutrition-sensitive Food and Agricultural Systems (Draft ESN programmatic focus areas for 2018-19).

## 2.7 Resource allocation to nutrition

31. *(a) Financial resources:* Owing to FAO's reorganization during the evaluation period, an analysis of the evolution of resources planned in the regular Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) across the three biennia is not straightforward.
32. *(b) Human resources:* Institution-wide human resources identified as "active" in nutrition amount to 109 staff, the majority concentrated between headquarters (40), Africa (38) and Asia (28). However, average time spent on nutrition activities is probably less.
33. *(c) Field Programme relevant to nutrition:* A rapid portfolio analysis using the Field Programme Management Information System allowed for a quantitative and qualitative comparison of FAO's portfolios in nutrition between 2004-2010 and 2012-2017 and includes distribution by region, by donors and by Lead Technical Unit. A typology of support by beneficiaries and objectives is also proposed. Three concentric portfolios were analysed. The data shows a significant growth of all three 'universes' of field projects. The 'medium universe' total value has increased by approximately 145 percent during the evaluation period as compared to the period 2004-2010.

## 2.8 Partnerships for FAO's work in nutrition

34. Partnership development is central to the fulfilment of FAO's role "to *work with others* in global, regional, and national arenas to increase the effectiveness of food and agricultural systems in improving nutrition" as stated in the Nutrition Strategy. FAO's work in nutrition includes collaboration and partnerships, among others with i) **WHO** in relation to ICN2 follow-up and the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025, but also in the development of normative guidance on healthy diets (food-based dietary guidelines), monitoring tools and databases (global food consumption data tool platform/Global Individual Food consumption data Tool, GIFT), Codex and food safety work; ii) **International Financial Institutions (World Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development, IFAD)**, through the collaboration of ESN with the FAO Investment Centre Division (TCI), to integrate nutrition into the formulation of large country's investments programmes in Africa and Asia (over 20 countries); iii) **Rome-based agencies** collaboration on nutrition-related work, in particular with the **World Food Programme (WFP)** in the area of food security and nutrition

(FSN) information and analysis as per the joint FAO-WFP strategy on information systems for FNS 2012-17.

### 3 Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

35. The proposed evaluation will take stock of progress achieved in nutrition by the Organization since the adoption of FAO's Nutrition Strategy in 2012 and since the 2011 Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work in Nutrition.
36. The purpose of the evaluation is to learn from FAO's work in nutrition to guide effective action towards the sustainable reduction of malnutrition in the coming years. This "formative" focus is expected to be quite useful given that the Strategy has no implementation plan and the policy environment in nutrition-sensitive agriculture has changed considerably since the Strategy was developed, as explained in section 1.
37. The objectives of the evaluation are to:
  - a. assess progress achieved in the implementation of the Strategy and Vision of FAO's Work in Nutrition, especially towards mainstreaming nutrition into FAO's own work and thinking, promoting food and agricultural systems governance for nutrition, increasing knowledge and evidence to maximize their impacts on nutrition and strengthening capacities at all levels for effective action.
  - b. Examine how the Strategy, the reviewed Strategic Framework and associated delivery mechanisms have helped FAO to focus and improve the relevance, strategic positioning and effectiveness of FAO's contribution to tackling malnutrition through nutrition-sensitive food and agricultural systems.
  - c. Based on the above, provide strategic recommendations for FAO at all levels – headquarters, regions and countries – to further mainstream nutrition in the work of the Organization and increase the contribution of food and agricultural systems to nutrition.
38. By taking stock of progress achieved, the evaluation will highlight some of the positive work conducted so far and identify potential gaps as well as resources and capacity bottlenecks, with a view to offer concrete orientations on the next steps in FAO's work in nutrition. It will also identify innovative approaches and key interventions required to reduce malnutrition in various contexts.
39. The primary **intended users** of this evaluation are: a) FAO Management and staff at all levels, in particular the Nutrition and Food Systems Division (ESN), the Strategic Programme teams at FAO headquarters and the regional and country offices; and FAO Member Countries and partners, donors of FAO's work in nutrition, as well as other actors directly involved in implementing the Strategy. Secondary users may include the broader community involved in nutrition at global, regional and country level, including parliamentarians, civil society organizations and those participating in the SUN movement.

## 4 Evaluation scope

40. The evaluation will encompass all the work of FAO in nutrition since the adoption of the Nutrition Strategy in 2012. The period of analysis will be from 2012 up to ongoing and planned commitments.
41. The evaluation will encompass any FAO initiative and/or product that specifically 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).
42. Specific nutrition-related themes deserving specific attention as to how they have been integrated in normative and capacity development work: impact of agriculture and food systems on consumption, diets and nutrition; urban nutrition; interaction with the private sector; response to obesity/overweight issues; review of policies/integration of nutrition in sectoral policies and policy coherence.
43. The reference framework will principally be composed of the Nutrition Strategy itself, as well as the new Strategic Framework 2010–2019 endorsed by the FAO Conference in June 2013 and reviewed during 2016–2017, where the work of the Organization on nutrition is mostly contained in Strategic Objective 1 “Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition” as well as in Objective 6, Outcome 6.5 regarding nutrition mainstreaming in all Strategic Objectives.
44. For the period prior to the reviewed Strategic Framework (2012–13), the evaluation will use the original Strategic Framework 2010–2019 as its frame of reference.<sup>8</sup>
45. Following a recommendation of the last evaluation,<sup>9</sup> Codex and food safety/quality were separated from Nutrition in the FAO organigram at the end of 2012, as reflected in the move of the core of nutrition expertise to the ES Department. Although food safety issues are relevant to nutrition and food systems, this linkage is more relevant for highly industrialized and commercialized food systems than for traditional (or mixed) food systems where food safety is often not monitored, or controls not adhered to. Therefore, this evaluation will exclude work on Codex and food safety and primarily focus on pro-poor, people-centred approaches to address structural determinants of malnutrition and the mainstreaming of nutrition into the sectors important for food security and nutrition, including agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, as well as social protection and education.

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<sup>8</sup> Prior to the revision of the Strategic Framework in 2013, FAO's nutrition-related work was framed as part of two Strategic Objectives: D 'Improved quality and safety of food at all stages of the food chain' and H 'Improved food security and better nutrition'.

<sup>9</sup> The recommendation (accepted in the Management Response) was to separate Nutrition from Codex and Food Safety because “*the cohabitation of Codex, food safety and nutrition did not translate into stronger linkages and [...] 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*”.

## 5 Evaluation questions

46. The evaluation will be structured along the main evaluation questions outlined below. The questions were developed through document review (in particular the previous evaluation), and extensive staff interviews during the scoping phase. The kick-off meeting also contributed some questions. Finally, a rudimentary Theory of Change was developed building on the proposed Pillars of Action for mainstreaming nutrition in FAO's work and used to sharpen and expand upon the list of evaluation questions.

**A. Relevance** – to needs at the global, regional, subregional and country levels.

- a1. **Relevance of the Strategy:** Is the Nutrition Strategy comprehensive, and still relevant, given recent developments and emerging challenges in different regions (e.g. sufficient emphasis on micronutrient deficiency, nutrition transition and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), or urbanization)? Are the priorities the Strategy attempted to address still relevant/priority issues for Member States and to the 2030 global development Agenda? Is the focus on food systems useful, clear and sufficiently focussed? Are there useful new concepts or approaches that would deserve to be better reflected in the Strategy?
- a2. **Relevance of the areas of work:** What priority issues are addressed through FAO's work at global, regional and country levels? Was the work carried out by FAO on nutrition since 2012 aligned with the Strategy? Was it supportive of countries/regions priority needs? What entry points appear the most promising? Are there thematic or sectorial gaps?

**B. Effectiveness** – is FAO's work on nutrition achieving results?

- b1. **Results achieved:** What have been the major achievements and significant/influential areas of work under each of the Strategy's outcomes? Is the work evolving in its extension and size? Is it evolving in its content towards better quality of design and better implementation? What were the success factors? What were the weaknesses? What was the balance of investments or efforts between global, regional and country level? Were there synergies between the different work streams and levels?
- b2. **Knowledge management:** Is the implementation of the Strategy and results achieved monitored and reported upon? Is the work of FAO in nutrition systematized and documented? Are there key lessons learned and best practices from countries and regions that can serve to guide the action of FAO in nutrition in the future or in other regions or countries? Are normative products and the field programme building upon one another? Is FAO leveraging information technologies, and managing nutrition knowledge and expertise more effectively since 2012?
- b3. **Gender:** How has gender mainstreaming been incorporated into nutrition programmes? What is the evidence for linkages between women's empowerment and improved nutrition, focusing on access and utilization of food at the household level? How can it be factored into agriculture and food security interventions, and is this connection leveraged in FAO's work?



- C. Efficiency** – in terms of adequateness of work processes to support FAO's work in nutrition.
- c1. **Resources:** How much additional resources (financial and human at global, regional and country level) were mobilized to implement the Strategy, or more broadly to provide nutrition-sensitive support to Member States? How are the capacities of FAO to deliver in the field of nutrition at global, regional and country levels?
  - c2. **Organizational set-up:** Is the new configuration of ESN adequate to support nutrition work in the Organization? Is it leading to greater synergies between the different areas of work within ESN and to a better positioning of nutrition within the Organization?
  - c3. **Mainstreaming:** To what extent is nutrition internalized as a cross-cutting theme in the mindsets of FAO staff? How did the delivery mechanisms of the new Strategic Framework mainstream nutrition themes and work? How efficient are the modalities of collaboration between ESN and the Strategic Programme teams, as well as with other technical units and decentralized offices?
- D. Strategic positioning** – FAO's role and capacity to respond to needs, select appropriate entry points and forge productive partnerships.
- d1. **Evolution since 2012:** How consistently were the recommendations agreed to in the Management Response for the 2011 evaluation implemented? How has FAO's position in the field of nutrition evolved since 2012 and what are the drivers? What was the follow-up to the 2014 ICN2 Conference and the Rome Declaration on Nutrition? Was the Nutrition Strategy disseminated inside and outside FAO at regional and country levels, and is it used to guide FAO's intervention at country level? Are FAO Member States and partners supportive of the Strategy and of a renewed focus on nutrition by the Organization? How is FAO's technical guidance on nutrition-sensitive agriculture now perceived by key stakeholders?
  - d2. **Comparative advantages:** What are FAO's areas of comparative advantage in this area? Is its role clear to other UN agencies, Member States and partners? Has FAO developed its capabilities and used its comparative advantages to a greater extent since the promulgation of the Strategy? Is FAO's role and contribution to nutrition, particularly, its push for food systems approach, at global, regional and country levels visible and acknowledged?
  - d3. **Partnerships:** Has the network of partners FAO works with expanded over time since the inception of the Strategy (including governments, UN agencies, resource partners, civil society, private sector, academia, etc.)? What have been FAO's contributions to the UN Network for SUN and REACH? To the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition? To multi-stakeholder arrangements and partnership agreements with UN agencies that have a mandate in nutrition? How effectively did FAO promote food-based approaches to nutrition in a domain generally dominated by health concerns?
  - d4. **Communication:** How have communication and knowledge management efforts between the country, region and headquarters evolved to inform, propagate and institutionalize the food systems approach to nutrition?
  - d5. **Leadership:** Has FAO played effective leadership and strategically influenced the global, regional and country level agendas on how nutrition can be addressed through food

systems? Has FAO created or seized opportunities to promote nutrition-sensitive food systems?

## 6 Methodology

47. The key evaluation questions above will guide the overall assessment, with further refinement of the scope and development of sub-questions to produce an overall evaluation matrix.
48. The evaluation will adopt a consultative and transparent approach within the team and with internal and external stakeholders throughout the process. It will primarily be based on semi-structured key informant interviews with FAO staff at country, subregional and regional level, governments and regional economic communities, and other stakeholders including SUN, REACH, donors, research institutions, representatives of civil society organizations and other international organizations working on nutrition. A list of stakeholders and partners to consult in this evaluation was developed at the kick-off meeting.
49. The evaluation team will refine, develop and apply a range of data collection tools. Triangulation of different data sources, perspectives and time points will underpin validation and analysis and support conclusions and recommendations.
50. The evaluation team will sharpen the rudimentary **Theory of Change** developed during the scoping phase in collaboration with ESN and other FAO staff working on nutrition.
51. **Mapping nutrition work and its evolution:** Update and improve the rapid inventory of FAO's nutrition work arrived at during the scoping phase. This initial inventory had several limitations and deserves a closer examination with the purpose to: a) further refine the FPMIS project universe by contrasting and comparing it with the lists of nutrition-related projects identified by the ESN staff posted in regional and subregional offices; b) improve the quantitative and qualitative analyses of FAO's work in nutrition and of its *evolution* since the Strategy was adopted (human and financial resources committed to nutrition work in FAO, project objectives, nutrition-related activities and components, targets and beneficiaries); and c) assist in the selection of national FAO staff for in-depth remote interviews, as well as in the selection of projects for the in-depth review (described below).
52. **Synthesis of evaluations related to nutrition:** Synthesis of main findings on the work of FAO in nutrition in evaluations carried out since 2012. The objective is to review and consolidate what past evaluations have to say about FAO's work and role in nutrition and recommend for improvement in the future. It will build on the available meta-analysis of 39 evaluations conducted by the Office of Evaluation (OED) during the period 2015-2016 and synthesized in the Programme Evaluation Report of 2017.
53. **Analysis of Country Programming Frameworks:** A desk review of nutrition integration in CPFs, building on ESN's baseline assessment (ongoing). Could cover United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs).
54. **Nutrition-sensitive review of FAO's food and agriculture portfolio:** A desk review of the extent to which the FAO portfolio of projects is nutrition-sensitive, based on the review of a sample of project documents identified as incorporating nutrition considerations in the 2012-2017 portfolio. The conclusions and recommendations will highlight potential practical

ways to enhance the nutrition sensitiveness of future projects. This review may use the tools and methodology developed by the Investment Centre Division (TCI) to review the World Bank agriculture portfolio.

55. **Inventory and mapping of normative work related to nutrition:** Desk review of key products/services (publication, guidelines, manuals, workshops and seminar documents, etc.) to assess the relevance and quality of the products as well as FAO's role and contribution to global and regional debates on nutrition.
56. **Embedding nutrition in ongoing and planned evaluations with overlapping time frames:** Other evaluations currently planned by the Office of Evaluation (OED)<sup>10</sup> can offer key opportunities to build synergies and generate learning on nutrition useful to this evaluation, if nutrition is properly embedded in their design from the outset. This coordination has already taken place in the case of the evaluations of SO1 and the German-funded nutrition projects in Africa (both ongoing). The two principal strategic evaluations planned for 2018 are: a) with Gender: linking women's empowerment and nutrition; and b) with SO2: gathering experience to date in designing nutrition-sensitive agriculture interventions. Other evaluations on which to piggyback include the Country Programme Evaluations, particularly those countries where nutrition is a priority focus in the CPF and have joined the SUN, and the resilience cluster evaluations in South Sudan, Syria and Southern Africa (response to El Niño).
57. **Use of the SO1 evaluation country case studies:** The evaluation of the Nutrition Strategy has been planned by the Office of Evaluation (OED) as part of the SO1 evaluation. In particular, the country case studies for SO1 were designed to benefit the evaluation of the Nutrition Strategy as well. For this reason, the present TORs do not include additional country case studies but rather assume the use of SO1 evaluation country case studies, namely Brazil, Cambodia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nepal and Nigeria.
58. **Online interviews with selected countries:** As a way to complement the SO1 country case studies, a sample of countries (maximum five) will be selected to hold telephone interviews with FAO country and project staff, as well as other key informants if possible (government, donors). The purpose is to gather insights on how FAO's Nutrition Strategy has been rolled out at country/regional level and experience in mainstreaming nutrition in FAO's field programme.
59. **Mini-workshops:** Small workshops will be facilitated with the Strategic Programme teams in order to trace nutrition-mainstreaming efforts within Strategic Objectives. At the end of the data collection process, a participatory consultation will be held for the purpose of validating the main findings and developing actionable recommendations.
60. **Surveys:** Internet questionnaire surveys are envisaged to collect the opinion of government stakeholders and other national and international institutions in countries that will not be visited directly by the evaluation team and will be captured through:
  - a) A survey of Member Countries: will complement interviews to be undertaken by the evaluation and critically seek the views and opinions of FAO Member Countries (focusing

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<sup>10</sup> The strategic evaluations scheduled for 2018 are that of SO2 and the Policy on Gender Equality. The country programme evaluations are: Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Burundi, Cambodia, Cuba, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Meso-America (several countries), Timor-Leste, and Uganda.

on those with high malnutrition burden) on: i) the relevance of both the Strategy and the areas of focus FAO's work in nutrition; ii) the extent to which these respond to priority needs and issues faced by their own country; iii) FAO's role and comparative advantage in nutrition within the UN system; and iv) the quality and usefulness of the FAO learning tools, knowledge products and country-level support related to nutrition.

- b) A survey of FAO staff: complement the interviews to be undertaken by the evaluation and to solicit feedback from across all relevant divisions and departments of the Organization on: i) the extent to which the Organization's strategy, role, approaches and technical priorities in nutrition are clear; ii) appropriateness of the organizational set-up within the Organization to fulfil this role; iii) satisfaction of staff with collaboration and technical services provided by the ESN Division; iv) what the Organization's comparative advantages are *vis-à-vis* the other UN organizations concerned with nutrition; v) quality and usefulness of the FAO learning tools, knowledge products and country-level support related to nutrition.

## **7 Roles and responsibilities**

61. The Office of Evaluation (OED) will take the lead in drafting the TOR, identifying the team composition and the consultants, and in the organization of their work. It shall brief the core team on the evaluation methodology and process and will review the final draft report for Quality Assurance purposes in terms of presentation, compliance with the TOR, and timely delivery, quality, clarity and soundness of evidence provided. OED is also responsible for following up with ESN for the timely preparation of the Management Response (MR) and the follow-up report to the MR.
62. The OED Evaluation Manager will serve as Team Leader, guide and coordinate the evaluation team in their specific work, discuss their findings, conclusions and recommendations, and oversee the production of the final draft and the final report, consolidating the inputs from the core team with his/her own.
63. The evaluation team is responsible for further developing and applying the evaluation methodology, for conducting the evaluation, and for producing the evaluation report. The evaluation team will participate in briefing and debriefing meetings, schedule its own interviews, and will contribute to the evaluation with written inputs for the final draft and final report. The evaluation team will agree on the outline of the report early in the evaluation process. The core team will refine the scope, criteria, questions and issues listed above, as well as develop their own evaluation tools and framework, within time and resources available and based on discussions with the Evaluation Manager and in consultation with the Evaluation Reference Group (described below).
64. An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) comprised of FAO staff (including former FAO staff) and external independent experts will be set up to ensure ownership across the Strategic Programme Leader as well as technical rigour. A first draft of the TOR was developed in consultation with ESN describing the purpose, composition and activities of the ERG. These need to be finalized and validated.

## 8 Evaluation team composition and profile

65. The evaluation team will consist of one senior international nutrition expert, supported by one analyst for desk reviews and questionnaire surveys. The team will work under the guidance and with the participation of the FAO OED Evaluation Manager.
66. The senior international nutrition expert should bring the following essential skills:
- i. Technical expertise in nutrition, in FSN policy and institutional reform, in capacity development in formulation and implementing FSN policies/programmes, in FSN information systems, and in mainstreaming nutrition across sectors such as agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, social protection and education.
  - ii. Relevant experience in developing countries on areas related to FAO's work (with experience in protracted crisis and resilience building considered an asset).
  - iii. Extensive experience in large-scale strategic independent evaluations involving strategic/technical oversight and advanced analytical skills.
  - iv. Experience with and institutional knowledge of FAO's work, inter-agency mechanisms in nutrition and donor policies (experience working for FAO or similar international development agencies will be advantageous).
  - v. Excellent synthesis and reporting skills.
  - vi. Good communication skills (written, spoken) in English among team members, and French and Spanish to carry out interviews with key informants in countries.
67. The minimum requirements that the senior expert should meet are: postgraduate degree (MSc or PhD) in nutrition, and at least ten years of relevant experience at international level.

## 9 Evaluation products (deliverables)

68. The following key evaluation products will be produced:
- **Evaluation Matrix** with sub-questions and/or information needs under each evaluation question, as well as data collection methods.
  - **PowerPoint presentation** for debriefing.
  - **Draft evaluation report:** The draft report will be prepared in English, with numbered paragraphs, following the Office of Evaluation (OED) template for report writing. It should include an executive summary and illustrate the evidence found that responds to the evaluation questions listed in the TOR. OED and the ERG will review the draft evaluation report to ensure that the evaluation meets the required quality criteria. ESN and other stakeholders will also provide written comments on the draft report.
  - **Final evaluation report:** The evaluation team will finalize the report based on the comments received. Supporting data and analysis should be annexed to the report when considered important to complement the main report.

## 10 Evaluation time frame

69. The proposed time frame for the deliverables and associated responsibilities for their completion is provided below. The timeline will be revised to allow for coordination with other ongoing and planned evaluations.

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Period</b>
Inception Phase	April 2017
ERG Meeting 1	End April 2017
Collection of information; interviews and analysis	May–July 2017
Report writing	Aug–Sept 2017
ERG Meeting 2	September 2017
Report finalization	September 2017
Management Response	October 2018
Presentation to the Programme Committee <sup>11</sup>	November 2018

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<sup>11</sup> The report was delayed and presented to the Programme Committee in March 2019.

