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FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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Synthesis of FAO Evaluations 2014-2019 in Latin America and the Caribbean

Executive summary

The FAO Programme Committee, the direct recipient of corporate-level evaluation reports, invited the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) to submit regional synthesis reports of the evaluations conducted between 2014 and 2019 to the respective FAO Regional Conferences to be held in 2020. The aim of the synthesis reports is to inform the Regional Conferences of the main results, shortcomings and lessons identified by the OED evaluations and provide food for thought. It is important to note that the synthesis reports are not evaluations of FAO's regional programmes, priorities or Regional Initiatives.

Main findings

Results

In the areas covered in this synthesis – the three Regional Initiatives and gender – FAO's contributions in Latin America and the Caribbean have been significant and highly valuable, supporting public policy, capacity-building and knowledge management. This synthesis presents numerous examples of concrete results.

Counterparts consider FAO to be an important partner, well positioned to help achieve the aims of their mandates. FAO is valued for its technical experience, its ability to leverage an extensive network of specialists, its sources of knowledge and resources. FAO is also seen as an honest broker and a neutral and reliable partner. All of this underpins its participation in and contributions to the results achieved.

The factors helping FAO to achieve these results include: its excellent relationships with its counterparts, its synergies with other stakeholders, the use of Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) funds as “seed capital”, continuity in processes of change, and South–South Cooperation (SSC) as a means of collaboration. Factors limiting the scope of FAO's contributions to achieving results include: the specific requirements of donors constraining the actions that can be taken, poor monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes and structural elements beyond FAO's control.

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FAO is recognized for its effective work in supporting countries in the improvement and creation of public policies for food and nutrition security (FNS), but many processes need to be consolidated and there are requests from countries for FAO to continue this work.

Although FAO has supported the comprehensive management of national information systems and the systematization and dissemination of good practices, its work has been limited in some regards and it could still broaden its actions. Project design limitations, poor take-up of learning, limited adoption of family farming practices, a dependence on external resources, welfarism and national structural realities are all factors limiting the sustainability of the outcomes of FNS initiatives in different Latin American and Caribbean countries.

Other shortcomings identified in the evaluations, and highlighted by the synthesis, include the need to:

- increase the promotion of family farming from a holistic point of view;
- continue to support policy-sector initiatives and capacity-building, and finalize processes that remain unfinished;
- continue to strengthen FAO interventions in the area of adaptation to climate change;
- increase the sustainability of certain outcomes of projects involving climate change adaptation actions, as these are fragile.

There has been progress in the application of a gender-sensitive approach to the various intervention measures used by FAO, although limitations persist. There have also been shortcomings in the integration of gender into the design of interventions.

Lessons learned

The evaluations examined contain lessons learned or examples of elements deemed to be of value for future work. These were used in the synthesis as a basis for lessons learned at a macro level. Some of the lessons identified include:

- the projects and instruments to be used should suit the specific characteristics of the area in which they will operate and the needs of their beneficiaries;
- contributions at field level face structural limitations beyond FAO's control and make it impossible to achieve meaningful changes in the living conditions of beneficiaries. FAO's efforts to increase its contributions and support in areas of public policy present opportunities to influence these factors and achieve more sustainable change;
- projects must incorporate "exit strategies" into their design and underpin the sustainability of their achievements;
- FAO's support for rural development must emphasize/demonstrate aspects of viability and economic benefit to the beneficiaries at local level to maintain their interest;
- consolidating gender equality requires the long-term commitment of all parties and includes awareness-raising activities, appropriate policies, capacity-building and targeted measures at a local level.

Conclusions

The results of FAO's contributions in Latin America and the Caribbean have been significant and very valuable, both in terms of the range of issues covered by the three Regional Initiatives and of promoting gender equality. Through its support for public policy-making, capacity-building and knowledge management, FAO has responded to requests for assistance and contributed to progress made. FAO is also seen as a point of reference and a facilitator in the implementation of international regulations and instruments and as a promoter of SSC. FAO is valued as a lead agency that is well positioned to collaborate in the achievement of its counterparts' mandates, with extensive technical capacity. FAO is also perceived as an honest broker and an unbiased and reliable partner, contributing to the coordination efforts and actions of different partners.

While very significant and relevant contributions have been made, the evaluations examined identified a series of shortcomings, as well as actions that need to be taken, including:

- consolidating and increasing support for countries to improve and create public policies to promote FNS;
- addressing the factors that limit the sustainability of outcomes (such as design limitations and the poor take-up of learning and structural elements);
- finalizing processes that were left unfinished and initiating new ones where sector policies and capacity-building are required;
- strengthening FAO interventions in the area of adaptation to climate change.

The development of exit strategies as part of the planning phase for project implementation will facilitate the connection with other initiatives under way or yet to be developed (by FAO or other stakeholders) and will serve as a yardstick for scaling up the sustainability of achievements in the long term. The inclusion of an exit strategy as an expected outcome of any project will serve as an impetus for project coordinators, FAO and national counterparts and guide their efforts from the outset, enabling them to plan and take measures that increase the probability of consolidating achievements.

FAO has been promoting the issue of gender equality in the region since before the Organization developed its institutional policy. The progress made in this area has been significant, including the empowerment of women beneficiaries, increased access to resources, equality of participation in decision-making, the creation of legal frameworks, advocacy and research studies, among other things. At the same time, there remains much to be done, from systematically mainstreaming gender across all FAO programmes and projects to improving M&E systems to assess results in this area.

I. Introduction

Background

1. The FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) conducts evaluations with a view to improving the performance of the Organization's initiatives, fostering corporate learning and demonstrating accountability to Members. The evaluations provide an objective basis for management to establish programmes and strategies and for the FAO Governing Bodies to take decisions. The FAO Programme Committee, the direct recipient of corporate-level evaluation reports, invited the OED to submit regional synthesis reports of the results, lessons learned and trends identified in the evaluations to the FAO Regional Conferences being held in 2020.

Aim, objectives and scope of the regional synthesis

2. The primary aim of the regional synthesis reports is to inform the FAO Regional Conferences of the main results, shortcomings and lessons identified by the OED evaluations carried out between 2014 and 2019. It is important to note that this is not an evaluation of FAO regional programmes, priorities or Regional Initiatives. The secondary aim of the regional synthesis reports is to improve the use of OED evaluation reports at a regional level and to create demand for evaluations focused on the region.

3. This regional synthesis report covers all of the relevant evaluations that OED managed and completed between 2014 and 2019: evaluations of country programmes, thematic evaluations, global evaluations and project evaluations. The report excludes finance and administration issues.

4. The objective is to identify the results, deficits and lessons pinpointed by the evaluations which can add to an informed debate on FAO's contribution to the region and its countries, and to provide thoughts and suggestions on the future planning of work at a regional level.

5. The regional synthesis report focuses on the following questions:

- What are the main results in terms of the regional priorities/thematic areas that have been achieved by FAO in providing support to the region and the countries of the region?
- Which issues and shortcomings identified by the evaluations require attention or consideration by the FAO Regional Conference?
- What lessons can be learned from the evaluations to inform the future programming and actions of FAO in the region?

Methodology

6. Themes were identified in accordance with the terms of reference of the regional synthesis reports by reviewing documents, based on the following criteria:

- the themes identified at the most recent regional conferences;
- a maximum of 3–4 themes per region;
- at least 3–4 evaluations used as data sources;
- their relevance to achieving FAO's Strategic Objectives (SO) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

7. A quick analysis of the content of the evaluations (see Appendix 1) was conducted to identify themes and sub-themes. Fifty-two evaluation reports were reviewed in total. The types of report were as follows:

- Country Programme Evaluations (CPEs) (n = 9);
- Project Evaluations (n = 8);
- Thematic Evaluations (n = 17) and additional case studies (n = 5);
- Global Projects Evaluations (n = 13).

8. In addition, the following documents were reviewed in full:

- Report of the 34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean;
- FAO results and priorities in the Latin America and Caribbean region and regional strategic review (34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean);
- Report of the 35th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean;
- FAO results and priorities in the Latin America and Caribbean region (35th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean);
- FAO Regional Initiatives for Latin America and the Caribbean (FAO 2016).

9. The reports were colour-coded based on their value as a source of evidence in response to key questions on the themes selected: green: very useful (n = 19); orange: somewhat useful (n = 14); and red: not useful (n = 19). Sixty-three percent of the evaluation reports were “very” or “somewhat” useful for extracting evidence (Appendix 1).

Approach

10. FAO’s Programme of Work in Latin America and the Caribbean is characterized by its high degree of alignment with the three Regional Initiatives. The Regional Conferences for Latin America and the Caribbean (34th and 35th sessions) emphasized that FAO should continue to focus on the themes outlined in these initiatives (broadly, food security, rural development and the environment). The quick analysis also identified cross-cutting themes (gender, community participation/empowerment and M&E) that recurred to varying degrees.

11. The vast majority of country programmes and most project evaluations contained evidence to address key questions on these themes. The thematic evaluations of projects were somewhat less useful in this regard, while only a couple of the global projects had a sufficient level of detail for this purpose.

12. Themes are often interconnected and boundaries blur, so the topics had to be broad enough to allow for a certain amount of overlap, given the basis of evidence available and the diversity of the approaches used by the authors of the evaluation reports.

13. Based on an analysis of the reports, the themes selected for review were:

General category	Themes
Regional Initiative 1: Hunger-free Latin America and Caribbean Initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and nutrition security
Regional Initiative 2: Family farming and inclusive food systems for sustainable rural development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural productivity and agriculture • Family farming
Regional Initiative 3: Sustainable use of natural resources, adaptation to climate change and disaster risk management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigation and monitoring • Natural resources management • Resilience
Cross-cutting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender

14. On this basis, the prioritized reports were reviewed and 1 485 extracts were identified using a coding system. Due to the number of extracts involved (some more relevant than others), efforts were made to use only those that were concise, complementary and broadly representative of a variety of examples.

Limitations

15. The synthesis report used information from a sample of evaluation reports that did not cover all of FAO's work in the region during the period and did not necessarily reflect the current state of the matters described.

16. The shortcomings that were identified are not the product of a needs analysis and are based solely on the analysis of the sample of reports used.

17. The requirement to limit the synthesis report to 20 pages made it necessary to summarize information and limit the number of examples included, with the risk of losing nuance and formulating findings that were too generalized.

18. Because of the vast volume of evaluations and their different types, as well as the fact that they were carried out by different evaluators, the content and quality of the reports varied.

Structure of the report

19. The report is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 contains the introduction and includes the objectives, scope and methodology of the synthesis. Chapter 2 summarizes the regional context, covering the state of food and nutrition security, the regional structure and its priorities. Chapter 3 details the findings on FAO's contributions in the region, the shortcomings identified and lessons learned. Lastly, Chapter 4 presents the conclusions.

II. Regional context

20. The Latin America and Caribbean region (LAC) has made significant achievements with regard to the right to adequate food and the protection of the health of all of its inhabitants. However, in recent years, various emerging factors have put at risk the sustainability of the results achieved.

21. The undernourished population in the region fell by 32 percent between 2000 and 2018, decreasing from 62.6 million to 42.5 million. Above all, this change is attributable to the progress made in South America, where the undernourished population declined by almost 19 million people, from 42.6 million people in 2000 to 23.7 million people in 2018. The other two subregions reported moderate changes in their statistics: in the Caribbean, the number of hungry people went from 8.9 million to 7.8 million, while in Mesoamerica, the undernourished population fell by around 200 000 people, but remained around 11 million for almost the entire period.¹

22. Moderate and severe food insecurity in Latin America have increased considerably. Food insecurity, as measured by the Food Insecurity Experience Scale, went from 26.2 percent to 31.1 percent between the 2014–2016 and 2016–2018 triennia, adding more than 32 million people to the 155 million living with food insecurity in the region in 2014–2016.² Other emerging factors adding to these conditions include overweight and obesity, which are affecting the population of LAC and manifesting themselves, in particular, in adults and school-aged children.

23. The challenges the region is facing when it comes to rural territorial development remain substantial, despite the achievements made. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)³ calculates that the rates of poverty and extreme poverty in rural areas in 2018 were 45.2 percent and 20 percent, respectively. According to FAO,⁴ the primary economic activities of the rural population are linked to agriculture, in particular, family farming. The challenges that must be overcome in order to have a positive impact on poverty reduction include limited access to basic services and productive resources, weak policy frameworks and a lack of incentives for rural development, among other things.

24. The sustainable use of natural resources, adaptation to climate change and the management of disaster risks are critical factors that are closely linked to the eradication of hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean. According to FAO,⁵ frequent floods and droughts have a negative impact on the economies of countries in South America and Central America, while hurricanes have similar effects in the Caribbean. FAO and ECLAC estimate⁶ that agricultural activity in the region is the activity most negatively affected by climate change. Given the role played by family farming and the level of rural development in the region, the economic effects are significant. The need to strengthen farmers' capacity and livelihoods, so that they can withstand climate change and foresee and recover sustainably from natural disasters, are highly relevant themes in the region.⁷

Regional structures

25. FAO in Latin America and the Caribbean has organized a technical and administrative structure to manage its relationships with the governments of the region's 33 Members more efficiently and smoothly. This structure is composed of the following bodies:⁸

¹ FAO, PAHO, WFP and UNICEF (2019) *Regional Overview of Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean 2019*. Santiago. 135. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

² *Ibid*

³ ECLAC (2019) *Social Panorama of Latin America, 2019* (LC/PUB.2019/22-P/Re v.1). Santiago.

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/family-farming/regions/latinamerica/en/>

⁵ FAO (2018) *Climate change and food and nutrition security Latin America and the Caribbean (disaster risk management in the agricultural sector)*. Santiago.

⁶ ECLAC (2018) *Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in the Agriculture Sector and Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean (2018–2030)*. El Salvador.

⁷ FAO (2018) *Climate change and food and nutrition security Latin America and the Caribbean (disaster risk management in the agricultural sector)*. Santiago.

⁸ www.fao.org/americas/conferencia/en/

- *The Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (FAO RLC)*, located in Chile, supervises and coordinates Subregional and Country Offices and promotes Regional Initiatives.
- *The Subregional Office for Mesoamerica (SLM)*, located in Panama, coordinates the work of the Organization with the different subregional bodies and governments.
- *The Subregional Office for the Caribbean (SLC)*, located in Barbados, coordinates the work of the Organization with the different subregional bodies and governments.
- *The Regional Conference* is the highest body at regional level, where Member representatives (such as the minister for agriculture) discuss challenges and priorities in relation to food and agriculture. The Regional Conference defines the priority areas of work for each biennium.
- *The Regional Commissions* are discussion forums in which all of the region's FAO Members participate. These include: the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission (LACFC), the Commission on Livestock Development for Latin America and the Caribbean (CLDLAC), the Commission for Small-Scale and Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture of Latin America and the Caribbean (COPPESAALC) and the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission (WECAFC).

Regional priorities

26. Having made substantial progress, LAC has witnessed a deterioration in food security and nutrition conditions in recent years, along with the emergence of an epidemic of overweight and obesity, affecting a significant proportion of the population.

27. The 35th Session of the Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean⁹ considered the following issues and relevant policy challenges for the region: (a) ending hunger and eradicating all forms of malnutrition in LAC; (b) working towards a transformative agenda for sustainable rural development; and c) sustainable agriculture that is resilient to climate change. The Regional Conference asked FAO to help countries to determine sources of funding, to transfer technology and to create the capacity, with a territorial focus, to effectively apply relevant policies in the region.¹⁰

III. Findings

Outcomes

28. The quantitative and qualitative measurement of contributions requires an M&E system that generates information not only about the number of activities carried out, the number of participants and types of output expected and delivered, for example, but also the changes to which these have led. At FAO, significant efforts have been made, but effective M&E systems have not yet been developed to make it possible to determine the changes achieved in the short, medium and long term. Not having this type of information means, undoubtedly, that FAO's contributions are under-reported and, as such, undervalued.

29. Taking this and the scope of the exercise into account, based on a small sample, the following provides some examples of the identified outcomes to which FAO has contributed.

⁹ Report of the 35th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean. Montego Bay, Jamaica, 5–8 March 2018.

¹⁰ *Ibid*

Finding 1: Based on the sample of evaluations examined, FAO's contributions in Latin America and the Caribbean have been significant and highly valuable in the areas covered by this synthesis report – the three Regional Initiatives and gender – through support for public policymaking, capacity-building and knowledge management.

30. ***Regional Initiative 1: Hunger-free Latin America and the Caribbean initiative***

- Obtaining and maintaining the commitment of key stakeholders, such as regional bodies, governments, parliamentary networks, civil society and the private sector, to promote FNS programmes, legislation and policies (including intersectoral approaches). For example, FAO contributed to the development of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States' (CELAC) Plan for Food Security, Nutrition and Hunger Eradication 2025, as well as its gender-sensitive strategy. This helped to boost the political commitment of the countries in the region to fight against hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.
- Impact on the development of public policy. By way of example, FAO has supported the expansion of the Parliamentary Front against Hunger and its collaboration with the Latin American Parliament (Parlatino) in its work to aid the development of public policy. In Mexico, FAO supported the design, monitoring and analysis of public policies focusing on the reduction of overweight and obesity in children of primary school age and contributed to the design of strategies for better assistance and guidance on appropriate nutrition. In Trinidad and Tobago, FAO supported the preparation of the Food and Nutrition Security policy. In Honduras, FAO contributed to the preparation and approval of the School Meals Law. In Colombia, FAO assisted municipal authorities with the design of policies related to food distribution and supply systems for cities, in addition to the creation and consolidation of the Food and Nutrition Security Observatory and the establishment of the M&E system for FNS policies.
- Increase in community FNS. In Bolivia (Plurinational State of), the evaluation on adaptation and mitigation of climate change found that FAO helped to increase the levels of food security and agricultural production for more than 7 000 beneficiaries (families). In El Salvador, food production increased by 15 percent and vegetable gardens made it possible to diversify the nutritional diet of families located in areas where a climate change adaptation project operated. In Mexico, a sustainable vegetable-garden project increased the accessibility, availability and variety of nutritional food for supply to community kitchens. Similarly, through farming projects, the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) contributed to an increase in and improvement of agricultural production for income generation and the availability of nutritious foods.
- Promotion of collaboration and coordination. In Antigua, FAO promoted the establishment and implementation of an Advisory Committee for Intersectoral Technical Management to improve governance and coordination between all sectors (education, health and agriculture) interested in a school feeding programme. FAO supported forums such as the National Council for Food and Nutrition Security (CONASAN) in El Salvador, as well as the National Commission for Food and Nutritional Sovereignty and Security (CONASSAN) and its provincial equivalent (REDSSAN) in the Dominican Republic.

31. ***Regional Initiative 2: Family farming and inclusive food systems for sustainable rural development***

- Impact on the development of public policy. In Guyana, FAO facilitated the formulation of a national livestock development policy and the five-year strategic plan of the Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA). In Honduras, FAO supported the official approval of the concept of family farming, a pilot programme for the voluntary registration of family farmers, the creation of the Public National Commission on Family Farming and the National Policy on Savings and Credit Banks. In El Salvador, the

Organization contributed to the implementation of policies for productive diversification, appropriate technologies, strengthening of family farming and institutional coordination in the territories. In Nicaragua, FAO supported the review of the regulatory law on the production, marketing and research, import and export of seeds. SSC, facilitated by FAO in Cuba and Mexico, helped to revise policies to eliminate the practice of scuba diving for lobster, without negatively affecting the finances of fishing families. In Guatemala, FAO advised on the review and approval of the 2011–2015 agrarian policy based on the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT).

- **Capacity-building.** In several LAC countries, FAO helped to strengthen beneficiary capacities in areas such as training on productive processes, the integrated management of pests and diseases, the diversification of crops and varieties, the staggering of crops as a strategy for permanent food availability, the production and storage of locally adapted seeds, and harvest and post-harvest techniques. In Guyana, the Organization supported the preparation of livestock farmer manuals for employees of GLDA, as well as the improvement of its veterinary laboratory facilities and the training of employees. In Nicaragua, FAO strengthened the institutional capacity of the Nicaraguan Institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture (INPESCA) by bolstering its information systems (Divers' Census and Fishing Census and Lobster Value Chain Study), research capacity, tools for the evaluation of fishery resources and its methodology for awareness-raising and horizontal training. In Honduras, FAO supported more than 1 000 rural farmers' organizations, comprising peasant farmer associative businesses, farmers' associations or cooperatives, and savings and credit banks.
- **Changes generated.** In Grenada, the evaluation of the FAO programme in the Caribbean demonstrated that the training and assistance provided by FAO to members of a farmers' association resulted in an increase of up to 50 percent in its income. In Colombia, the evaluation on sustainable land management highlighted the quantification by members of the environmental and socioeconomic benefits resulting from the establishment of silvopastoral systems: forage production grew 6 percent; production increased from 1 animal/hectare to 4-5/hectare; less investment was needed in agricultural materials, including fertilizers and manual labour; milk production increased from 15 litres to 45 litres and an increase in cattle weight generated higher income. In Nicaragua, the CPE concluded that the assistance provided by FAO enabled national institutions to broaden the coverage of their services. For example, it assisted the Healthy Backyard Solidarity Programme (*Programa Solidario Patio Saludable*) by implementing a promotion system that taught and trained 850 outreach workers in backyard farming techniques, who then took the programme to around 8 500 families. The evaluation of the Guatemalan country programme cited FAO's support for the Directorate of Regional Coordination and Rural Extension (DICORER) in reintegrating the rural extension system, enabling the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food to install 338 rural extension agencies and numerous Learning Centres for Rural Development (CADER) in the country.

32. ***Regional Initiative 3: Sustainable use of natural resources, adaptation to climate change and disaster risk management***

- **Impact on the development of public policy.** In Argentina, FAO supported the development of actions for the integration of sustainable land management at a local level, including the proposal of a provincial law known as the Promotion of Agroecological Farming Systems Law; in Panama, it supported the preparation of the draft Land Law that would integrate sustainable land management into the country's planning, financing and policy frameworks, as well as the National Plan of Action for Sustainable Fishing; in Nicaragua, it accompanied the Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Technology in the preparation of the National Plant Breeding Strategy; in Peru, it supported the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation in the preparation of its Plan for Risk Management and Adaptation to Climate Change in the Agricultural Sector (2012–2021); in Ecuador, it

facilitated the integration of conservation and the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in the updating of the National Biodiversity Strategy (2015–2030) and its Plan of Action.

- Capacity-building. In Bolivia (Plurinational State of), FAO supported the implementation of the National Wheat Production and Transformation Plan, facilitated coordination between different national ministries and inter-institutional cooperation at national, regional and local levels to establish and implement an early warning system. In Mexico, FAO contributed to the preparation of REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries) measures, strengthening capacities in the National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR) to monitor the emission and absorption of greenhouse gases and to capture information for decision-making. In El Salvador, the Organization supported the methodological design, planning and management of micro-watersheds (management plans) and, to this end, developed institutional technical capacity. In Nicaragua, FAO contributed to the design and implementation of the Agroclimatic Information and Analysis System, trained technical staff and supported the execution of the workplan with financial resources and advice from a technical mission comprising Mexican experts and FAO employees.
- Changes generated. In Panama, FAO's ecological and economic evaluation of technologies for sustainable land use was used by the Ministry of Environment as technical support in discussions to create a new trust fund for water, protected areas and wildlife. In El Salvador, FAO's evaluation of a project to reduce land deterioration in micro-watersheds highlighted the progress made on protecting and conserving soil and water in an area of around 1 757 hectares and on increasing vegetation cover in the target micro-watersheds. FAO's evaluation of the Benefit-sharing Fund (II) of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture reported that small-scale farmers and their associations had been empowered to make informed decisions on their food security, nutrition and economic development, enabling them to: (a) choose varieties that reproduced seeds for the next season, reducing their dependence on external seed purchases; (b) produce varieties that required little to no additional supplies, thus also reducing farmers' dependence; and (c) include a range of varieties with a commercial value to generate additional income.

33. *Cross-cutting issue: Gender*

The evaluation of FAO's work on gender (the LAC regional report) concluded that FAO was contributing to closing the gender gap in agriculture and rural development, in line with regional priorities. This evaluation and the others analysed for this synthesis pointed to the progress made at policy and community level, including:

- Impact on the development of public policies. FAO lent technical support to the CELAC Working Group for the Advancement of Women and to the design of the Gender Strategy for the CELAC Plan for Food Security, Nutrition and Hunger Eradication. FAO also supported approval and implementation of this strategy at national level by providing technical assistance to the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti and Paraguay. FAO contributed to the design of three Parlatino model laws – on family farming, small-scale fishery and school feeding – with a gender equality approach. In Paraguay, FAO advocated for and provided technical assistance with the formulation and approval of a law on rural women, subsequently promoting its regulation, dissemination and implementation. FAO also supported Paraguay's National Plan for Indigenous Peoples, which included a chapter on indigenous women, and advocated the formulation of a law on indigenous women. In Guatemala, it supported the Gender Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food with the formulation of a gender equality policy and corresponding plan of action.

- **Capacity-building.** In the Dominican Republic, in collaboration with UN Women, FAO supported the development of capacity in the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment to incorporate a gender perspective into policies and programmes. In Guatemala, FAO has continued to support the Gender Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food, which has been folded into the Technical Commission of the Family Farming Programme to Strengthen the Rural Economy. In Honduras, FAO has helped to reduce the existing inequality gap through three specific measures: (i) the provision of productive assets (credit, land, equipment and other) directly to women; (ii) promoting access for women to decision-making spaces in the executive structures of agricultural associative businesses; and (iii) championing the participation of women in family nutrition and food tasks. In Mexico, as part of the implementation of the SPFS, FAO helped to prepare a gender-related manual and series of instruments to be used in community workshops (reaching 80 000 rural families).
- **Knowledge management.** In collaboration with ECLAC, FAO prepared the ATLAS of Rural Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, which contains specific data on the situation of rural women in the region and on the implementation of treaties and matters related to gender. FAO also promotes the #*MujeresRurales* (Rural Women) campaign as a means of highlighting the challenges that rural women face and to share knowledge and experience in pursuit of independence for women. The Hunger-Free Mesoamerica Programme (*Mesoamérica sin Hambre*), a Mexican SSC initiative, published a report relating the experience and accounts of 11 female parliamentarians fighting against hunger in Mesoamerica (*Mujeres Parlamentarias en la Lucha contra el Hambre en Mesoamérica*).
- **Changes generated.** In Ecuador, 70 percent of farmers who participated in FAO's agrobiodiversity project were women. Women have been recognized for their importance as knowledge-holders on agrobiodiversity and as generators of their own income through participation in agroecological fairs. The participation rate of women in establishing and implementing participatory guarantee systems was more than 85 percent. Work in the Chimborazo area of Ecuador strengthened women's leadership within beneficiary communities; they now act as promoters, participate in water councils and serve as presidents of parish councils. In other countries, including Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, the review found case evidence of projects helping to promote substantial change in women's quality of life and participation: opportunities to generate their own income, for example, giving them greater ability to buy essential items, such as food, school materials and medication; self-empowerment in decision-making through experience in sales, leadership posts in community organizations, access to goods and services and reduced workloads.

34. There are a number of factors affecting FAO's contributions.

Finding 2: Counterparts consider FAO to be an important partner, well positioned to contribute to achieving the aims of their mandates. FAO is valued for its technical experience and its ability to leverage an extensive network of specialists, sources of knowledge and resources. FAO is also seen as an honest broker and a neutral and reliable partner. All of this underpins its participation in and contributions to the results achieved.

35. The evaluations reviewed for this synthesis, in particular, those of the country programmes and projects, identified certain factors that have helped FAO to obtain results, including:

- **Its excellent relationships with its counterparts**, such as national and local governments, donors, civil-society organizations, the private sector and academia. Similarly, the trust that FAO generates among beneficiary communities has been very important.
- **Its synergies with other stakeholders** who have assisted or collaborated on various initiatives have been valuable in terms of increasing results. Close collaborations with

other stakeholders are a feature of FAO programmes in all countries. By way of example, in Honduras alone, the following were noted:

- a collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP) to equip basic grain producers' associations and to open up market opportunities in the state purchasing system;
 - a cooperation with the Caritas Archdiocese of San Antonio Las Flores, which is experienced in dealing with humanitarian situations, to jointly provide emergency assistance to the community;
 - in terms of building synergies within an initiative, a project to buy products from family farmers for the National School Feeding Programme, is a positive example of a process with effects on two areas of family farming: an improvement in the nutrition of students in schools and the purchase of crop surpluses from small-scale farmers.
- The use of TCP funds as “seed capital” has been highly significant in increasing the level of cooperation. The evaluation of the FAO programme in Colombia found that the relationship between the investment of TCP resources for the formulation of projects and all of the funding obtained as a consequence has been positive, particularly in the areas of rural development and family farming, FNS, and emergencies and rehabilitation. Cuba is another key example of TCP resources being used to access new resources. Thanks to a TCP, FAO was appointed by the Delegation of the European Union, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to execute a project to support Cuba's municipal self-sufficiency policy. Similarly, with funding from several TCPs and thanks to intensive advocacy work and the transfer of capacity to national counterparts in the search for new sources of funding, new resources were obtained via the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and Green Climate Fund (GCF).
 - Continuity of prior processes of change has been a crucial success factor in those projects using the prior development processes of other stakeholders in selected communities as a starting point. In Guatemala, the knowledge generated by the SPFS was used and translated into validated methods of good agricultural practice (GAP) adapted to the agroecological and cultural conditions of local communities. The duration of projects, as in the case of SPFS, has been a key factor in achieving significant change in the FNS practices of beneficiary families and key stakeholders dealing with this issue at local level, notably, municipal governments, associations and civil-society organizations.
 - SSC, within the framework of dynamic knowledge management, has made it possible to increase the benefits of experience/expertise and exchanges of ideas between different countries.

36. In contrast, some factors were identified as having limited the scope of FAO's contribution to results, including:

- The specific requirements of donors that influence FAO's work programmes. One of the challenges FAO faces in Guatemala, for example, is the need to fulfil the specific requirements of each of its donors. These requirements relate to the duration of projects and programmes, their geographical location, themes to address and budget availability. The requirements do not always create the most favourable conditions for achieving the outcomes and changes expected in the long term.
- Inefficient M&E processes, focused more on the measurement of activities and outputs and less on the outcomes/results generated. The M&E information is used more to report on implementation (completion of activities) and less in the decision-making necessary to ensure objectives are achieved.

- ‘Structural’ elements and/or transitory matters beyond the control of FAO that affect the performance of many initiatives, such as:
 - a change in priorities, particularly when there is a change in government (national or local);
 - the limited access of peasant families to productive assets and financial resources;
 - specific situations, as in Candelaria de La Frontera in El Salvador (adaptation to climate change project), which saw a reduction in the flow of remittances and an increase in the price of the staple food basket and agricultural supplies, which negatively impacted fieldwork;
 - limited presence by and insufficient support from the state does not aid sustainability of results, as can be seen in the absence of investment, lack of follow-up/technical support, monitoring of important indicators (FNS, climate, etc.), among other things.

Shortcomings

37. This synthesis cannot replace a regional needs analysis, or even necessarily identify the deficits/priorities to the same degree as other processes and instruments such as the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs). While the evaluations identified country-specific shortcomings and needs, as well as areas in which FAO should continue its work, there remains much to be done, despite the contributions made. The evaluations also describe the issues to be addressed and/or actions to be completed.

38. The main message that emerges is that FAO must continue to provide support to the development, implementation and evaluation of public policies, as it has an important role to play here, regardless of the specific areas it needs to address.

Finding 3: FAO is recognized for its effective work in supporting the creation and improvement of national public FNS policies. While there are many processes that need to be consolidated, countries have requested that work in this area continue along the same lines.

39. The assistance that FAO provides to the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean to improve and create public policies has been highly effective and has been recognized by various national stakeholders and by international bodies that work on development issues. The beneficiary countries have made significant achievements by updating and/or adjusting their legal and normative frameworks on FNS. However, there is still room for improvement in order to generate better results and increase sustainability. This includes incorporating new approaches and concepts that will allow countries to respond to the SDGs.

40. In this context, through the various evaluations, FAO has been asked to capitalize on its FNS experience to maintain its assistance actions throughout the public policy cycle (impact, capacity-building, preparation/adjustment of policies and regulations, application and distribution of policies, evaluation, etc.) and to incorporate new dimensions and emerging approaches into strategic frameworks. This includes, for example, strengthening the FNS capacities of public institutions by implementing an approach that is holistic, multidisciplinary and inclusive and by incorporating a human rights-based approach.

41. Examples of demands made on FAO by stakeholders interviewed in CPEs of Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, among others, include consolidating ongoing processes and focusing on the sustainability of outcomes; strengthening national capacities for policy implementation and evaluation; exploring greater collaboration with other United Nations entities and the private sector; and empowering civil society to seek greater possibilities for sustainability. Furthermore, stakeholders suggested strengthening the capacities of its offices in terms of policy, gender and nutrition. A final suggestion was that FAO explore the possibility of allocating lower budgets over a longer period to facilitate the implementation of activities related to Strategic

Objective 1 (SO1, to contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition). This is down to the lack of support required over the full policy cycle, thanks to the TCP mechanism.

Finding 4: Although FAO has supported the comprehensive management of national information systems, as well as the systematization and dissemination of good practices, it has shown certain limitations and can still broaden its range of actions.

42. FAO has supported several national statistics offices, including two actions mentioned in evaluations: support for the completion of the agricultural pre-census in the Dominican Republic and the implementation of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) in El Salvador by means of the SICA Regional Programme of Information Systems on Resilience of Food and Nutrition Security (PROGRESAN-SICA). All countries need to use the data gathered to evaluate policies and gaps in implementation. Evidence-based decision-making goes beyond data management; it requires interpretation, synthesis of data flows and context-specific evaluations, leading to learning and motivation.

43. Strengthening capacity to assess policy impact emerged as a key function in the policy cycle to which FAO could contribute more. Various stakeholders consulted in the evaluation processes agreed that FAO had shown limitations in the comprehensive management of national information systems and knowledge management. In some cases, good practices were not developed because of a lack of technical data (such as a lack of food and nutritional stability indicators) or the agro-environmental and local socioeconomic adequacy of instruments (such as healthy back yards and school gardens in the case of the evaluation of the FAO programme in Nicaragua). Others deemed there to be limited capacity to provide the support that countries needed to develop and manage information systems that would allow the generation of evidence for decision makers, according to the evaluation of FAO's contribution to SO1 (in the case of the Dominican Republic). Project experience (positive or negative) was rarely systemized and there was little dissemination of the outcomes of good practices and lessons learned, limiting the replication, upscaling or adjustment of implementation strategies. For example, through SSC, the School Feeding Framework was implemented in Brazil and some countries were keen to learn from the experience. However, a lack of systemization and insufficient dissemination of good practices limited its use in other countries.

Finding 5: Project design limitations, poor uptake of learning, limited adoption of family farming practices, a dependence on external resources, welfarism and national structural realities are all factors limiting the sustainability of the outcomes of FNS initiatives in different Latin American and Caribbean countries.

44. Several of the evaluations analysed noted that the development initiatives implemented depended heavily on external resources and that once FAO's interventions were completed, the continuity of outcomes was subject to the availability of funds held by national institutions, as well as the priority assigned to them in their budgets. For example, the funds for the Sustainable Vegetable Gardens Project in Mexico came from the Secretariat of Social Development (SEDESOL)¹¹ and the project's continuity will depend on its results and the availability of Organizational resources. No specific actions are identified to enable local stakeholders to develop the technical and financial capacity to continue to implement actions or to complete planned measures once external resources end. For example, the evaluation of the FAO programme in Guatemala noted that the school garden initiative there included an educational phase (manuals for teachers), but that this could not be completed due to state budget constraints.

45. Other evaluations point to the poor uptake of learning and of the limited adoption of sound family-farming practices by beneficiaries, as well as the welfare-oriented nature of the state, among other things, as factors limiting the sustainability of FNS initiatives. In Honduras, for example, where

¹¹ After 2018, this became the Secretariat of Welfare.

family and community vegetable gardens were promoted through the FAO Country Programme, the evaluation found that a significant proportion of these were no longer being cultivated because seeds were unavailable and producers were turning to the production of basic grains. A similar situation arose in Colombia, where resource donations are a common practice in government interventions (the evaluation termed it “welfarism”) and where FAO has very little room for manoeuvre.

46. The third lesson learned (see below) complements this finding.

Finding 6: There needs to be better promotion of family farming from an holistic point of view.

47. Various evaluations recommended that FAO maintain an holistic approach to its work on family farming, taking into account the diversity of interests, needs and support requirements, with a view to strengthening the social fabric (in the case of the evaluation of Colombia’s country programme) and improving capacity, so that farms can operate as businesses (CPE Trinidad and Tobago). It was also recommended that synergies be established with other institutions to facilitate the provision of comprehensive assistance, including updated information on different topics, such as new technologies, weather conditions and market elements, so that farmers can make more informed decisions when planning agricultural activities, particularly the sowing of basic grains.

48. For example, in terms of the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) approach (in which FAO has a lot of experience and which has produced very good outcomes), some evaluations recommended the following: (i) using the approach as a scaled-up extension model to increase improvements in ruminant genetics (CPE Guyana); and (ii) adopting it to introduce agricultural practices and train farmers with a business approach, enabling them to improve the viability of their agricultural businesses to achieve greater agricultural productivity (CPE Trinidad and Tobago).

49. The Nicaragua CPE recommends continuing to optimize initiatives that are highly relevant to improving the economic conditions of families, where the support of FAO national teams and SSC assistance are of great importance. One of these cases is the development of the artisan-sector supply chain for whole lobster, transitioning it from fisheries and sale of lobster tails only. Another is the continuity of measures to strengthen community seed banks to achieve consolidation and sustainability. FAO could also continue to support relevant institutions in developing and implementing strategies to give farmers up-to-date information on weather, prices and other topics related to the value chains of their main agricultural products, so farmers can make sounder decisions.

Finding 7: Sectoral policies and capacity-building are areas where FAO can continue to provide support, while concluding actions that remain unfinished and starting new ones where needed.

50. The evaluation of FAO’s contribution to reducing rural poverty highlights the need to promote an agricultural sector policy that helps to boost productivity, foster the sustainable management of natural resources, increase competitiveness, health, plant health and food security standards, and promote technologies available for specific lines of production, as part of broader policies that address the environment and the impact of climate change. All of these aspects are relevant to the region and are areas where FAO has ample experience, so can contribute to their formulation and implementation.

51. According to the Colombia CPE, technical support was not focused on the processes of constructing and realizing public policies related to rural development and the governance of land tenure, although this had been planned. FAO’s contribution to public policy and decision-making in programme areas was limited and less than its partners had expected. In other cases, agricultural policies continued to concentrate on large-scale commercial agriculture, excluding the vast majority of small-scale and vulnerable farmers who could not acquire the manufactured supplies required to sustain such agriculture in the medium and long term.

52. The need for FAO to continue working to strengthen capacity to support countries in different areas is another main message. For example, major bottlenecks arise in the value chains of different agricultural products when it comes to market access, because this point of the chain generally

receives less attention than the production process. Various evaluations suggest that attention should be focused on market forces and opportunities. For example, improving farmers' access to export markets is very important for Caribbean countries given the need to develop new value chains and new points of sale for their products.

53. Many evaluations identified pending actions. These include: (i) in Guyana, a rapid response to food-safety incidents is needed through improved food traceability, including the review and enactment of legislation relating to all aspects of agricultural health and food safety; (ii) in Guatemala, a suggested analysis to examine institutionalism in the rural development sector and to identify the factors, stakeholders and processes preventing institutions from fulfilling their roles and mandates; (iii) in Nicaragua, forestry companies showed organizational, administrative, production and market-access weaknesses; and (iv) in Ecuador, a need to continue supporting the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) in training experts on the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity, in order to increase interest in and guarantee the appropriate implementation of holistic programmes.

Finding 8: There needs to be continued strengthening of FAO interventions in the area of adaptation to climate change.

54. The 2015 evaluation of FAO's contribution to adaptation and mitigation of climate change (AMCC) highlighted that, in general, FAO was not a leader in AMCC discussions on the international stage and was seen as a technical partner, operating on the periphery, with limited strategic priority when it came to AMCC matters.¹²

55. In specific cases across the region, some deficiencies were noted in certain evaluations. In Peru, when it came to the climate-smart agriculture (CSA) approach FAO uses to outline its various climate-related interventions in diverse projects (including policies, knowledge development and work at local level), this did not explicitly reflect CSA and its efforts in relation to its three pillars – improving food security, adaptation and mitigation. In Colombia, FAO's projects have not systematically addressed the issue of public policy on the environment, sustainability and climate change, taking into account the diversity of stakeholders, so many actors do not consider FAO to have a model for dialogue on the issue. In Bolivia (Plurinational State of), FAO could have been more effective in sharing the experiences and good practices of pilot projects on adaptation to climate change and emergency disaster risk reduction (DRR) in other countries. Key informants emphasized that providing DRR assistance does not resolve the fundamental challenges of AMCC in their area in the long term and that greater focus and support is needed in terms of structural assistance to more directly address AMCC. This will help to support sustainability in the long term.

Finding 9: Some of the planned actions supported by FAO in relation to the management of natural resources have been affected by different factors that have limited their outcomes.

56. The evaluation of the agrobiodiversity project in Ecuador noted that the project facilitated the formulation of three ordinance proposals on the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in the provinces of Chimborazo, Imbabura and Loja, but only that in Chimborazo was approved by ordinance in 2017. The other two were not approved because of a lack of political will among provincial governments.

57. In Honduras, the CPE observed a lack of focus on the sustainable management of natural resources, particularly of water with integrated production systems, and the limited application of watershed methodology. Similarly, no specific actions were identified to manage natural resources and adapt to climate change in territories where food security projects were executed. The evaluation, therefore, suggested more comprehensive operations to ensure the sustainable management of natural resources to reduce the effects of climate variability; to strengthen FAO's role and contribution in this

¹² This diagnosis was made before the Organization prepared its strategy on climate change, which includes increasing FAO's efforts and role in this area.

area; to make the most of recent collaborations on the environment at national level; and to explore the opportunities to mobilize GEF and GCF resources at a national and regional level.

58. Given the limitations it faces, the evaluation of the project on natural resources management in Chimborazo suggested promoting a comprehensive view on the development and planning of the land to include *in situ* conservation of agrobiodiversity, recognizing local knowledge and native technologies, and identifying the agrobiodiversity that can generate income.

59. Colombia's CPF included no interventions in the area of sustainable forestry management to make the most of its vast forestry potential. The evaluation suggested that in the next CPF, FAO place greater importance on the sustainable management of natural resources as one of the cross-cutting objectives of cooperation in the country, taking into account strategic measures at territorial and watershed level, including governability and social inclusion.

Finding 10: The sustainability of certain project results in relation to climate change adaptation is fragile.

60. The evaluation of the agrobiodiversity project in Ecuador states that: (i) the sustainability of many project activities aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity depends on regulatory approval to implement the agrobiodiversity and seeds law and the political will of the MAG; (ii) the lack of internal capacities within the MAG to lead the research and promotion of agrobiodiversity in a coherent and coordinated manner is another factor putting at risk the sustainability of the progress made; (iii) a high number of farmers have not managed to perfect their seed storage and selection skills, putting their productivity at risk, while others have not received training to monitor their plots and make progress in their adaptation to the effects of climate change.

61. The evaluation of the adaptation to climate change project in El Salvador states that it is unlikely that the actions promoted by the project will be sustainable in the medium and long term without additional resources, technical assistance and initiatives to consolidate the results achieved. The project lacks a comprehensive exit strategy that sets out the commitments of all parties and the sources of financing that will be made available.

Finding 11: There has been progress in the application of a gender-sensitive approach across the different types of intervention used by FAO, but limitations persist.

62. FAO has made progress in the application of gender equality in its development interventions. However, there are still technical and methodological limitations that have to be overcome to incorporate the gender focus in a cross-cutting manner and to ensure the social, economic and political empowerment of women, as well as to strengthen their invaluable contribution to the struggle against food insecurity and rural poverty. The limitations are evident in different phases of the project cycle and relate to the different standards that FAO has defined for the evaluation of the gender approach.

63. For example, the evaluation of the Nicaraguan country programme identifies limitations (similar to other countries) to the mainstreaming of gender in FAO's work, noting progress in only three of the nine relevant minimum standards and the need to improve capacity for the analysis and use of sex-disaggregated information for the analysis and formulation of policies and programmes (standard 2). It also notes that the designs of projects show little more than a declaration of intent in relation to a gender-sensitive approach. In effect, of the 23 projects analysed in the evaluation, only 17 percent incorporated some level of gender analysis and 30 percent of the projects analysed incorporated products, actions and/or gender targets. Without an initial diagnosis of the problem from a gender-sensitive perspective, designing actions to reduce barriers and gender gaps is made more difficult in practice.

64. The evaluation of country programmes in the Caribbean states that the topics of gender and youth are insufficiently integrated into FAO's programmes and not integrated conceptually into programme documents. It also cites insufficient analysis and limited resources for gender-sensitive activities.

65. The Colombia CPE report notes that development of the gender perspective is unequal and, in most cases, limited and it does not crosscut the project cycle. Inclusion of the gender perspective is confined to indicating the percentage of women participants, but is rarely used for a situational analysis or applied to the development of actions. The differentiation of beneficiary social groups in projects related to the traditional division of roles leads to the greater participation of women in the production of food for family consumption and of men in actions to generate income, which limits the participation of women in actions that could contribute to their greater economic autonomy. In the same vein, the incorporation of differential and gender-sensitive approaches into FAO's programme in Colombia in the period analysed was very limited at both the conceptual and practical levels.

66. One issue that stands out in several evaluations relates to the limited amount of resources allocated in project budgets to achieve objectives linked explicitly to overcoming gender gaps.

Finding 12: There was limited incorporation of a gender-sensitive approach into intervention design.

67. The evaluation of FAO's work on gender (LAC regional report) identified a knowledge deficit on the methods and approaches for integrating gender issues into technical interventions. Although FAO has produced valuable knowledge documents, these outputs are not well known or widely used at country level.

68. The evaluations identified limitations to project design when it came to incorporating a gender focus. In several (ten) evaluations of different types of intervention in different countries, a gender-sensitive approach was not incorporated into the design. The following examples confirm this.

69. In the case of the adaptation to climate change project in El Salvador, the evaluation stated that the project document frequently mentioned 'gender-sensitive approaches', but did not explicitly describe how the specific needs of women and young people would be attended to in practical or operational terms. In the results indicators, the gender focus was limited to gathering and reporting data broken down by sex.

70. The evaluation of the project to strengthen agrochains noted that an analysis was not made of the initial situation of women, which impeded the design of actions to generate more equal conditions between men and women. It did not incorporate a gender-sensitive approach from the design stage, or any specific component geared towards promoting equal conditions for women who work in agriculture. This meant that in some countries, such as Nicaragua, for example, certain activities geared solely towards groups of women did not generate good results. The project also did not include a system of indicators or M&E to evaluate the specific impact of the activities on women.

71. The evaluation of FAO's work on gender also observed that the insufficient integration of gender into FAO's Strategic Framework impeded greater incorporation of the gender perspective into the planning, implementation and presentation of reports at national and regional level. As far as FAO's gender policy is concerned, the lack of intermediate results linking implementation mechanisms to the five Strategic Objectives in a way that is attributable to FAO's work will continue to hamper the evaluation of the Organization's work on gender equality. According to the evaluation, at project level, only 55 percent of the projects in the region included some gender analysis in their design, and their quality varied. This was the result of FAO's lack of sufficient knowledge and capacity at local level and of the low levels of awareness of some members of the technical teams about the importance of including the approach in technical areas. Poor gender analysis leads to poor gender-related interventions.

Lessons learned

Lesson 1: The projects and instruments to be used should be appropriate to the specific characteristics of the country in which they are operating and to the needs of beneficiaries.

72. FAO's projects are considered relevant, successful and responsive to the priorities of national counterparts. The satisfaction expressed in the various evaluations analysed reflects the alignment of the measures adopted to the specific problems to be addressed. The degree of flexibility and adaptation of methods and approaches was greatly appreciated.

73. The evaluation of global project GCP/GLO/337/GFF, "Decision-Making Support for the Mainstreaming and Scaling-up of Sustainable Land Management", found the methodological framework, consisting of seven modules, to be apt. The strategy adopted worked well, as it enabled a response to issues at different levels – national, regional, provincial, landscape and local. The modules were sufficiently flexible to allow adjustment to different country contexts, facilitating appropriate solutions.

74. There were one or two cases in which the alignment of measures was not optimal. In culturally diverse environments with profound asymmetries that affect the majority of the population, it is necessary to adapt the orientation of interventions to the geographic, social, cultural and temporal specificity of the beneficiary community. The evaluation of FAO's programme in Guatemala cited cases in which the field teams made such adaptations during the implementation process, but concluded that, in general, the projects were of generic or universal design, as if from a standardized package of technical services suited to any type of recipient (in this case, mostly indigenous people and women). The evaluation considers it important that the strategy be adapted to take into account gender and indigenous peoples as key assets in promoting sustainable change in the development of a territory.

75. The same evaluation identified other cases in which communities had asked FAO to implement activities that best suited their needs, not always in line with their intended purpose. At the time the evaluation was conducted, FAO had still not been able to modify its activities in the way required by the communities in question. This demonstrates the importance of carrying out a prior analysis of communities' needs and adapting interventions to a specific context.

Lesson 2: Contributions at field level face structural limitations beyond FAO's control, which make it impossible to make meaningful changes to beneficiaries' living conditions. FAO's efforts to increase its contributions and assistance in areas of public policy present opportunities to influence these factors and achieve more sustainable changes.

76. In certain countries, FAO's assistance programmes face structural challenges that make the consolidation of contributions difficult. A substantial proportion of changes in the living conditions of small and medium-sized agricultural producers require the transformation of factors that have historically led to and perpetuated their exclusion from the benefits of development – a situation that is beyond FAO's control. These factors include the limited access of peasant families to natural resources and productive assets (such as land and water), as well as limited financial resources, the need for more technical assistance and access to supplies.

77. For example, the evaluation of FAO's country programme in Guatemala highlighted the fact that many of the farmers who were beneficiaries of the projects leased their land, limiting the implementation of GAP for the conservation of soil, as well as long-term investment in the territory more generally. Some communities suffered from structural limitations, such as a lack of water, limited access to land and the need for more technical assistance on vegetable production. These factors highlight the importance of carrying out long-term assistance programmes while simultaneously dealing with the structural limitations.

78. The final evaluation of the regional project on “Strengthening selected agrochains with an entrepreneurial approach in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua” (GTFS/RLA/176/ITA) cited restricted access to resources by small-scale farmers as a limitation to development and a lesson learned. Consequently, both project components and policies need to improve access to resources via bank loans, seed capital, revolving funds and/or leverage from clients and suppliers as a priority in future projects.

79. In addition, there is evidence, in certain cases, of weak state presence and oversight to reverse the structural situation. While this analysis should be the starting point for the design and implementation of activities, it is important to stress that FAO cannot replace the role or responsibility of the state. These factors negatively impact the effectiveness and sustainability of the transformation process.

Lesson 3: Projects must incorporate exit strategies into their design and underpin the sustainability of their achievements.

80. One of the issues that requires greater emphasis in project design and implementation is forecasting the measures to be taken prior to the end of activities to increase the sustainability of achievements. The examples cited in the outcomes and shortcomings section demonstrate the importance of this.

81. A project conducted by FAO from 2011 to 2016, aimed to reinforce REDD+ readiness in Mexico and facilitate SSC, did not include an exit or sustainability strategy in the design phase. This would have enabled a more precise estimation of the political and financial resources required to sustain and maintain the uninterrupted functioning of the platforms and systems developed after the project ended.

82. There are other examples of such challenges to achievements that must be considered when formulating exit strategies. As proof of this, the evaluation of FAO’s programme in Guatemala characterized the changes initiated by some projects as ‘temporary’ and subject to the State sustaining, continuing and consolidating them. It noted the following:

- promoters of CADER continued to work, though greatly discouraged by the lack of state support. Some of them said they were thinking about giving up.
- FAO’s work with the Land Fund (FONTIERRAS) needed to overcome the challenges of institutional weakness, politicization and a lack of government budgetary allocation.
- FAO’s support for the institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food was reduced due to resistance to change and indifference or dismissal on the part of staff.

83. The evaluation of FAO’s programme in Honduras found that the short duration and limited resources of some projects had restricted the sustainability of changes, by not allowing the causes of community vulnerability to be addressed, or the scale of the interventions to be expanded to more affected communities where a high level of vulnerability existed. The Evaluation Team concluded that implementing interventions of sufficient size, in terms of resources and duration, over the years had a positive impact on reducing poverty and improving access to services.

84. Another important aspect for the sustainability of achievements, observed by the evaluators of the Benefit-sharing Fund (II), was having a period of implementation in line with the capacity and needs of farmers. The lesson learned was that in all projects geared towards the *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA), duration should be estimated in growing seasons, not calendar years, and should allow enough growing seasons to enable the development of management, storage and replication processes for quality, effective seeds.

85. The evaluation of global project GCP/GLO/337/GFF, “Decision-Making Support for the Mainstreaming and Scaling-up of Sustainable Land Management” shows that the introduction of practices for sustainable land management (SLM) requires a long-term funding strategy. Although the new projects funded by national state resources or donors could be an element of said strategy, attracting investment from the private sector for profitable productive SLM could be more important in many situations. This is a significant lesson for designing new initiatives. Good SLM practices and approaches must be profitable and finance themselves in the long term, or be subsidized by governments for environmental reasons, for example. These subsidies must be long-term to have a real and sustainable impact. Accordingly, the institutions that promote SLM must know whether the practices promoted will be profitable or not for the farmers/communities in question. Thus, there should be more focus on the financial and economic studies/analysis of the good practices, technologies and SLM approaches when designing similar new projects.

Lesson 4: The eradication of poverty, particularly food and nutrition insecurity, is a complex and multidimensional problem that requires comprehensive/complementary support adapted to each specific context.

86. The evaluation of FAO’s contribution to SO1, the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, highlighted how FAO’s approach is based on hunger being as much a governance problem as a technical challenge, prompting it to work outside its traditional technical space with a view to integrating rights-based advocacy and highlighting the need to work with “non-traditional partners”, such as ministries of finance, health and education. Consequently, the topic of nutrition features more prominently in SO1.

87. Tackling the challenges this involves requires comprehensive guidance. The evaluation of FAO’s country programme in Honduras identified some measures to be taken into consideration, such as: (i) the assessment and formulation of conceptual models based on technical and scientific evidence of causal factors; (ii) the design of theories of change and models of intervention that comprehensively address the most important factors; (iii) sustained efforts and the coordinated commitment of numerous stakeholders, with the clear leadership of state institutions; and (iv) changes in the approach and lifecycle of the actions supported by international cooperation that place an emphasis on long-term and well-formulated, comprehensive solutions to problems.

88. Conducting larger-scale, comprehensive interventions is only possible by influencing national public policy and coordinating and complementing operations on the ground – two elements that constitute one of FAO’s priority areas of action in Guatemala, for example. Similarly, the collaboration and complementarity of different (non-traditional) stakeholders is a necessary enabler for this approach.

89. An example of the interdependence to which different technical responses can contribute can be found in the “lessons learned” of the final evaluation of the “Mainstreaming of the use and conservation of agrobiodiversity in public policies through integrated strategies and *in situ* implementation in four Andean Highlands provinces” project (GCP/ECU/086/GFF GEF ID 4777).

- Lesson 1 – Agrobiodiversity plays an important role in improving family diet and, consequently, is directly related to improving public health.
- Lesson 2 – Agrobiodiversity can help farmers adapt to the effects of climate change and is essential to ensuring the medium- and long-term food and nutrition security of small-scale farmers and their marginalized rural communities.
- Lesson 7 – The teachers who established school gardens used them effectively to promote interactive education and child nutrition and to generate income by selling seeds, crops and meals to children’s parents and families. This confirmed the relevance of schools and the approach of school gardens as channels to promote agrobiodiversity. A similar example was mentioned in the evaluation of FAO’s country programme in Guyana.

Lesson 5: The support FAO provides for rural development must emphasize and demonstrate viability and economic benefit to the beneficiaries at local level to maintain their interest.

90. The evaluation of FAO's programme in Colombia concluded that the level of work put into preparing, adapting and implementing *in situ* the concept of rural territorial development and the territorial approach had generally been very low, in particular, the role of family farming within it. The evaluators stressed that family farming is a significant component of rural territorial development, as it has the potential to be the most important productive unit for rural family income: it helps rural families to remain in the countryside; it can facilitate their participation in niche markets, whereby efficiency is not down to size but a workforce's ability to specialize and micromanage; and it can boost their contribution to the generation of foreign currency through participation in external markets. It is, therefore, important to win and maintain the commitment of beneficiaries in the long term, particularly, those geared towards family farming.

91. One lesson learned, cited in the final evaluation of the regional "Strengthening agrochains" project, was that, in agricultural projects, it is important to improve the performance of crops (for example, through training in GAP), as this will boost incomes and be a clear benefit to farmers, leading to their participation and interest in other project components. The evaluators of "Benefit-sharing Fund (II)" concurred, highlighting that farmers want to produce PGRFA not only for their food and nutrition security, but also to increase their income. Farmers were quick to use high-yield commercial varieties of PGRFA with a view to selling surpluses, thus linking the conservation of PGRFA with income generation.

92. A lesson learned in the aforementioned final evaluation of the "Mainstreaming of the use and conservation of agrobiodiversity in public policies" project was that in promoting the production of agroecological crops for fairs, for example, it is important to include the training of promoters and farmers in the calculation of the economic, social and environmental results of agrobiodiversity, as this enables farmers to make informed decisions and promotes learning among and within families.

93. The evaluation of FAO's programme in Nicaragua questioned the relevance and viability of proposals on business development and access to markets for certain organizations, such as community-based forest enterprises (CFEs) making artisan products in isolated territories devoid of local demand. The lesson learned from the process, according to the evaluators, is the importance of knowing who to work with, what to work on and how, and which results are to be expected by when. The evaluation believes more coordinated knowledge management is necessary to make progress towards the validation of a strategy for strengthening CFE, with instruments and methodologies that can respond to the diversity of the groups in ethnic, gender, organizational, productive and market-access terms, so as to achieve realistic outcomes.

Lesson 6: Consolidating gender equality requires the long-term commitment of all parties, including awareness-raising activities, appropriate policies, capacity-building and targeted measures at a local level.

94. The evaluation of FAO's work on gender issues recognized that promoting gender equality both within and outside the Organization involves ongoing, long-term efforts, including actions to raise awareness and develop skills, among other things. However, the evaluation also noted that it is important to establish short-term objectives to guarantee the realization of these intermediate results, as they are key to enabling progress towards FAO's Gender Objectives. Awareness of the importance of addressing gender issues, obtaining the political commitment to drive them forward and having the capacity to do so are necessary to ensure gender mainstreaming in FAO's work. The evaluation concluded that the two first components are generally present in the region, but that there are capacity deficiencies when it comes to carrying them out.

95. As FAO has limited resources for work on gender, the evaluation emphasized that it would make sense to focus efforts on supporting ministries of agriculture in this regard, as these are its main counterparts. This is a strategic way of reaching rural areas, where the gender gap is wider. Such an approach leads to significant outcomes in countries where the Ministry of Agriculture does not assign enough resources to activities related to gender. Meanwhile, as this strategic process is consolidated, taking specific actions at a local level remains important. Examples include:

- encouraging the participation of women by offering services such as mobile nurseries during training courses in Guatemala;
- a need to facilitate women's participation in some contexts by establishing quotas (as was done in the Cotton Project in Paraguay, according to the evaluation);
- promoting participatory processes, such as those adopted by the "Climate Change Adaptation to Reduce Land Degradation in Fragile Micro-Watersheds located in the Municipalities of Texistepeque and Candelaria de la Frontera" project in El Salvador, which allows communities to become involved and participate more decisively and consciously.

Lesson 7: Actions aimed at promoting gender equality run more smoothly and are more likely to produce better results when designed based on good-quality, context-specific gender analysis.

96. The evaluation of FAO's work on gender identified the development of good-quality gender analysis, at regional and national level, as essential to promoting better-targeted interventions. The same is true for project-level interventions, which require context-specific gender analysis. Understanding gender dimensions and the different roles played by men and women is vital to tackling the gender divide. At community level, the best results are achieved when precise analyses are performed on the different gender roles in the beneficiary area, with the involvement of both women and men from the outset.

97. According to the evaluation of FAO's programme in Nicaragua, by not analysing the obstacles that women face (for example, the distance from homes to plots of land, their limited time due to the burden of domestic work) and responding to their specific needs (such as seeds for backyard production and varieties for own consumption in the specific case analysed), the shortcomings in access to public goods and services cannot be closed effectively. High-quality analyses help to achieve the desired results. The gender evaluation deemed periodic reviews to monitor intermediate achievements to be equally important for identifying gaps and improving the chosen strategy. For example, in 2018, FAO Paraguay hired an external consultant to carry out an evaluation of the quality of gender mainstreaming in the office – a fact considered good practice in terms of periodic review.

IV. Conclusions

Conclusion 1

98. The outcomes achieved as a result of FAO's contributions in Latin America and the Caribbean have been significant and highly valuable in terms of the range of issues covered by the three Regional Initiatives and of promoting gender equality. Through its assistance in formulating public policy, capacity-building and knowledge management, FAO has responded to requests for support and contributed towards the progress made. FAO is also seen as a point of reference and facilitator when it comes to implementing international regulations and instruments and as a promoter of SSC. FAO is valued as a lead agency that is well positioned to collaborate in the achievement of its counterparts' mandates and with extensive technical capacity. FAO is also perceived as an honest broker and an unbiased and reliable partner that contributes to coordination efforts and actions by various partners.

Conclusion 2

99. Although highly significant and relevant contributions have been made, the evaluations examined identified a series of shortcomings, as well as actions to be taken, including:

- consolidating and increasing the support to countries for the improvement and creation of public policies in pursuit of FNS;
- extending FAO's support to the comprehensive management of national information systems, for the systematization and dissemination of good practices;
- addressing the factors limiting the sustainability of identified outcomes (such as design limitations, the poor uptake of learning and structural elements);
- increasing the promotion of family farming from a holistic perspective;
- completing processes that were left unfinished and initiating new ones where sector policies and capacity-building are needed;
- strengthening FAO interventions in the area of adaptation to climate change.

Conclusion 3

100. The lessons learned serve as guidelines for the design of measures to be taken to achieve FAO's various objectives in the region.

Conclusion 4





101. The development of exit strategies as part of the requisite planning for the implementation of projects will facilitate the connection with other initiatives that are under way or yet to be developed (by FAO or other stakeholders) and will serve as a critical measure for increasing the sustainability of achievements in the long term. The inclusion of an exit strategy as an expected outcome of any project will serve as an impetus for project coordinators, FAO and national counterparts, and guide their efforts – from the outset – to plan and undertake measures that increase the probability of consolidating achievements.




Conclusion 5




102. FAO has promoted the issue of gender equality in the region since before the inception of its institutional policy in this regard. The progress made in this area has been significant in terms of the empowerment of women beneficiaries, access to resources, participation in decision-making, legal frameworks, advocacy and studies, among other things. At the same time, there is still much to be done, from systematically mainstreaming gender across all FAO programmes and projects to improving M&E systems to measure results in this area.

Appendix 1 – List of evaluations included







Evaluations with a green dot were included in the analysis sample.



#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
Country Programme Evaluations					
1	Evaluation of FAO's contribution to Members of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and Barbados 2010–2015	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FNS • Food and feed systems – value chains • Agricultural censuses and information systems • SPS, animal and plant health (transboundary pests and diseases) • Fisheries and forestry management • Disaster risk management (DRM) and emergency response 	Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Barbados	
2	Evaluation of FAO's cooperation in Colombia (2009–2013)	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FNS • Environment, sustainability and climate change • Rural development and family farming • Livestock health and food safety • Emergency response and rehabilitation • Gender perspective • Ethnic groups • Lifecycle and people with disabilities • Partners and alliances • Key challenges for the future 	Colombia	
3	Evaluation of the Positioning and Contributions of the FAO programme in Cuba (2013–2018)	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable production of food, seeds and animal feed • Access to the global climate funds • Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation (FIRST) • Catalytic entity 	Cuba	
4	Country Programme Evaluation Guatemala (2013–2016)	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and nutrition security • Sustainable management of renewable natural resources, management of risks and adaptability to climate change 	Guatemala	



#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural policies and institutions • Competitiveness of family farming • Reduction of disadvantages and empowerment of women 		
5	Evaluation of FAO's contribution in Guyana (2012–2015)	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for food security and nutrition • Agriculture and rural development • Natural resources and climate change • Institutional capacity development for agricultural health and food safety • Partnerships • Gender 	Guyana	
6	Honduras Country Programme Evaluation (2013–2016)	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable FNS in the territories • Sustainable rural business development with generational handover and a gender-sensitive approach • Management of natural resources and adaptation to climate change • DRM and resilience • Gender • Sustainability 	Honduras	
7	Evaluation of FAO's programme in Mexico (2013–2018)	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social and productive inclusion • Food security • Adequate nutrition of girls and boys • Eradication of hunger among people with a lack of access to food • Reduction in extreme poverty • Public policies (agriculture, food, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture) • Modernization of the regulatory and institutional framework • Environmental sustainability • Agrobiodiversity • Resilience • Climate change 	Mexico	





#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSC 		
8	Evaluation of FAO's Cooperation programme in Nicaragua (2013–2016)	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of capacities/knowledge management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ climate change adaptation ○ family farming ○ agroclimatic information ○ Parliamentary Front 	Nicaragua	
9	Evaluation of FAO's contribution in Trinidad and Tobago (2010–2015)	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FNS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FNS policy ○ national agricultural data and information • Agriculture and rural productivity and business development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ value chain ○ modernization of the food and agricultural sector ○ food standards ○ forestry ○ fisheries • Gap: Youth in agriculture, gender mainstreaming 	Trinidad and Tobago	
Project Evaluations					
1	Final Evaluation of the Project “Climate Change Adaptation to Reduce Land Degradation in Fragile Micro-Watersheds located in the Municipalities of Texistepeque and Candelaria de la Frontera”	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development/strengthening of capacities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ adaptation to climate change (ACC) approach in the planning of fragile micro-watersheds ○ fragile micro-watershed management plans • Food security: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ domestic vegetable gardens ○ diversification of productive activities and improvement of productivity ○ agricultural practices resistant to climate change • Improvement in the soil quality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ vegetation cover ○ vegetation materials and supplies • Integrated natural resources management practices in the wider landscape: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ field schools • Increase in the quality and availability of water: 	El Salvador	







#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ sustainable water management practices ○ rainwater harvesting systems ● DRM to increase ACC capacity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ risk reduction, preparation, response and recovery in the face of disasters ○ vulnerability and risk perception index ○ climate risk maps and early warning systems focused on drought ● Cross-cutting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ participation and empowerment of stakeholders ○ gender equality and empowerment of women 		
2	Ex-post Evaluation of the Project “Contribution to the food security of vulnerable families of Antioquia”	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● FNS ● FF sustainable productive undertakings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ access and availability of food ○ promotion of good eating habits ● FF commercial undertakings ● Implementation of productive undertakings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ intervention models ○ field school ● Model departmental plan for the supply of the staple food basket ● Strengthening of capacities for the development of local supply plans and FNS programmes <p>Gender: Does not consider conceptual or operational separation by gender</p> <p>The project’s beneficiary population was defined as “families”</p> <p>Gap: Afro-Colombian population and ethnicities and ethnic territories do not form part of the Technical Cooperation Project Agreement</p>	Colombia	●

#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
3	Final Evaluation of the Project “Integrated Management of the Ilha Grande Bay Ecosystem” (BIG Project)	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning, policy and institutional strengthening • Biodiversity conservation and protected areas • Threat analysis and mitigation and monitoring and enforcement • Public environmental awareness and communications • M&E and knowledge management 	Brazil	
4	Final Evaluation of the Project “Mainstreaming the Use and Conservation of Agrobiodiversity in Public Policy through Integrated Strategies and in situ Implementation in four Andean Highlands provinces”	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity in public policies • Biodiversity conservation and protected areas • Threat analysis and mitigation and monitoring and enforcement • Public environmental awareness and communications • Inclusivity of indigenous communities 	Ecuador	
5	Final Evaluation of the Project: “Management of Chimborazo’s Natural Resources” (2015–2017)	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of biodiversity in production landscapes/seascapes and sectors • Public policies in order to ensure food sovereignty • Participatory planning of the management of water basins • Local-government capacity-building 	Ecuador	
6	Final Evaluation of the Regional Project “Strengthening of selected agrochains with an entrepreneurial approach in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua”	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positioning of farmers • Strengthening of productive, processing and sales capacities • Farmer organizations • Regional agrochains 	El Salvador Guatemala Honduras Nicaragua	
7	Final Evaluation of the Project “Strengthening Climate Change Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction in Agriculture to Improve Food Security in Haiti After the Earthquake”	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hurricane Isaac and Sandy response • Production systems for climate-resilient local plant materials, crop varieties and seeds • Agricultural and agroforestry production systems (FFS) 	Haiti	
8	Project “Strengthening of the sustainability of land restitution processes”	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land or collective territory restitution • Sustainability and permanence of families 	Colombia	









#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender: Participation of women in characterization processes, as well as in the implementation of productive projects 		
	Thematic Evaluations				
1	Evaluation of FAO's contribution to Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation, Final Report (2009–2014) <i>See annexed report with the cases of Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Peru and Saint Lucia</i>	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Normative work and analysis Strengthening Member countries' data and knowledge Developing-country enabling environments Technical assistance and field-level interventions Climate-smart agriculture 	11 countries globally, 3 of which in RLC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bolivia Plurinational State of) Peru Saint Lucia 	
	Evaluation of FAO's contribution to Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation – Annexes (2009–2014)	2015	<u>Bolivia</u> (Plurinational State of) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> water and agriculture (promoting climate risk management and reducing vulnerability to strengthen sustainable agriculture production) Emergency DRR/CCA (preparedness and risk reduction in response to extreme climate events and water supply problems – also for Peru) Climate risk management and reducing vulnerability to strengthen sustainable agriculture production Community engagement Normative work Seed germination using simple rainfall prediction guidelines Training local municipalities in using an early warning system Seed banks, small-scale drip irrigation systems, small fisheries based on water harvesting and crop diversification in farmers' gardens Gender mainstreaming Challenge: Scaling up 	Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Peru, Saint Lucia	





#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
			<u>Peru</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Plan for risk management and ACC in the agricultural sector ○ Assessments of climate change impacts and mapping of vulnerability to food insecurity ○ Comprehensive and adaptive management of environmental resources ○ Struggle against poverty and the desertification and ACC by means of the co-management of water basins • Comparative advantages (facilitation, expertise and tools) versus minimal when implementing • Policy development (PLANGRACC-A) and in DRR <u>Saint Lucia</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Disaster risk mitigation in agriculture, fisheries and forestry ○ Emergency agriculture ○ Emergency assistance for the recovery of vulnerable farmers • Capacity development • Observation: Often few results obtained (Project 3203 more successful though sustainability an issue) 		
2	Evaluation of FAO's Work on Gender (2012–2017)	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress towards meeting objectives (policy and strategic for RLC in CELAC, Parlatino, various countries) • Empowerment, introduction of technology (Guatemala) • Lessons learned 	Worldwide	
	➤ Regional Report: Latin America and the Caribbean	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and political level contributions (at regional and country levels) • Sensitization/awareness-raising • Input provision 	Countries visited: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ El Salvador ○ Guatemala ○ Mexico ○ Panama 	

#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity development • Lessons learned and enabling factors • Challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Paraguay Multiple countries cited in the report (broad representation)	
3	Evaluation of FAO's work in Genetic Resources (2007-2015)	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance examples • Partnerships (Guatemala, paragraph 62) 	Worldwide and case studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Brazil ○ Chile ○ Ecuador ○ Guatemala ○ Peru There is an example (p.27) of the improvement of seeds for family farming in Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Ecuador and Peru	
4	Synthesis of the Evaluations of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices (2009–2013)	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decentralization process • Priority-setting, programming and delivery mechanisms 	Worldwide (used supplies from the following evaluation of RLC)	
	➤ Evaluation of FAO's Regional and Subregional Offices for Latin America and the Caribbean	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decentralization process • Cost-effectiveness and efficiency of offices • Priority-setting • Human resources • Gender • Partnership and resource mobilization 	RLC Office SLM and SLC Offices All offices in the region	
5	Evaluation of the work of the FAO Subregional Office for Mesoamerica 2012-2017	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The strategic positioning of the SLM and the relevance of its axes of work • Contributions from the SLM to outcomes • Management of the work arrangements and the consistency of the resources • Collaboration with instances of integration 	All of the countries of Mesoamerica (n=9).	

#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
6	Evaluation of FAO Strategic Objective 1: Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition Excel sheet with case study data	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress achieved towards SO1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gender ○ Nutrition • FIRST (policy support) • Voluntary guidelines • Zero Hunger • Parliamentary Front • School feeding programme 	Case studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Brazil ○ Dominican Republic ○ El Salvador 	
7	Evaluation of FAO's Contribution to Integrated Natural Resource Management for Sustainable Agriculture (SO2) (2014–2017)	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross-sectoral work • Sustainably improve agricultural productivity • Governance mechanisms • International instruments and support related governance mechanisms (sustainable food systems) • Evidence generation for planning and management 	RLC Visits were made to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ RLC ○ SLM ○ Bolivia (Plurinational State of) 	
	➤ Evaluation of Strategic Objective 2 Regional Offices Latin America Case Study Report (draft)	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO2 has been embedded across Regional Initiatives (intersectoral) • SOs used mainly for reporting purposes • Results around policy agenda (REDD+, fisheries, sustainable agriculture) • Continuum between SO2 and SO5 	RLC Visits were made to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ RLC ○ SLM ○ Bolivia (Plurinational State of) 	
8	Evaluation of FAO's contribution to the reduction of rural poverty through Strategic Programme 3	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-sectoral approach to address rural poverty • Strategic collaborations 	Worldwide	
	➤ Evaluation of FAO's contribution to rural poverty reduction – Draft Latin America and the Caribbean Report	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access • Decent rural employment • Social protection • Results below targets (p.21) • Gap: Focus more on indigenous populations and other vulnerable groups (para. 110) 	Colombia El Salvador Mexico Paraguay	
9	Evaluation of FAO's Contribution to Strategic Objective 4: Enabling	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food safety (CODEX) 	Countries visited: Barbados, Bolivia	

#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
	Inclusive and Efficient Agricultural and Food Systems		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest law enforcement, governance and trade fisheries • Agribusiness (establishment of a regional network for public food supply systems in Latin America and the Caribbean) • Value chain (Barbados example p.30) 	(Plurinational State of), Chile, Colombia, Jamaica, Mexico Evaluations including: Guatemala	
10	Evaluation of FAO Strategic Objective 5: Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience/DRR • Regional approaches (RLC= IRs) 	RLC/SLM interviewed by phone	●
11	Evaluation of FAO's Role in Support of Crop Production (2007–2013)	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normative work 	Case studies: Ecuador El Salvador Visit to RLC	●
12	Evaluation of FAO's contribution to Knowledge on food and agriculture (2011-2014)	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public policy training centre • FAOSTAT 	Institutional/Global	●
13	Evaluation of the Strategy and Vision for FAO's Work in Nutrition (2012-2017)	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School nutrition 	Used the case studies of the SO1 evaluation (Brazil, El Salvador)	●
14	FAO/WFP Joint Evaluation of Food Security Cluster Coordination in Humanitarian Action	2014			●
15	Independent Review of FAO Governance Reforms	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization topics - do not directly affect the topics to address 		●
16	Synthesis of findings and lessons learnt from the Strategic Objective Evaluations (2014–2017)	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SO contributions • Integration of cross-cutting themes 	Global/Institutional	●
17	Synthesis of lessons learnt in the application of the Country Programming Framework	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPF as tool 	Institutional	●
Global Projects Evaluations					
1	Final Evaluation of the Project "Building a Global Agenda of Action in Support of Sustainable Livestock Sector Development"	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable livestock sector development • Establish a multi-stakeholder platform 		●

#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
2	“Capacity Building Related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries”	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen capacity in ACP countries to implement, comply with and enforce (MEAs) National capacity Implementation of specific MEAs 	ACP	
3	“Conservation and Adaptive Management of Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems”	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GIAHS Conservation and adaptive management of globally significant agricultural biodiversity 	Chile Peru	
4	Final evaluation of the first phase of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Global Strategic Programme	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the IPC for decision-making; this is providing the evidence and standards for better decisions that improve emergency and development policy and programming 	Guatemala Peru	
5	Final evaluation of the FAO Project “Monitoring and Assessment of GHG Emissions and Mitigation Potentials in Agriculture Project”	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CC mitigation Agricultural productivity Global knowledge base on GHG emissions 		
6	Second project cycle of the Benefit-sharing Fund (BSF II) of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food security and climate change adaptation High impact activities on sustainable use and conservation of PGRFA 		
7	Evaluation of the FAO Multi-partner Programme Support Mechanism (FMM)	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizational topics – do not directly affect the topics to address. 		
8	Joint FAO-OIE Evaluation of the Global Framework for Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) (2009–2017)	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Veterinary services 	Region was not visited	
9	Terminal Evaluation of the Project “Decision Support for Mainstreaming and Scaling Up of Sustainable Land Management” (2018–2019)	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GeoServer (Argentina, p. 21) SLM benefits (Colombia, p.22) Results table, p.23 	Annex (missing) that covers: Argentina Colombia Ecuador Panama	

#	Title	Year	Topics	Geographical cover	Utility
10	Final Evaluation of the Project “Securing Tenure Rights for Forest Landscape-Dependent Communities: Linking science with policy to advance tenure security, sustainable forest management and people’s livelihoods” (2015–2019)	2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness-raising • Normative approaches • Capacity-building of policymakers 	Peru	
11	External Evaluation of the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (the UN-REDD Programme)	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest monitoring and MRV • Stakeholder engagement (indigenous peoples’ and civil-society organizations) • Development of national REDD+ governance systems 	Ecuador Paraguay	
12	Evaluation of the Project “Voices of the Hungry” (2013–2017)	2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) • <i>State of Food Insecurity in the World</i> 	SOI evaluation case studies: Brazil and the Dominican Republic	
13	Final Evaluation of “Groundwater Governance: A Global Framework for Action”	2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwater knowledge base • Partnerships • Global diagnostic, vision and global framework for action 		

Appendix 2 - List of documents consulted

In addition to the evaluations (Appendix 1), the following documents were consulted:

FAO, PAHO, WFP and UNICEF. 2019. *Regional Overview of Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean 2019*. Santiago. 135. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

Report of the 34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean

FAO Results and Priorities in the Latin America and Caribbean Region and Regional Strategic Review (34th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean)

Report of the 35th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean

FAO Results and Priorities in the Latin America and Caribbean Region (35th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean)

FAO Climate Change Strategy. Rome, 2017

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). 2019. *Social Panorama of Latin America, 2019 (LC/PUB.2019/22-P/Re v.1)*. Santiago.

FAO. 2018. *Climate change and food and nutrition security. Latin America and the Caribbean (disaster risk management in the agricultural sector)*. Santiago.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). 2018. *Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in the Agriculture Sector and Food and Nutrition Security in Latin America and the Caribbean (2018-2030)*. El Salvador.