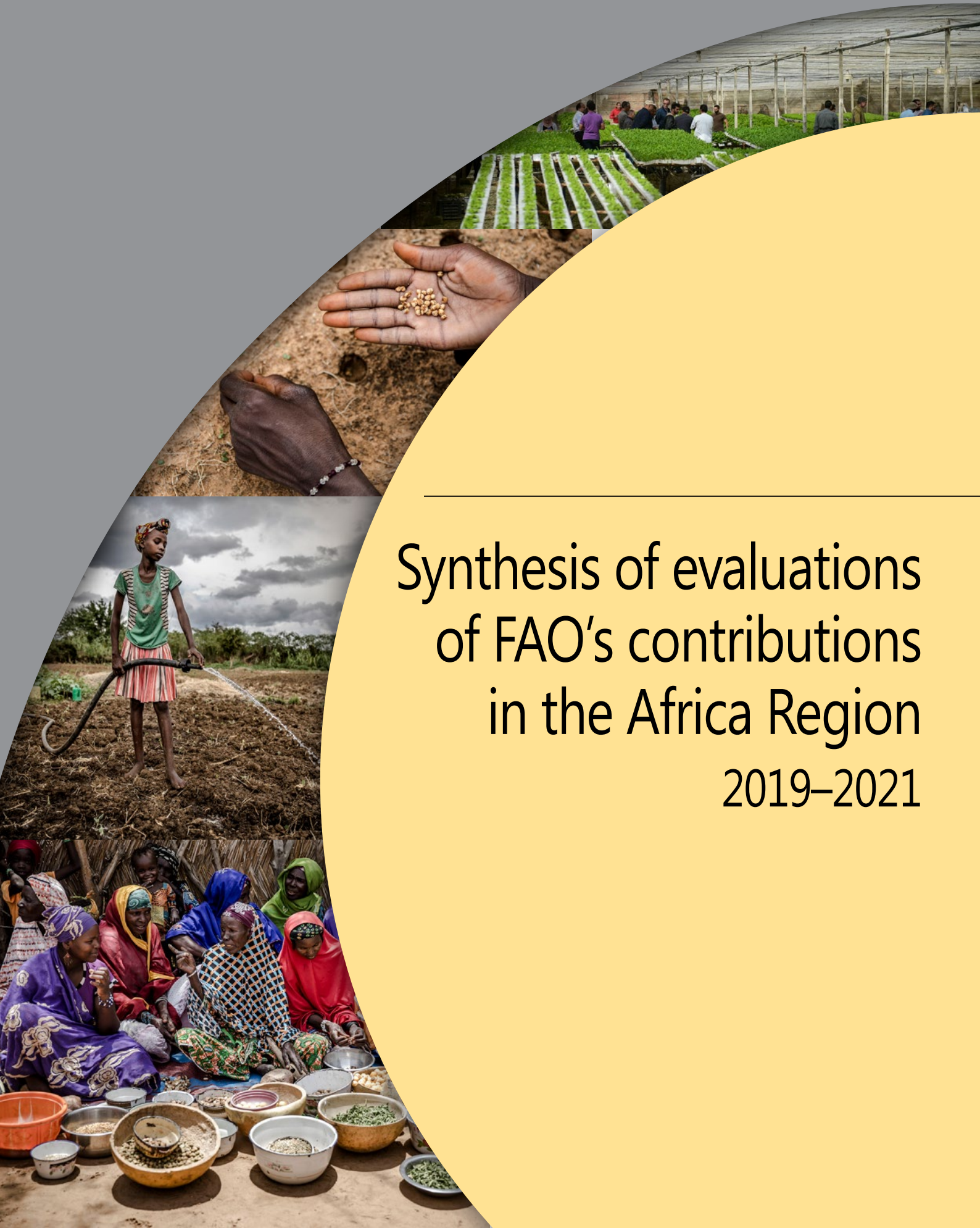




Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Synthesis of evaluations of FAO's contributions in the Africa Region 2019–2021

Synthesis of evaluations of FAO's contributions in the Africa Region (2019–2021)

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
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Abstract

The report is a synthesis of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Office of Evaluation (OED) evaluations completed from 2019–2021 on FAO’s work in the Africa region. It documents FAO’s contribution to results, identifies gaps and emerging issues, and lessons learned. The synthesis is organized around the themes of Sustainable production and value chain development, Food security and nutrition, Climate change and natural resources, Resilience to threats and crises, and Gender equality and empowerment of women. The synthesis used the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) of the Strategic Framework 2022–2031 to analyse FAO’s contribution to results.

The synthesis found many positive examples of FAO’s contribution to results in the Africa region. However, the sustainability of results is a challenge for the region, due to several factors including capacity constraints of government partners, and limitations of FAO project designs. Gaps and emerging issues include the need for guidance on ‘accelerators’ of results, addressing youth as a key priority, and new approaches to partnerships with civil society and the private sector. Lessons learned include the importance of good project design, suitably capacitated decentralized offices, effective knowledge management, and strategic and inclusive partnerships to achieve results.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CCA	Climate change adaptation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS	Farmer field school
NAP-Ag	National Adaptation Plan
PKH	Pastoralist Knowledge Hub
PPA	Programme Priority Area
PPR	Peste des Petits Ruminants
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal

Executive summary

Introduction

1. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Office of Evaluation (OED) conducted a synthesis of evaluations of projects and programmes implemented in the FAO Africa region. The purpose of the synthesis is to contribute to the organization's learning and improvement. The objective of the synthesis is to identify lessons that can contribute to an informed discussion of FAO's strategic positioning and contribution to results in the Africa region and to provide suggestions for future work planning at the regional level.
2. This is the second synthesis of evaluations. The first synthesis was conducted in 2019–2020. The present synthesis covers evaluations completed between 2020 and 2021, as well as evaluations from 2019 that were not included in the first regional synthesis. The synthesis aims to answer questions about the results achieved through FAO's support, emerging issues and gaps that require attention and lessons that can be used to inform future programming.
3. A sample of 42 evaluation reports (project, thematic and country programme evaluations) was analysed under the following themes:
 - i. sustainable production and value chain development;
 - ii. food security and nutrition;
 - iii. climate change and natural resources;
 - iv. resilience to threats and crises; and
 - v. gender equality and empowerment of women.
4. The synthesis used Nvivo software to analyse the reports. The results of the analyses were also mapped according to the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) of the Strategic Framework 2022–31.

Contribution to results

5. The synthesis found several examples of FAO's contribution to sustainable production: supporting countries to improve production through innovation and technology and strengthening national capacities for sustainable use and management of natural resources. FAO's support contributed to strengthened capacities of small-scale producers as well as the capacities of governments to reform policies and make evidence-based decisions on investments. There were, however, several examples where positive results were not scaled up due to a lack of financial resources, among other things.
6. In the area of food security and nutrition, FAO raised awareness of the Right to Food across countries in the region. FAO's support contributed to the development and implementation of agriculture and food-related policies and programmes that integrated nutrition as well as direct support to the most vulnerable countries to improve their nutrition. The synthesis located only one evaluation covering FAO's contribution to reducing food loss and waste.

7. FAO strengthened the capacities of Ministries, civil society organizations and agro-pastoralists in climate change adaptation. FAO also helped to improve the knowledge of governments and local communities on the biodiversity including ecosystems. The synthesis found examples of FAO's contribution to improved management and disposal of persistent organic pollutants and obsolete pesticides. There were, however, limitations to scaling up the results of FAO's work in managing the environment and natural resources. The evaluations identified a lack of finance as a constraint to scaling up and to the sustainability of results.
8. FAO made significant contributions to building resilience to threats and crises in the Africa region. The organization helped to strengthen preparedness and response to emergencies, contributed to peace and conflict prevention and enhanced resilience. FAO also advocated for, and raised awareness on, addressing future health risks. It improved national capacities and provided substantial policy support on zoonotic diseases and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). There are still gaps in embedding resilience building in FAO's emergency response and in accounting for conflict in its programming. Regarding One Health, FAO has not yet been able to scale up initiatives to adequately control health risks in endemic countries or to ensure the sustainability of its interventions.
9. The synthesis found several examples of gender equality mainstreaming in the design of projects and programmes. There is room for strengthening FAO's work in gender equality and empowerment of women in the region, including addressing the structural and cultural barriers to gender equality and reporting on results.

Enablers and constraints

10. Key enablers of the results include the quality of FAO's partnerships with governments; its leadership and expertise in coordinating multiple stakeholders across national boundaries; the organization's collaboration with other United Nations entities; and FAO's approach to capacity development. The main constraints are similar to those identified in the 2019–20 regional synthesis, namely, limited financial resources in governments, shortcomings in project design and human resources capacity constraints.

Gaps and emerging issues

11. The synthesis identified several gaps and emerging issues.
12. The "accelerators" of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022–31, namely, innovation, technology, data and complements are present in FAO's programmes to varying degrees and are interconnected. However, these programmes will need to be more visible and deliberate going forward to achieve significant transformation of agriculture and food systems in the Africa region. There is also a need for more detailed guidance on how these four "accelerators" operate in practice.
13. The issue of youth is not receiving the required attention in FAO projects and programmes. The Strategic Framework 2022–31 identifies youth as a cross-cutting theme. In the African context, the youth sector needs to be addressed as a key priority.
14. Engagement and partnerships with civil society has tended to be transactional rather than strategic. The private sector as partners did not feature in most of the projects and programmes evaluated. There is a need to shift the nature of FAO's partnerships with civil society organizations towards a more strategic one. There is also a need to forge

partnerships with the private sector, taking full consideration of the recently adopted FAO Strategy for partnerships with the private sector.

15. There is a gap in monitoring and evaluation at country level and in the region. Moreover, insufficient attention is paid to knowledge management.
16. The sustainability of results is fragile in several of the projects and programmes reviewed in the synthesis. With the constrained public finance in most African countries, FAO will need to find alternative ways to ensure both sustainability and scaling up of initiatives.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1. FAO contributed to results in the 14 PPAs, reflected in the overarching themes of the regional synthesis. The results to which FAO contributed are wide-ranging at the regional, national and subnational levels. These benefit stakeholders in governments, local communities, small-scale producers and civil society organizations. FAO's most significant contribution is its capacity to strengthen governments' policy development, policy reforms and planning. Here, FAO has empowered governments through research to generate evidence and analytical and planning tools as well as sharing FAO's knowledge and technical expertise in the various sectors that fall within the organization's mandate.

Although the synthesis found many positive results, there is a recurring theme of the fragile sustainability of interventions since activities often do not continue once the project and funding end. A lack of funding was frequently cited as the reason for this. However, the issue of sustainability is also a reflection of FAO's default modality of execution through projects rather than adopting a more programmatic approach. The fragility of sustainability also reflects weaknesses in project design which has not adequately planned for the project's future "after FAO". Another limitation is that positive results, such as the successful promotion of innovation and technology, are not scaled up in many instances since insufficient attention is paid to how to scale up interventions when they are designed. The absence of adequate strategies for scaling up is especially problematic in the case of zoonotic diseases and AMR as these pose a risk to the impact of other FAO interventions.

Conclusion 2. FAO's contribution to results in the region has been enabled by its strategic positioning as a trusted partner of governments in the region and by its technical expertise that supports counterpart ministries. It has leveraged its position as the lead technical organization of the United Nations in food and agriculture to convene multistakeholder platforms and policy dialogues. The participatory approaches that FAO has used in capacity development are important enablers as they increase ownership by governments and stakeholders. They also ensure that interventions are relevant to the country and the local context and needs. There are, however, several constraints that impact FAO's contribution to results negatively. In addition to financial and human resource constraints experienced by many governments on the continent, there is a need for technical expertise in FAO Country Offices that cannot always be filled by overstretched regional technical experts. Administrative delays were also identified as constraints in evaluations.

Conclusion 3. The regional synthesis identified gaps and emerging issues that may be taken into consideration in improving FAO's performance in the region. The synthesis attempted to use the "accelerators" of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022–31 to understand how they contribute to results. There is a need for guidance on how these "accelerators" function in practice. The issue of youth needs to be prioritised, and young people should be treated as distinct stakeholders with agency. There are gaps in partnerships with non-state actors, as well as persistent gaps in

monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management at country level, which limits organizational learning.

Lessons learned

Lesson 1. It is imperative to have a good project design with a clear focus on sustainability as well as a FAO strategy for exit and scale-up. Projects need to be informed by and nested in medium-to-longer term programmes for greater impact. The evaluations reviewed in the synthesis identified weaknesses in the design of projects, and this issue emerged in the previous synthesis. Characteristics of good project design include: i) participation of partners in the design process; ii) relevance of the design to the country or local context and needs of beneficiaries; iii) a theory of change with explicit assumptions and risks; iv) coordination mechanisms identified at the design stage; v) appropriate indicators and mechanisms for tracking progress; vi) realistic targets and timeframes; and vii) a sufficient budget to implement all the planned activities. Projects should also have an explicit exit strategy and an indication of how results will be sustained. If appropriate, a plan should be developed for how and by whom the intervention will be scaled up. A portfolio of well-designed stand-alone projects that are not clearly linked to a programme is less likely to have impact and sustainability than projects that form part of a soundly designed programme.

Lesson 2. FAO Country Offices are at the front line and must be equipped for this critical role. The evaluations reviewed highlighted the importance of FAO's technical expertise and leadership at the country level in achieving results. These are essential for FAO to positively influence the policy agenda and advocacy on normative issues. FAO's technical expertise and leadership are also essential for the organization to contribute to, and lead in, discussions related to food and agriculture in the United Nations Strategic Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). Country Offices need to have ready access to technical expertise when it is needed and should have the skills to design and implement robust monitoring and evaluation systems. The offices should also be effective in managing knowledge. The transition to the new FAO Strategic Framework 2022–31 may press Country Offices to conceptualise and implement projects and programmes that are more integrated and potentially more complex. Given the COVID-19 pandemic experience, projects design should take potential risks into account.

Lesson 3. Knowledge generated by FAO projects is important for the organization's advocacy, resource mobilization and internal learning. It is also a public good that should be systematised and made widely accessible. Projects that demonstrated positive results contained an element of managing and sharing knowledge with stakeholders. However, knowledge management was not an integral part of many projects. Knowledge management is seldom done if it is not planned and budgeted for in the project. There are many good reasons for FAO to document and systematise the knowledge and lessons generated through projects, including use in advocacy for mainstreaming interventions and approaches. They could also be used as persuasive evidence for governments to scale up initiatives and innovation and to make public finance available for this purpose. Good knowledge management also provides evidence to support FAO's resource mobilisation. Effective knowledge management can improve the quality of FAO's portfolio in the region. Additionally, it is an essential part of organizational learning since it contributes to strengthening capacities of civil society organizations, farmer and producer organizations, pastoralist associations and individual farmers.

Lesson 4. Coordination is effective when it is built into project design and is relevant to the context. The evaluations in the synthesis identified coordination as a critical factor in the success of interventions. Coordination mechanisms were identified in the design phase of all projects; they were not an afterthought. Importantly, these mechanisms were relevant to the context of the project. The projects that were evaluated as effective in coordination made use of resources

dedicated to this purpose. Coordination among FAO headquarters, Regional, Subregional and Country Offices can be improved.

Lesson 5. Strategic and inclusive partnerships are essential for achieving results. The evaluations reviewed in this synthesis reaffirmed FAO's strong partnership with counterpart ministries. While this is positive, FAO's partnerships need to be more inclusive of other stakeholders, particularly other ministries, civil society and the private sector. Inclusive partnerships are not built through ad hoc activities; rather, they require a strategy based on a deep understanding of potential partners in government, the private sector, civil society and other development partners. There should be a clear articulation of the mutual benefits of the partnership for FAO and the potential partners. Building and maintaining strategic and inclusive partnerships are not add-on activities nor the responsibility of a partnership specialist alone, and such partnerships should be treated as integral to the functions of all FAO personnel.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

1. FAO's OED conducts evaluations to provide accountability of the organization to member countries, giving them an assessment of the organization against the strategic objectives the organization has set for itself as well as its organizational performance. OED evaluations play an important role in contributing to corporate learning and to provide evidence to inform decisions on improvements to the organization's projects and programmes. This report is the synthesis of evaluations of FAO's work in the Africa Region and follows on the previous synthesis conducted in 2019.

1.2 Purpose of the synthesis

2. The primary purpose of the synthesis is to contribute to the organization's learning and improvement. The synthesis will inform the Programme Committee and the Regional Conference for Africa about the results and lessons learned from OED evaluations completed and managed between 2020 and 2021. The Africa regional office, sub-regional offices and country offices can use the lessons learned to inform and improve their programmes in the region. The secondary purpose of the synthesis is to enhance the utilisation of OED evaluation reports at the regional level and create demand for regionally focused evaluations.

1.3 Scope and objective of the evaluation

3. The regional synthesis covered all categories of evaluations that FAO completed and managed between 2020 and 2021. These evaluations included project evaluations at country, regional and global levels, country programme framework evaluations, and thematic or programme evaluations.
4. The objective of the synthesis is to identify lessons from evaluations that can contribute to an informed discussion on FAO's strategic positioning and contribution to results in the region and provide reflections and suggestions for future work planning at the regional level. The preparation of the regional synthesis is part of a broader objective of enhancing the usefulness and utilisation of evaluations by members of the governing bodies, in particular, at the regional levels.
5. The regional synthesis aimed to answer the following key questions:
 - i. Results through FAO support to the region. What are the main results, in the regional priorities/thematic areas, that have been achieved through FAO support to the region and countries in the region?
 - ii. Emerging issues and gaps. What issues and gaps emerge from the evaluations, which require attention/consideration by the FAO Regional Conference?
 - iii. Lessons to be learned. What lessons can be learned from evaluations that can inform FAO's future programming /actions in the region?

1.4 Methodology

6. The synthesis identified four broad themes and one cross-cutting theme to answer the key questions. In order to arrive at the themes, OED collected all evaluations completed between 2020 and 2021 that referred to countries in the Africa region. These reports were reviewed to assess their relevance to the Regional Initiatives and priorities of the Africa region, as confirmed in the Africa Region Conference 2020. A total of 45 reports were reviewed and the main themes that emerged were confirmed with the Regional Office.
7. A second round of screening was done on the 45 reports and additional reports that had been finalised after the initial screening. The second screening was done against the following criteria:
 - i. the year of project/programme completion should not be older than 2016;
 - ii. global or thematic evaluations must include examples of implementation in the Africa region;
 - iii. project/programme content must demonstrate direct relationship with the regional synthesis themes;¹ and
 - iv. mid-term evaluations were only to be included if their topics were not covered adequately by final evaluations.
8. There were 42 evaluation reports in the final sample. Following the selection of the final sample, each report was read and coded using Nvivo. The coding structure was based on the key questions and sub-questions. The coded data was then used to analyse and synthesise the data, using the Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) as the framework for organising the findings. The methodology is described in more detail in Appendix 1. The list of reports in the final sample is contained in Appendix 2.

1.5 Limitations

9. The synthesis endeavoured to be rigorous and improved the methodology based on the lessons learned from the 2019/2020 synthesis.² The following are the main limitations:
 - i. The regional synthesis methodology requires the synthesis to be based on evaluations conducted by OED. These are independent evaluations, distinct from self-reporting on projects. The synthesis therefore does not cover the full spectrum of FAO's activities in the Africa Region.³
 - ii. In conducting the analysis, the activities and results of evaluated projects and programmes were retrospectively categorised by PPAs. The categorisation is based on OED's understanding of the PPAs and others may have a different view on the categorisation.

¹ The regional synthesis themes are informed by the Regional Initiatives and priorities, but are also broader than the Regional Initiatives. The synthesis therefore used the themes as the basis for selection, rather than use Regional Initiatives as the selection criterion.

² The Nvivo software introduced more rigor into the coding and analysis of the large volume of qualitative data. Two evaluators carried out the screening and coding and one evaluator cross-checked these.

³ Refer to OED guidance note on conducting syntheses (FAO, 2021b).

- iii. The results reported in the synthesis are in most instances country specific and cannot be generalised across the entire region.

1.6 Structure of the report

10. Following the introduction, section 2 provides a brief overview of the regional initiatives and priorities, the new FAO Strategic Framework 2022–2031. It also outlines how the themes selected for synthesis are connected to the Regional Initiatives and the new Strategic Framework.
11. Section 3 discusses the FAO's contribution to results in the region, Section 4 discusses the enablers and constraints to results, Section 5 discusses the gaps and emerging issues, and Section 6 presents the conclusions and lessons learned.
12. The Nvivo codes have been used to reference the reports in the discussion of the results in section 3. Appendix 2 contains the full titles of the reports and the countries covered in these reports.

2. Regional context

2.1 Regional initiatives and priorities

13. The Thirty-first Africa Regional Conference held in 2020, reiterated the importance of the Regional Initiatives in driving FAO's priorities in the Africa region. The three Regional Initiatives are:
 - i. Fight against hunger (Africa's Commitment to End Hunger by 2025): This initiative supports countries in multi-sectoral planning, coordinated implementation, and monitoring and evaluation in support of countries achieving their commitments on the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
 - ii. Promote sustainable, inclusive proven innovative practices and principles of production and post-production processes (Sustainable Production Intensification and Value Chain Development in Africa): This initiative supports countries in the transformation of agriculture, with the aim of making nutritious food accessible to all, while preserving biodiversity through the effective management of the region's natural resources.
 - iii. Strengthen resilience among vulnerable farming and pastoral communities (Building Resilience in Africa's Drylands): This initiative supports countries to build resilience against shocks and disasters through addressing their root causes and consequences.
14. The Thirty-first Africa Regional Conference, while reaffirming the three Regional Initiatives, recommended that FAO also refine the regional priorities in the context of new initiatives, for example, the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, inclusive food systems transformation, digitalization and innovation, the COVID-19 Response and Recovery programme, and the UN Development system repositioning. The conference recommended that FAO strengthen its work on climate change, biodiversity and sustainable natural resources management, especially land degradation, desertification and floods. Another important recommendation was that FAO promote knowledge-sharing and scaling up of best practices, technologies and innovative approaches to inform policies and investments that can accelerate the transformation of agriculture and food systems development and contribute to poverty eradication and ending hunger and nutrition in all its forms.
15. The Thirty-first Africa Regional Conference made additional recommendations to FAO to support countries in strengthening their responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and mitigate the threat that the pandemic poses to eradicating extreme poverty and ending hunger in Africa. These recommendations include support to Members to ensure that national response plans to the COVID-19 pandemic include response to and recovery of the agricultural and food systems; support Members in assessing the impact of COVID-19 on food security, nutrition, and the functioning of food systems; promoting multi-sectoral approaches to addressing food security and nutrition; supporting efficient, cost-effective and innovative social protection programmes; and support Members to take up opportunities generated by the pandemic to accelerate innovation and digitization.

2.2 FAO Strategic Framework 2022–2031

16. FAO's Strategic Framework 2022–2031 sets an agenda for the accelerated transformation of food and agriculture to contribute to achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 and accelerate progress across several other goals and targets. The new Strategic Framework sets out a strategic narrative of this transformative agenda, namely, "...MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life*, leaving no one behind." (FAO, 2021a, p. 14) These four betters describe FAO's longer-term development impacts. They are linked to the SDGs and represent the organizing principles for how FAO will contribute to SDG 1 (No poverty), SDG 2 (Zero hunger), SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities) and the broader SDG agenda.
17. The Strategic Framework elaborates 20 PPAs that guide FAO's programmes implemented under the four betters. These PPAs are issue-based technical themes and inter-disciplinary in nature. They represent FAO's comparative advantage and value-added of FAO's contribution to medium-term Outcomes and the relevant SDG targets. Although a PPA may be strongly anchored in one of the four betters, it can contribute to the remaining three betters. In addition to the PPAs, the Strategic Framework includes four accelerators representing means to accelerate progress and realise the four betters. These accelerators are technology; innovation; data; and complements (for example, governance, human capital, and institutions). The Strategic Framework also identifies the cross-cutting themes of gender, youth and inclusion, as well as cross-cutting dimensions of partnerships and South-south and Triangular Cooperation. Accelerators, cross-cutting themes and cross-cutting dimensions must be taken into account in all of the organization's programmatic work.

2.3 Framework for the regional synthesis

18. The screening of evaluation reports for the regional synthesis identified the following themes:
 - i. Theme 1: Sustainable production and value chain development.
 - ii. Theme 2: Food security and nutrition.
 - iii. Theme 3: Climate change and sustainable natural resources management.
 - iv. Theme 4: Resilience to threats and crises.
 - v. Gender equality and empowerment of women (cross-cutting theme).
19. These themes are closely aligned to the Regional Initiatives of the Africa Region and were confirmed by the Regional Office. To ensure that the regional synthesis would be useful for the Region and forward-looking, the synthesis used the new Strategic Framework and the PPAs as the framework for the synthesis. Table 1 illustrates the regional synthesis themes and Regional Initiatives, categorised into the four betters and PPAs. The table reflects only those PPAs that are associated with the sample of evaluation reports used in the synthesis.

Table 1. Mapping of themes to Regional Initiatives and Priority Programme Areas

Synthesis theme	Regional Initiative	Four Betters	Programme Priority Areas
Sustainable production and value chain development	Regional Initiative 2	Better Production	BP1: Innovation for sustainable agriculture production BP2: Blue Transformation BP4: Small-scale producers' equitable access to resources BL6: Scaling up investment
Food security and nutrition	Regional Initiative 1	Better Nutrition	BN1: Health diets for all BN2: Nutrition for the most vulnerable BN4: Reducing food loss and waste
Climate change and natural resources management	-	Better Environment	BE1: Climate change mitigating and adapted agrifood systems BE2: Bioeconomy for sustainable food production BE3: Biodiversity and ecosystems services for food and agriculture
Resilience to threats and crises	Regional Initiative 3	Better Life	BL4: Agriculture and food emergencies BL5: Resilient agrifood systems BP3: One Health
Gender equality and women's empowerment		Cross-cutting theme	BL1: Gender equality and rural women's empowerment

Source: Developed by the evaluation team.

3. Results achieved through FAO's support to the region

20. This section discusses the results achieved through FAO's support to the Africa region, under the synthesis themes. As was the case with the 2020 regional synthesis, the evaluations in the sample reflected diversity in the type and level of results reported. It should be noted that the discussion only reflects results reported in the sample of OED evaluations and does not reflect results generated by other FAO activities.

3.1 Theme 1: Sustainable production and value chain development

21. Results under Theme 1 are organized around the PPAs linked to Better Production:

- i. BP1: Innovation for sustainable agriculture production – opportunities inclusive of small-scale and vulnerable producers for sustainable crop, livestock and forestry production systems supported by innovation and technology
- ii. BP2: Blue transformation – promoting inclusive and sustainable blue food systems through improved policies and programmes for integrated science-based management, technological innovation and private sector engagement
- iii. BP4: Small-scale producers' equitable access to resources – access to economic and natural resources, markets, services, information, education and technologies
- iv. BL6: Scaling up investment – reducing inequalities and eradicating poverty through increased public and private investment and improved capacities to leverage future investments.

Finding 1. There are good examples of FAO's contribution to sustainable production in the Africa region, through supporting countries to improve production through innovation and technology, strengthening national capacities for sustainable use and management of land, forests and ocean resources, and strengthening knowledge, data and knowledge platforms, and capacities of small-scale producers. FAO's support assisted in reforming policies for food and agriculture and strengthened capacities of countries in the region to make evidence-based decisions on investments. There are however several examples where positive results have not been scaled up or continued by governments, often due to lack of public sector financial and other resources.

Programme Priority Area BP1: Innovation for sustainable agriculture production

(Reports 4P, 5G, 7G, O17, O8 case study: Angola)

22. *Developed capacities for agricultural innovation.* FAO piloted an approach to capacity development within the context of agricultural innovation that placed emphasis on the development of functional capacities alongside technical capacities.^{4; 5} The approach contributed to improvements in targeted value chains (innovation niches). For example, in

⁴ The African countries that participated in the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) project are Angola, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Rwanda.

⁵ These functional capacities are: capacity to navigate complexity, capacity to collaborate, capacity to reflect and learn, capacity to engage in strategic and political processes, and capacity to adapt and respond in order to realize the potential of an innovation. Under the CDAIS approach, capacity development takes place in innovation niche partnerships that have been established at farmer/producer level focusing on a particular value chain. Examples of these innovation niches and their value chains include: rice production improvement (Angola); family food processing enterprises (Burkina Faso); chickpea cluster farming (Ethiopia) and cassava value chain (Rwanda) (Report 5G).

Ethiopia the approach strengthened capacities among chickpea value chain actors to coordinate their actions in securing input supply, field operations, marketing and lobbying and successfully practise chickpea cluster farming (Agrinatura and FAO, 2019a). In Angola, small-scale farmers in the rice development niche received training in functional and technical capacities to grow cold tolerant and disease resistant rice varieties at high altitude in a relatively dry part of the country. This contributed to an expansion in the area under cultivation and an increase in the rice yield (Agrinatura and FAO, 2019b). The cassava niche in Rwanda strengthened the functional capacities of smallholder farmers and stakeholders (traders, public and private research, and extension services) to work collaboratively to improve the quality of cassava and increase the volume of cassava processing. This contributed to improvements for cassava farmers to a secure market, increased production of disease-tolerant varieties cassava, and increased the volume of cassava processed at the processing plant that had previously been unable to source sufficient cassava to make it profitable (Agrinatura and FAO, 2019c). Although there was evidence of positive changes in the individual innovation niches, the evaluation found that there were many different interpretations of the term 'innovation' by those in the project and hence differing expectations of the project.

23. *Improved quality, variety and productivity of crops through innovation and technology.* FAO contributed to the development of sustainable rice systems in ten target beneficiary countries through promoting good practices using the farmer field school (FFS) approach.⁶ FAO successfully promoted improved varieties of rice and best practices in rice growing, as well as increased availability and access to better quality seeds. Seed quality, rice productivity and production, sales and income increased, contributing to improvement of livelihoods of beneficiaries. FAO also helped strengthen capacity for *use of biotechnology* to propagate date palm in vitro and to distribute high-quality, improved and disease-free tissue-cultured planting materials of date palm to farmers in Eritrea.
24. *Introduced a territorial approach to land-use and natural resources planning and management.* FAO supported the introduction of the Green Negotiated Territorial Development approach (GreeNTD) in three provinces in Angola along the transhumance routes of pastoralist communities.⁷ The main results reported are the development of territorial development plans FAO supported a similar participatory approach for selected Angolan municipalities in their land-use and natural resources management planning, namely, Participatory and Negotiated Territorial Development (PNTD). As a result, FAO's support for the PNDT and GreeNTD approach, more land was included in grazing reserves to ensure sustainability of ecosystems. FAO also capacitated over public sector technical staff and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the participatory methodology. The participatory approach is time-consuming as it requires successive dialogues with a wide range of actors and a minimal organized social base such as an association or cooperative to set up the dialogue processes. Extending the approach to other areas and municipalities will require considerable financial resources.

⁶ The ten beneficiary countries are Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.

⁷ The GreenNTD is a bottom-up and community-based approach for negotiation and dialogue that seeks to manage land/territories sustainably through stakeholders exploring adaptive strategies for sustainable land management practices and simultaneously improve local livelihoods.

25. *Introduced innovative ethno-veterinary practice for animal health.* Indigenous knowledge about common cattle pests and diseases and how they can be treated using native plants, exists in local communities but is often overlooked. FAO developed a methodology to capture indigenous knowledge on native plants that can be used for veterinary purposes, and working with national research institutions in Angola, FAO further developed the methodology for collecting, and systematizing the data and information collected. Veterinary technicians and community animal healthcare workers were trained on native plants and their use in animal health, and the latter were able to provide animal health care services to local communities. The evaluation noted that the practice has been adopted on a small scale and that scaling up would be constrained by the limited financial and other resources of public veterinary services and small number of NGOs in the remote parts of the country.

Programme Priority Area BP2: Blue transformation

(Reports 2G, 9G, O3 and O8 case study: Cabo Verde)

26. *Capacities for maritime spatial planning.* Africa sub-regions benefited from training in maritime spatial planning and in the application of improved management tools for mitigating threats to sustainable deep-sea fisheries and biodiversity in ocean areas beyond national jurisdictions. The evaluation found several positive results that demonstrated contributions towards improving tuna fisheries governance, the safeguarding of vulnerable marine ecosystems, and strengthened monitoring, control and surveillance to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. The synthesis could not ascertain the extent to which these positive results applied to the Africa sub-regions that had participated in this global programme.
27. *Use of technology to enable data collection and analysis.* Ghana participated in the piloting of an electronic observer system (EOS) for monitoring, compliance, and data collection in purse seine tuna fishing. The EOS enabled the collection of data unprecedented in volume and quality and contributed to improved compliance and the introduction of new legislation to strengthen compliance. The practice of using the EOS however, was discontinued once project funding ended. With political changes in the Government and changes in the ownership of the purse seine fishing vessels, there was no commitment to continue with the use of EOS for purse seiners.
28. *Transitioning to the blue economy.* FAO contributed to Cabo Verde's process of transitioning to the Blue Economy, in particular, supporting this SIDS to implement the commitments of its Blue Growth Charter (2015). Positive results were reported, including establishing institutional structures for national dialogue and coordination, consolidation of the National Strategy for the Blue Economy, the development of the National Investment Plan for the Blue Economy, and the development of the Programme to support and promote the Blue Economy. The evaluation case study noted the great potential of the Blue Economy initiative in Cabo Verde but cautioned that the transfer of know-how from FAO consultants to the Blue Observatory was not yet sufficient to ensure sustainability, and that the limited presence of national entrepreneurs in the Blue Economy also poses a challenge to scaling up.
29. *Capacities for managing fisheries resources.* FAO supported Sierra Leone to strengthen capacities for the effective management of marine and key fisheries resources. FAO activities included support in relation to the Port States Measures Agreement, as well as

plans to eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, attendance at regional fisheries management organization meetings, and conducting a scientific survey of the country's fishery resources. Evaluation of the country programme found that these capacity strengthening measures were not coordinated effectively and that the absence of marine fisheries expertise in the FAO Country Office hampered the development of strong partnerships with the relevant ministry.

Programme Priority Area BP4: Small-scale producers' equitable access to resources

(Reports: O3, O11, O12, O13, O17)

30. *Capacity building for commercialisation.* FAO supported capacity development of agriculture business centres (ABC) that provided a platform for the commercialisation and diversification of smallholder agriculture in Sierra Leone and capacity building to farmer-based organizations (FBOs) in marketing and business development through the ABCs. The evaluation found that the ABC model was effective to the extent that it provided training to equip producers and producer organizations with knowledge and skills for commercialisation, but the ABCs required support to become sustainable entities. Furthermore, ABCs are reliant on the Ministry of Agriculture for access to markets and have limited access to financial products that are suited to farmers' needs. Several ABCs were found to lack functioning equipment, had low processing output and were not well governed. Notwithstanding these challenges, ABCs are highly relevant to the Sierra Leone context and have reached farmers in the most remote parts of the country.
31. *Improved practices and value addition.* With FAO support, the Ministry of Agriculture in Eritrea was able to train farmers in improved practices for bee keeping and learn new techniques of value addition for honey and honey products. These interventions were found to have contributed to higher yields of honey and increased income for farmers. FAO's support to women farmers in value chain and agri-business in Eritrea through the Telefood Programme was effective in some areas in increasing production, productivity and incomes. The support was effective for farmers engaged in mushroom production, as they were able to generate profit from the sale of mushrooms. Results from other products and production activities, for example food production and value addition, poultry and rabbit were below expectations. These were challenged by lack of infrastructure, transportation bottlenecks affecting input purchasing and output marketing, and the inability of women poultry farmers to compete with the low prices of eggs in the market.
32. In Sierra Leone, the FFS approach was found to be effective in transferring knowledge of rice production by smallholder farmers, but adoption of the practices lagged considerably as the technology was labour-intensive and not suited to a labour-scarce environment. The evaluation noted that this problem might have been detected had there been a value chain analysis conducted at the start of the programme. Most farmers did however adopt the technology of assessing the quality of rice seeds, something they had not practised prior to the FFS training. The evaluation found that the FFS has been adopted as a national approach to extension and is used by other development partners in addition to the Ministry of Agriculture.
33. *Enhanced access to knowledge.* Pastoralists' access to knowledge was enhanced through the *Pastoralist Knowledge Hub (PKH)* a global programme highly relevant to the Africa region where pastoralism forms an important if not significant part of the food production system. The projects aimed to strengthen the voice of pastoralists through supporting their

civil society organizations, facilitating their access to policy-making processes and strengthening their capacities to engage in those processes. The PKH projects also sought to create more receptive decision-making spaces for pastoralists to be heard. The evaluation found that the PKH had increased pastoralist civil society organizations' access to relevant knowledge through the Knowledge Repository, exchanges and discussions in fora, studies focusing specifically on pastoralism, and provision of training and research.

34. Sub-regions in Africa benefited from the PKH. In West Africa, the PKH supported pastoralist civil society organizations in the inter-ministerial meeting for a peace transhumance, and this was considered by stakeholders to be a major step towards securing peaceful transhumance and livestock mobility between Sahelian countries and coastal countries in West Africa. The PKH also supported the Eastern and Southern Africa Pastoral Network (ESAPN) participating in the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) on the regional transhumance protocol. The evaluation found that the sustainability of the PKH was built into its design that entailed capacity building of civil society organizations and building a network of partners. It noted that although the PKH contributed to increased attention to pastoralism within FAO, this was not matched with resources for operational activities at country level. The capacity of the PKH to support pastoral work of FAO country offices is limited, and opportunities for synergy between FAO headquarters initiatives and pastoralism-related programmes of Country Offices are missed.
35. *Improved how knowledge about forest and land tenure reforms is understood, communicated and used.* FAO supported the synthesis of knowledge on the implementation of tenure reforms in Uganda that contributed to a more critical understanding of the historical relationship between customary and formal forest tenure, and the impacts of and barriers to the implementation of land tenure reforms. Support from FAO helped to strengthen organizations and networks in Uganda to support innovation and transitioning towards sustainable agricultural production systems in forest settings. Not all stakeholders were able to implement or adopt the alternative or innovative practices because resources (from government) were not available for implementation. It was also not possible for some communities to implement the plans on land that they did not own.
36. FAO's support contributed to increased awareness and understanding among Uganda's policy makers and stakeholders of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT). One of the changes reported was that the increased awareness of legal requirements in relation to community forests prompted policymakers to seek increased funding for the forestry sector. FAO's support also contributed to increased awareness of forest-dependent communities about their rights through training communities in collective community forest tenure rights and privileges, and training in gender, conflict management and leadership.

Programme Priority Area BL6: Scaling up investment

(Reports 10G, O9)

37. *Evidence for policy reforms, strategies, plans and public finance.* Several African countries⁸ benefited from FAO support through the *Monitoring and Analysing Food and Agriculture Policies (MAFAP II)* to review and reform their food and agriculture policies. Through FAO's support, governments were able to make evidence-based policy reforms or adopt new policies. Examples of policy reforms include Ghana's trade policy that identified the mango value chain as the most promising export to be targeted in future investment decisions; Malawi's trade policy removing the ban on maize export; Rwanda's milk price regulations; Mozambique's reformed cotton pricing setting formula that uses future prices rather than historical prices.
38. In Burkina Faso, MAFAP II studies informed the selection of priority sub-sectors (livestock, cash crops and horticulture) incorporated into the Second National Agricultural Investment Plan and considered to be most impactful in terms of value added and poverty reduction. Drawing on evidence from MAFAP II studies, Rwanda developed and adopted its Fourth Strategic Plan for Agricultural Transformation, reflecting an increased emphasis on and budget allocations to nutrition-sensitive agricultural production and agricultural research. The United Republic of Tanzania developed and adopted its Second Agricultural Sector Development Programme (ASDP II) and re-oriented towards the most impactful agricultural commodities and investment options.
39. Senegal adopted the MAFAP public expenditure classification methodology to track and allocate Government budget to food security, assisting sectoral ministries to make better budget allocations to food security. The MAFAP studies informed the new selection criteria used to identify projects for inclusion in the Second Plan Senegal Emergent and Priority Action Plan that reoriented towards increased investments in the most beneficial sub-sectors in terms of productivity, poverty reduction, reduction in food insecurity, and a favourable trade balance.
40. *Evidence-informed investment decisions.* In Ethiopia, FAO contributed to strengthening the evidence-base for investment decisions on the country's Integrated Agro-Industrial Parks, which the Government identified as one of the key mechanisms for the transformation and modernisation of the agriculture sector. FAO also supported the public expenditure review to assist in computing the investment gap and the development of an investment plan for the Integrated Agro-Industrial Parks. The evaluation of the Ethiopia CPF cautioned that the investment plan may be focused on strengthening supply-side capacity and not paying sufficient attention to demand issues, for example, food safety, standards and certification.

⁸ Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania.

3.2 Theme 2: Food security and nutrition⁹

41. Food security has been partially covered under Theme 4: Resilience to threats and crises. This section organizes results from the region around the PPAs linked to Better Nutrition:
- i. BN1: Healthy diets for all – on establishing the right to adequate food and transition towards healthy diets in integrated institutional, policy and legal environments, ensuring and incentivising engagement of consumers and the private sector.
 - ii. BN2: Nutrition for the most vulnerable – identifying and ending food insecurity and malnutrition for the most vulnerable individuals in all contexts.
 - iii. BN4: Reducing food loss and waste – roadmaps to prompt and enable all actors in the food supply chain, the food environment and at consumer level to reduce food loss and waste.

Finding 2. FAO raised awareness on the Right to Food across countries in the region and contributed to the development and implementation of agriculture and food related policies and programmes that incorporate nutrition. In the evaluations reviewed in this synthesis, no results from work with consumers or food chain actors for nutritious food were found. FAO's work on nutrition extends to working with the most vulnerable. It has provided direct support to the most vulnerable in improving nutrition and has strengthened systems to monitor food insecurity and malnutrition. Under reducing food waste and loss, FAO has contributed to the reduction of post-harvest loss in Ethiopia. No results from other countries were captured across evaluations.

Programme Priority Area: BN1: Healthy diets for all

(Reports O3, O7, O10, O14, O17, 10G, 13P)

42. *Enhanced and developed policies.* FAO has contributed to the development and implementation of cross-sectoral and sectoral policies on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture (FNSSA). In Burkina Faso, FAO has provided support to the finalization of the National Food and Nutrition Security Policy. In Cabo Verde, it supported the development of key governance instruments, including the formulation of a National Strategy of Food and Nutrition Security - 2020", as well as its subsequent action plans including immediate hunger relief interventions. FAO has also assisted Cabo Verde in preparing the Law on the Right to Adequate Nutrition, that was conceived as a guiding instrument to ensure access to sufficient, healthy, and nutritious food. Further, through its programme on Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation (FIRST), FAO has supported the incorporation of nutrition into agriculture strategies in countries such as Kenya, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, and Liberia. FAO has also increased emphasis placed on nutrition sensitive agricultural production and funds designated to nutrition-related expenses in countries like Rwanda, through its Monitoring and Analysing Food and Agriculture Policies (MAFAP II) programme.
43. Even though FAO has carried out extensive work in policy development and implementation, the duration of related projects was considered to be short given the goals they were meant to achieve. Most of the work in the region is still focused on policy development, while support on policy implementation is yet to be provided in most cases.

⁹ OED notes that FAO Africa Region works closely with the African Union supporting the Continent's priority of ending hunger through the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP). FAO's contribution to CAADP was covered in the 2020 Regional Synthesis of Evaluations for the Africa Region.

In cases where FAO is supporting the implementation of policies, strategies, and plans, such as in Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya, the work is in very early stages to be assessed for impact. Further, the evaluation of the project on mainstreaming nutrition in Sub-Saharan Africa, found that while moving from policy development to implementation, it was unclear who would be responsible and accountable for implementation, monitoring and evaluation for these policies. Another key challenge to be addressed to ensure sustainability are the technical skills and funding to roll these policies out, particularly at the subnational/local levels.

44. *Strengthened the enabling policy and institutional environment.* Through FIRST, FAO has supported FNSSA coordination/governance mechanisms. It has facilitated intra and intersectoral policy dialogue by strengthening human and organizational capacities in the FNSSA domain. In Kenya FAO increased the inclusiveness of policy processes through the involvement of non-state actors in the development of the new agricultural strategy. For example, it strengthened the capacity of the Kenyan Small-Scale Farmers Forum for involvement in policy processes and advocated on behalf of its members. In Ethiopia, it has been able to support the establishment of an operational platform for all partners to have a voice. As a result, partners are better able to align their planning and investments in line with the ministry. Similarly, in Chad, youth organizations, women's groups and producer organizations have acquired capacities that facilitated their participation in the policy processes. Simultaneously, FAO has also strengthened government capacities to engage in a more inclusive policy process. For example, in Côte d'Ivoire, FAO worked with staff of the Directorates for Planning and Studies in the Ministry of Agriculture and in the Ministry of Animal Resources, Fisheries and Aquaculture to engage youth organizations, women groups and producer organizations.
45. Furthermore, FAO has helped identify budgetary issues and investment gaps for nutrition related policies. For example, in Chad and Côte d'Ivoire, FAO supported agricultural expenditure reviews while in Guatemala it commissioned a detailed study on public expenditure in the area of FNSSA. In Ethiopia, with FAO supported costing of nutrition in agriculture, the coordination office was able to clarify its investment needs allowing partners to identify possible investments. In the Niger, FAO has made it possible to budget and finalize the multisectoral action plan for its nutrition policy.
46. *Contributed to nutrition programmes.* In addition to policy support, FAO has also supported programmes focused on nutrition and access to healthy diets. In Cabo Verde, FAO partnered with the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) to support the National Programme of School Feeding, contributing to the diversification of school meals with local production. In Sierra Leone, FAO has played an important role working closely with the secretariat of Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN), Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Health and relevant UN agencies in supporting the integration of nutrition-sensitive agriculture diversification activities into FFS and the promotion of dietary diversity. Through FAO's work many countries have also successfully integrated relevant nutrition indicators in their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and national databases. The indicators are, however, yet to be used in national food security information systems, such as their national or regional early warning systems and food security situation/needs assessments.

Programme Priority Area BN2: Nutrition for the most vulnerable

(Reports O17, O14, O6, 2P)

47. *Supported vulnerable households in preventing hunger and malnutrition.* In multiple contexts, through its humanitarian work, FAO contributed to improving nutrition of the vulnerable. In Eritrea, input distribution, including chicks and small ruminants, to vulnerable households provided improved yields, household income, and nutrition. Particularly, improvements were noted in the nutrition of children among farmer households. Milk and dairy products as well as eggs were added to their diet from own produce. Similarly, through its response to the El Niño induced drought in Southern Africa, FAO made consistent efforts to prioritize vulnerable groups, with a focus on improving nutrition. This was done through demonstrations of more balanced diets during input trade fairs, the promotion of horticulture and vegetable gardens, supported by nutrition health workers cooking demonstrations for more varied diets. Results from the evaluation show high adoption rates of these improved practices that support dietary diversity. In Burkina Faso and Mali, FAO has also enhanced resilience of vulnerable populations through campaigns that include demonstration sessions on nutritional aspects. These have had significant results among participating households as evidenced by the comparative analysis of baseline and end line studies.
48. In addition to the direct support provided to vulnerable households, FAO has also supported the development of nutrition monitoring systems, risk analyses, and decision making through its INFORMED programme. More details are covered under Theme 4.

BN4: Reducing food loss and waste

(Report 13P)

49. *Contributed to the reduction in post-harvest losses.* In Ethiopia, FAO's work on reducing post-harvest losses and increased knowledge of food processing contributed to greater diversity and availability of food for household consumption over longer periods. A project in Ethiopia included the introduction of improved technologies and practices with capacity-development and awareness-raising exercises. The resulting rise in quality and quantity of produce brought about by the project enhanced the food security of producers. Improved storage facilities enabled farmers to choose an appropriate time to sell, thus increasing their income. FAO also contributed to the creation of an enabling environment to reduce postharvest losses by supporting the Ethiopian Society of Postharvest Management and by gathering evidence on the importance of postharvest management. These were further complemented by studies helping to fill in key information gaps for providing evidence of the size and significance of post-harvest losses. Even though the project had some key positive results, it targeted three of Ethiopia's 13 regions and specific value chains given the limited budget. Scale-up of such technologies and practices to other regions in Africa and other value chains would be required for an overall impact of reduction in postharvest loss.

3.3 Theme 3: Climate change and sustainable management of natural resources

50. Results under Theme 3 relate to Better Environment and are organized around the following PPAs:

- i. BE1: Climate change mitigating and adapted agrifood systems – establishment and implementation of climate-smart agricultural practices, policies and programmes for transformation and resilience of agrifood systems to achieve sustainability and Paris Agreement Goals
- ii. BE2: Bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture – balancing economic value and social welfare with environmental sustainability through implementation of integrated evidence-based policies and practices in micro and macro environments using technological, organizational and social innovation
- iii. BE3: Biodiversity and ecosystems services for food and agriculture – biodiversity of food and agriculture maintained, and sustainable use, conservation and restoration of marine, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems promoted

Finding 3. FAO's contribution to a Better Environment covered all three PPAs. The organization helped strengthen capacities of ministries, civil society organizations and agro-pastoralists in climate change adaptation and in the management and disposal of persistent organic pollutants and obsolete pesticides. FAO also contributed to improved knowledge of biodiversity of ecosystems by governments and local communities. The lack of finance was identified in evaluations as a constraint that limits scaling up and the sustainability of results.

Programme Priority Area BE 1: Climate change mitigating and adapted agro-food systems¹⁰

(Reports 1P, 3P, 12P, 14P, 15P, 8G, O1)

51. *Strengthened institutional capacities for CCA.* FAO's support through the National Adaptation Plans (NAP-Ag) programme contributed to reforms in Kenya's institutional arrangements for climate change with the establishment of a Climate Change Coordination Unit. Kenya also developed the Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Strategy and Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Implementation Framework. FAO helped to garner political and financial support for mainstreaming climate change into development planning in Kenya. In Zambia, the government has integrated CCA into the work plans and budgets of the Ministry of Agriculture. Uganda has integrated NAP-Ag into its statutory processes, and it is mandatory to integrate climate change concerns in all work plans and budgets.
52. *Built national technical expertise in CCA.* Through FAO's support, Niger built expertise of agricultural advisory actors to support the implementation of CCA and increased the number and quality of advisory and extension agents at local level. Delays were experienced in implementing the experimental set-ups and local micro-projects to test and encourage greater adoption of CCA technologies. The need for substantial financial resources for inputs and equipment was also a constraint. In Lesotho, national ministries as well as district level administrations benefited from training in conservation agriculture, climate risk assessments, gender mainstreaming, water harvesting and geographic information systems. In addition, FAO's support in Lesotho contributed to enhancing data on land use, soil and water types and climate impacts at different project sites and contributed to the national Lesotho Soil Information System.

¹⁰ OED notes that FAO in the Africa Region has many projects on climate action in agriculture, and a number of these were covered in the 2020 Regional Synthesis of Evaluations for the Africa Region. There is also ongoing work in several countries including Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau, the Seychelles and Nigeria. These have not been evaluated by OED so are not included in the current regional synthesis.

53. *Strengthened capacities of agro-pastoralists through raising awareness and providing technical know-how for CCA.* Agro-pastoralists in several African countries were exposed to CCA technology and practices, with the aim of mitigating the risks they faced as a result of climate change. The agro-pastoralist field school (APFS) was adopted as the methodology in countries such as Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The approach had some success in Mali where agro-pastoralists including women participated in learning activities and implemented integrated adaptation strategies in pilot sites. Increased productivity was reported in CCA pilot areas for cereals and market gardening. In Malawi, FAO's support contributed to increased awareness among local communities, of the effects of climate change, and enhanced their knowledge and skills on how to apply climate-resilient practices. At least 60 percent of beneficiaries were reported to have adopted measures for mitigating the effects of climate change. Sustainability of results of these initiatives is not assured. In the case of Mali, many end-beneficiaries lack the finances to continue with activities beyond the pilot phase. FAO is also credited with building capacities of producers in Senegal, improving their knowledge on climate action.
54. The APFS approach in Niger contributed to strengthened capacities of agro-pastoralist. The APFS installed between 2016 and 2020 were found to have contributed to several positive effects including social cohesion from regular meetings at which knowledge was shared and mutual understanding and cooperation enhanced. Furthermore, a survey of farmers trained found that 72 percent had adopted at least two of the technologies, good practices or innovations demonstrated in the APFS, and 19 percent had applied these once. Although there were delays in setting up micro-projects for implementing CCA and security risks, the evaluation found that the approach has good prospects for institutionalisation and sustainability.

Programme Priority Area BE2: Bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture

(Reports 8P, 9P, 10P)

55. *Strengthened capacities of governments and stakeholders.* In Botswana, FAO built national capacities of relevant ministries (agriculture, health, environment); pesticide retailers; the university and an environmental NGO, with training targeting different stages of the pesticide lifecycle. FAO contributed to strengthening capacities in Eritrea to safeguard obsolete pesticides through training that covered the life cycle of pesticides from importation through to waste management. FAO also supported the review and submission of draft legislation on pesticides and its translation into local languages. FAO's support to Mozambique translated into limited success. There was some progress in strengthening the policy environment with the development of a draft waste management strategy and guidelines for pesticide lifecycle management and waste management. Lack of access to internet connectivity, institutional arrangements for the project, and limited capacity building hampered achievement of results.
56. *Capacities of farmers strengthened.* Farmer and extension staff was trained in identifying and managing risks associated with pesticides and empty containers. The main results reported from FAO's support are the banning of toxic pesticides, the promotion of bio-pesticides and other less toxic alternatives, and the development of legislation to reduce importation via temporary permits. Capacities were strengthened in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) using the FFS approach. Farmers and FFS facilitators were trained in IPM, and a manual was developed. The Government of Eritrea expressed its desire to have FFS in IPM extended to all farmers' fields and the inclusion of the FFS approach as one of

its strategies for sustainability. Though the evaluation considered this a positive influence by FAO on government policy, it cautioned that the rapid roll out of the FFS without appropriate guidance could dilute the quality of the approach.

57. *Some progress in safeguarding and disposal of obsolete pesticides.* Botswana was able to export 26.8 tonnes of obsolete pesticides for destruction and add 35 tonnes of seed to composting for bioremediation of contaminated soil. The government has temporarily ceased to collect obsolete pesticides and pesticide containers while its warehouse destroyed by fire is being rebuilt. Sustaining the results achieved by Botswana requires on-going support from the Government and donors, and a recognition of the risks posed by obsolete pesticides and the need to prioritise public finance for these pesticides. The Government of Eritrea was able to achieve its target of safeguarding and disposing of 364 tonnes of obsolete pesticide stocks. However, progress in safeguarding and disposal of contaminated soils, empty pesticide containers and contaminated sprayers was limited. In Mozambique, there was moderate progress in the excavation of buried pesticides and the remediation of contaminated sites, primarily due to problems with the contracted company.

Programme Priority Area BE3: Biodiversity and ecosystems services for food and agriculture

(Reports 7P, 14P, 6G)

58. *Strengthened knowledge and understanding of transboundary marine ecosystems.* The Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME) provides vital food and economic resources for West African countries, particularly for coastal populations living in areas bordering it. The CCLME has the highest fish production among African Large Marine Ecosystems and is subject to many threats. FAO supported a regional project with the objective of enabling CCLME countries to address priority transboundary concerns. The initiative improved knowledge through analysis of pre-existing scientific and technical work, and the analysis of information generated by project activities such as ecosystems-based campaigns. Knowledge of scientists was also strengthened through training on the Ecosystems Approach to Fisheries (EAF) and missions at sea. The knowledge generated by the project informed the development of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA)¹¹ for the CCLME, particularly with regard to the decline of living resources and habitat degradation. The project also enabled the collection of vast amounts of data on declining water quality, but these could not be analysed fully in time for inclusion in the TDA.
59. *Contributed to policy and plans on transboundary marine ecosystems.* Through FAO's support, the CCLME countries were able to develop the Strategic Action Programme (SAP), based on the TDA and reflecting an ecosystems-based management approach. Although seven countries have signed the SAP, it is not a binding commitment but rather a Memorandum of Understanding with the project. Another risk to the SAP is that the predominance of the fisheries sector in the SAP may undermine the ecosystems-based approach. The knowledge generated in the CCLME Working Groups contributed to policy documents on trade and marketing mechanisms, and a regional geo-referenced database on habitats and biodiversity. Other results include the preparation of a draft emergency

¹¹ Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis is a technical approach to determine the relative importance of sources and causes of transboundary water problems, and to identify potential and preventive and remedial actions. It provides the technical basis for the preparation of the Strategic Action Programme (SAP) in international waters.

plan to combat and prevent oil pollution at sea, and the development of a regional action programme on the impacts of land-based activities on water and sediment quality.

60. *Raised awareness of biodiversity conservation at community level.* In Malawi, through FAO's support, farmers and over beneficiaries from member associations were exposed to a range of conservation activities. The evaluation found heightened awareness of natural resources management and motivation towards conserving biodiversity. FAO contributed to positive and upward trend in land conservation in areas where FAO supported sensitization on land conservation.
61. *Strengthened strategic and legislative frameworks for wildlife management and bush meat sector.* FAO supported countries in the Congo Basin (Central African Republic, Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Gabon) to reform or strengthen their strategic and legislative frameworks and tools for participatory sustainable management of wildlife and bush meat. A sub-regional strategy for wildlife management and the bush meat sector has been developed, bush meat is increasingly recognised as an important animal protein source and income for forest communities that should be managed sustainably to ensure these communities continue to benefit from the bush meat sector. Moving to implementation of participatory wildlife management has proved to be challenging as countries move at different paces and the highly political nature of the issues requires inclusion of a diverse range of stakeholders and on-going advocacy. The complexity of the project made project management coordination difficult, impacting negatively on the progress of the project.

3.4 Theme 4: Resilience to threats and crises

62. FAO's results under Theme 4 can be categorized by its work under the following PPAs:
 - i. BL4: agriculture and food emergencies – focusing on developing preparedness for potential risks and hazards, facilitating anticipatory action, emergency response to assist populations, contributing to sustained peace and conflict prevention, and embedding longer term resilience building within humanitarian activities.
 - ii. BL5: resilient agrifood systems – focusing on enhancing resilience of agrifood systems and the ecosystem that supports those systems to inform risk governance and decision-making for vulnerability reduction measures.
 - iii. BP3: One Health – work on strengthening integrated One Health systems and emergency operations against transboundary plant pests and animal diseases, transforming access to biosecurity and best-practice guidance, health systems performance in sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) standards for better trade and food security, and addressing antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the agriculture, fisheries, and environment sectors.

Finding 4. FAO made significant contributions to all three PPA's across the region. It has strengthened preparedness and responded to emergencies, contributed to peace and conflict prevention, and enhanced resilience. However, there are gaps in embedding resilience building within its emergency response and in accounting for conflict in its programming. Similarly, there are gaps in comprehensively addressing value chain development and in ensuring sustainability of its efforts. Under One Health, FAO advocated for and raised awareness on addressing future health risks, improved national capacities, and provided substantial policy support on zoonotic diseases

and AMR. However, FAO has not yet been able to scale up its initiatives to adequately control health risks in endemic countries and ensure sustainability of its interventions.

Programme Priority Area BL4: Agriculture and food emergencies

(Reports O6, O9, 5P, O18, O3, O5, O13, O14, O17, 16P, O16, 2P)

63. *Strengthened early warning systems and resilience decision making.* Through its programme on Information for Nutrition, Food Security, and Resilience Decision Making (INFORMED), FAO has improved risk analysis and decision making across several countries. Key activities include the publication of the global quarterly Early Warning Early Action (EWEA) report and the development of an EWEA country toolkit. The reports were found to be particularly useful and were valued as coordination and advocacy tools. In Ethiopia, the EWEA toolkit helped in developing national EWEA plans, however, the overall effectiveness of these plans in triggering early action is yet to be assessed. Even though the work has encouraged investments in early warning systems, these have not yet been fully used to support design and delivery of programmes. At the community level there is little evidence of the capacity provided to stakeholders on early warning systems. In the case of the El Niño events of Southern Africa, agro-meteorological and early warning alerts were timely but did not lead to early action in the countries.
64. FAO has also supported regional and national technical capacities to conduct resilience measurement and analyses by applying the resilience index measurement and analysis (RIMA) methodology.¹² The context specific food security and nutrition data collected through the process was valued by planners. To establish and enhance resilience analysis capacities FAO has also collaborated with regional institutions (including IGAD, the African Union and the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel [CILSS]) and national governments. Overall, the resilience index helped to explain factors contributing to resilience capacities, however, there was little evidence of its use in planning policies and programmes to target resilience interventions and no specific institutionalization strategy for RIMA was found to guide the activities. Further, RIMA results have not yet been utilized in FAO Country Programming Frameworks and the rollout of RIMA within the African Union has only recently commenced, consequently it is still early to provide feedback on its effectiveness.
65. *Strengthened resilience coordination at regional and national levels.* In the case of FAO's response to the desert locust upsurge in the Horn of Africa, FAO organized monthly meetings with key partners including donors, regional commissions, and national governments to coordinate operations. The regional coordination function was singled out as successful by partner organisations. The strengthening of regional coordination structures enhanced awareness and information-sharing. FAO has also followed a similar coordination function at the national level. For example, in Ethiopia, it has made strong contributions in strengthening the coordination of resilience actors, while addressing emergency response to disasters.
66. *Enhanced preparedness and emergency response.* Across the region, FAO has effectively responded to emergencies through a holistic approach. It has strengthened preparedness, surveillance, and control operations for management of pests, delivered livelihoods assistance in the form of cash assistance, livestock support and farming re-engagement

¹² More details in the INFORMED evaluation (FAO, 2021s).

- packages. There are mixed results in terms of embedding resilience building within its activities.
67. While responding to the desert locust upsurge in the Horn of Africa FAO worked on preparation, surveillance and control of locust swarms. The activities resulted in significant reduction of swarm sizes and damage to crops and livelihood assets.¹³ In Eritrea, FAO successfully carried out the control of Fall armyworm and desert locusts through integrated pest management. FAO's contribution to controlling successive, widespread locust infestation has safeguarded the livelihoods of both rural and urban populations. In 2020, only 0.4 percent of the harvest in Eritrea was lost to desert locust attack. For similar emergencies, in Sierra Leone, FAO's support in the establishment of a multidisciplinary National Task Force for Fall armyworm (NTFF) in coordination with the government led to the establishment of surveillance teams. These teams engaged in sensitization and awareness raising of the farming community on the symptoms of fall armyworm infestation.
 68. In multiple emergency contexts, FAO has also delivered livelihood support. During the Desert Locust upsurge, the organization reached a large number of households with its livelihood protection assistance, including cash assistance, supplementary livestock feed and farming re-engagement packages. FAO's projects responding to El Niño induced drought in Southern Africa, made significant contributions to reduce the food gap by improving access to nutritious food in the short-term through support to farmers. The results from the household survey conducted by the evaluation team showed that beneficiary farmers recorded significantly higher production and productivity, when compared to non-beneficiaries in all country case studies. Further, unconditional cash transfers and cash-for-work activities in Burkina Faso and Mali have assisted vulnerable populations during lean periods and contributed to strengthening the economic and social fabric of communities by supporting investments in income generating activities.
 69. FAO also supported livestock management and production in emergencies through a combination of support packages: vaccinations and rehabilitation of water facilities in Lesotho, trainings and restocking in Malawi, and vaccinations, provision of livestock feed and destocking in Zimbabwe. The evaluation identified positive results in building resilience capacities in Malawi and Zimbabwe. In Ethiopia, the evaluation noted further scope to capitalize on its expertise on livelihoods and the resilience of pastoralist communities.
 70. In recent years, FAO has played a role in promoting a humanitarian–development nexus approach among national stakeholders in Chad. For example, from 2015, FAO encouraged the Humanitarian Country Team to address humanitarian–development nexus issues, instead of only prioritizing humanitarian responses, to address the root causes of the crisis and better support resilience building in affected communities. The nexus was integrated into Chad's National Response Plan 2017–2019, finding consensus among humanitarian actors. However, not in all cases has resilience building been embedded in its humanitarian activities. For example, even though for the countries around the Lake Chad region, FAO's emergency support has contributed to changes in food production and diversification, income and households' dietary status, FAO has not focused on underlying issues that require longer-term strategies and solutions. For the livestock sector, the overall approach

¹³ FAO's own calculations suggest that 3.1 million tonnes of cereal were protected over one season, saving USD 933 million in cash value, and meeting the cereal requirements of 21 million people (FAO, 2021c).

was considered a pure emergency response action without a focus on preserving livestock. Similarly, in Burundi and Eritrea, emergency projects ignored sustainability issues or appropriate exit strategies. The quantity of emergency assistance provided remained insufficient to effectively meet the needs of rural households and to build resilience, especially in areas prone to recurrent climatic shocks.

71. *Contributed to peace and conflict prevention.* Through its activities, FAO has contributed to peace and conflict prevention. Conflict has also been a significant impediment in its resilience building efforts. The interventions in Sierra Leone directly addressed the two conflict drivers of gender discrimination and fragmented land governance. FAO helped establish a system of community conflict monitors and mediators in the country for future land disputes. The work has also created a momentum for women in their communities to address conflict issues more confidently. The combination of addressing land disputes and economic empowerment was effective in contributing to increased land tenure security and peace. In Burkina Faso and Mali, social cohesion and community solidarity were strengthened through community activities such as, Cash for Work and the collective action of the DIMITRA clubs (in Mali). The clubs have promoted an inclusive dialogue (including women and youth) within the communities and the mobilisation of the communities around important local problems. In Nigeria, improved stoves have not only helped reduce environmental impact but also helped in creating jobs and in reducing the risk of conflict between displaced and host populations.
72. Continuous conflict and uncertainties in some countries, including the intervention areas, pose a serious threat to resilience building efforts. In Nigeria, project beneficiaries are subject to attacks from armed groups leading to continuous loss of productive assets. Insecurity in general also affects implementation itself, making it difficult to find safe, accessible, and suitable sites for trainings and farmer fields schools. FAO's capacity for carrying out context/conflict analysis has been strengthened but still needs to be embedded more uniformly at all levels, especially at regional and country levels and needs to inform programming. The evaluation on the HDP nexus found FAO's overall food security analysis to be very weak, with limited understanding of the underlying structural causes, and limited incorporation of context/conflict analysis.

Programme Priority Area: BL5: resilient agrifood systems

(Reports 2P, O3, 5P, 16P, O9)

73. *Enhanced resilience through awareness campaigns and capacity development.* Through FFS, FAO has enhanced resilience of vulnerable populations. In Mali, awareness campaigns combined with demonstration sessions on the nutritional aspects have had significant results among participating households.¹⁴ In Burkina Faso, for households covered under sensitization on nutritional aspects, the comparative analysis of the endline and baseline studies confirmed the significant positive impact in terms of dietary practices, particularly among children. Additionally, in parts of the Sahel and Southern Africa, FFS have proved highly relevant and effective in helping farmers to be more resilient to climate change and natural disasters by promoting climate-smart agriculture and climate change adaptation practices. For example, in response to the El Niño induced drought in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe, FFS strengthened social networks and group dynamics among farmers to improve resilience. In Burkina Faso and Mali, the adoption of these good practices by these

¹⁴ Champ école agro-pastoral (CEAP) programme.

households has resulted in increased agricultural and livestock productivity and income. In Sierra Leone, FAO has successfully provided technical support for design and capacity development for the FFS as an extension system.

74. FAO complemented FFS by institutionalizing and strengthening farmer-based organization (FBO) networks. In Sierra Leone, it has supported the National Federation of Farmers of Sierra Leone (NAFSL), which has enhanced long-term technical support provided to farmers by strengthening the district agricultural officers' capacity through the FFS extension system. Further, FBO's were given opportunities to integrate livestock into cropping activities and diversify income generation and diets. However, it faced widespread challenges such as conflict with crop farmers, scarcity of feeds during the dry season, animal diseases, and lack of veterinary services, and no concrete steps were taken towards comprehensive value chain development.
75. FAO has also contributed to the financial resilience of affected populations through the Village Savings and Credit Associations (VSCAs) in Burkina Faso and Mali. It has promoted a savings and credit culture and the beneficiaries value the importance of pooling their finances to improve their own living conditions and strengthen food security. Many households now have access to credit for income generating activities and have increased their saving capacities. There are further opportunities for improvements through work with microfinance institutions (MFIs).
76. Even though the capacity development work as part of the FFS and other trainings were highly appreciated and the skills acquired have been used across the board, the sustainability of the results is mixed, and challenges remain for interventions to be mainstreamed at district and community levels and beyond the end of the project. In cases such as of the *Caisses de Résilience* approach in the Sahel, the evaluation noted that the project has laid the foundations for sustainability and for the perpetuation of its actions after its completion. Across the projects implemented in Ethiopia, the sustainability of results is more likely where projects have adopted an economically sound, market-based approach that are relevant to the local context and implemented at a sufficient scale. Evaluations have also highlighted that FAO does not have the resources to provide such services at the scale needed to make a significant impact on the overall resilience of the regions.
77. *Strengthened national capacities and policy support.* To reinforce its resilience building efforts, in the affected countries, FAO has provided inputs to national governments on related programmes and policies. For example, in Sierra Leone, FAO with its strong collaboration with the national ministries has contributed to the development of agricultural programmes and strategies with specific inputs to programs. FAO's support to policies in Sierra Leone include the Land Policy and the Forestry Act of 1988. However, FAO's policy footprint has varied across countries and subjects. In Ethiopia over the evaluation period, although the support was highly valued by all stakeholders interviewed, FAO's involvement was relatively limited. In Sierra Leone, there was limited support in the development or implementation of policies on fisheries and marine resources. Further, some of the support provided is also threatened by the high turnover of government staff.

Programme Priority Area BP3: One Health

(Reports O2, O3, O4, O9)

78. *Advocated for and raised awareness on addressing future health risks.* Through the Africa Sustainable Livestock 2050 (ASL2050) project, FAO engaged the African Regional Economic Communities to discuss challenges associated with increasing demand for animal source foods and on how livestock development could be best coordinated at a regional scale to mitigate potential negative impacts. ASL2050 established a solid foundation for future decision-making processes. For instance, the Centre for Pastoral Areas and Livestock Development (ICPALD) indicated that such analyses have potential to significantly facilitate its work on livestock policy development, harmonization, and trade, and expressed interest in further developing regional scenarios. The work has helped national governments, donors, and other key stakeholders to identify key policy constraints that address risks to the livestock sector and to public health from zoonotic diseases and antimicrobial resistance (AMR).
79. On AMR, FAO's activities have contributed to improving awareness among national stakeholders through activities such as the annual World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (WAAW), providing support on the development of the awareness raising components of the National Action Plans, and by working directly with key stakeholder groups such as farmers, veterinarians, and extension workers. At the national level, its awareness raising activities have been guided by baseline surveys to ensure their suitability. However, direct users of antimicrobials and those who consume products grown using them have not been targeted at scale.
80. *Improved national capacities by providing necessary tools and training.* The evaluation found that EPT-2 effectively raised the capacity of target countries to pre-empt and respond to emerging zoonotic diseases threatening human health. For example, the outbreak of a new H5N8 strain in the Plateau and Bauchi States of Nigeria in 2019 was detected and contained with the Programme support. In several African countries, outbreaks of HPAI were controlled, while standard operating procedures for selected disease investigation and national preparedness plans were developed. In Eritrea, animal disease control and surveillance proved highly effective, enabling vulnerable families to benefit from milk consumption and the sale of animals to sustain them.
81. FAO has also worked with laboratories to enhance their diagnostic capacities, as well as their information management systems. Its support for laboratories in Cameroon following a 2016 outbreak of HPAI enabled the country to diagnose 22 H5N1 and H5N8 outbreaks, as well as 115 outbreaks of other major animal diseases. The provision of relevant equipment and Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) in Uganda and proficiency testing in Ghana, helped in improving their diagnostic capacities. Through projects such as the emergency equipment stockpile, FAO has also made it possible for some African countries (such as Ghana, Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo) to rapidly ship samples to international laboratories for confirmatory diagnosis.
82. With regards to early warning systems (EWS) under One Health, through the joint FAO-OIE-WHO early warning system (GLEWS), countries such as Sierra Leone and Senegal in 2017 were able to update their preparedness plans and test migratory birds to prevent avian influenza outbreaks. FAO also enhanced animal disease reporting systems in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania through the

- Event Mobile Application (EMA-i). However, the EPT-2 evaluation noted that many African countries needed significant training support in the use of decision support tools and the interpretation of risk maps.
83. Furthermore, the expertise and capacity gained in Africa through FAO projects have been valuable for diseases not directly targeted. For example, training on Good Emergency Management Practices (GEMP) for transboundary animal diseases and other activities to strengthen veterinary officer capacity in Nigeria (in 2018) reportedly helped to improve the early detection, investigation, and control of outbreaks of equine influenza. The GEMP trainings have also increased overall awareness of veterinary services to better prepare, prevent, detect and respond to animal diseases.
 84. Although EPT-2 bolstered outbreak response in some countries, diseases such as avian influenza are not yet under control in endemic countries, as efforts rely on national commitment to scale up initiatives. Early detection of cases also remains a concern. Much of the detection work in Africa has yet to become sustainable and the evaluation found little evidence of cost recovery or public-private partnerships. The absence of institutional oversight and robust policy to support appropriate and timely compensation continues to hamper disease reporting. Considerable efforts to improve hygiene at live bird markets across countries are important in preventing outbreaks, with guidelines, standard operating procedures for cleaning, disinfection, and destocking. However, as market infrastructure typically remains poor, there is little ability to effectively reduce the prevalence of influenza viruses until additional investment in market infrastructure is made by local authorities and/or traders.
 85. In some countries such as Sierra Leone, veterinary surveillance, disease reporting and outbreak response depends entirely on FAO for functionality. In Burundi, quality technical assistance was provided to control certain health risks such as cassava mosaic, the fall armyworm and *peste des petits ruminants*. Nevertheless, the country needs structural support in establishing a diagnostic capacity and in developing its surveillance and control systems, beyond the emergency support provided. Similarly, in Ethiopia, benefits from capacity development have been highly regarded and the benefits will persist. However, the sustainability of such activities is not clear.
 86. On AMR, FAO has developed and successfully rolled out its tool for assessing in-country AMR surveillance capacity and, where funding has allowed, worked to improve national capacity. However, active AMR surveillance remains a challenge and, in most countries, FAO's work is not generating the quality data needed to build evidence. FAO's regional technical publications on AMR have been assessed of good quality.
 87. *Provided substantial policy and governance support.* To countries covered by its work on AMR, FAO has provided substantial support through legal assessments and assistance to policymakers, following a multisectoral and One Health approach. It has provided support in developing, implementing, and monitoring National Action Plan's on AMR and has developed important guidelines on use of antimicrobials. On reducing the risk and impact of emerging pandemic through a One Health approach, FAO's EPT-2 programme successfully supported animal health strategies and policy development. In Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania, the programme facilitated the development of strategies for the control of some priority zoonotic diseases and the development of guidelines for the integrated surveillance of zoonotic diseases. In Ghana, a collaboration between FAO and

WHO lent support to the National Disaster Management Organization to coordinate the development of a One Health policy.

88. *Facilitated and strengthened One Health platforms.* Further FAO has facilitated One Health coordination within the region to work closely on transboundary threats and AMR. FAO through the EPT-2 programme facilitated regional cooperation for better understanding, surveillance, and detection of MERS-CoV in Ethiopia and Kenya. However, there is still limited buy-in from national governments, as evidenced by their limited investment and capacity to continue without FAO support. The EPT-2 evaluation also found that national One Health mechanisms generally need further development. In Sierra Leone, the One Health engagement has made significant strides but is still facing challenges. The platform is effectively championing multisectoral collaboration on health security, emergency preparedness and response, however, the overall sustainability of such coordination mechanisms depends on the commitment of Government to continue and their ability to convene development partners. Further, these mechanisms in most cases have not succeeded in promoting joint planning or implementation.

3.5 Gender equality and empowerment of women

Finding 5. The synthesis found several examples of gender equality mainstreaming in the design of projects and programmes, and this is an improvement on the 2019/20 synthesis. There is room for strengthening FAO's work in gender equality and empowerment of women in the region, including addressing the structural and cultural barriers to gender equality and reporting on results.

89. Gender equality was a consideration in the design of a number of projects and programmes. The NAP-Ag programme for example, explicitly recognized the pivotal role that women play in slowing down the impact of climate change. The project design delineated specific areas for inclusion of women, the necessity for sex-disaggregated data, an emphasis or focus of gender in training and capacity building, gender-focused case studies and formulating gender-specific indicators. As this was a multi-country programme, the extent to which countries mainstreamed gender varied from country to country. In the Lesotho CCA project, women's engagement in projects was recorded and sex-disaggregated data provided in reports. Gender issues were reflected in the design of the El Niño response project with project activities designed to improve women's access to productive resources and reducing their work burden through the introduction of new technologies. The sustainable forest project in Uganda did not expressly state gender targets in its design but women were actively encouraged to participate in the project from the outset. The project also trained government staff at national, regional and local levels on gender issues, while journalists were trained in reporting gender issues in natural resources management.
90. The project in Sierra Leone was exclusively for empowering women through improving their access to land tenure and management of natural resources and enable them to address conflict issues in their communities. The women participated in the design of income-generating activities, were trained in business management, communication and negotiation, entrepreneurship etc. and were successful in generating income. The project underscored the role of women in conflict resolution. The United Republic of Tanzania has included gender in the National Fisheries Policy (2015) with the view to mainstreaming gender-focussed interventions in fisheries and aquaculture to attain gender equity and development. Micro-projects and income-generating projects in the Niger effectively

responded to concerns of women in vulnerable circumstances to generate income while ensuring that the environment is protected.

91. Other positive examples of gender mainstreaming and gender considerations include the FIRST project contribution to the integration of gender in policy development through advocacy and involvement of women's organizations in the policy development phase; FAO's country programme in Eritrea had many projects targeting women-headed households; and the VGGT project developed capacity and raised awareness of women's access to land, and contributed to changed perceptions at national institutional level and at community level. Women's access to land formed part of concrete activities going beyond raising awareness. Climate change projects in Kenya, Senegal and Uganda were deliberate in including gender considerations in the design and implementation.
92. There were projects that made no attempt to address gender in their design and implementation, for example, projects on the disposal of organic pollutants and obsolete pesticides, and the climate change project in Mali. In the Ethiopia food loss and waste reduction project gender equality considerations were not sufficiently considered. The evaluation noted the lack of capacity in the country office to conduct a gender analysis. The previous regional synthesis found that gender mainstreaming at project level needed improvement, and that there appeared to be insufficient technical expertise for gender analysis in country offices.
93. Although gender is being mainstreamed into the design of projects and programmes, implementation however tends to focus on women's participation in training, income-generating activities and other activities. These are important, but they do not go far enough in addressing the structural and cultural barriers to gender equality in the region. Another shortcoming observed is the reporting on gender, which is in many instances reduced to stating the number of women that participated in the project or programme, with little or now information about how participation has changed or improved conditions for women.

3.6 Enablers and constraints

Finding 6. The quality of FAO's partnership with governments, its leadership and expertise in coordinating multiple stakeholders across national boundaries, its collaboration with other UN entities, and its approach to capacity development that is participatory and invested in local level actors, are key enablers of results. The main constraints are similar to those identified in the 2019/20 regional synthesis, namely, limited financial resources in governments, shortcomings in project designs, human resources capacity constraints, and delays in procurement.

3.6.1 Enabling factors

94. The quality of FAO's partnership with counterpart ministries in national governments is a critical success factor for achieving results. Working in close partnership with governments fosters government ownership and leadership in driving implementation. Partnership with government counterparts is also necessary for effective implementation, coordination and monitoring progress at sub-national levels, as was demonstrated in FAO's support for building resilience in Burkina Faso. Evaluations noted that FAO's partnership with ministries of agriculture is stronger than partnerships with other ministries and can create imbalance in programmes that require participation of other ministries.

95. Evaluations noted the importance of effective coordination for achieving results. This is especially the case for projects that are inter-disciplinary in nature, involve multiple stakeholders at multiple levels (national and sub-national levels). Coordination of national and local actors is a common enabler in control of desert locusts and protection of livelihoods. FAO convened coordination meetings regularly, enabling the sharing of information and communication among partners. The evaluation of FAO's response to the desert locust upsurge observed that FAO had performed very well on coordination of a highly complex, multi-component, multi-actor response. FAO developed a context-relevant coordination system that was well suited to the cross-border and dynamic nature of desert locust upsurges, and appropriate for the pre-existing capacity and response architecture in the Horn of Africa. Another example of effective coordination is NAP-Ag project implemented across several African countries and coordinated effectively through adoption of a common results framework, communication strategy, budgets and work plans, and clearly delineated roles and responsibilities.
96. Evaluations identified FAO's collaboration with other entities of the United Nations as a factor enabling success. Examples include collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the NAP-Ag programme and the joint field visits with the International Labour Organization (ILO) helped to address challenges and improve implementation of the project for women's economic empowerment in Sierra Leone. In the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ) tuna project, FAO collaborated with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) who funded the project secretariat that enabled coordination of project activities. FAO collaborated with WHO on One Health activities such as the One Health policy work by the National Disaster Management Organisation of Ghana. The results of collaboration however were not always evident in the evaluations. This may be because the collaboration was not substantial or because FAO has not developed the tools to measure results of collaboration.
97. FAO's approach to capacity development is an enabler common to several of the projects and programmes in the sample of evaluation reports. The participatory approach of the APFS and the FFS was a key factor in enabling results in the development of sustainable rice systems and in the introduction of CCA for farmers. Demand-driven approaches that were responsive to the needs of intended beneficiaries, and the participatory approach in mobilising stakeholders facilitated implementation of projects and programmes. The use of community facilitators assisted in ensuring that FAO's support was sensitive to cultural diversities, while the training of local trainers helped to ensure that capacities built remained in the country. The use of participatory dialogue approaches such as Dimitra and the Green Negotiated Territorial Development Approach facilitated dialogue on conflict-sensitive issues. Engaging and convening multiple stakeholders enabled FAO to obtain consolidated input from interdependent sectors, enabling integration of agriculture in National Adaptation Plans.
98. Technology (old and new) was an enabler in a few projects, providing tools for surveillance, data collection, and improving production. Examples include the electronic monitoring system for tuna enabled the collection of a high volume, quality data, which was unprecedented; and the use of biotechnology for date palm cultivation. The use of high-resolution climate forecasts in Kenya enabled local communities to anticipate and prepare adequately for climate-related disasters.

3.6.2 Constraining factors

99. The constraining factors identified in this synthesis are similar to those identified in the previous regional synthesis.
100. The limited finances of governments were identified as a major constraint in many of the evaluations, impacting negatively on results and their sustainability. The non-availability of funds to continue implementation of the electronic observation system for tuna in Ghana is a case in point. Other examples of financial constraints limiting the scaling up of interventions include the participatory approach to land-use and natural resources planning in Angola, the lack of finances to implement action plans and innovative practices learned from training in forest-related agriculture in Uganda and limiting ethno-veterinary services to a small number of locations. In Ethiopia, a national coordinator was appointed for the animal health service delivery project, but no funding was available from the government to implement activities.
101. The evaluation of FAO's work in climate action identified FAO's heavy reliance on individual donor grants hampered the organization's ability to be more strategic and link the medium-term outcomes of its work to longer-term transformative outcomes and impacts. This challenge is demonstrated at the country level – for example, in Senegal there are many climate change-related projects implemented by different experts and no synergy or harmonisation of these interventions, thus also missing opportunities for mutual learning.
102. Similar to the previous regional synthesis, the lack of adequate human resources in country offices and in government partner ministries was identified as a major constraint in a number of evaluations. FAO country offices, especially smaller offices lack specialised technical capacity in certain areas (for example, fisheries, pastoralism and climate change) and rely on lead technical officers in regional and sub-regional offices. Regional lead technical officers usually cover several countries and are not always able to provide the technical support when required. Insufficient backstopping from headquarters was also identified as a constraint. Other human resources issues include delays in recruitment and of project staff, turnover of staff and focal points in ministries, and focal points in ministries already overburdened with other responsibilities.
103. Evaluations identified delays in procurement of goods and services, delays in obtaining internal approvals and the many steps involved in FAO internal procedures, delays in obtaining signed letters of agreement from governments, as constraints to delivery. More recent evaluations cited delays in procurement as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. FAO was not able to ensure the timely supply of equipment and pesticides for control operations on desert locusts.
104. A small number of evaluations identified problems in project design that impacted negatively on the achievement of results. Projects lack a robust theory of change to show how inputs and activities contribute to outcomes. The absence of a robust theory of change also runs the risk of flawed designs based on assumptions that do not hold true, as was the case with the forest and tenure reform project where end-beneficiaries were unable to implement the plans they had developed in the project, as they did not own the land. The Blue Economy initiative in Cabo Verde generated projects for private sector financing, but there were insufficient national entrepreneurs to finance the projects. Another example of weak project design is the absence of value chain analysis to identify issues that affect the value chain and leads to unsuitable activities being implemented along the value chain.

Evaluations also noted that global projects in some cases did not sufficiently consider the specific needs and context of the country in the design phase, resulting in projects that are difficult to implement at country level. Project institutional arrangements in instances are not conducive to national ownership, for example, the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) project. Problems with project design were also identified in the previous regional synthesis.

105. Poor internal coordination hindered results, especially in global projects and programmes that spanned several country offices across FAO regions. The evaluation of FAO's work in climate action found that the coordination between FAO headquarters and decentralized offices on issues relating to donors, human resources and decision-making, leading to fragmented actions and hindering constructive feedback on strategic operationalization.

3.7 Gaps and emerging issues

106. This section discusses the gaps and issues that emerge from the synthesis of the evaluation reports. As the regional synthesis is based on a sample of evaluation reports, it does not cover all the programmes and activities of FAO in the Africa region. The gaps identified in the regional synthesis might therefore not be real gaps, but a reflection of the sample of evaluation reports reviewed. The section also reflects on these issues and gaps against the backdrop of the Strategic Framework 2022–2031. Some of the issues discussed were highlighted in the previous regional synthesis.

Finding 7. The 'accelerators', namely, innovation, technology, data, and complements are present in FAO's programmes to varying degrees and are inter-connected. However, they will need to be more visible and deliberate in programming going forward, to achieve significant transformation of agriculture and food systems in the Africa region. There is also a need for more detailed guidance on how these four accelerators operate in practice.

107. There are examples of innovation in several projects, and innovations took different forms. One of the challenges for the regional synthesis was to determine whether or not a particular practice or intervention could be classified as an innovation. The FAO Guidance Note to PPA teams on the innovation accelerator provided some cues. Examples of innovation and innovative practices under Theme 1: Sustainable Production and value chains, with the Agriculture Innovation System demonstrated in the CDAIS project being a prominent example. The use of non-entangling fish aggregation devices is another example of innovation, and innovative approaches were introduced for surveillance of desert locusts. The ethno-veterinary project is an example of innovation that is based on indigenous knowledge and is a salutary reminder that innovation does not have to emanate from external experts. As mentioned in section 3.6, scaling up innovation requires resources beyond the life span of the project and often these resources are not readily available. Innovation is also context specific – what works in one country or community may not be suited to another.
108. Technology is closely related to innovation, and there were examples of the use of technology. As was the case with innovation, technology took different forms in the projects and programmes reviewed. The biotechnology used in cultivation of date palm, rice-growing and seed production technology, CCA technology, animal disease detection technology, and electronic observation systems for fisheries monitoring are examples found in the synthesis. The application and scaling up technology often require functioning

ICT infrastructure. The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the importance of ICT for response and recovery from disasters and global health risks and has exposed the underdevelopment of ICT infrastructure in many Africa countries especially in rural areas. The evaluations did not make explicit reference to women's access to technology. Many farmers in the Africa region are women,¹⁵ and their access to technology can accelerate the transformation of agriculture. There were no examples of indigenous technologies in the evaluations reviewed.

109. Technology enabled the collection and analysis of vast amounts of data for surveillance of natural resources, diseases and pests. Examples include the data generated on tuna purse seine vessels, the use of biophysical surveys to generate comprehensive baseline data on land use, degradation and climate impacts at multiple sites, the use of geo-database tools for CCA, the use of data and the use of data modelling on public expenditure for agriculture. Evaluations noted challenges associated with data, for example, the data gaps that still exist in surveillance of pests and AMR, and the cost of collecting quality data and keeping databases current. Data fragmentation is also an issue, for example, the weak linkages between data collection and analysis in relation to short-term food insecurity and the data collection and analysis in relation to long-term chronic food insecurity. The consequences of this disconnect is that the underlying structural causes of food insecurity are not well understood or are overlooked.
110. There is limited information to guide understanding of 'complements' in the new Strategic Framework. What can be inferred from the Strategic Framework is that these complements are about effective governance (rules, decision-making, political environment), institutional capacities (systems, data etc.) and human capital. The complements apply internally to FAO and to its stakeholders. From the evaluations reviewed, the issue of human resource capacity constraints in FAO country offices and in counterpart ministries was a common theme. The COVID-19 pandemic has probably exacerbated the human resource capacity constraints at country level. Institutional capacities cannot be strengthened without the requisite human resources in these institutions. This is an issue that requires attention. FAO's internal processes, for example, delegation of authority, procurement, communication between headquarters and decentralized offices, if improved, can go a long way to contributing to results.

Finding 8. The issue of youth is not receiving the requisite attention. Youth are absent in most projects and programmes or are peripheral and often grouped with 'women's issues'. The issue was raised in the 2019/20 regional synthesis. The Strategic Framework identifies youth as a cross-cutting theme and in the African context youth needs to be addressed as a priority in its own right.

111. The synthesis was able to identify projects and interventions that mentioned youth as a target group, but in most instances, youth were grouped with women. Examples include the Dimitra projects in Burkina Faso and Mali, advocacy for women and youth land tenure security in Madagascar, and encouraging the elderly, women and youth to participate in projects in Uganda, and climate change projects targeting women and youth. The Sierra Leone country programme was a rare example of a youth-focused intervention that engaged youth in agriculture-based employment opportunities and livelihoods activities. The evaluation of the NAP-Ag programme noted the paucity of youth-inclusive adaptation

¹⁵ The figure of 50 percent to 60 percent of agricultural input being provided by female labour is often quoted. A World Bank study puts the figure closer to 40 percent. See Christiaensen & Demery, 2018.

options and proposals to remove barriers to participation that youth face, such as access to land, farm inputs and insurance.

112. Young people are an important demographic as they form a significant proportion of Africa's population. Young people, given the opportunity, are strong forces for transformation and change, while young people without hope and opportunities can become fertile ground for political and social upheaval and violent extremism. The need for greater attention to youth was raised in the previous regional synthesis. Youth needs to be addressed as a cross-cutting theme in FAO, and not grouped with women, except where there is a focus on young women. The African Youth Charter (2006) is the continental framework for youth and Article 14: Poverty eradication and socio-economic integration of youth is especially relevant to FAO's work in the Africa region (African Union, n.d.). Collaborating with other UN entities such as UNFPA that has a youth mandate may be useful for advocacy with governments to pay greater attention to youth in agriculture.

Finding 9. Engagement and partnerships with civil society is important for FAO's effectiveness but has tended to be transactional rather than strategic. The private sector did not feature in most of the projects and programmes evaluated. There is a need to shift the nature of FAO's partnerships with civil society organizations to a more strategic level. There is also a need to forge partnerships with the private sector.

113. FAO's partnership with civil society organizations is essential for extending the organizations reach at local level. Civil society organizations act as important interlocutors, amplifying the voice of local communities and engaging in policy dialogues. The synthesis noted several examples of engagement with civil society organizations. For example, civil society has played an important role in projects related to land tenure (VGGT), participating in inclusive dialogue with government on land tenure issues and serving on project steering committees. The Pastoralist Knowledge Hub is an important vehicle for pastoralist organizations to share and access knowledge and for advocacy on issues that affect pastoralist. Civil society organizations are also involved in mobilizing communities and supporting emergency and resilience interventions and play an important role in peace-related initiatives. Civil society organizations have also received training.
114. The evaluations in the synthesis did not explicitly address challenges in FAO's partnerships with civil society organizations. From the evidence in the reports, it appears that partnerships with civil society organizations at country level are project-based and transactional, and end when the project ends. They do not present as strategic partnerships seeking to make systemic changes over a longer period of time. The evaluation of the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with civil society organizations (2020)¹⁶ noted the lack of capacity at country office level to integrate civil society partnerships in country programme frameworks; the necessary but cumbersome risk management and due diligence mechanisms that have limited the number of partnerships struck; and how the positioning of civil society and the attitude of governments can limit FAO's engagement with civil society organizations at country level. The evaluation contains important recommendations that are being implemented, notably, the need for country offices to be proactive in identifying opportunities for strategic partnerships with civil society organizations as agents of change.

¹⁶ This evaluation was not included in the synthesis sample, as it did not cover one of the four synthesis themes.

115. African civil society organizations have limited resources and have been stretched by the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to be stretched for the foreseeable future. Democratic spaces have also shrunk in some countries since the onset of the pandemic. FAO will need to bolster capacities and resources of African civil society organizations, and simultaneously maintain its primary relationship with national governments.
116. The synthesis found only three examples of substantive engagement with the private sector. Kenya established the Climate Business Information Network that serves as a collaborative platform for engaging the private sector to mainstream climate change in their business models, finance and technical support. Through this platform, the government hopes to catalyse private sector investments in low carbon and climate resilient development. The Government of Mozambique, through the MAFAP project, engaged the Mozambique Cotton Institute in government efforts to change the price setting formula for cotton. The Blue Economy initiative in Cabo Verde could not successfully engage the private sector as the latter lacked the finance to back projects. There are examples of the private sector included in multi-stakeholder platforms and project steering committees, but this seems to be ad hoc rather than a partnership between FAO and the private sector. The issue of private sector engagement was raised in the previous regional synthesis, and it is understood that FAO has developed a new strategy for private sector engagement.

Finding 10. Monitoring and evaluation at country level remains a gap in the region, and insufficient attention is paid to knowledge management.

117. A number of the evaluations identified monitoring and evaluation at country level as a shortcoming. Problems identified include the lack of effective monitoring systems for projects and programmes that would enable robust assessment of progress; poorly constructed monitoring indicators that hindered the project's ability to convey achievements; the absence of a systematic mechanism for reporting contribution to results beyond individual projects and not being able to report at outcome level. The gap in monitoring and evaluation at country level was identified in the previous regional synthesis.
118. Knowledge management is another gap at country level. The synthesis found examples of good knowledge management such as the documentation of climate resilient practices and using these in training workshops. Evaluations noted that knowledge management at project level was weak. Knowledge management, such as studies documenting lessons learned is not done routinely in country offices, and so limits organizational learning and institutional memory. Well-intentioned knowledge management initiatives such as setting up a knowledge management platform can also be misplaced if the demand for there is no demand for the knowledge or if a similar platform already exists.

Finding 11. The sustainability of results is fragile in several of the projects and programmes reviewed in the synthesis. With the constrained public finance in most African countries, FAO will need to find alternative ways to ensure sustainability and scale up initiatives.

119. Concern about the sustainability of results is a recurring theme, with several evaluations finding that projects or initiatives cannot be scaled up due to lack of finances and human resources from government ministries, and perhaps because up-scaling was not given sufficient attention in the design of the project. Most of the projects and programmes evaluated pre-date the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and given the devastating economic impact of the pandemic on African countries, the availability of public finance

will be further constrained. There is also the short-term impact of reprioritisation of funds from bilateral development partners to address the health emergency.

120. The issue of limited finance from government partners raises the question of how well FAO designs its projects and programmes, in particular, the extent to which project and programme designs have a clear exit strategy for FAO and commitments from government (and/or other development partners) for financial and human resources to sustain the interventions and/or to scale up successful initiatives.
121. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the value of countries in Africa collaborating to fight the pandemic. FAO should make greater use of South-South cooperation to facilitate sharing of expertise and resources across the region. FAO can also facilitate public-private partnerships as another vehicle for governments and the private sector to collaborate and share risks, and have bankable, sustainable interventions. Building capacities of governments to conduct public expenditure reviews and achieve better allocation of its own public finances are potential ways in which FAO can help to bridge financing gaps.
122. Sustainability can also be strengthened by building synergies between related projects and consolidating FAO's portfolio. FAO's portfolio in the Africa region is fragmented, particularly in the area of climate change as was noted in the thematic evaluation of FAO's work in climate change. This fragmentation is driven in part by the large portion of voluntary contributions that are earmarked for climate change. The transition to the Strategic Framework 2022–2031 with interventions clustered into PPAs can go some way towards consolidating the portfolio but will need an increased proportion of flexible voluntary contributions.

4. Conclusions and lessons learned

4.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. FAO contributed to results in the 14 PPAs reflected in the overarching themes of the regional synthesis. The results to which FAO contributed are wide-ranging, at multiple levels (regional, national and sub-national), benefiting stakeholders in government, local communities, small-scale producers, and civil society organizations. FAO's most significant contribution is its strengthening capacities of governments in policy development, policy reforms and planning. Here FAO has capacitated governments through research to generate evidence, and analytical and planning tools, as well as sharing FAO's knowledge and technical expertise in the various sectors that fall within FAO's mandate. Although the synthesis found many positive results, there is a recurring theme about the fragile sustainability of interventions, as activities often do not continue once the project and funding end. Lack of funding was frequently cited as the reason for this. However, the issue of sustainability is also a reflection of FAO's default modality of executing through projects, rather than adopting a more programmatic approach. The fragility of sustainability also reflects weaknesses in project designs that have not adequately planned for project life 'after FAO'. Another limitation is that positive results such as the successful promotion of innovation and technology are not scaled up in many instances as insufficient attention is paid to how to take interventions to scale when these interventions are designed. The absence of adequate strategies for scaling up is especially problematic in the case of zoonotic diseases and AMR as these pose a risk to the impact of other FAO interventions.

Conclusion 2. FAO's contribution to results in the region has been enabled by its strategic positioning as a trusted partner of governments in the region, and its technical expertise to support counterpart ministries. It has leveraged its position as the lead technical organization of the United Nations in food and agriculture to convene multi-stakeholder platforms and policy dialogues. The participatory approaches that FAO has used in capacity development is an important enabler as it increases ownership by governments and stakeholders and ensures that interventions are relevant to the country and local context and needs. There are however several constraints that impact negatively on FAO's contribution to results. Poor project design and financial constraints experienced by many governments on the Continent are among the factors that limit the scaling up of initiatives and the sustainability of results. There are human resources constraints in government ministries, and there are gaps in technical expertise in FAO Country Offices that cannot always be filled by overstretched regional technical experts. Administrative delays were also identified as constraints in evaluations.

Conclusion 3. The regional synthesis identified gaps and emerging issues that may be taken into consideration in improving FAO's performance in the region. The synthesis attempted to use the 'accelerators' of the new Strategic Framework to understand how they contribute to results. There is a need for guidance on how these accelerators function in practice. The issue of youth needs to be prioritised, and young people treated as distinct stakeholders with agency. There are gaps in partnerships with non-state actors. Gaps in monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management at country level persist and limit organizational learning.

4.2 Lessons learned

123. The synthesis identified lessons for consideration in addressing the constraints, gaps and emerging issues. Some of these lessons were identified in the previous synthesis.

Lesson 1. Good project design with a clear focus on sustainability, a FAO exit strategy and scale-up, is an imperative. Projects need to be informed by and nested in medium-to-longer term programmes for greater impact.

124. Good project designs, although on their own they do not guarantee positive results, they do provide a foundation for effectiveness and the efficiency with which results can be achieved. Weaknesses in project design tend to become evident once there are problems in project implementation. The evaluations reviewed in the synthesis identified weaknesses in the design of projects, and this issue was raised in the previous synthesis.
125. Characteristics of good project design gleaned from the evaluation reports include participation of partners in the design process, relevance of the design to the country or local context and needs of beneficiaries, a theory of change with explicit assumptions and risks, coordination mechanisms identified at the design stage, appropriate indicators and mechanisms for tracking progress, realistic targets and timeframes, and sufficient budget to implement all the activities planned. It should also have an explicit exit strategy, an indication of how results will be sustained and if appropriate, how the intervention will be scaled up, and by whom.
126. Good project design requires skill, resources and time. It should be seen as an investment and not as something that is done perfunctorily and for the sake of compliance. There is also the risk of going to the other extreme where projects are over-designed and rigid. The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the need for project designs that are adaptable in the face of rapidly changing conditions.
127. Even when projects are well designed, they are not a substitute for a strategic programmatic approach. A portfolio of well-designed stand-alone projects that are not clearly linked to a programme is less likely to have impact and sustainability than projects that form part of a soundly designed programme.

Lesson 2. FAO country offices are at the front line and must be equipped for this critical role.

128. As was the case in the previous synthesis, the evaluations reviewed highlighted the importance of FAO's technical expertise and leadership at the country level in achieving results. These are essential for FAO to positively influence the policy agenda and advocacy on normative issues. Its technical expertise and leadership are also essential for FAO to contribute to and lead on food and agriculture in the United Nations Strategic Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).
129. The evaluations identified capacity gaps in country offices. While country offices need not be replicas of headquarters or regional and sub-regional offices, they need to have ready access to the technical expertise when it is needed. The transition to the new Strategic Framework may place demands on country offices to conceptualise and implement projects and programmes that are more integrated and potentially more complex. Country offices will need the capability to deal with complexity. Country offices will also need skills to design and implement robust monitoring and evaluation systems and be effective in managing knowledge.
130. Most of the projects and programmes reviewed in this synthesis have designs that pre-date the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Country offices will need capability in designing projects that risk-informed and have skills in adaptive management. Country offices that

are not 'fit for purpose' pose a risk to FAO's reputation and to its ability to support member countries in Africa to achieve the ambitions of the SDGs.

Lesson 3. Knowledge generated by FAO projects is important for FAO's advocacy, resource mobilization and internal learning. It is also a public good that should be systematised and made widely accessible.

131. Projects that demonstrated positive results contained an element of knowledge management and knowledge sharing with stakeholders. However, knowledge management was not an integral part of many of the projects, especially those projects that had weak monitoring and evaluation systems. Knowledge management is seldom done if it is not planned and budgeted for in the project.
132. There are many good reasons for FAO to document and systematise the knowledge and lessons generated by projects. Knowledge is an important tool for FAO's advocacy, especially with decision-makers in government. There are examples of projects that used well-documented cases and lessons learned to advocate for mainstreaming certain interventions and approaches. Well-documented cases are persuasive evidence for governments to scale up initiatives and innovation and make public finance available for this. Knowledge generated by projects is also useful in FAO's advocacy on policy. Good knowledge management also provides evidence to support FAO's resource mobilisation from donor partners.
133. Effective knowledge management can improve the quality of FAO's portfolio in the region. By systematically documenting what has been done and the lessons learned, FAO can design projects that avoid the pitfalls of previous projects or can design projects that build on the success of previous projects. Making knowledge of lessons learned available more broadly in FAO is an essential part of organizational learning that feeds into improving programmes and implementation strategies.
134. Knowledge management also serves external non-state actors. By making knowledge accessible, FAO contributes to strengthening capacities of civil society organizations, farmer and producer organizations, pastoralist associations, and individual farmers. Effective knowledge management provides them with information that they would not otherwise have. Other users include the media, academic and research institutions and ordinary citizens. Effective knowledge management is essential for retaining FAO's strategic positioning as a knowledge organization.

Lesson 4. Coordination is effective when it is built into project design and is relevant to the context within which coordination takes place.

135. Coordination is necessary for coherence within projects and within a portfolio of projects. Effective coordination helps to ensure synergies and generates benefits from working systemically. Coordination is also essential for avoiding duplication of effort and for ensuring that certain aspects are not overlooked or neglected. The evaluations in the synthesis identified coordination as a critical factor in the success of interventions.
136. The coordination described in the evaluations range from coordination of a small number of stakeholders at local level to coordination of a highly complex, multi-component, multi-sector, multi-country response such as was the case with the desert locust intervention. What the projects had in common was that the coordination mechanisms were identified

in the design phase of the project and were not an afterthought. Importantly, the coordination mechanisms were relevant to the context of the project. Multi-country projects used standardised communication and reporting frameworks, a basic core coordination structure that could be adapted to the country context, and allowed sufficient flexibility in project implementation based on the needs in each country.

137. Irrespective of the complexity of the project, achieving effective coordination of different stakeholders requires clarity on roles and responsibilities, open sharing of information, transparency in decision-making, and regular meetings that focus on the common agenda. Coordination meetings are also an opportunity for mutual learning. The projects that were evaluated as effective in coordination had dedicated resources for coordination.
138. For FAO to coordinate external stakeholders effectively, FAO needs to be coordinated internally. The coordination between FAO headquarters, the regional office and sub-regional offices, and the country offices is an area that can be improved.
139. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced organizations into using virtual platforms for coordination. It is likely that blended approaches to coordination may be the norm for the short-to-medium term. This has implications for how FAO ensures inclusiveness in coordination platforms for stakeholders with limited access to ICT.

Lesson 5. Strategic and inclusive partnerships are essential for achieving results.

140. FAO's contribution to results in the region is done through the partnerships it has with counterpart ministries and other relevant ministries, regional and national institutions, civil society organizations and other development partners. The organization also collaborates with the other UN entities. The importance of partnerships is a lesson identified in the previous synthesis.
141. The evaluations reviewed in this current synthesis reaffirmed FAO's strong partnership with counterpart ministries, and while this is positive, FAO's partnerships need to be more inclusive of other stakeholders. Inclusive partnerships are not built through ad hoc activities. They require a strategy based on deep understanding of potential partners in government, the private sector, civil society, and other development partners, with a clear articulation of the mutual benefits of the partnership for FAO and the potential partners. Building and maintaining strategic and inclusive partnerships are not add-on activities or the responsibility of a partnership specialist alone. Partnerships should be treated as integral to the functions of all FAO personnel.

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Appendix 1. Methodology

The section briefly describes the methodology followed in conducting the regional synthesis.

Initial screening

OED conducted a rapid desk review of 45 final evaluations completed from September 2019 to August 2021: (22 Africa region, and 23 global evaluations that included African countries). This screening involved scanning the titles of the reports and the executive summaries and grouping evaluation reports according to the main topic or area of work of FAO. The table below shows the number of evaluations grouped by broad categories.

Category	Number of completed evaluations
Climate change, sustainable natural resources management	17
Resilience to threats and crises	7
Sustainable production and value chain development	7
Food security and nutrition (end hunger)	4
Corporate issues (e.g. Partnerships, TCP, Statistics, Strategic Results Framework)	7
Country Programme Evaluations (cover multiple categories)	3
TOTAL completed evaluations	45

Source: Elaborated by the evaluation team.

From these, OED identified potential four themes and one cross-cutting theme that could be used to structure the synthesis. The following potential themes were discussed with the Regional Office for Africa and confirmed as appropriate:

- i. climate change and sustainable natural resources management;
- ii. resilience to threats and crises (including COVID-19);
- iii. sustainable production and value chain development;
- iv. fight against hunger; and
- v. gender equality and empowerment of women (cross-cutting theme).

Except for the theme of Sustainable production and value chain development, these themes are the same as those used in the 2019 regional synthesis, and this has the advantage of continuity between the two regional syntheses.

Second screening

The purpose of the second screening was to select the final sample of reports that would be used in the synthesis. Each report was screened against the following criteria and the screening results were captured in Excel:

- i. the year of project/programme completion should not be older than 2016;
- ii. global or thematic evaluations must include examples of implementation in the Africa region;

- iii. project/programme content must demonstrate direct relationship with the regional synthesis theme; and
- iv. mid-term evaluations were only to be included if their topics were not covered adequately by final evaluations.

The second screening yielded a total of 42 reports and included reports that became available after the first screening.

Coding the data

A coding framework was developed using the key questions as illustrated below:

Key questions	Indicators/criteria/what to look for in analysis
1. What are the main results, in the regional priorities/thematic areas, that have been achieved through FAO support to the region and countries in the region?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of FAO contribution to outcomes relevant to themes and priorities of the region. • Factors enabling contribution to results • Factors hindering contribution to results • Sustainability of results
2. What issues and gaps emerge from the evaluations, which require attention/consideration by the FAO Regional Conference?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging issues that should be addressed to achieve results in the region and SDGs • Gaps in FAO response/programmes that should be addressed to achieve results in the region and SDGs.
3. What lessons can be learned from evaluations that can inform FAO's future programming /actions in the region?	<p>Look for lessons that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are relevant to the regional context • Are useful – likely to make a difference if applied • Positive and negative lessons • Are clearly documented and based on evidence

Source: Elaborated by the evaluation team.

Each report in the sample was allocated a code and allocated to one of the four themes of the synthesis. Nvivo software was used to extract data from each report using the coding framework that had been developed. The extracted data for each of the synthesis themes were then analysed to identify common issues or topics and map these against the PPAs of the Strategic Framework. As the development of projects and programmes preceded the PPAs, decisions had to be made about the best fit for a particular project or programme to one or more PPAs.

Appendix 2. Report codes

Report Nvivo Code	Report title	Countries
Country-level project evaluations		
1P	Evaluation of the project "Integrating climate resilience into agricultural and pastoral production for food security in vulnerable rural areas through the farmers field school approach"	Burkina Faso
2P	Final evaluation of the project "Reducing the vulnerability of agricultural livelihoods through the <i>Caisses de Résilience</i> approach in the Sahel"	Burkina Faso, Mali
3P	Final evaluation of the project "Strengthening resilience to climate change through integrated agricultural and pastoral management in the framework of Mali's sustainable land management approach"	Mali
4P	Final evaluation of the project "Partnership for sustainable rice systems development in sub-Saharan Africa"	Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda
5P	Final evaluation of "Strengthening institutionalized subnational coordination structures and harmonization mechanisms" in Ethiopia	Ethiopia
6P	Final evaluation of "Pursuing pastoralist resilience through improved animal health service delivery in pastoralist areas of Ethiopia"	Ethiopia
7P	Final evaluation of the project "Sustainable Management of Wildlife and the Bushmeat Sector in Central Africa"	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Congo, Gabon
8P	Final evaluation of "Demonstration project for the decontamination of Persistent Organic Pesticides contaminated soils using non-thermal treatment methods"	Botswana
9P	Final evaluation of "Disposal of persistent organic pollutants and obsolete pesticides in Mozambique"	Mozambique
10P	Terminal Evaluation of "Prevention and Disposal of Persistent Organic Pollutants and Obsolete Pesticides in Eritrea" Phase II	Eritrea
11P	Final Evaluation of the Project "Land Rehabilitation and Rangelands Management in Smallholders Agro-pastoral Production Systems in South Western Angola (RETESA)"	Angola
12P	«Intégration de la résilience climatique dans la production agricole et pastorale pour la sécurité alimentaire dans les zones rurales vulnérables à travers l'approche des champs-écoles des producteurs	Niger
13P	Evaluation of the "Food-loss reduction through improved postharvest handling and value addition of key fruits and vegetables" project in Ethiopia	Ethiopia
14P	Strengthening Community Resilience to Climate Change in Blantyre, Zomba, Neno and Phalombe Districts	Malawi
15P	Strengthening capacity for climate change adaptation through support to integrated watershed management in Lesotho"	Lesotho
16P	Creating peaceful societies through women's improved access to management of natural resources, land tenure rights and economic empowerment in Sierra Leone"	Sierra Leone
Global projects		
1G	Evaluation of the project "Enhancing the contribution of small-scale fisheries to food security and sustainable livelihoods through better policies, strategies and initiatives"	Senegal, United Republic of Tanzania
2G	Terminal evaluation of the areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) Program Coordination, part of the "Global sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation in ABNJ"	Ghana

Report Nvivo Code	Report title	Countries
5G	Evaluation of the project "Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS)"	Angola, Burkina Faso, Rwanda
6G	Final evaluation of the project "Protection of the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME)"	Gambia, Senegal, Cabo Verde, Guinea Bissau, Morocco, Mauritania
7G	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"	Uganda
8G	Evaluation of the project "Integrating Agriculture into National Adaptation Plans (NAP-Ag)"	Kenya , Uganda Zambia;
9G	Terminal evaluation of the areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) Tuna project, part of the "Global sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation in ABNJ"	Ghana
10G	MAFAP2 Monitoring and Analysing Food and Agricultural Policies II	Burkina Faso, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, United Republic of Tanzania
Other (Thematic, CPE)		
O1	Evaluation of FAO's support to climate action (SDG 13) and the implementation of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change (2017)	
O2	Evaluation of the Emerging Pandemic Threats (EPT-2) Programme (2014–2019)	
O3	Evaluation of FAO's contribution to Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone
O4	Evaluation of FAO's role and work on antimicrobial resistance (AMR)	
O5	Evaluation of FAO response to the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin (2015–2018)	Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria
O6	Evaluation of the Information on Nutrition, Food Security and Resilience for Decision Making (INFORMED) Programme	
O7	Evaluation of the Food and Nutrition Security, Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation (FIRST) Programme	Chad; Côte d'Ivoire; Kenya;
O8	Evaluation of FAO's contributions to Sustainable Development Goal 2 - "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture" (SDG 2 evaluation)	
O9	Evaluation of FAO's country programme in Ethiopia 2014–2019	Ethiopia
10	Cluster evaluation of "Establishing a hunger-free initiative for West Africa" and "Mainstreaming nutrition in CAADP and agriculture policies and programmes in sub-Saharan Africa"	Ghana, Namibia, Madagascar, Togo
O11	Evaluation of FAO's contribution to the Smallholder Commercialisation Programme and to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme in Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone
O12	Cluster evaluation of FAO's contribution to the Pastoralist Knowledge Hub	
O13	Evaluation of FAO's contribution to Burundi 2012–2018	Burundi
O14	Evaluation of FAO's contribution to building resilience to El Niño-induced drought in Southern Africa 2016–2017	Lesotho, Malawi, Zimbabwe
O15	Evaluation of projects related to the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security funded by Germany	Uganda
O16	Evaluation of FAO's role and work in the humanitarian – development – peace nexus	
O17	Review of FAO's contribution in Eritrea	Eritrea
O18	Real-Time Evaluation of FAO's Response to Desert Locust Upsurge (phase 1,2)	

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