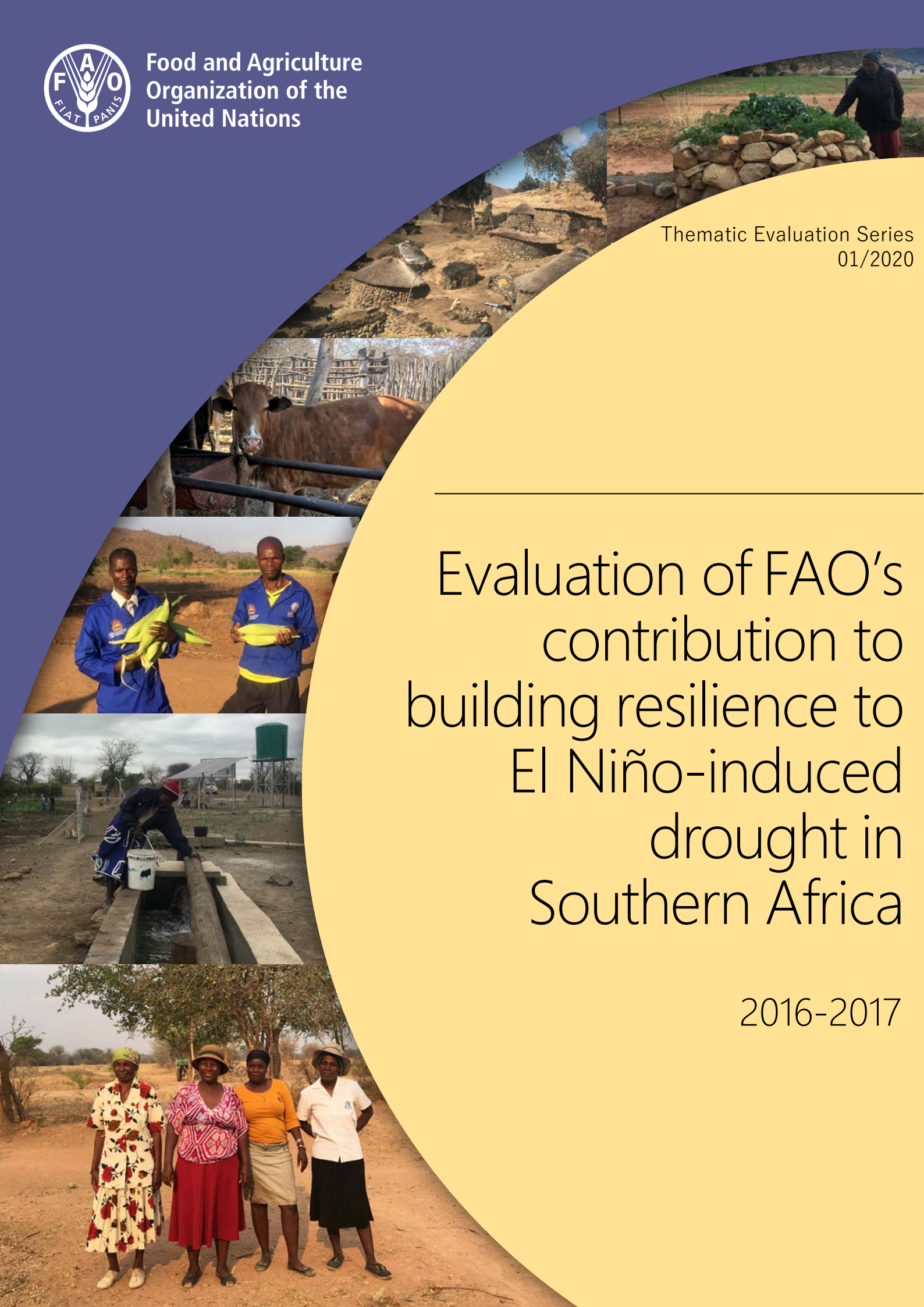




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United Nations

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Evaluation of FAO's contribution to building resilience to El Niño-induced drought in Southern Africa

2016-2017

Thematic Evaluation Series
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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
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Contents

Acknowledgements	v
Acronyms and abbreviations	vi
Executive summary	vii
Recommendations.....	xi
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose of the evaluation.....	1
1.2 Scope and objective of the evaluation	1
1.3 Methodology.....	2
1.4 Limitations	4
1.5 Structure of the report.....	4
2. Background and context of the 2016/17 El Niño response.....	5
2.1 Context of the response	5
2.2 Overview of FAO 2016/17 Southern Africa El Niño response	5
2.3 Theory of change	9
3. Findings	11
3.1 Relevance of FAO’s approach.....	11
3.2 Assessment of the results	16
3.3 Cross cutting issues.....	29
3.4 Assessment of FAO’s effectiveness and organizational performance.....	31
4. Conclusions and recommendations	37
4.1 Conclusions	37
4.2 Recommendations.....	39
References.....	42
Bibliography	43
Appendix 1. List of El Niño projects in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe.....	47
Appendix 2. People interviewed.....	49
Appendix 3. Lessons from other previous evaluations and reviews: common highlights	53
Appendix 4. Summary of FAO’s review of the 2016/17 El Niño response.....	56
Appendix 5. RIASCO prioritization of countries.....	57
Annexes	58

Boxes, figures and tables

Box 1: Overarching evaluation questions.....	2
Box 2: FAO 2016/17 El Niño priority areas and activities.....	6
Box 3: Testimonials from focus group discussion participants in Chikanda, Kasungu in Malawi.....	26
Box 4: Case story - beneficiary farmer with disability in Lesotho	30
Box 5: Example of a project with adaptive reprogramming	34

Figures

Figure 1: Theory of change.....	10
Figure 2: Number of different packages received per household	15
Figure 3: Outcome of the interventions on crop production.....	19
Figure 4: Difference in crop diversification index (at plot level).....	20
Figure 5: Factors contributing to the adoption of conservation agriculture in focus countries	22
Figure 6: Best approach for the livestock component.....	25
Figure 7: Impact of interventions on the perception of resilience	27
Figure 8: FAO's proposal for the sequencing of 2016/17 El Niño interventions	36

Tables

Table 1: Summary of funding requirement, funds received (USD) and beneficiaries by country.....	7
Table 2: Financial overview by project types	8
Table 3: Summary of priority areas in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe	8
Table 4: Summary of water intervention activities	23
Table 5: Summary of livestock component activities	24

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ADA	Agricultural Development Committee
CA	Conservation agriculture
CSA	Climate-smart agriculture
CPF	Country Programming Framework
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGD	Focus group discussion
FFS	Farmer field school
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
REOSA	Southern Africa Resilience Hub
RIASCO	Regional Inter-Agency Standing Committee
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TOC	Theory of change

Executive summary

Introduction

1. During the 2015/16 agricultural season, Southern Africa experienced an intense drought driven by one of the strongest El Niño events of the last 50 years and this significantly affected food security and livelihoods in the region. With 70 percent of the population relying on agriculture for their livelihoods, El Niño had a direct impact on food security and caused loss of income from crop and livestock value chains, as well as loss of income-generating opportunities for vulnerable people who provide labour for the sector. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) declared a regional drought emergency on 26 July 2016, launched a regional humanitarian appeal while seeking international humanitarian support. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) developed the 2016/17 El Niño Response Plan and sought USD 109 to complement and support the efforts of governments in the region focusing on three priority areas: i) reduce the food gap and improve access to nutritious food in the short-term through off-season crop and vegetable production, as well as supporting farmers in the main 2016/17 season; ii) protect and enhance livestock production at country level; and iii) strengthen coordination, information and analysis relating to El Niño.
2. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the results and provide FAO's management and programme teams with evidence-based lessons and best practices to inform future strategic decisions, and to improve FAO's long-term support to building resilience to El Niño-induced drought and other natural disasters, which bear an impact on agriculture and food security. The evaluation covers the period from December 2015 to December 2017. The evaluation largely looks at the programmatic approach, and does not cover individual projects. The evaluation has two parts: synthesis of common findings from previous evaluations focusing on coordination, resource mobilization and efficiency aspects of the response; and three country case studies (in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe) providing in-depth assessment of the results of FAO El Niño Response from farmers' perspectives. The evaluation had three objectives: i) assess progress achieved in the implementation of the interventions in building resilience to El Niño-related events (drought, floods); ii) provide FAO Subregional Office, resilience hub, country offices and stakeholders with evidence on the results of the interventions for the El Niño-related events, to inform future strategic development; and iii) provide recommendations for FAO and also gather lessons learned and best practices to feed into the broader synthesis of FAO's resilience evaluations.
3. This evaluation adopted a mixed methods approach for data collection. This included a desk review of documentation, structured household questionnaire-based survey, community-level focus group discussions (FGD), key informant interviews and synthesis of past evaluations and reviews. The evaluation was conducted in three phases: inception, field and data collection, analysis, synthesis and dissemination phase. The data collection phase included a desk review and a field mission to Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe. The evaluation mission was undertaken between July and October 2018. In total, there were 104 interviews with internal and external key informants and stakeholders, including representatives of government officials, resource partners, United Nations agencies, private sector and non-governmental

organizations (NGOs). For the household survey, 2 108 households were surveyed in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe, of which 641 were female-headed households and 1 467 were male-headed households. In addition to the household survey, the evaluation conducted community focus group discussions in sampled districts to obtain qualitative information. More than 600 farmers were consulted through 36 community FGDs in the three countries.

Main findings

4. The evaluation had 15 main findings based on the four main evaluation questions:

Finding 1. FAO's 2016/17 El Niño response has been relevant and well aligned to regional and national priorities. At country level, the response has been appropriate and responded to the specific national needs, as it addressed the main challenges and gaps due to the impact of the 2015/16 El Niño on food security and agricultural production.

Finding 2. Although all three country programming frameworks (CPFs) have pillars addressing resilience building and disaster risk reduction, there were no explicit mechanisms in the respective CPFs to allow for programme flexibility and adaptiveness: no defined scenario-based risk analysis, contingency allocation or provision to allow for realignment or redirection of funds.

Finding 3. The response in the three countries were tailored to the local context and specific needs identified in the various national assessments. Although, the targeting approaches and the beneficiary selection criteria adopted for the 2016/2017 response in the three countries were very different, the evaluation found that they were coherent and aligned to the respective national priorities. The evaluation found that the more the projects and programmes managed to include communities (both men and women), local groups, extension workers and subnational institutions in decisions on design of interventions and targeting criteria, the more the projects and programmes were likely to result in successful and sustainable interventions.

Finding 4. The projects made significant contributions to reducing food gap by improving access to nutritious food in the short-term through off-season crop and vegetable production, as well as supporting farmers in the main 2016/17 season. The results from the household survey show that beneficiary farmers recorded a greater increase in their crop production as production and productivity were significantly higher among beneficiary farmers, when compared to non-beneficiaries in all country case studies. Malawi showed the biggest difference between production and productivity impacts, and this is because FAO Malawi emphasized the provision of water harvesting tools and the promotion of water conservation to complement the agricultural inputs, because water was seen as a huge constraint, in the intervention areas.

Finding 5. In all three countries, conservation agriculture (CA) was the main climate-smart agriculture (CSA) technique promoted. The evaluation found that the emphasis on farmer field schools, farmer groups and the lead farmer approach as a base layer for the interventions, created more incentive for the adoption of CSA. The main factor contributing to the adoption of conservation agriculture in Lesotho and Malawi was the presence of a lead farmer, and in cases where the interventions leveraged ongoing existing groups or ongoing initiatives, the benefits were greater, as seen in Lesotho and Malawi with the adoption of CA.

In Zimbabwe, the provision of extension services was a determining factor in CA adoption rates.

Finding 6. Priority Area 2 which focused on protecting and enhancing livestock production translated into different combination packages in the three countries based on local context and needs. The evaluation found better results in the improvement of livestock management and production when farmers received a combination of support: vaccinations and rehabilitation of water facilities in Lesotho, trainings and restocking in Malawi, and vaccinations, provision of livestock feed and destocking in Zimbabwe.

Finding 7. The evaluation identified positive results (some intended and some implicit) to varying degrees in all dimensions of resilience capacities in Malawi and Zimbabwe; in Lesotho only for the absorptive capacity.

Finding 8. Equity, gender and nutrition issues were reflected in the design and implementation of the El Niño response projects, emphasis was mainly on the participation of women in the projects' activities, improving vulnerable groups' access to productive resources and reducing women's work burden through the introduction of new technologies.

Finding 9. The agro-meteorological and early warning alerts were timely but did not lead to early action in the countries. The declarations in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe were done at different times: Lesotho declared a national emergency on 22 December 2015, followed by Zimbabwe on 5 February 2016, and Malawi on 13 April 2016.

Finding 10. FAO's contribution to the SADC (such as secondment of the Food Security and Livelihoods Expert to SADC El Niño Logistics and Coordination Response Team) ensured that the needs of agriculture and food security issues were well prioritized and reflected in the SADC Appeal, and respective national responses.

Finding 11. There were variations in the resources mobilized in the various FAO country representations. Lesotho, although a Tier 2 country per the Regional Inter-Agency Standing Committee (RIASCO) prioritization of countries, was the most successful in terms of resource mobilization for the 2016/17 El Niño response. Two contributing factors for Lesotho's record are: the early declaration on 22 December 2015, making the Government of Lesotho the first in Southern Africa to declare a state of national disaster and to appeal for humanitarian relief assistance from the international community; and enhanced the visibility of the FAO response plan in the country as a result of the high-level mission to the country.

Finding 12. The mobilization of the surge funds through the SFERA mechanism to cover the cost of technical support staff and needs assessment worked very well. Beyond SFERA, there were no mechanisms in place nor immediate availability of funds for FAO country offices to access emergency programme funds for immediate response.

Finding 13. The evaluation found some good examples of adaptive programming but these were not systematically used across the three countries.

Finding 14. A good example of the complementarities of short and long-term interventions was found in Lesotho. FAO benefitted from the complementarity strengths of other organizations (specifically UNICEF's Child Grant Programme) for the social protection component by targeting and providing CGP beneficiaries with home gardening and nutrition kits.

Finding 15. Overall, the evaluation did not find any major areas of failure or mistargeting but mainly processes and interventions where there is room for improvement and learning, as well as some gaps in programming and complaints from farmers. These include poor sensitization on voucher system used for the inputs trade fair and prolonged delays in procurement in Malawi. In Zimbabwe, it was including an unfamiliar sorghum variety in the package for beneficiary farmers with poor extension on agronomic practices.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1. The existence of the FAO Regional El Niño response plan promoted coherence across countries by outlining the priority areas and key outputs, which FAO country teams translated into different intervention packages based on respective country contexts.

Conclusion 2. FAO made varying degrees of progress towards the envisaged priority areas of the FAO 2016/17 response. Overall, the 2016/17 FAO El Niño response achieved positive results in the three focus countries in terms of higher production and productivity when comparing beneficiaries with non-beneficiaries. In particular, strong contributions were noted in relation to safeguarding the food security of the targeted farmers in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe. Although positive results were recorded, there were implementation delays in all three countries. In terms of the longer term resilience, the evaluation concludes that short-term response on its own is not sufficient for a drought response, and it is essential they are combined with recovery, rehabilitation and development interventions.

Conclusion 3. The targeting approaches and the criteria for the beneficiary selection in the three countries varied and were informed by individual country contexts. In cases where the interventions leveraged on existing groups or ongoing initiatives, the benefits were greater, and the evaluation concludes that the best approach in targeting is a comprehensive one that includes different sets of activities for different groups in a complementary way. Additionally, FAO achieves better results from its interventions when it adopts a more comprehensive targeting approach, including not just households but also pre-existing groups and associations as part of its targeting as well as by differentiating interventions to meet the needs of farmers with different levels of vulnerability.

Conclusion 4. FAO made consistent efforts to prioritize different vulnerable groups, with a focus on improving nutrition, access to productive resources and reducing women's work burden through the introduction of new technologies and improving nutrition.

Conclusion 5. While the agro-meteorological and early warning alerts was available and timely, it was not used to trigger early action, as government declarations were at different times: Lesotho declared a national emergency on 22 December 2015, followed by Zimbabwe on 5 February 2016, and Malawi on 13 April 2016.

Conclusion 6. There were examples of adaptive programming but these were not systematically used across the focus countries. Beyond the SFERA, there were no mechanisms in place or immediate availability of resources for FAO country offices to access emergency programme funds for immediate response, other than adapting ongoing projects and redirecting the funds based on resource partners' flexibility. The evaluation found some strong cases where programmatic flexibility and adaptiveness led to better results or even avoided losing development gains in Malawi and Zimbabwe.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Considering that Southern Africa is exposed to several hazards, particularly drought and floods, the evaluation recommends that FAO initiate a systematic approach for adaptive programming. The evaluation recognizes that this is not a new way of work but rather transforming an implicit way of working into a more explicit and systematic way of programming.

Recommendation 2. FAO should conduct an in-depth analysis of the factors that affected the business, financial and procurement processes that slowed down the delivery during the 2016/17 El Nino response. Once this is done, FAO should put in place the measures to address the disabling factors.

Recommendation 3. To enhance the reach and sustainability of efforts, targeting should be expanded and articulated around different groups. FAO should ensure there is a link between the targeting, and emphasis on transformative resilience capacities. Based on evidence collected, interventions achieve better results when they adopt a more comprehensive targeting approach, including not only the targeting of households but also of pre-existing groups and associations linking them to existing markets. It has been shown that better results can also be achieved by differentiating interventions to meet the needs of the more vulnerable as well as those of households with productive capacity, that is, "better-off farmers". This is based on the evidence that expanding the targeting and differentiating the interventions would increase the social cohesion dimension resulting in benefits trickling down to the wider community, thereby ensuring target diversification.

Beyond linking targeting to pre-existing social groups/institutions, FAO needs to think of a systematic way to strengthen market institutions and service providers by linking and supporting other pre-existing markets and service providers in ways that help nurture the development of services and enterprises attuned to farmers' demand. For instance, under the crop component, there are local enterprises, production groups and markets (both formal and semi-formal), who are often promoted under FAO's development activities, and complement the public sector in areas of research that can help farmers access innovative techniques and services that will be important in building their resilience.

Recommendation 4. FAO should support the improvement of learning across countries, information sharing and advocacy efforts about emergency responses among participating countries by better facilitating some suggested actions.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the evaluation

1. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) conducted an evaluation of its contribution to building resilience to the 2015/16 El Niño-induced drought in Southern Africa was triggered by the Director-General's Bulletin (2017) on FAO Emergency Declaration and Response Protocol, which stipulates that the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) should assess all Level 3 emergency responses to provide oversight for accountability and lessons learning.
2. Following initial consultations with the FAO Southern Africa Resilience Hub (REOSA), it was agreed that the evaluation will assess the results and FAO's approach to recurrent natural disasters (mainly drought) in Southern Africa, in order to explore the interface between short-term and long-term activities (humanitarian-development nexus). The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the results of FAO's 2016/17 regional El Niño response in Southern Africa and its contribution to building resilience, as well as well as provide FAO's management and programme teams with evidence-based lessons and best practices to inform future strategic decisions, and improve FAO's long-term support to building resilience to El Niño-induced drought and other natural disasters, which has an impact on agriculture and food security. The primary intended users of this evaluation are FAO staff (particularly FAO country offices and REOSA), implementing partners and government. Additionally, the evaluation provided the platform for exchange of good practices and lessons among government, implementing partners and FAO staff from Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

1.2 Scope and objective of the evaluation

3. The evaluation covered the period from December 2015 to December 2017, largely focusing on the programmatic approach, and does not cover individual projects. The evaluation has two parts: synthesis of common findings from previous evaluations focusing on coordination, resource mobilization and efficiency aspects of the response; and three country case studies (in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe) providing in-depth assessment of the results of FAO El Niño Response from farmers' perspectives. The evaluation has a learning focus and the overall objectives as outlined in the evaluation terms of reference are:
 - i. assess progress achieved in the implementation of the interventions in building resilience to El Niño-related events (drought, floods);
 - ii. provide FAO Subregional Office, resilience hub and country offices and stakeholders with evidence on the results of the interventions for the El Niño-related events, to inform future strategic development;
 - iii. provide recommendations for FAO and also gather lessons learned and best practices to feed into the broader synthesis of FAO's resilience evaluations.

4. The overarching evaluation questions are presented in Box 1. An evaluation matrix was developed based on these evaluation questions, and this, together with the theory of change (TOC) questions guided the data collection and overall analysis.

Box 1: Overarching evaluation questions

Relevance

- How relevant and appropriate has FAO's current mechanism been to strengthen the resilience of livelihoods affected by the 2015/16 El Niño event (in terms of restoration of agricultural production, natural resource management, protection of assets, and increased access to adequate nutrition)?

Contribution to results

- What are the main achievements of the FAO 2016/17 El Niño response? To what extent has the FAO 2016/17 El Niño response contributed to building the resilience of affected livelihoods? To what extent has the 2016/17 FAO El Niño response facilitated bridging short-term and long-term interventions to ensure better drought management, and livelihood adaptation and response at the community level?

Cross-cutting issues

- To what extent were cross-cutting issues mainstreamed and adequately considered during and after the projects' implementation?

Efficiency and effectiveness

- What are the key issues around the organizational performance during the implementation of the FAO 2016/17 El Niño response and what factors influenced FAO's delivery?

1.3 Methodology

5. The evaluation was managed by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED). One OED staff coordinated the fieldwork with two independent consultants leading the qualitative and quantitative data collection exercises respectively. Teams of national enumerators were identified and used for the data collection in the three countries.
6. The evaluation was conducted in three phases: inception; field and data collection; and analysis, synthesis and dissemination phase. The inception phase commenced with an inventory of all relevant FAO interventions, a background review and a portfolio analysis. Following the background review and a round of meetings with relevant FAO staff, the evaluation team recognized that various partners, including FAO, had conducted reviews,¹ evaluations or internal stocktaking of the lessons from the 2016/17 El Niño response. These reviews mainly focused on the relevance, efficiency of coordination mechanism, resource mobilization and operational/process aspects of the response, with limited coverage of the results at community level. In a bid, to avoid duplication of efforts and to build on the

¹ The reviews identified include those conducted by FAO, SADC, RIASCO, UNICEF, WFP and OFDA.

evidence already documented by FAO and its partners, it was agreed that the evaluation will have two main components:

- i. Synthesis and validation of the common findings and lessons on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coordination mechanism, resource mobilization and operational/process aspects from the previous evaluations, reviews and stocktaking exercises. This involved a review of available documentation on reviews and an internal stocktaking exercise conducted by FAO and partners, with additional interviews and workshops for validation. The findings were validated in a multi-stakeholder workshop. The significant findings are presented in Appendices 3 and 4.
 - ii. Collection of additional primary data focused on the results from the farmers' perspectives through mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative). Farmers' perspectives were collected through three country case studies. Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe were selected for in-depth assessment based on two criteria: i) priority countries for the 2016/17 El Niño Response in Southern Africa;² and ii) size of FAO country portfolio for the 2016/17 El Niño response.
7. This evaluation was highly participatory and engaged stakeholders through an inception workshop that defined and gained consensus on the evaluation framework, theory of change and validation of the common findings from past reviews and stocktaking exercises. The workshop participants comprised FAO regional and country office staff, as well as representatives from United Nations partners, Southern African Development Community (SADC), government officials from Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe, and implementing partners. The workshop participants constituted the evaluation reference group and they were kept involved throughout the evaluation conduct.
8. This evaluation adopted a mixed methods approach for data collection. This evaluation employed a structured household questionnaire-based survey, community-level focus group discussions (FGD) and key informant interviews to collect field information. Based on the developed theory of change, the results of the interventions were assessed on the following key variables: i) production; ii) productivity; iii) quantity sold; iv) crop diversification; v) factors affecting the adoption of climate-smart agriculture techniques; and vi) resilience (measured as perception).
9. The evaluation missions were undertaken between July and October 2018: Lesotho (from 5 to 17 July), Malawi (from 26 July to 12 August) and Zimbabwe (from 23 September to 19 October). In total, there were 103 interviews with internal and external key informants and stakeholders (full list in Appendix 2). A comprehensive methodological approach for the field data collection detailing the sampling strategy and steps taken for data collection and analysis is presented in Annex 1. Given the availability of data and the nature of the interventions, a quasi-experimental approach (Propensity Score Matching) was used to construct a valid counterfactual group to estimate the impact of the project against the treatment group (beneficiaries). The details of this approach are presented in Annex 1. For the household survey, 2 108 households were consulted in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe, of which 641 were female-headed households and 1 467 were male-headed households. In addition to the household survey, the evaluation conducted 36 community focus groups

² Refer to paragraph 14 for more information on the prioritization of the countries.

in the sampled districts to obtain qualitative information. More than 600 farmers were consulted through community FGDs in the three countries.

10. A second workshop was organized at the end of the field data collection and analyses to validate the findings and develop the recommendations in a participatory manner. The preliminary findings and conclusions were validated at the second stakeholder workshop in Johannesburg. The initial recommendations were also discussed at the workshop, which ensured stakeholders' perspectives on the feasibility and implementability of the recommendations were incorporated.

1.4 Limitations

11. The limitations include:
 - i. The in-depth assessment only focused on Anglophone countries and excluded other potential countries that are non-Anglophone (Madagascar and Mozambique) from the fieldwork due to cost and logistics complexities.
 - ii. The Zimbabwe fieldwork initially planned for August was moved to the period from 23 September to 19 October due to the 2018 Zimbabwe elections in September. These changes affected the overall evaluation timeline.
 - iii. Some households were not available to conduct the household survey, which posed a challenge in reaching the targeted sample size in Lesotho. In order to minimize this issue, an additional one week of data collection was carried out in August in order to meet the targeted household sample.

1.5 Structure of the report

12. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 presents the background and context of the project. Chapter 3 presents the main findings, followed by Conclusions and recommendations in Chapter 4.

2. Background and context of the 2016/17 El Niño response

2.1 Context of the response

13. During the 2015/16 agricultural season, Southern Africa experienced an intense drought driven by one of the strongest El Niño events of the last 50 years and this significantly affected food security and livelihoods in the region. It led to many parts of Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe experiencing the driest rainfall season yet, and poor yields in 2015/16 (November–April). The lean season, which continued through 2016, had a cumulative eroding effect on the production capacities of farmers in the 2016/17 agricultural season, resulting in low production, adoption of negative coping mechanisms and limited household food availability. With 70 percent of the population relying on agriculture for their livelihoods, El Niño had a direct impact on food security and caused loss of income from crop and livestock value chains, as well as loss of income-generating opportunities for vulnerable people who provide labour for the sector. Over 30 million people in the subregion were considered food insecure in 2016 and of these, 23 million required immediate humanitarian assistance. The Southern African Development Community declared a regional drought emergency on 26 July 2016, launched a regional humanitarian appeal, and released an addendum in mid-September (SADC, 2016) to include additional information on recent national assessments. SADC sought USD 2.7 billion to assist about 40 million people in need, and the food security and agriculture sector³ constitute 72 percent of the total appeal-response requirements (that is, USD 1.9 billion).
14. The United Nations and NGOs developed, through the Regional Inter-Agency Standing Committee (RIASCO), an Action Plan to support the efforts of SADC and its Member States. With limited available resources, RIASCO developed a 5-Tier ranking of countries to guide resource allocation for the international humanitarian interventions. The prioritization was based on three risk criteria: **high existing vulnerabilities** of the population severely affected by El Niño; **exposure and impact**;⁴ and **government capacity to cope**. There are four Tier 1 countries (Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe) - these are the most severely affected and require the highest priority for assistance. Tier 2 countries (Angola, Lesotho and Swaziland) have been severely affected and their second priority is resource allocation. Tier three countries are under close monitoring on a watch list and did not appeal for international assistance. Tier 4 countries have been affected but have sufficient coping capacity. Tier 5 countries have the lowest needs, given the negligible impact on the agricultural sector. Appendix 5 presents the RIASCO prioritization of countries.

2.2 Overview of FAO 2016/17 Southern Africa El Niño response




15. With the magnitude of the crisis across multiple countries affected by the El Niño induced drought in the Southern Africa subregion, FAO declared a Corporate Surge Support (L3 Emergency Corporate Response) to the subregion initially between 4 July and 16 November 2016 and later extended to February 2017. In response, the FAO Southern

³ The SADC regional appeal covered the following sectors: food security and nutrition, communication, coordination, education, health, livelihoods, logistics, nutrition, protection, resilience and early recovery.

⁴ Exposure in terms of how many people are employed in the sector and its contribution to GDP, while impact in terms of the reduction in output, increase in food prices and the percentage of the population that is food insecure.

Africa Resilience Hub (SFS-REOSA) in collaboration with the FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF), and the Emergency and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) at FAO headquarters, as well as the concerned countries in Southern Africa, developed a full response plan to address the effects of El Niño. The SFS through the Johannesburg-based Resilience Team (SFS-REOSA) was the coordinating hub for the response. The overarching objective of the FAO 2016/17 Southern Africa El Niño response plan was to support the recovery and resilience of agriculture-based livelihoods affected by El Niño through restoring agricultural production, incomes and assets, as well as increasing vulnerable households' access to nutritious food. FAO, through the 2016/17 El Niño response plan, sought to complement and support governments' efforts in the region in three priority areas. Box 2 presents the three priority areas and activities of the regional response.

Box 2: FAO 2016/17 El Niño priority areas and activities

<p>①</p>	<p>Reduce food gap: safeguard agriculture-based livelihoods</p> <p>USD 56.5 million to assist 1.6 million targeted households</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture input provision (in-kind/vouchers) for the 2016/17 season (mainly drought-tolerant short-cycle crops cereals and legumes). • Scale up household and school gardens. • Support small-scale irrigation initiatives and associated soil and water conservation works using cash-for-work schemes. • Promotion of climate-smart agricultural techniques including conservation agriculture and water harvesting. 	
<p>②</p>	<p>Protect and enhance livestock production</p> <p>USD 46 million to assist 1.8 million targeted households</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of supplementary feed. • Animal health interventions (vaccinations and treatment campaigns). • Rehabilitation of animal water points. • Support for community-level fodder production. • Restocking. 	
<p>③</p>	<p>Strengthened coordination, information and analysis</p> <p>USD 5.7 million to support programme implementation, information generation, dissemination and policy dialogue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to Ministries of Agriculture and Disaster Management authorities in the execution of national plans. • Support to the National Vulnerability Assessment Committees (VACs) and food security clusters. • Livelihood assessments (seed security assessments, livestock needs assessments, crop forecasts, market assessments and IPC analysis). 	

Source: FAO 2016/17 El Niño Response

16. FAO sought USD 109.9 million to assist vulnerable pastoralist, agropastoralist and smallholder farming households (19 million people). FAO mobilized USD 44.4 million which represents 41 percent of the funding appeal. Table 1 presents the summary of the funding requirement, total funds received and beneficiaries by country.

Table 1: Summary of funding requirement, funds received (USD) and beneficiaries by country

Region ⁵	Funding Appeal	Funding Received	% Funding Appeal Received	Total Delivery	Delivery Rate	Targeted HH	Beneficiary HH	% Share of Targeted HH Reached
Zimbabwe	35 200 000	9 139 548	26%	8 620 776	94%	486 000	157 715	32%
Lesotho	11 000 000	9 090 703	83%	7 749 752	85%	75 000	104 580	139%
Malawi	10 500 000	7 884 872	75%	7 588 159	96%	260 000	222 550	86%
Madagascar	12 400 000	4 887 184	39%	4 801 968	98%	230 000	151 000	66%
Mozambique	8 000 000	4 249 328	53%	4 009 812	94%	371 400	140 540	38%
Swaziland	8 400 000	2 334 233	28%	1 686 117	72%	72 700	26 500	36%
Angola	-	1 815 135		1 818 617		15 000	11 295	75%
Namibia *	2 500 000	797 474	32%	776 611	97%	13 235	-	-
Tanzania*	6 900 000	531 557	8%	531 557	100%	11 500	-	-
South Africa*	10 000 000	500 000	5%	27 668	6%	-	-	-
Zambia*	3 300 000					13 699	-	-
REOSA	1 750 000	3 213 808	184%	3 286 961	102%	-	-	-
Total	109 950 000	44 443 843	41%	40 897 997	92%	1 548 534	814 180	53%

Source: Field Programme Management Information System (FPMIS) (2018)

*figures on beneficiary households not available

17. The 2016/17 El Niño response in Southern Africa had 53 projects; consisting of 35 country-dedicated projects, 12 Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities⁶ (SFERA) projects and 6 regional projects. Table 2 presents the overview of number of projects and share of budget for various project types. The main resource partners for the 2016/17 El Niño response in Southern Africa were: the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) managed UN Central Emergency Fund (UN-CERF), United States of America and United Kingdom contributing USD 8.6 million, USD 7.8 million and USD 6 million respectively. Contributions from these top three resource partners constitute 51 percent of the entire funds received for the 2016/17 El Niño response in Southern Africa.

⁵ All funding and delivery data extracted from the Field Programme Management Information System (FPMIS). Information on the beneficiaries extracted from the REOSA tracking table.

⁶ The Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA) enables FAO to take rapid and effective action in response to food and agricultural threats and emergencies. SFERA enables FAO to rapidly initiate emergency operations by participating in interagency needs assessment and coordination activities, establishing an emergency coordination unit, preparing a programme framework and projects, and providing advance funding for procurement of inputs once donor commitment has been obtained.

Table 2: Financial overview by project types

Geographical Coverage	No. of projects	% share of total budget
Country-dedicated projects	35	73%
Regional projects	6	26%
Global projects (SFERA)	12	2%
Total	53	100%

Source: FMPIS (2018)

18. The regional response plan was translated into country response plans with context specific priority activities. The in-depth assessment focuses on the three countries (Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe) with the biggest portfolio in terms of total funds received from the appeal; receiving USD 9 million, USD 7.8 million and USD 9.1 million respectively. This represented 59 percent of the available resources for the 2016/17 Southern Africa response. Table 3 presents the summary of the priority activities in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

Table 3: Summary of priority areas in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe

Priority Area	Activities	Lesotho	Malawi	Zimbabwe
Reduce good gap: safeguard agriculture-based livelihoods	seed distribution (staple crops)	x		
	distribution of home gardening and nutrition kits	x		
	fertilizer distribution	x	x	
	small-scale irrigation initiatives including water harvesting			
	promotion of nutrition-sensitive and climate-smart agricultural techniques	x	x	x
	rehabilitation of water facilities and provision of water harvesting tools		x	
	farmer field schools		x	
Protect and enhance livestock production	animal health interventions (vaccination and treatment campaigns)	x	x	x
	direct distribution of livestock feed	x		
	provision of subsidized livestock feed			x
	support to fodder production	x		
	restocking		x	
	destocking	x		x
	rangeland management and conservation with grazing associations	x		
	livestock water storage and provision	x		
Strengthened coordination, information and analysis	rehabilitation of water points (boreholes)	x	x	x
	support to Ministries of Agriculture and disaster management authorities in the execution of national plans	x	x	x
	support to the National Vulnerability Assessment Committees (VACs) and food security clusters	x	x	x
Number of projects	livelihood assessments (seed security assessments, livestock needs assessments, crop forecasts, market assessments and IPC analysis)	x	x	x
		9	5	9

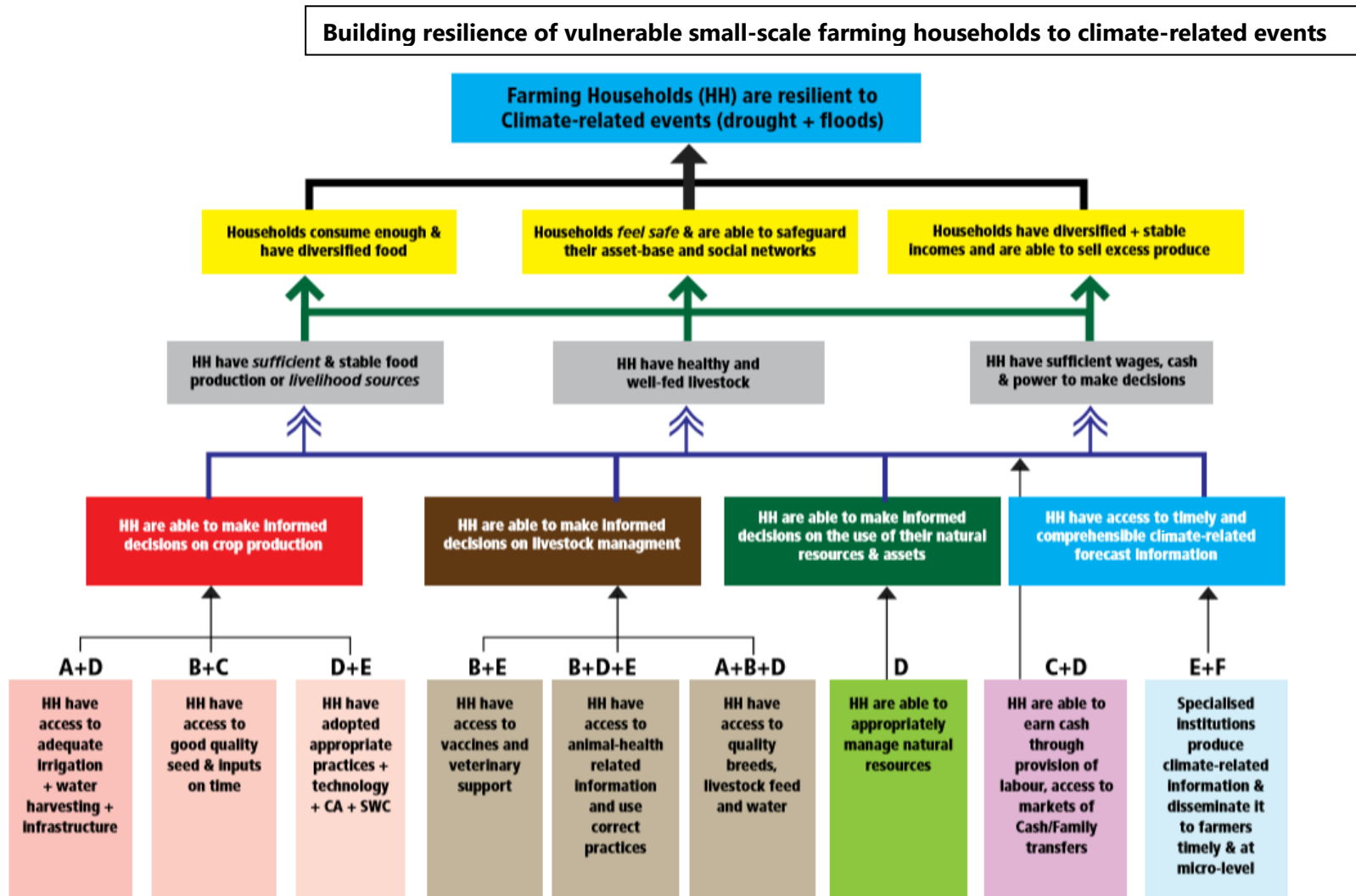
2.3 Theory of change

19. As part of the evaluation process, the evaluation team decided it would be useful to develop a theory of change on building the resilience of vulnerable small-scale farming households to climate-related events. The underlying question was: **what are the sequences of outcomes that will ensure that vulnerable small-scale farming households will be able to cope with drought and other extreme climate events that negatively impact their agricultural livelihoods?** This required capturing the domain of FAO's interventions, as well as that of other partners (such as government). Mapping the partners' interventions was useful to initiate discussions on what external agencies (such as local institutions and development actors) could do to strengthen the resilience capacity of the households and the communities. Additionally, this mapping was effective in sparking a debate on what development actors could do to strengthen the capacity of local institutions while they supported households and communities. The TOC guided the evaluation, describing the change trajectories and the causal linkages of FAO interventions and the resilience building of farmers to climate-related hazards.

20. Figure 1 presents the developed TOC, which maps the preconditions (expressed as outcome statements in each box), that lead sequentially (bottom-up) to the overall outcome (higher level). The arrows represent the cause and effect relationship of outcomes, namely the "if-then" logic. Once the TOC was developed, the specific FAO interventions were positioned under the priorities and domains of mandate/influence. In Figure 1, the letters in the bottom line are the mapped FAO activities that are assumed to contribute to the first outcome level. These are:
 - i. infrastructure rehabilitation and construction: boreholes, irrigation;
 - ii. input provision: seed kits for home gardens, planting materials, staple crops seeds, chickens, goats, feed, and vaccines;
 - iii. cash + voucher transfers: input trade fairs, vouchers for fertilizers;
 - iv. training of farmers on: water harvesting, climate-smart agriculture technologies, soil and water conservation, soil land management, nutrition, restocking and destocking, marketing skills;
 - v. training of institutions (extension workers, teachers) + service providers: nutrition, geographic information system (GIS), disease surveillance, agro-dealer's seed quality;
 - vi. generation of information for policy support + decision-making + coordination: needs assessment (surge), seed security assessments.

21. From the developed TOC, the evaluation identified the following themes which guided the analysis of the results of the interventions:
 - i. access to food;
 - ii. improved and stable crop and livestock production;
 - iii. factors affecting the adoption of new and improved agricultural technologies;
 - iv. access to natural resources and alternative income and food sources;
 - v. protection of agricultural assets and social networks.

Figure 1: Theory of change



Source: Evaluation team (constructed and validated at stakeholder workshop in June 2018)

3. Findings

22. This section presents the findings of the evaluation, grouped by the four evaluation questions. The main findings are presented at the beginning of each main question, and followed by supporting findings, derived from the evidence collected from the document review, key informant interviews, household survey and focus group discussions.

3.1 Relevance of FAO's approach

Evaluation Question 1: How relevant and appropriate has FAO's current mechanism been to strengthen the resilience of livelihoods affected by the 2015/16 El Niño event (in terms of restoration of agricultural production, natural resource management, protection of assets and increased access to adequate nutrition?)

Alignment to priorities

Finding 1. FAO's 2016/17 El Niño response has been relevant and well aligned to regional and national priorities. At country level, the response has been appropriate and responded to the specific national needs, as it addressed the main challenges and gaps due to the impact of the 2015/16 El Niño on food security and agricultural production.

23. The evaluation found that FAO's approach to having a regional plan based on the recommended response actions emanating from the SADC El Niño meeting⁷ was highly relevant. This ensured that the objectives and design of the FAO regional response plan were fully aligned with regional priorities and commitments, as stipulated in the Southern African Development Community appeal (SADC, 2016) and in the Regional Inter-agency Standing Committee El Niño response plan (RIASCO, 2017). Furthermore, the existence of the SADC Appeal and the RIASCO Plan of Action was useful as it formed the basis and provided the strategic direction/framework for SADC, United Nations agencies and its partners to develop a common vision and priorities in responding to the 2015/16 El Niño-induced drought, and all subsequent actions in Southern Africa. The SADC response and RIASCO were the main guiding framework for all subsequent programme planning and implementation at the regional and country level. The evaluation found that the links between the SADC appeal, the RIASCO Action Plan and the FAO Regional Response plan were very strong. The FAO Regional response had accompanying country-specific components, which translated into the various country response plans. A review of the projects documentation confirmed that all the projects in the three countries had been designed to support the three FAO priority areas:
- i. reduce the food gap and improve access to nutritious food in the short-term through off-season crop and vegetable production, as well as supporting farmers in the main 2016/17 season;
 - ii. protect and enhance livestock production at country level;

⁷ This was a two-day multi-sectoral stakeholder meeting organized for SADC Member Countries to develop a regional preparedness and response strategy on 25 and 26 February 2016. The meeting was convened by SADC, with the support of FAO and WFP. Refer to footnote 4 for more details.

- iii. strengthen coordination, information and analysis relating to El Niño/La Niña and agriculture at all levels.
24. The evaluation found that the 2016/17 El Niño response in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe were developed after their respective government's declaration of a state of emergency, and informed by results of the National Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC).⁸ Furthermore, FAO's priority areas were relevant as they complemented government's efforts and have been aligned to the agenda and commitments of the Governments in their respective national response plans (Lesotho National Response Plan to the 2015/16 El Niño, Malawi's 2016/17 Food Security Response Plan, and Zimbabwe 2016/17 Drought Disaster Domestic and International Appeal for Assistance). FAO's efforts during the 2016/17 El Niño response reflects the Organization's leading role in supporting governments in Southern Africa in the coordination of activities under the agriculture and food security sector. In all three countries, key informants reported that FAO convening power was visible during the 2016/17 El Niño response and that partners (mainly Government, United Nations agencies and NGOs) relied on FAO for updated information on the food security situation. For instance, FAO co-led the seed security assessment and supported crop and livestock sector assessments in all three countries.

Finding 2. Although all three CPFs have pillars addressing resilience building and disaster risk reduction, there were no explicit mechanisms in the respective CPFs to allow for programme flexibility and adaptiveness: no defined scenario-based risk analysis, contingency allocation or provision to allow for realignment or redirection of funds.

25. The FAO 2016/17 El Niño responses in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe were fully aligned with the respective FAO Country Programme Frameworks in Lesotho,⁹ Malawi¹⁰ and Zimbabwe.¹¹ Although climatic events such as drought and floods are recurrent events in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe, and the three CPFs have pillars addressing resilience building and disaster risk reduction, there were no explicit mechanisms in the respective CPFs to allow for programme flexibility and adaptiveness: no defined scenario-based risk analysis, contingency allocation nor provision to allow for realignment or redirection of funds. In terms of integration with previous or existing programmes, the evaluation found some integration of the El Niño interventions with past and existing programmes, more specifically with the farmer field school (FFS) programme in Malawi and the Emergency

⁸ All SADC Member States have a National Vulnerability Assessment Committees (NVACs) with the overall responsibility of coordinating the annual vulnerability assessment and analysis conducted in their respective countries. NVACs are multi-sectional committees led by relevant government ministries with wide ranging memberships - this includes different government departments, non-governmental organizations and international organizations involved in poverty reduction and socioeconomic development. The NVACs carry out annual and periodic vulnerability assessments, in addition to special studies on selected topics such as nutrition and climate change. The national reports are further sent to the SADC Regional Vulnerability Assessment Committee (RVAC) for harmonization and collation of the regional outlook.

⁹ For Lesotho, specifically output 3 of the CPF Priority 1 which focuses on vulnerable farming households accessing productive enhancing inputs and technologies.

¹⁰ For Malawi, Priority Area 5 of the Malawi CPF 2013-2017, which focuses on support to disaster risk reduction and resilience in the context of reducing hunger and promoting sustainable agricultural development.

¹¹ Specifically, to Priority Areas B and C of the Zimbabwe CPF 2016-2020. Priority Area B focuses on enhancing agricultural productivity and competitiveness and Priority Area C focuses on increasing resilience and uptake of climate-smart agriculture

Resilience Programme¹² in Lesotho. In Malawi, the integration was facilitated by the fact that the FAO field officers who acted as focal points at the district levels were also in charge of the development programmes, and thus were involved in the planning and implementation process.

Responding to the needs of beneficiaries

Finding 3. The response in the three countries were tailored to the local context and specific needs identified in the various national assessments. Although, the targeting approaches and the beneficiary selection criteria adopted for the 2016/2017 response in the three countries were very different, the evaluation found that they were coherent and aligned to the respective national priorities. The evaluation found that the more the projects and programmes managed to include communities (both men and women), local groups, extension workers and subnational institutions in decisions on design of interventions and targeting criteria, the more the projects and programmes were likely to result in successful and sustainable interventions.

26. Overall, the evaluation found that the response in the three countries was tailored to the local contexts and specific needs identified in the various national assessments, and this was deemed appropriate by all government key informants interviewed. This is demonstrated in the following case studies:
- i. The Lesotho response was nationwide and addressed the priority issues outlined in the LVACs: i) significant low agricultural production; ii) loss of livestock assets (30 percent of households reported two-thirds head of cattle died during the drought); and iii) increase in food prices. To address these priority issues, the FAO response focused on the distribution of crop production package (livelihood recovery component), provision of home gardening and nutrition kits and nutrition awareness support (social protection component), capacity development on climate-smart food production techniques, and provision of water for livestock and livestock feeding. FAO was the only development partner with operational presence across the country and with emergency and rehabilitation activities in food security in all ten districts.
 - ii. In Malawi, FAO interventions prioritized the most affected districts focusing mainly on the central and southern parts of Malawi. The beneficiary selection was guided by a selection criteria developed by the agriculture cluster. The interventions were designed to support food insecure farmers to get their productive capacity back on track with planting materials and seeds of locally-adapted varieties that would help them cope with the effects of El Niño. Interviews with FAO, government staff and implementing partners confirmed that the selection criteria and targeting was guided by the MVAC and IPC analysis conducted in June 2016.

¹² The ERP was implemented from 2012 to 2015, after the 2012 food crisis. Through the ERP, three working groups were established: National Conservation Agriculture Task Force (CATF), Home Gardening and Nutrition Working Group (HGNWG), and Sustainable Land Management Working Group. The group, comprised of a range of stakeholders with interest in food security and natural resources management, came together to develop harmonized visual training materials for the promotion of climate-smart agriculture practices among communities, farmers, students, decision makers and the general public.

- iii. In Zimbabwe, FAO interventions prioritized the 15 most affected districts in natural regions 4 and 5.¹³ The interventions addressed the following priority issues outlined in the ZimVAC: i) poor grazing, water shortages and disease outbreaks, which significantly affected livestock production and prices; and ii) widespread crop failure in southern parts of the country, which resulted in low cereal production and high prevalence of food insecure households. To address these priority issues, the Zimbabwe interventions focused on the provision of supplementary feed and agricultural inputs (cowpea and sorghum seeds) at subsidized prices (50 percent of market value). The Zimbabwe interventions were firmly based on the agreement of the Agriculture National Steering Committee (ANSC). The ANSC strongly discouraged free input distribution, and instead encouraged farmers to contribute in cash to ensure farmers' commitment and reduce donor dependency. The evaluation found that FAO adhered to this directive and did not provide free handouts for the FAO 2016/17 response, rather the inputs were provided at a subsidized price (50 percent) and proceeds put into a community resilience fund and reinvested into the community through community projects. The sales of the inputs and resilience fund were managed by the Agricultural Development Associations (ADA), who decided which community projects should be undertaken. The use of resources in the resilience fund was restricted to the development of agriculture-related activities such as the rehabilitation of infrastructure (e.g. warehouses, boreholes and dip tanks) and procurement of additional stock feed.
- 27. **Targeting/Beneficiary selection.** The evaluation found that the targeting approaches and the beneficiary selection criteria adopted for the 2016/17 response in the three countries were very different, however they were coherent and aligned to the respective national priorities. More specifically:
 - i. In Lesotho, the livelihood recovery component targeted poor farming households with subsistence production capacity. The beneficiary selection for the livelihood recovery component was guided by farming history and vulnerability criteria: households with access to land (at least 0.5 ha): lost a minimum of 60 percent of their crops and/or animals in the previous agricultural season due to El Niño; have limited access to seed reserves and lack alternative livelihood means and assets. While, the social protection component targeted the ultra-poor or vulnerable households with land/labour resources who relied on social safety net supports or emergency food aid and had special nutritional needs. The majority in this category were female headed households, households with persons living with HIV, elderly and the disabled. Under the social protection component, FAO complemented the efforts of other UN agencies by targeting and providing home gardening and nutrition (HGN) kits to the Lesotho Child Grants Programme¹⁴ and World Food Programme (WFP) emergency cash transfer beneficiaries.
 - ii. In Zimbabwe, the asset protection interventions (agricultural inputs and livestock feed) targeted two categories of farmers: poor households with production

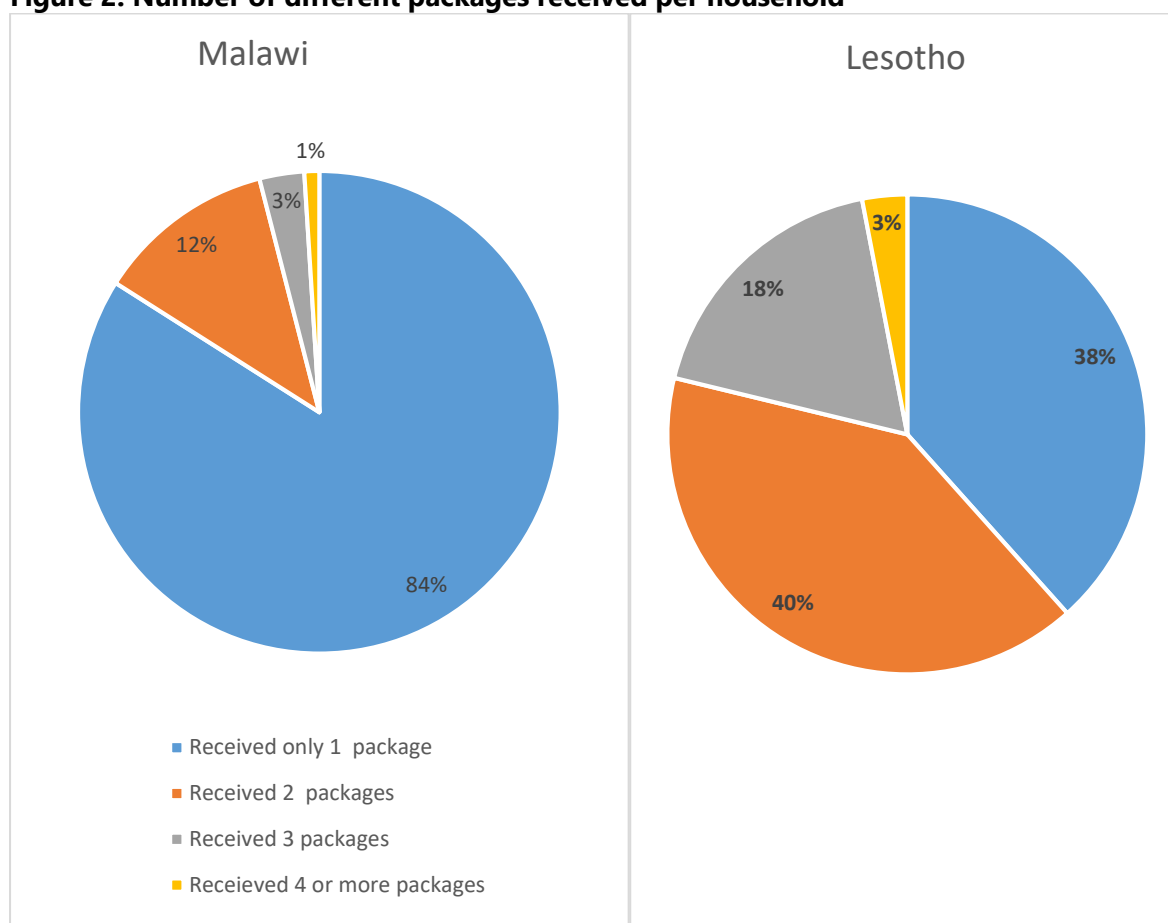
¹³ Natural regions 4 and 5 are generally the semi-arid parts of the country, characterized by low and erratic rainfall. These regions are too dry for successful crop production without irrigation. Region 4 receives 450–600 mm rainfall per year and Region 5 receives less than 500 mm rainfall per year.

¹⁴ The Lesotho Child Grants Programme (CGP) is an ongoing government initiative implemented by the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD). The programme provides unconditional social cash transfer to targeted poor and vulnerable households in Lesotho. The Programme was initiated in 2009, with financial support from the European Commission and technical support from UNICEF.

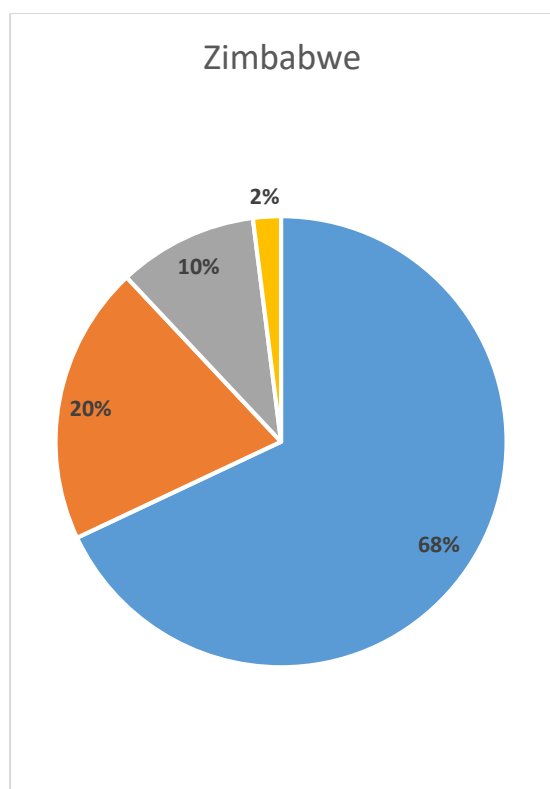
capacity, and farming households with medium to high production potential, but had cash and technical constraints. Furthermore, the interventions were restricted to farmers with a herd size of eight and below and there was a limit/cap on the quantities for each beneficiary household: that is, a maximum of 15 bags of the supplementary stock feed (notion that during the drought 15 bags was sufficient to save two breeding cows), and one bag of the small grain seeds per season for each household.

- iii. In Malawi, the interventions targeted vulnerable smallholder farmers. FAO adopted the beneficiary selection criteria developed by the agriculture cluster for all partners during the 2016/17 El Niño response. The criteria: vulnerable smallholder farmers with access to land (at least 0.2 ha) and labour during both rainfed and winter season, households that reported crop losses of more than 50 percent during the 2015/16 season,¹⁵ households who did not benefit from the Government Farmer Input Subsidy Programme, feasibility of agriculture production, and links with ongoing resilience building activities and inter-linkages with other cluster actions. The household survey results show that Malawi adhered to this criterion, as 84 percent of the beneficiary farmers received only one type of assistance (Figure 2). In all three countries, the interventions targeted individual farmers directly or through existing groups.

Figure 2: Number of different packages received per household



¹⁵ And also located in areas which had been severely impacted by El Niño as per assessments conducted at district level.



Source: Household survey (2018)

28. Evidence from the FGD and the household survey illustrated that some valuable examples of spillover effects can be seen from targeting “wealthier farmers” (farming households with productive capacities) who then “gave back” to the community and targeted extremely vulnerable households and orphaned children. **The evaluation found that the more the projects and programmes managed to include communities (both men and women), local groups, extension workers and subnational institutions in decisions on design of interventions and targeting criteria, the more the projects and programmes were likely to result in successful and sustainable interventions. There were clear benefits and added value in terms of results and sustainability when short-term project activities were carried out on top of pre-existing structures, groups and dynamics put in place by longer term development interventions.**

3.2 Assessment of the results

29. This section presents the findings of the results of the priority areas mainly from the farmers’ perspective. Based on the TOC¹⁶ developed, the evaluation identified the following key variables in measuring the impact of the interventions: i) production; ii) productivity; iii) quantity sold; iv) factors for the adoption of new technologies; and v) resilience (measured as perception). This section also reflects on the factors affecting the results and dynamics of change over time mainly related to the social networks. The following sections present overarching findings of the two main priority areas: i) safeguarding agriculture-based livelihoods; and ii) protecting and enhancing livestock production.

¹⁶ Refer to the narrative of the developed theory of change in chapter 2.

Evaluation Question 2: What are the main achievements of the FAO 2016/17 El Niño response? To what extent has the FAO 2016/17 El Niño response contributed to building the resilience of affected livelihoods? To what extent has the 2016/17 FAO El Niño response facilitated bridging short-term and long-term interventions to ensure better drought management, and livelihood adaptation and response at the community level?

Priority Area 1: Safeguarding agriculture-based livelihoods

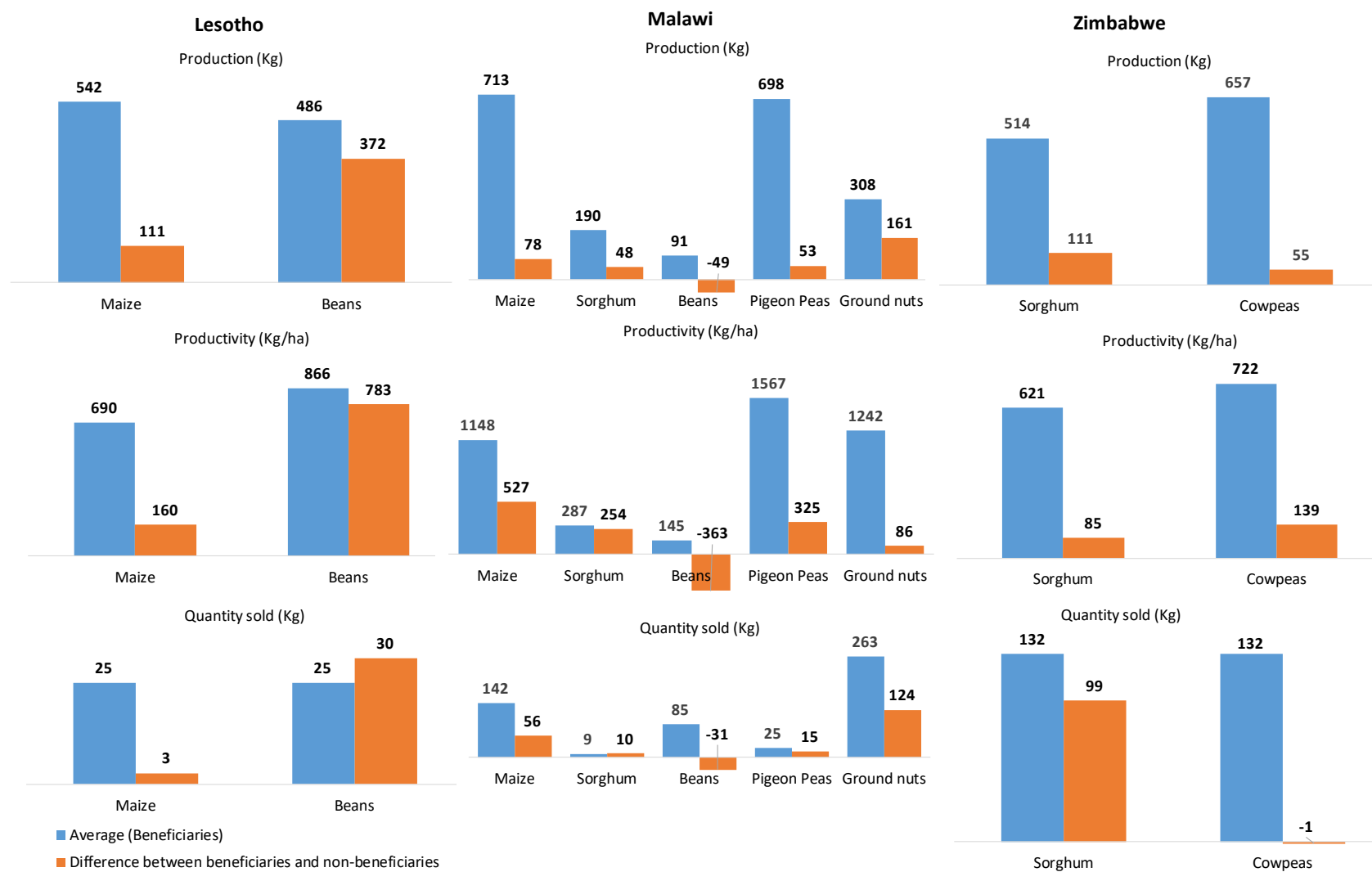
Finding 4. The projects made significant contributions to reducing food gap by improving access to nutritious food in the short-term through off-season crop and vegetable production, as well as supporting farmers in the main 2016/17 season. The results from the household survey show that beneficiary farmers recorded a greater increase in their crop production as production and productivity were significantly higher among beneficiary farmers, when compared to non-beneficiaries in all country case studies. Malawi showed the biggest difference between production and productivity impacts, and this is because FAO Malawi emphasized the provision of water harvesting tools and the promotion of water conservation to complement the agricultural inputs, because water was seen as a huge constraint in the intervention areas.

30. Priority Area 1 broadly focused on reducing the food gap and improving access to nutritious food in the short-term through off-season crop and vegetable production, as well as supporting farmers in the main 2016/17 agriculture season. For the 2016/17 El Niño response, more than 50 percent of the resource was allocated to Priority Area 1. Overall the evaluation findings on the results of Priority Area 1 are positive and the three case studies provide concrete evidence to confirm Priority Area 1 made significant contributions in reducing the food gap of the vulnerable households in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe after the 2015/16 El Niño event. The evaluation found that Priority Area 1 translated into a different combination of packages in each of the three countries, based on the country context and FAO's efforts in complementing government efforts:
- i. Lesotho: distribution of recovery livelihood packages, which consisted of 10 kg of Open Pollinated Varieties (OPV) maize seed, 5 kg of beans seeds, 5 kg of grazing vetch seeds, and fertilizers.
 - ii. Malawi: provision of seeds and agricultural inputs through the input trade fairs by using a voucher system. The seeds at the fairs included maize (hybrid and OPV), beans, cowpea, groundnut, millet, pigeon peas, pea, rice, sorghum, soybean and vegetables.
 - iii. Zimbabwe: provision of agricultural inputs, mainly Cowpea (CB2) and Sorghum (Shiri-Kure variety) seeds at subsidized prices (50 percent of market value), and proceeds from the sales of the seeds were put into a resilience fund and used for community projects.
31. Figure 3 presents the outcomes¹⁷ of the interventions on crop production, productivity and quantity sold by farmers. In all three countries, there was a positive and significant improvement in production and yield of the beneficiary farmers. The results from the household survey show that beneficiary farmers recorded a greater increase in their crop production as production and productivity were significantly higher among beneficiary farmers, when compared to non-beneficiaries in all country case studies (Figure 3). On average, beneficiary farmers in Lesotho and Malawi respectively harvested 160 kg/ha and

¹⁷ This was based on means test using T-statistics of the marginal benefits. See Annex 1 for the detailed methodological approach

527 kg/ha more maize than non-beneficiary households. The results also showed that beyond maize, which is the staple crop, beneficiary farmers also saw a significant increase in the production of other staples, such as beans in Lesotho, sorghum, pigeon peas and groundnut in Malawi, and sorghum and cowpea in Zimbabwe. Malawi showed the biggest difference in productivity increases, and this is because FAO emphasised the provision of water harvesting tools and the promotion of water conservation to complement, as water was seen as a huge constraint, in the intervention areas. These results were confirmed at the FGDs in the three countries, as all beneficiary farmers at the FGD reported that they had enough food from the harvest, and were also able to generate some income. In Malawi, farmers who received common beans in the affected areas showed reported reduced production. These are hot dry areas where beans normally do not do well and, thus there was a need to find the right legumes, e.g. cowpeas. In Zimbabwe, the main driving factors for the increased productivity were the beneficiary farmers having access to better quality seeds and improved water access (irrigated schemes and water harvesting techniques).

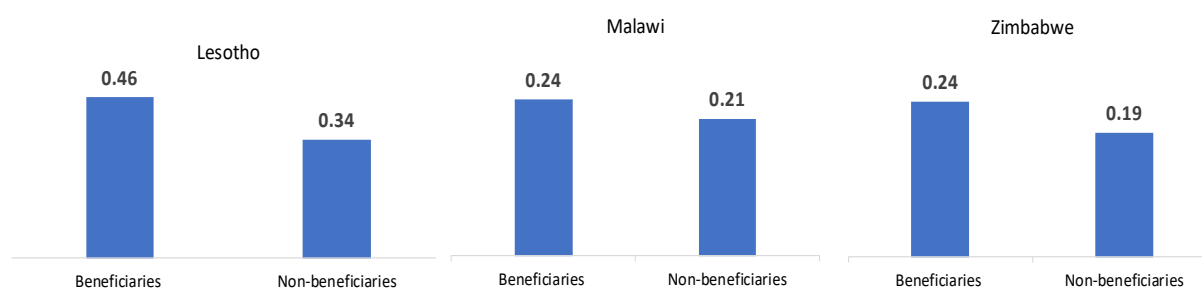
Figure 3: Outcome of the interventions on crop production



Source: Household survey (2018)

32. Based on the results from the household survey, the Crop Diversification Index¹⁸ indicates that beneficiaries have a more diversified crop when compared to non-beneficiaries (Figure 4). A key aspect of the Lesotho livelihood package was the mix of maize and beans to promote inter-cropping and nitrogen fixing. The household survey results showed that about 80 percent of beneficiary farmers intercropped (maize/beans), whereas only 29 percent of non-beneficiary farmers intercropped maize and beans. In Malawi, the evaluation found that the package for the input trade fair was tailored to the different regions in terms of the proportion for maize, legumes and vegetables seeds by putting a cap on maximum quantity, and this was designed to promote crop diversification, nutrition security and balanced diets, and enhance the resilience of vulnerable farmers to future shocks. Farmers in the southern region of Malawi were given a different package from those in the central and northern region. The small difference in the lower crop diversification index for Malawi, when comparing beneficiary and non-beneficiary households could be a result of already small land holding sizes in Malawi that have naturally forced households, in general, to intercrop. For example, intercropping in the southern region of Malawi is a very common practice as land sizes are less than 0.3 ha per household on average.

Figure 4: Difference in crop diversification index (at plot level)



Source: Household survey (2018)

33. A key aspect of Priority Area 1 focused on capacity development of the extension services and promotion of climate-smart agriculture techniques. The evaluation found that different approaches were adopted in the three countries:

- i. In Lesotho, the evaluation found that the use of harmonized visual training materials and manuals ensured there was a standardized and coherent message used at the field level by all partners (government, NGOs and United Nations agencies) to provide guidance on keyhole and trench garden construction, water conservation, information on home gardening such as cropping systems, compost making and nutritional messages (food groups). While some good extension work was found in Quthing and Buthe-Buthe, in most of the visited areas farmers complained there were no extension services during times of need. With a minimal presence and coverage of the extension workers to provide the needed technical support to farmers on the ground, farmers at the FGD reported they relied on lead farmers, farmer groups and the visual materials provided.

¹⁸ The crop diversification index varies from 0 (less diversified) to 1 (more diversified).

- ii. In Malawi, the interventions focused on building the capacity of both extension workers and lead farmers in soil and water conservation techniques: CA, diversified crop production, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, business skills to build farmers' resilience, agronomic practices for drought tolerant and short season varieties, and control of Fall Armyworm (FAW). The inclusion of lead farmers and FFSs was found useful, as key informants reported that there were issues with access to and coverage of extension services (average ratio of extension worker to farmers is 1: 1 800).
- iii. In Zimbabwe, the evaluation found that the use of Agricultural Development Associations as an entry point for the interventions was appropriate and promoted community ownership and buy-in. The guidance provided on the formation, governance and management of the resilience fund were clear, and in all visited areas the evaluation team found that they have been adhered to. The interventions emphasize on the formation or capacity building of existing ADA and farmer groups. The trainings provided mainly focused on group dynamics, finance management, leadership skills, good agricultural practices including nutrition-sensitive agriculture, and management of the sales of the inputs and the community fund. The training on good agricultural practices covered both crops in terms of proper spacing for cropping (cowpea) and animal husbandry such as cattle survival, lot feeding, pen fattening, silage (mixing stovers, water and salt), and general livestock management and health practices. The evaluation however noted challenges with the distances to the sales points.

Finding 5. In all three countries, conservation agriculture was the main CSA technique promoted. The evaluation found that the emphasis on farmer field schools, farmer groups and the lead farmer approach as a base layer for the interventions, created more incentive for the adoption of CSA. The main factor contributing to the adoption of conservation agriculture in Lesotho and Malawi was the presence of a lead farmer, and in cases where the interventions leveraged ongoing existing groups or ongoing initiatives, the benefits were greater, as seen in Lesotho and Malawi with the adoption of CA. In Zimbabwe, the provision of extension services was a determining factor in CA adoption rates.

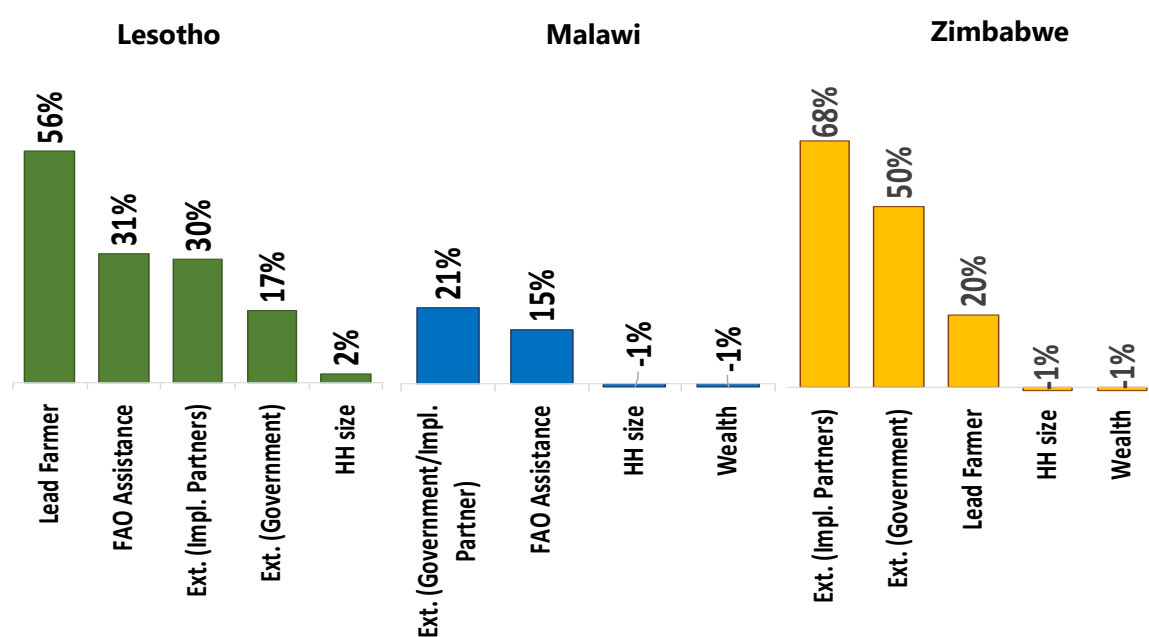
34. **Promotion of climate-smart agriculture techniques.** In all three countries, conservation agriculture¹⁹ was the main CSA technique promoted. From the evidence collected from the FGD and the household survey, the evaluation found that the emphasis on FFS, farmer groups and the lead farmer approach as a base layer for the interventions, created more incentive for the adoption of CSA. This approach emphasized the importance of building farmers' resilience capacity through strengthening social networks and group dynamics in promoting CSA, including soil and water conservation techniques. The evaluation also found this incentive (farmer groups as a base layer) was essential for the uptake of CA, in cases where farmers raised concerns on mulching and where minimum tillage impeded uptake. **The evaluation team found some good practices in Lesotho, where the intervention encouraged farmers who found CA to be labour demanding to form a labour cooperative (locally called Letsema) to take turns in working in each other's fields. This was seen as an innovative solution for prolonged adoption of CA. The evaluation observed a very high interest among female-headed households in joining the Letsema, and FGD participants highlighted that since most female-headed**

¹⁹ In this context, the promotion of CA is based on practicing all three principles: minimum tillage and soil disturbance; permanent soil cover with crop residues and live mulches; and crop rotation and intercropping.

households lacked draft power, the Letsema approach was a very convenient mechanism to assist each other in agricultural activities to save time and, in this way, circumventing the labour issue. Letsema members also helped each other in the construction of keyhole gardens at the homesteads. At the time of the evaluation mission, the Mafeteng Letsema had members (all women).

35. The main factors contributing to the adoption of conservation agriculture in the three focus countries are presented in Figure 5. In cases where the interventions leveraged ongoing existing groups or ongoing initiatives, the benefits were greater, as seen in Lesotho and Malawi with the adoption of CA. In Lesotho and Malawi, the presence of a lead farmer increased by 56 percent and 20 percent, respectively, the likelihood of a household adopting CA. In Zimbabwe, the provision of extension services was a determining factor in CA adoption rates. Lead farmers and beneficiary farmers (FFS, farmers' groups) interviewed in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe, reported an increase in crop production when they adopted CA. In terms of the uptake, conflicts between livestock and crop residues left on the fields affected and impeded the adoption of CA technologies for some farmers in all the three countries. However, famers in Malawi adopted the use of non-palatable grass by livestock as a mulch. This proved very effective as the mulch was not eaten by livestock and yet provided the necessary soil cover.

Figure 5: Factors contributing to the adoption of conservation agriculture in focus countries



Source: Household survey (2018)

36. There were water interventions in all three countries. Malawi and Zimbabwe explicitly had improved water access as one of the four priority areas in the country response plans, with an indicative budget of USD 1 million and USD 6 million respectively. Lesotho, however, captured the water interventions under the crops and livestock components. FAO collaborated with the respective government ministries in charge of small-scale irrigation and water harvesting to implement the water interventions. Key government informants in

all three countries reported that the implemented activities were informed by mapping exercises of current water harvesting and small-scale irrigation, and assessments of the various catchment areas. To assess the results of the water interventions, the evaluation reviewed the project statistics, and triangulated them with the results from the FGDs and from on-the-spot interviews with a selection of beneficiary farmers. In all three countries, the activities focused on increasing water access through improved infrastructure which was translated into different types of activities. The evaluation found that the different approaches adopted in each of the three countries were appropriate for the local context and needs. Table 4 presents the summary of reported results for the water component based on project statistics. FGD participants and key informants confirmed that the main constraint to livestock and crop production during the drought was access to water. Therefore, FAO's water interventions were essential for both crop and livestock production. Evidence from the FGDs and household surveys revealed that large number of households benefited from the water interventions, such as the installation of solar-powered boreholes in Zimbabwe and the provision of water harvesting tools in Malawi. In Zimbabwe, the solar powered boreholes provided water for domestic use to the community, water for livestock and irrigation of vegetables. In Malawi farmers reported double crop harvests in Phalombe in the irrigation schemes and hence increased land productivity. In Lesotho, rehabilitation of water points had significant impact on livestock numbers at the household level.

Table 4: Summary of water intervention activities

Country	Type of activities
Lesotho	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation of two water holding structures in Ha Meshaka and Ha Chere schemes. • Construction of 17 animal water points. • Construction of ten water harvesting structures in schools to improve water harvesting and gardens in schools.
Malawi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 community leaders (chiefs and representatives) and 120 farmers in three districts trained on community-based watershed management, water harvesting, utilization and management of tools. • Distribution of 39 solar irrigation pumps, 2 540 treadle pumps, 109 sets of drip kits and 986 various types of water harvesting tools and materials including shovels, wheelbarrows, pick axes, graduated poles.
Zimbabwe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitation of 99 water points (boreholes) with manual pumps, with a livestock water trough constructed adjacent to the borehole to ensure both humans and livestock derive benefits from clean and safe water. • Rehabilitation of 15 water points (boreholes) upgraded to solar-powered, and water trough and community gardens set up at each of the solar-powered boreholes.

Source: Project statistics

Priority Area 2: Protect and enhance livestock production

Finding 6. Priority Area 2 which focused on protecting and enhancing livestock production translated into different combination packages in the three countries based on local context and needs. The evaluation found better results in the improvement of livestock management and production when farmers received a combination of support: vaccinations and rehabilitation of water facilities in Lesotho, trainings and restocking in Malawi, and vaccinations, provision of livestock feed and destocking in Zimbabwe.

37. The evaluation found that Priority Area 2 which focused on protecting and enhancing livestock production translated into different combination packages in the three countries. The entry points varied across i) animal health interventions-vaccination and treatment campaigns; ii) provision of supplementary feed and rehabilitation of water points; iii) destocking; and iv) restocking. Table 5 presents the summary of the activities in the three countries.

Table 5: Summary of livestock component activities

Country	Interventions	Activities
Lesotho	Animal Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution of 103 veterinary kits and 35 sterilizers to equip livestock technical staff. Vaccination campaigns (377 673 animals in 19 892 households vaccinated against priority animal diseases like anthrax, black quarter, African horse sickness, and rabies). 29 officers (government and NGO staff) trained on Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS).
	Provision of emergency feed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution of 10.1 tonnes of fodder seeds to 21 grazing associations with a membership of 20–100 people.
Malawi	Animal Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> About 1.5 million chickens vaccinated against Newcastle disease. Support for the purchase of an incubator (vaccine production equipment) for the Central Veterinary Laboratory (CVL) to produce the I-2 vaccine for the control of the Newcastle disease. About 900 lead farmers participated in community-based training on animal health and husbandry practices by March 2017. About 6 264 ha area of cropland sprayed with 783 kg of Denim Fit (households covered are 5 508 farm households in 14 extension planning areas).
	Restocking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> About 11 750 goats distributed to 2 350 households under a pass-on restocking scheme (each farmer benefits from five goats – four does and one buck).
Zimbabwe	Animal Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 600 000 doses of both Foot and Mouth Disease vaccines and Anthrax vaccines procured and administered. 151 DLVS staff trained in animal health and participatory disease surveillance in the barrier zone. About 5 346 smallholder men and women farmers trained on participatory disease surveillance in barrier zone.
	Provision of livestock supplementary feed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A total of 8 800 tonnes of stockfeed (survival and pen fattening meal) purchased by about 800 households.

Source: Project statistics

38. To assess the results of the livestock interventions, the evaluation reviewed the project statistics, and triangulated with the results from the FGDs and from on-the-spot interviews with a selection of beneficiary farmers. Vaccinations campaigns were a common approach in the three countries. The projects' terminal reports indicate good results on the impact of the vaccination campaigns in terms of coverage and effectiveness, the analysis of the household survey could not confirm these because it was beyond the scope of the data collection, but evidence from the FDG showed that majority of beneficiary farmers vaccinated their animals. Based on interviews in all three countries, the evaluation found that FAO's contributions to the delivery of public awareness on destocking and campaigns on zoonotic and transboundary animal diseases in areas with high animal density were needed. Access to veterinary services was highlighted as a major concern in Lesotho at all FGDs due to the density of communities. **For the evaluation period, FGD participants highlighted that the vaccination and treatment campaigns were a success, as they relied on veterinary/extension services to treat animal diseases, and reported that they had received vaccinations on time.** Farmers reported their animals had been vaccinated (mainly against anthrax, foot and mouth disease, new castle disease, black quarter, African horse sickness and rabies).
39. Figure 6 presents the results of the household survey on the best package/approaches for the livestock component, in terms of which combination yielded more results²⁰ in the improvement of livestock management and production in the respective countries:
- In Lesotho, it was mainly vaccinations and rehabilitation of water facilities.
 - In Malawi, it was the combination of trainings and restocking through the goat pass-on scheme.
 - In Zimbabwe, it was mainly the combination of vaccinations, provision of livestock feed and destocking. The destocking campaign focused on the promotion of selling of the lean bull and getting one large improved bull that resulted in improved breeding and healthy cows.

Figure 6: Best approach for the livestock component

Lesotho	Malawi	Zimbabwe
Vaccination	Vaccination	Vaccination
Water / borehole rehabilitation	Trainings	Water / borehole rehabilitation
Trainings	Fodder seeds	Trainings
Fodder seeds	Livestock feed	Fodder seeds
Livestock feed	Restocking	Livestock feed
		Destocking

Source: Household survey (2018)

²⁰ The result is based on a regression on the number of livestock owned in 2018 on a number of factors affecting the number in 2018. The results are presented in Figure 6 of the significant factors that affected the number of livestock in each country.

40. The evaluation found the Malawi restocking component had a positive impact in terms of building social cohesion and trust among participants in the scheme - and strengthened the sense of responsibility of the lead farmers vis-à-vis other households. The evaluation found that the emphasis on farmers' groups served as a monitoring system to ensure farmers passed on the goats. Farmers had adopted different mechanisms to ensure the pass-on to the second generation beneficiaries, such as "FAO goats don't die, nor get stolen". The results showed that using FFS or farmer groups as a base layer for beneficiary selection strengthened social networks dynamics and provided a social monitoring mechanism for sustainability. Box 3 presents testimonials from FGD participants in in Kasungu, Malawi.

Box 3: Testimonials from focus group discussion participants in Chikanda, Kasungu in Malawi

"30 farmers in this village are now owners of goats and have been trained on animal husbandry and management for goats. The goats are providing us with manure. They came at the right time. A goat is not a food hand out. It is a long-term benefit that can be passed on even to our children. Even if drought continues in future we are able to sell some goats and buy food. The goats will generate income and we will be able to buy roofing sheets for our houses and improve our standard of living."

FGD participants in Chikanda, Kasungu in Malawi

Farmers' perception of their resilience capacities

Finding 7. The evaluation identified positive results (some intended and some implicit) to varying degrees in all dimensions of resilience capacities in Malawi and Zimbabwe; in Lesotho only for the absorptive capacity.

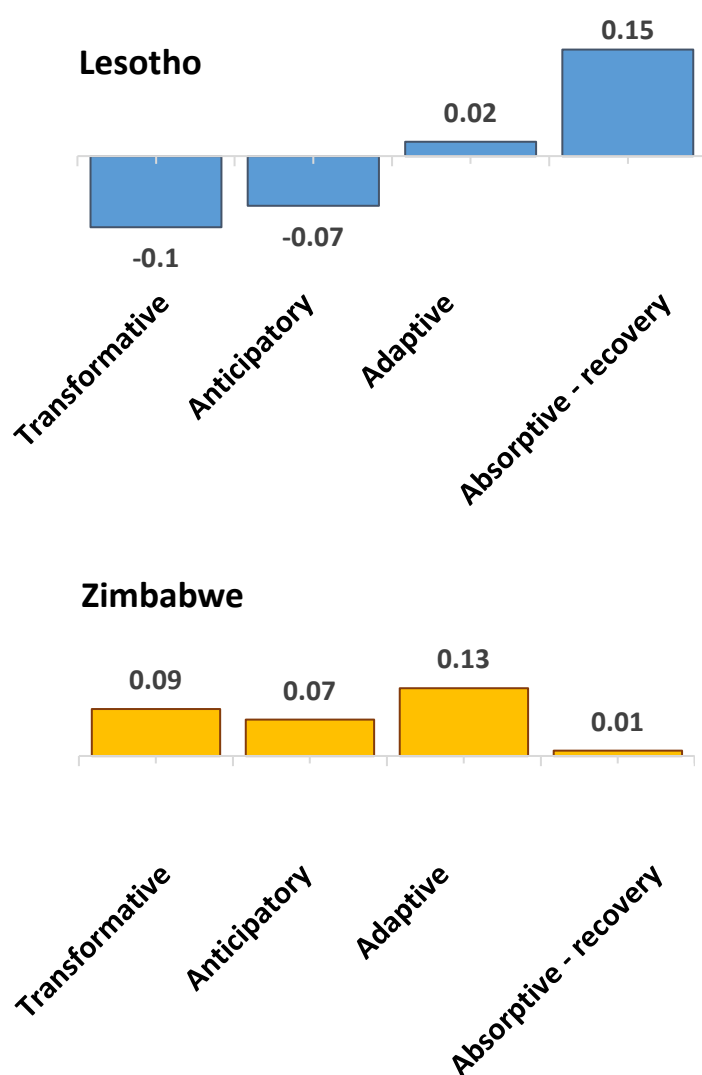
41. To assess the resilience capacities of farmers, the evaluation used the perception of farmers' resilience capacities²¹ (absorptive, adaptive, anticipatory and transformative) in the absence of a baseline. The evaluation identified positive results (some intended and some implicit) to varying degrees in all dimensions of resilience capacities in Malawi and Zimbabwe; in Lesotho only for the absorptive capacity. The two main supporting features in strengthening the resilience dimensions were: i) the centrality of systematic provision of

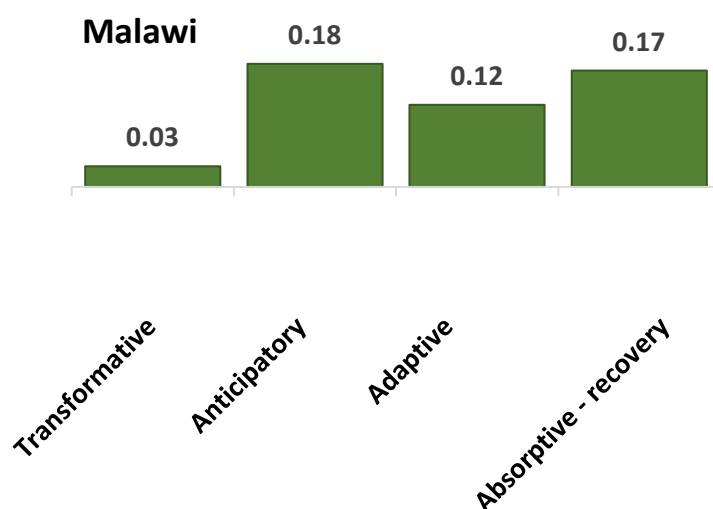
²¹ In the absence of baseline data on the resilience capacities of farmers, to assess the resilience capacities of farmers, the evaluation used the perception of farmers' resilience capacities. In order to assess the perceived resilience, households were asked to report on the following questions:

- Absorptive: If a severe drought/floods occurred tomorrow, my household would be well prepared in advance.
 - Absorptive (recovery): If a severe drought/floods occurred tomorrow, my household could recover fully within six months.
 - Adaptive: If severe drought/floods were to become more frequent and intense, my household would still find a way to get by.
 - Transformative: During times of hardship, my household can change its primary source of income or livelihood if needed.
 - Anticipatory: My household is fully prepared for any future threats and challenges that life throws at us.
- Using a scale of -2 to +2; where -2=strongly disagree, -1=disagree 0=neutral +1=agree and +2 strongly agree), and then mean values were calculated and presented in Figure 7.

extension, training and other forms of knowledge and capacity development; and ii) the activation of short-term response complemented with longer term development interventions. Figure 7 presents the impact of the interventions on the perception of the farmers' resilience capacities. The absolute figures are not necessarily meaningful as such but in their dynamic relationship with one another and as a possible source of insights into the effects of FAO interventions. These are indications of directions used to analyse the causal linkage between FAO activities and the strengthening of the different aspects of resilience – albeit based on a perception survey. **The best way to use these results, is in the comparison between the categories of resilience capacities and reflections on elements of the design that strengthen the different types of resilience capacities, that is, what worked well in terms of the enabling and disabling factors that can be useful to inform future interventions. For instance, the weaker areas can be used by FAO to reflect on how to prioritize activities that strengthen those resilience capacities, such as the anticipatory capacities in Lesotho.**

Figure 7: Impact of interventions on the perception of resilience





Source: Evaluation team

42. The specific findings for each of the three countries are:

- i. In Lesotho, resilience was mainly linked to the efforts of strengthening national systems in terms of good agriculture practices and group formation (lead farmers, CA groups and grazing associations), the integration of nutritional and agricultural practices (improved access to vegetables through the keyhole garden for limited water needs) and the activation of social and financial capital through labour cooperatives (Letsema). From the results, beneficiary framers perceived to have mainly strengthened their absorptive capacities by 15 percent, compared to the non-beneficiary farmers. The results from the household survey show that beneficiary farmers did not perceive to have strengthened their anticipatory and transformative capacity when compared to non-beneficiary farmers (-7 percent and -10 percent respectively). This can be explained by two factors. The first was the targeting criteria. Under the social protection component, which was the main component, FAO prioritized the most vulnerable groups as defined by the LVACs (female-headed or child-headed households, pregnant/lactating women, chronically ill members, households hosting orphans) as having less diversification of income sources. The second factor was the nature of interventions, which had minimal focus on asset generation. The evaluation observed some unintended positive results, although not on a large scale, where farmers were exploring beekeeping for honey (as bees pollinate the grazing vetch which was provided for cover cropping).
- ii. In Malawi, resilience was mainly linked to the efforts of strengthening national systems in terms of good agriculture practices and access to seeds, providing choice to farmers through the input trade fairs and FFS, the integration of nutrition and agricultural practices, the activation of social and financial capital through livestock pass-on schemes and village revolving funds, and the attention paid to indigenous knowledge systems for pest management (FAW). As a result of the FAO interventions, beneficiary farmers reported to have strengthened their absorptive, adaptive and anticipatory

capacities by 17 percent, 12 percent, and 18 percent respectively, when compared to the non-beneficiary farmers.

- iii. In Zimbabwe, there was very good and consistent evidence of resilience building in the four dimensions. As shown in Figure 7, FAO beneficiary farmers perceived to have strengthened their adaptive, transformative and anticipatory capacities by 13 percent, 9 percent and 7 percent, respectively, when compared to non-beneficiaries. The systematic focus on farmers' capacities, the more intensive presence of extension networks and farmers' associations (mainly the ADAs), as well as a broader and more comprehensive approach to targeting, resulted in a more visible and consistent activation of resilience capacities at individual, household and community levels. There were no free handouts, the inputs were provided at subsidized prices and as a result, beneficiary farmers who received FAO's support contributed in cash, and the proceeds were put in a resilience fund at the district/ward level. This was a notable area of success as the resilience fund was used to implement a range of services and building of assets that benefited the whole community and strengthened their resilience. The community projects included construction of warehouses, fodder gardens, rehabilitation of water facilities, and solarisation of animal health centres and boreholes. The evaluation found that the concept of the resilience fund was an effective means of funding highly demanded community projects. The evaluation observed that the management of the funds and the identification of community projects varied among the implementing partners and districts.

3.3 Cross cutting issues

Evaluation Question 3: To what extent were cross-cutting issues mainstreamed and adequately considered during and after the projects' implementation?

Finding 8. Equity, gender and nutrition issues were reflected in the design and implementation of the El Niño response projects, emphasis was mainly on the participation of women in the projects' activities, improving vulnerable groups' access to productive resources and reducing women's work burden through the introduction of new technologies.

43. The evaluation found that equity and gender issues were reflected in the design and implementation of the 2016/17 El Niño interventions in the three countries and are in line with the FAO Policy on Gender Equality.²² In terms of gender-disaggregated data, the project documentations do not have comprehensive disaggregated data for all project interventions in the focus countries. However, the case studies provided evidence to show that there were consistent efforts to prioritize or target different vulnerable groups. Focus was on improving access to the productive resources of vulnerable groups and reducing women's work burden through the introduction of new technologies. Below are highlights from the three country cases:

²² The FAO Policy on Gender Equality has set five main objectives to guide FAO's effort in advancing equality and access to resources and services between men and women: i) women participate equally with men as decision makers in rural institutions and in shaping laws, policies and programmes; ii) women and men have equal access to and control over decent employment and income, land and other productive resources; iii) women and men have equal access to goods and services for agricultural development, and to markets; iv) women's work burden is reduced by 20 percent through improved technologies, services and infrastructure; and v) the share of total agricultural aid committed to projects related to women and gender equality is increased by 30 percent. (FAO, 2013).

- i. In Lesotho, the social protection component was designed to address the needs of both men and women with special emphasis on vulnerable groups with nutritional special needs (elderly, chronically ill, orphaned and disabled). The evaluation found that the social protection component was particularly adapted to vulnerable households with labour constraints, since the keyhole gardens it promoted could be practiced in the homestead with limited labour and/or access to land and water. The keyhole garden was found to reduce the work burden, as vegetable gardens previously tended to be close to water bodies; the introduction of the keyhole gardens to the homestead farmers improved proximity to the vegetables and farmers could also use domestic waste water from the kitchen during the dry season. The evaluation however observed that there was no appropriate analysis of constraints in terms of transport, labour and use of technology, which limited beneficiaries' access to inputs and services, especially among those with disabilities or weaker labour capacity (i.e. use of heavy equipment or demands for heavy physical labour in conservation agriculture). The FGDs revealed that some intended beneficiaries were excluded or derived low/no benefits from activities because of issues ranging from lack of access, to low labour, to transport capabilities at the household level that had not been addressed. Box 4 presents an example where a beneficiary farmer with a disability was unable to attend training sessions due to the long distance to the venue for the training.

Box 4: Case story - beneficiary farmer with disability in Lesotho

I was widowed prior to the El Niño event. The loss of my husband brought with it such a heavy financial burden that my children and I would sometimes go for days without food. Then the strong winds and hailstorms of the El Niño destroyed our house and left us without a home. Thankfully, the government came to my aid, providing me with M360/month to cater to our basic needs, as well as financial support to keep my children in school. I also received vegetable seeds and shed nets from FAO, but I was unable to attend the training on the use of these vegetable inputs due to my disability (foot problem). My neighbours, who also received assistance from FAO, were able to attend the training and upon their return, shared with me how to construct and manage the keyhole gardens. I started growing the vegetables for home consumption and now I have enough to sell and even share with friends. I also dry some vegetables to sustain me during dry spells. I also earn additional money from weeding and harvesting other farmers' crops.

FGD participant in Ha Petlane Maseru district

- ii. In Malawi, the evaluation found that the interventions prioritized improved women's access to productive resources. Extension workers interviewed indicated the interventions emphasized 9:6 women to men ratio to ensure an increased participation of women and access to productive resources.
- iii. In Zimbabwe. The evaluation confirms that there were deliberate efforts in the selection of committees for the different activities (including ADA committees, irrigation and nutrition gardens) and that the interventions put in place some measures to ensure women were actively involved in the Agriculture Development Committee set up for the administration and management of the sales of the inputs, community fund and the identification of community projects. In all districts visited, female farmers held positions in the committee.

44. **Nutrition.** The evaluation found that nutrition was well integrated in the project activities with clear linkages between agriculture and nutrition. This was done through demonstrations of more balanced diets during input trade fairs in Malawi, the promotion of horticulture and vegetable gardens, supported by nutrition health workers in Lesotho. The evidence collected from the FGDs show high adoption rates of these improved practices supporting dietary diversity. The best practice was found in Lesotho, where the introduction and high uptake of keyhole vegetable gardens near the homestead as opposed to earlier practices of vegetable gardens located near waterbodies ensured some perennial vegetables such as spinach as well as other underutilized vegetables such as cabbage and beetroots. Beneficiaries who had adopted new cooking practices and increased diversity of foods consistently reported improved health dynamics for both children and adults.

3.4 Assessment of FAO's effectiveness and organizational performance

Evaluation Question 4: What are the key issues around the organizational performance during the implementation of the FAO 2016/17 El Niño response and what factors influenced FAO's delivery?

Finding 9. The agro-meteorological and early warning alerts were timely but did not lead to early action in the countries. The declarations in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe were done at different times: Lesotho declared a national emergency on 22 December 2015, followed by Zimbabwe on 5 February 2016, and Malawi on 13 April 2016.

45. Most of the internal issues around the organizational performance of FAO during the 2016/17 El Niño response have been covered in the lesson learning and review processes conducted in 2017. The summary of that review is presented in Appendix 4. This section is structured around seven themes: coordination, resource mobilization, funding mechanism, adaptive programming, interface between short- and long-term interventions, knowledge sharing, and areas for improvement.
46. The evaluation confirms the findings of the previous reviews and stocktaking exercises of FAO and partners which indicated that while agro-meteorological and early warning information was available, it was not used to trigger early action since there were delays between the time of the El Niño drought alert and government declarations. The alarm on the impending El Niño drought was raised in August 2015 at the Southern African Regional Climate Outlook Forum²³ meeting (SARCOF 19) and climate outlook update in February 2016 (SADC, 2016). However SADC declared the regional drought emergency on in July 2016, and at different times at the national level: Lesotho declared a national emergency on 22 December 2015, followed by Zimbabwe on 5 February 2016, and Malawi on 13 April 2016.

²³ The SARCOF is the climate Outlook Forum coordinated by the SADC Climate Services Centre (CSC) in Gaborone, Botswana. It covers all the 15 SADC Member States.

Finding 10. FAO's contribution to SADC (such as secondment of the Food Security and Livelihoods Expert to SADC El Niño Logistics and Coordination Response Team) ensured that the needs of agriculture and food security issues were well prioritized and reflected in the SADC Appeal, and respective national responses.

47. FAO's active contribution both at the regional and national level has enhanced its visibility and strengthened its relationship with other key partners, such as SADC. More specifically, FAO's contribution to the SADC El Niño Logistics and Coordination Team (together with WFP and OCHA) ensured that the needs of agriculture and food security issues were prioritized and reflected in the SADC Appeal, and respective national responses. FAO's contributions were both in financial and technical support. For the early warning and preparedness efforts, FAO contributed both in terms of financial and technical support to subregional efforts, such as jointly convening the SADC regional meeting with WFP at the peak of the crisis, allowing member countries to share information and identify national and regional priority actions at the time. A key recommendation of the SADC meeting was the establishment of SADC El Niño Logistics and Coordination Response Team by SADC Member States and partners to coordinate the regional emergency preparedness and response to the impacts of El Niño in the SADC region. FAO seconded a Food Security and Livelihoods Expert to SADC El Niño Logistics and Coordination Response Team from June to August, who contributed to the development of the SADC regional Appeal, SADC El Niño situation reports and regional analysis.
48. This evaluation confirms the findings of the 2017 Review of FAO's 2016/16 El Niño response that the FAO internal L3 declaration was necessary as it triggered full attention and action at all levels (headquarters, regional, subregional and country level). FAO staff interviewed in all three countries appreciated the value added of the of the L3 declaration and indicated that it raised the needs of their country offices at the corporate level. FAO declared the corporate surge support for Southern Africa initially between 4 July and 16 November 2016, subsequently extended to February 2017. Evidence collected from the document review show that the protocols for the activation of the Corporate Surge Capacity were followed and led to the following:
 - i. Establishment of a coordination mechanism and the roles of the various levels (FAO headquarters, regional and subregional, and country level defined).
 - ii. Launch of the response plan and appeal for funds.
 - iii. Activation of the activated surge team comprising of a Designated Responsible Official; a Senior Strategic Adviser; an Emergency Response Manager; and a Surge Support Team Coordinator.
 - iv. Activation of the Fast Track Procedures (FTPs). These were modified standard procedures, building on existing policies and manual sections that offered a greater degree of authority, speed and flexibility in specific operational and programme areas for the duration of the Corporate Surge Response. All units were requested to review the relevant FTPs and ensure that all personnel are aware of their activation.

Finding 11. There were variations in the resources mobilized in the various FAO country representations. Lesotho, although a Tier 2 country per RIASCO prioritization of countries, was the most successful in terms of resource mobilization for the 2016/17 El Niño response. Two contributing factors for Lesotho's record are: the early declaration on 22 December 2015, making

the Government of Lesotho the first in Southern Africa to declare a state of national disaster and to appeal for humanitarian relief assistance from the international community; and enhanced the visibility of the FAO response plan in the country as a result of the high-level mission to the country.

49. **Resource mobilization.** There were variations in the resources mobilized in the various FAO country representations, in terms of the proportion of the funding appeal received. As presented in Table 2, only three country offices (Lesotho, Malawi and Mozambique) were able to mobilize more than 50 percent of the funding appeal – 83 percent, 73 percent and 53 percent respectively. Among the three evaluation focus countries, Zimbabwe raised the least funds as it was only able to mobilize 26 percent of the funding appeal, though its appeal was significantly larger than all the other countries (Table 2). **Lesotho, although a Tier 2 country per RIASCO prioritization of countries, was the most successful in terms of resource mobilization for the 2016/17 El Niño response. The main contributing factors leading to better resource mobilization results in Lesotho include:**

- i. Early declaration on 22 December 2015, making the Government of Lesotho the first in Southern Africa to declare a state of national disaster and to appeal for humanitarian relief assistance from the international community. This allowed FAO Lesotho to activate and operationalize a response plan.
- ii. High-level missions organized by FAO with other United Nations agencies (WFP) to Lesotho increased the awareness of the 2015/16 El Niño impact, enhanced the visibility of FAO's El Niño response plan and influenced resource partners to commit more resources for the response.

Finding 12. The mobilization of the surge funds through the SFERA mechanism to cover the cost of technical support staff and needs assessment worked very well. Beyond SFERA, there were no mechanisms in place nor immediate availability of funds for FAO country offices to access emergency programme funds for immediate response.

50. **Funding mechanism.** Overall, the surge mechanism used to channel technical support staff and cover the needs assessment cost worked very well. The mobilization of the surge capacity and funds through the SFERA mechanism was timely and allowed FAO to immediately respond in Lesotho, Zimbabwe as well as second a Food Security and Livelihoods Expert to the SADC. In Lesotho USD 81 735 was released to FAO Lesotho through the SFERA mechanism to cover technical staff support and to support the Disaster Management Authority in conducting need assessment. In Zimbabwe, USD 96 332 was released to FAO Zimbabwe in January 2016, through the SFERA mechanism to support the first crop and livestock assessment mission in Zimbabwe. At the regional level, USD 32 500 was released for the secondment of the Food Security and Livelihoods Expert to SADC El Niño Logistics and Coordination Response Team from June to August 2016. **Beyond SFERA, there were no mechanisms in place nor immediate availability of funds for FAO country offices to access emergency programme funds for immediate response. The only other option was to modify ongoing projects and redirect the funds.**

Finding 13. The evaluation found some good examples of adaptive programming but these were not systematically used across the three countries.

51. The evaluation found some good examples of adaptive programming but these were not systematically used across the three countries. The evaluation found that SFERA funds were in some cases complemented by funds from resource partners who were flexible and allowed for country offices, such as FAO Malawi and FAO Zimbabwe, to realign the project funds by reprogramming or by retargeting the funds allocated for ongoing projects. In particular, the evaluation highlighted cases where programmatic flexibility and adaptiveness led to better results or even avoided failure. This is demonstrated in the following examples:
- i. **Reprogramming linked to seasonality:** In Zimbabwe, the slow provision of funds was going to result in late delivery of seeds for the planting season and stockfeed. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) project was initially earmarked for provision of subsidized stockfeed and agricultural inputs. However, when the funds arrived late, they were redirected to rehabilitate water facilities, mainly boreholes (solar, bush and hand-pumps), and complemented with communal vegetable gardens. This was in line with the priorities outlined in the FAO Zimbabwe 2016/17 El Niño response; rehabilitation of water facilities was one of the four priority areas (entry points).
 - ii. **Adapting geographic and targeting coverage:** In Malawi, a Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) project originally intended for flood response was modified at the time of the El Niño alert, to review specific project activities and redirect some of the funds to cover two additional districts in the south through the provision of irrigation equipment. These two identified were particularly vulnerable to drought and required some assistance with irrigation. FAO requested a three-month no-cost extension and redirected the distribution of irrigation equipment to different communities or farmers who were not participating in the input trade fairs according to the original plan. Box 5 shows how FAO adapted the activities of a CERF-funded project in response to the evolving needs of the most affected communities and households.

Box 5: Example of a project with adaptive reprogramming

This was the only FAO Office for Special Relief Operations (OSRO) project operationally active in the period October to December 2015, with the focus of mitigating the impact of a floods (bearing in mind the government of Malawi declared a state of emergency in April 2016, and only after that could FAO develop an extensive El Niño response). FAO redesigned the activities of the project to respond to the evolving needs of the beneficiaries, and sought a three-month no-cost extension, thereby *redirecting resources that were earmarked for the rain-fed season to intensify irrigation activities*. The project initially planned to distribute treadle pumps to 11 280 households with access to irrigable land/residual moisture in six districts (Chikwawa, Neno, Balaka, Chitipa, Zomba and Nsanje). Due to the insufficient rain in the southern part of Malawi, and the need to maximize food production among affected households, FAO, in consultation with the cluster members and the government, reviewed the specific project activities, and in some cases, redirected the distribution of irrigation equipment to different communities or farmers who were not originally participating in the input trade fairs.

- iii. **Modifiers linked to crisis occurrence:** In Zimbabwe, the evaluation found that a four-year project included crisis modifiers, which were activated for El Niño response. The project titled "Zimbabwe Livelihoods and Food Security Programme (LFSP)" is a

Department for International Development (DFID)-funded project. Climate-smart subsidies were successfully introduced as a way to protect gains from longer term development processes and activities.

Finding 14. A good example of the complementarities of short- and long-term interventions was found in Lesotho. Where FAO benefitted from the complementarity strengths of other organizations (specifically UNICEF's Child Grant Programme) for the social protection component-by targeting and providing CGP beneficiaries with home gardening and nutrition kits

52. **Interface between short- and long-term interventions:** The evaluation set to test the interface of short- and long-term interventions in terms of synergies and complementarities or separation of trajectories. The evaluation found that where there were synergies or complementarities, there were better results in terms of sustainability. A good example was found in Lesotho, where the social protection and agriculture complementary approach helped serve as an important interface between short- and long-term interventions, as it complemented the Lesotho Child Grants Programme (CGP), by targeting and providing the CGP beneficiaries with home gardening and nutrition kits, with a potential to generate income, thus strengthening their shock responsiveness. While the decision to concentrate on social protection was justified, some social issues (such as access to training constraints) were not given priority attention. Additionally, building on previous efforts implemented through FAO's emergency and resilience programme²⁴ (2012-2015) worked well in Lesotho. This approach was catalytic, as it focused on building on existing efforts and investments, and improved the likelihood of sustainability after the project closure.

53. **In terms of knowledge sharing, the evaluation also found a good example in Malawi.** The input trade fair evaluation workshop organized by FAO and Catholic Relief Services in Malawi created a platform for knowledge-sharing and reflection on the key lessons learned among the implementing partners, and government representatives from the different participating districts. A notable result following the input trade fair evaluation workshop has been the development of guidelines on the execution of input trade fairs in Malawi, jointly prepared by FAO and Catholic Relief Services.

Finding 15. Overall, the evaluation did not find any major areas of failure or mistargeting but mainly processes and interventions where there is room for improvement and learning, as well as some gaps in programming and complaints from farmers. These include poor sensitization on voucher system used for the inputs trade fair and prolonged delays in procurement in Malawi. In Zimbabwe, it was including an unfamiliar sorghum variety in the package for beneficiary farmers with poor extension on agronomic practices.

54. **Areas for improvement.** The evaluation did not find any major areas of failure or mistargeting but mainly processes and interventions where there is room for improvement and learning, as well as some gaps in programming and complaints from farmers. The only areas where the evaluation found more significant concerns were linked to following cases:

²⁴ The Emergency and Resilience Programme (ERP) was developed after the 2012 food crisis and was implemented for three years (2012-2015). The programme had three pillars: the first pillar focused on sustainable production through the promotion of sustainable agriculture practices such as CA, home gardening, nutrition and natural resource management; the second pillar focused on capacity development by strengthening local structures and producing harmonized and visual training materials; the third pillar focused on monitoring and evaluation, coordination and advocacy.

- i. Complaints from farmers on the sensitization of the voucher system used for the inputs trade fair in Malawi. Despite the clear success of the input trade fairs implementation in Malawi, the evaluation found that there were challenges with the sensitization of the voucher system which affected the overall results. In all case study areas, FGD participants reported that they had challenges using the vouchers. In particular, the agro-dealers and implementing partners complained that the vouchers were not user-friendly because they were text-heavy and had no illustrative design to help illiterate farmers. This was made worse by poor sensitization of beneficiaries. As a result, some beneficiaries reported getting less than what they were entitled to. The poor design of the vouchers also complicated the redemption process.
- ii. Prolonged delays in goat procurement and distribution for the pass-on scheme in Malawi, due to the complexities in the quarantine, inspection and vaccinations of the goats, and also in the procurement of Newcastle disease vaccines.
- iii. Poor extension to farmers on the agronomic practices and the lack of market for the sorghum variety (shirikure) that was unfamiliar to most beneficiary farmers in Zimbabwe. In addition, FAO's guidance on Seeds in Emergencies discourages introducing farmers to an innovation during emergencies. Although the four page technical note on the shirikure sorghum variety prepared was necessary, the evaluation observed that it was not sufficient when introducing an unfamiliar variety. During the evaluation workshop, participants highlighted that mapping all known varieties in the different agro-ecological is essential for planning purposes and to inform future interventions.
- iv. Late distribution of agricultural inputs that are subject to seasonality affected uptake and/or yields in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe. Despite highlighted results under Priority 1, a major drawback in all three countries was the late timing of the interventions. Figure 8 presents FAO's proposal for the sequencing of activities based on the seasonal agricultural calendar for Southern Africa (FAO, 2016/17). Unequivocal evidence from the document review and interviews with beneficiary farmers and key informants in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe showed that farmers received the seeds for the rainfed season in December instead of August or September, as indicated in the response plan. Farmers particularly complained that they received the input package late, which did not allow them to properly plan for their cropping arrangements.

Figure 8: FAO's proposal for the sequencing of 2016/17 El Niño interventions

	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Crop calendar					Planting			Growing				Harvesting		
Support recovery of smallholder farmers			Fertilizer and seed distribution									Small-scale irrigation initiatives		
Protect and enhance livestock production					Livestock restocking					Livestock restocking				
	Provide supplementary feed and water													
	Vaccination programme *													
Coordination and analysis of information														Crop assessments and seed security assessments

*Vaccinations are conducted throughout the year, depending on the livestock and type of vaccine

Source: FAO Southern Africa El Niño response plan

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. The existence of the FAO Regional El Niño response plan promoted coherence across countries by outlining the priority areas and key outputs, which FAO country teams translated into different intervention packages based on respective country contexts.

55. The links between the SADC appeal, RIASCO Action Plan and the FAO Regional Response plan were strong, and guided programme planning and implementation at both the regional and country levels. In terms of design, the FAO regional response was appropriate. It had accompanying country-specific components which translated into the various country response plans with different intervention packages based on respective country contexts. FAO was only able to mobilize USD 44.4 million which represents 41 percent of their regional funding appeal. The funds raised in the countries varied among the focus countries and were linked to the country office's capacity.
56. Although climatic events such as drought and floods are recurrent events in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe, there were no explicit mechanisms in their respective Country Programme Frameworks to allow programme flexibility and adaptiveness, and adaptive programming was done in an implicit way.

Conclusion 2. FAO made varying degrees of progress towards the envisaged priority areas of the FAO 2016/17 response. Overall, the 2016/17 FAO El Niño response achieved positive results in the three focus countries in terms of higher production and productivity when comparing beneficiaries with non-beneficiaries (see section 3.2). In particular, strong contributions were noted in relation to safeguarding the food security of the targeted farmers in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe. In terms of the longer term resilience, the evaluation concludes that short-term response on its own is not sufficient for a drought response, and it is essential they are combined with recovery, rehabilitation and development interventions. Although positive results were recorded, there were implementation delays in all three countries.

57. In all countries, the interventions made considerable contributions to the safeguarding of farmers' food security - farmers who were identified as highly vulnerable to the effects of the El Niño-induced drought. The sustainability of results was found to be more significant when they were layered and articulated in a systems approach, with elements of asset delivery and/or protection combined with training and extension, with the engagement with pre-existing groups and associations and with the direct engagement of beneficiaries through some form of commitment (financial or social).
58. The introduction of new practices under the El Niño response were generally successful: in Zimbabwe the introduction of stockfeed (supplementary feed and pen fattening) altered the livestock management practices for the better during the El Niño response, and farmers retained these after the project. In Lesotho, the work on social protection carried out jointly with WFP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) resulted in clear benefits in terms of household food security and nutrition for the most vulnerable. In Malawi, the implementation of input trade fairs and the accompanying cooking demonstrations improved access to different varieties of seeds and food options.

59. In terms of resilience capacities, the evaluation identified positive results albeit some intended and some implicit in all dimensions of resilience capacities – absorptive, adaptive, anticipatory and transformative. The two main features that supported the strengthening of the resilience dimensions were: i) the centrality of systematic provision of extension, training and other forms of knowledge and capacity development; and ii) the activation of short-term response in a complementary way to longer term development interventions.
60. This evaluation concludes that short-term response (immediate actions) on its own is not sufficient for a drought response, and it is essential they are combined with recovery, rehabilitation and development interventions in an integrated way that looks across different dimensions and levels, such as risk governance, policy dimension, institutional capacity development, early warning systems.

Conclusion 3. The targeting approaches and the criteria for the beneficiary selection in the three countries varied and were informed by individual country contexts. In cases where the interventions leveraged on existing groups or ongoing initiatives, the benefits were greater, and the evaluation concludes that the best approach in targeting is a comprehensive one that includes different sets of activities for different groups in a complementary way. And that FAO achieves better results from its interventions when it adopts a more comprehensive targeting approach, including not just households but also pre-existing groups and associations as part of its targeting as well as by differentiating interventions to meet the needs of farmers with different levels of vulnerability.

61. The evidence collected showed that the more the projects and programmes managed to include communities, local groups, extension workers and subnational institutions in decisions on design of interventions and targeting criteria, the more the projects and programmes were likely to result in successful interventions. There were clear benefits and added value in terms of results and sustainability when short-term project activities were carried out on top of pre-existing structures, groups and dynamics put in place by longer term development interventions.

Conclusion 4. FAO made consistent efforts to prioritize different vulnerable groups, with a focus on improving nutrition, access to productive resources and reducing women's work burden through the introduction of new technologies and improving nutrition.

62. Gender and equity issues were reflected in the targeting through the introduction of technologies that reduce women's burden (e.g. key-hole gardens and solar pumps) and formation of groups to tackle the labour constraints of techniques promoted. With regards to nutrition integration, 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.

Conclusion 5. While the agro-meteorological and early warning alerts was available and timely, it was not used to trigger early action, as government declarations were at different times. The alarm on the impending El Niño drought was raised in August 2015 at the SARCOF meeting; however, Lesotho declared a national emergency on 22 December 2015, followed by Zimbabwe on 5 February 2016, and Malawi on 13 April 2016.

Conclusion 6. There were examples of adaptive programming but these were not systematically used across the focus countries. Beyond the SFERA, there were no mechanisms in place or immediate availability of resources for FAO country offices to access emergency programme funds for immediate response, other than adapting ongoing projects and redirecting the funds based on resource partners' flexibility. The evaluation found some strong cases where programmatic flexibility and adaptiveness led to better results or even avoided losing development gains in Zimbabwe and Malawi.

63. The evaluation confirms the findings of the previous reviews and stocktaking exercises of FAO and partners which indicated that while agro-meteorological and early warning information was available, it was not used to trigger early action. This is because there were delays between the time of the El Niño drought alert and government declarations. The alarm on the impending El Niño drought was raised in August 2015 at the SARCOF meeting, but SADC declared the regional disaster in July 2016. At the national level, the declarations in the three focus countries were made at different times: Lesotho declared a national emergency on 22 December 2015, followed by Zimbabwe on 4 February 2016, and Malawi on 13 April 2016. The delay in declarations affected the timing of when FAO could respond to the crisis. The timeliness of the interventions remained an issue in all three focus countries.

4.2 Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Considering that Southern Africa is exposed to several hazards, particularly drought and floods, the evaluation recommends that FAO initiate a systematic approach for adaptive programming. The evaluation recognizes that this is not a new way of work but rather transforming an implicit way of working into a more explicit and systematic way of programming.

64. Suggested actions include:

- i. The CPF programmes and projects should include a dedicated scenario-based analysis of the risk factors (likelihood, frequency, intensity and likely impact) of the climatic events such as drought and floods as well as for other potential crises (food chain and socio-economic).
- ii. Based on the above FAO should systematically seek agreements with resource partners for programming flexibility that should allow for a redirection of funds in both development and pre-existing emergency activities to respond to new crises. Ex-ante agreements should be put in place to ensure that project documents explicitly indicate what measures will be taken to redirect and modify project funds and activities in the event of a risk occurring, so as to mitigate the impact of crisis and safeguard development gains achieved so far.
- iii. FAO should integrate the lessons learned from previous responses - in terms of the monitoring and reporting of results - into the design and planning of future responses. There is a need for REOSA and country offices to develop a template for reporting that includes the development of a set of explicit indicators to measure and report on overall country progress towards results.
- iv. Investments in adaptation activities and infrastructure for both the short- (drought emergency response) and long-term development programmes need to be put in place.

Recommendation 2. FAO should conduct an in-depth analysis of the factors that affected the business, financial and procurement processes that slowed down the delivery during the 2016/17 El Niño response. Once this is done, FAO should put in place the measures to address the disenabling factors.

65. In recognition of the continuous delays in procurement and operations support in delivering goods during the emergency response, the evaluation recommends that FAO carry out a comprehensive review/analysis of the factors that have been affecting the business, financial, technical and logistical processes and slowing down the procurement process, resulting in non-delivery or inability to reach the targeted population in need. FAO should use the analysis of what did not work to inform a broader reflection at the higher corporate level. It is essential to tackle these issues collectively at the appropriate level, as they are beyond the immediate sphere of control of the FAO country offices and therefore cannot be addressed at the individual country level. The analysis should identify where the bottlenecks are, as they are linked to several units at country, regional and headquarters levels. Areas to be explored by the analysis could include:
- i. What processes are in place at the country level to initiate procurement in lieu of an early warning trigger? What are the existing procurement plans, and what activities can be initiated in advance based on analysis of the likelihood of crisis?
 - ii. What is the available level of support (technical clearance, international procurement provisions) at the regional level to facilitate the procurement process?
66. This review could benefit from the findings of the 2017 Office of Inspector General's Audit (AUD 2517): Audit of Technical Support for the Procurement of Goods (FAO, 2018), as this audit identified potential risks around existing processes and responsibilities.

Recommendation 3. To enhance the reach and sustainability of efforts, targeting should be expanded and articulated around different groups. FAO should ensure there is a link between the targeting, and emphasis on transformative resilience capacities. Based on evidence collected, interventions achieve better results when they adopt a more comprehensive targeting approach, including not only the targeting of households but also of pre-existing groups and associations linking them to existing markets. It has been shown that better results can also be achieved by differentiating interventions to meet the needs of the more vulnerable as well as those of households with productive capacity, that is, "better-off farmers". This is based on the evidence that expanding the targeting and differentiating the interventions would increase the social cohesion dimension resulting in benefits trickling down to the wider community, thereby ensuring target diversification.

67. As part of broadening the targeting, FAO interventions should:
- i. Identify and support "innovative farmers" who are able to implement technology improvement at the community level, including, processing–value addition, conservation agriculture and social/collective action, such as associations and cooperatives.
 - ii. Promote greater linkage and the use of farmers' groups (such as farmer field schools, Agricultural Development Committee, CA groups) as entry points to provide extension services, and marketing opportunities to promote the sustainability of results.

- iii. Properly analyse the implications of information requirements (prices, weather and diseases/pests) and accessibility issues for farmers. These must be factored into the design of various interventions.
68. Beyond linking targeting to pre-existing social groups/institutions, FAO needs to think of a systematic way to strengthen market institutions and service providers by linking and supporting other pre-existing markets and service providers in ways that help nurture the development of services and enterprises attuned to farmers' demand. For instance, under the crop component, there are local enterprises, production groups and markets (both formal and semi-formal), who are often promoted under FAO's development activities, and complement the public sector in areas of research that can help farmers access innovative techniques and services that will be important in building their resilience.

Recommendation 4. FAO should support the improvement of learning across countries, information sharing and advocacy efforts about emergency responses among participating countries by better facilitating the following:

- i. Ensure all evidence-based assessments (needs/market/value-chains) are used more effectively in designing interventions, emphasizing the need to look at the productive, institutional, socioeconomic and agro-ecological system in an integrated way.
- ii. Use acquired experience and knowledge to advocate and support governments to improve their use of early warning information and to make evidence-based and timely decisions on crises declarations and early mobilization.
- iii. Improve the monitoring and aggregation of data and where applicable ensure the data is gender-disaggregated.
- iv. Promote the dissemination of best practices and lessons learned across different thematic focuses and levels.
- v. Make explicit provisions for tours for FAO officers involved in implementing projects to promote learning across countries.
- vi. Promote joint monitoring with governments and other partners, where possible.
- vii. Encourage knowledge-sharing exchanges between governments, implementing partners, and FAO staff at all levels.

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Appendix 1. List of El Niño projects in Lesotho, Malawi and Zimbabwe

Recipient Country	Project Symbol	Project Title	Actual EOD	Actual NTE	Total Budget	Total Delivery
Lesotho	SFER/GLO/102/MUL BABY54	Lesotho	2015-12-21	2030-12-31	81 735	81 735
	OSRO/LES/601/EC	FAO Emergency response to El Niño Drought in Lesotho	2016-03-01	2017-08-31	1 650 000	1 621 060
	OSRO/LES/602/CHA	FAO Emergency Response to the Drought caused by El Niño Weather Phenomenon	2016-04-01	2016-10-31	1 128 270	1 113 682
	OSRO/LES/603/NET	Emergency Support to Rural Livelihoods affected by the El Niño induced-drought	2016-06-27	2017-06-26	550 000	549 547
	TCP/LES/3601	Emergency assistance to vulnerable smallholder households affected by El Niño-induced drought	2016-07-07	2017-07-07	500 000	413 198
	UNJP/LES/053/UNJ	Emergency Response to the El Niño induced Drought in Lesotho (2016)	2016-07-01	2017-08-31	1 500 000	1 370 960
	OSRO/LES/604/USA	Livestock emergency response to El Niño induced drought in Lesotho	2016-09-16	2017-12-31	1 000 000	983 101
	OSRO/SFS/603/UK	Emergency support to smallholder farmers affected by El Niño in Southern Africa	2016-10-01	2017-09-30	1 667 500	1 405 947
	UTF/LES/054/LES	Emergency Response to the El Niño induced Drought in Lesotho (2016)	2016 -11 -18	2018-06 30	1 100 000	1 112 939
Malawi	OSRO/MLW/504/CHA	Emergency Agricultural Assistance to Support Food Insecure Rural Households	2015-10-16	2016-06-30	1 999 987	1 982 791
	UNJP/MLW/069/UNJ	Tackling negative effects of El Niño 2015 - 2016 in Malawi	2016-01-01	2017-12-31	1 412 654	1 402 656
	OSRO/MLW/601/ITA	Enhanced Agriculture Emergency Response to tackle the negative effects of El Niño in Malawi 2016	2016-09-01	2017-08-31	1 111 111	1 043 380
	OSRO/SFS/603/UK	Emergency support to smallholder farmers affected by El Niño in Southern Africa	2016-10-01	2017-09-30	2 873 203	2 828 446
	OSRO/SFS/604/CAN	Emergency livelihood response to assist El Niño-affected households in Southern Africa Region	2016-12-14	2017-12-30	487 917	440 497
Zimbabwe	OSRO/ZIM/501/CHA	Improved food security of drought affected households in Zimbabwe	2015-11-06	2016-07-05	2 128 136	2 046 888
	SFER/GLO/101/MUL BABY47	Zimbabwe	2016-01-22	2016-07-22	96 332	96 332
	OSRO/ZIM/601/EC	Improved food & livelihoods security & resilience of women & men s/h farmers through livestock	2016-02-03	2017-08-02	1 840 760	1 708 599
	OSRO/ZIM/602/ITA	Enhanced food and nutrition security for smallholder women and men farmers affected by drought	2016-08-26	2017-08-25	1 106 196	1 100 477

	OSRO/ZIM/603 /USA	Livelihood, food & nutrition security for small holder women and men farmers affected by the El Niño	2016-09-16	2017-08-30	1 975 111	1 937 370
	OSRO/ZIM/604 /WFP	Building resilience of smallholder farmers by increasing small grains production and productivity	2016-11-01	2017 - 06-30	542 111	378 556
	OSRO/SFS/604 /CAN	Emergency livelihood response to assist El Niño-affected households in Southern Africa Region	2016-12-14	2017-12-30	687 699	688 703
	TCP/ZIM/3603	Emergency support for vulnerable households affected by El Niño-induced drought	2017-01-02	2017-12-31	390 000	343 770
	OSRO/ZIM/702 /WFP	Building resilience of smallholder farmers by increasing small grains production and productivity	2017 - 11-28	2018 - 06-30	428 040	411 300

Appendix 2. People interviewed

No.	Name	Organization	Role
Headquarters and Regional meetings			
1	Bedane, Berhanu	FAO-SFS, Harare	Animal Production and Health Officer
2	Chiko, Mercy	FAO-REOSA, Johannesburg	Nutrition Officer
3	Elago, Panduleni	SADC, Botswana	SADC FANR Directorate
4	Gabella, Lindiwe	World Vision- Zimbabwe	Project Coordinator
5	Hove, Lewis	FAO-REOSA, Johannesburg	Coordinator-Resilience Hub
6	Igweta, Grace	WFP-Regional Bureau for Southern Africa	Evaluation Officer
7	Kalonga, Clement	SADC, Botswana	SADC DRR Unit
8	Kormawa, Patrick	FAO-SFS, Harare	FAO Sub-Regional Coordinator for Southern Africa (SFS)
9	Luchen, Sina	FAO-REOSA, Johannesburg	Agronomist
10	Magunda, Douglas,	FAO-REOSA, Johannesburg	M&E Officer
11	Marsland, Neil	FAO-HQ	Senior Technical Officer
12	Mcguire, Shawn	FAO-HQ	Agricultural Officer
13	MulilaMitti, Joyce	FAO-SFS, Harare	Plant Production and Protection Officer for Southern Africa
14	Nicholas, Grace	Ministry of Land, Agriculture and Rural Settlement	Principal Economist
15	Obongo, David	FAO-REOSA, Johannesburg	Resilience Officer
16	Odero, Andrew	WFP-Regional Bureau for Southern Africa	Head, Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM)
17	Pound, Jonathan	FAO-HQ	Economist
18	Were, Jacqueline	FAO-HQ	Emergency and Rehabilitation Officer
19	Zanamwe, Elma	FAO-REOSA, Johannesburg	Emergency Management Specialist (Livestock)
Lesotho meetings			
20	Khobotle, Mokete	UNICEF	M&E Officer
21	Khotso, Mathafeng	FAO-Lesotho	GIS Officer
22	Mantutle, Bokang	FAO-Lesotho	Senior Agronomist
23	Maope, Mohlophehi	FAO-Lesotho	Agriculture Officer
24	Matsepe, Nkopo	World Food Programme	Resilience Officer
25	Md Islam, Shafiqul	UNICEF	Chief, Social Policy
26	Mochaba, Liau Daniel	Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)	Country Director
27	Molahlehi, Lebone	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	Director for Crops
28	Mwesigwa, David	FAO-Lesotho	Emergency and Rehabilitation Coordinator
29	Nthimo, Mokitinyane	FAO-Lesotho	Assistant FAOR (Programme)
30	Poeea, Makhotso	Pokane	Agricultural Assistant-SRC
31	Sehloho, Lineo	World Food Programme	M& E Officer

Malawi meetings			
31	AmayaOrtiz, Luis	FAO-Malawi	Programme Officer
32	Amos, Stephano	Zakuthe Investments	Agro-dealer
33	Chilumbila, Chancy	UNRCO	Programme Officer
34	Chimsale, Elwin	Catholic Development Commission (CADECOM) Blantyre	Project Coordinator
35	Chiona, Vexer	Chikalema section, Neno EPA	Agricultural Extension Development Officer (AEDO)
36	Chulu, Julius L.C.	Malawi Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development	Director, Dept. of Animal Health and Livestock
37	Divasoni, Danwick	Phalombe Agro dealer Association	Agro-dealer for the FAO Input trade fair
38	Gama, Laston	Livunzu EPA, Chikwawa	Agricultural Extension Development Coordinator
39	Kamanga, Julius	SAJU Agro dealer, Kasungu	Managing Director
40	Kanjira, Yuda	Malawi Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development	Department of Agriculture Planning Services
41	Kaponya, Innocent	FAO-Malawi	Field Officer FAO Phalombe
42	Kumwenda, Chesterman	FAO-Malawi	Food Security Officer
43	Linachi, Linly	COOPI	Field Officer
44	Lipenga, Lewis Yohane	Malawi Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development	Department of Agriculture Planning Services
45	Makanmda, Daniel	Malawi Agric Extension (Phalombe, Blantyre Rural & Neno)	District Coordinator
46	Makondetsa, Jessie	Phalombe Agro dealer Association	Agro-dealer for the FAO Input trade fair
47	Malunga, Clifford	Malawi Govt. Agric-Extension Blantyre Rural	Agricultural Extension Development Officer (AEDO)
48	Matipa, Malanaga	Neno District Agriculture Development Division	Crops Officer
49	Mhango, Veronica	UNRCO	Programmes Officer
50	Mittawa, David Chapendeka	Malawi Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development	Principal Animal Health, Dept. of Animal Health and Livestock
51	Moyo, Happy	Neno District Agriculture Development Division	Agricultural Extension Development Officer (AEDO)
52	Mphande, Linda	Blantyre District Agriculture Development Division	District Agriculture Development Officer
53	Mpulula, Reuben	Revonia Agro dealers	Agro-dealer
54	Mpumila, Elias	Emmanuel Investments	Agro-dealer for the FAO Input trade fair
55	Mwale, Mathew	Total Land Care SCRCC	Field Coordinator
56	Mwamlima, Rhodrick	CADECOM Chikwawa	Director
57	Natani, Time	Sante, Kasungu District Agriculture Development Division	Agriculture Extension Development Coordinator (AEDC)
58	Ngwira, Sam	Blantyre District Agriculture Development Division	Crop Protection Officer
59	Okoth, James	FAO-Malawi	Programme Officer
60	Phiri, Nixon	Lirangwe EPA, Blantyre	Agricultural Extension Development Officer (AEDO)

61	Salera, Catherine	Phalombe Agro dealer Association	Agro-dealer for the FAO Input trade fair
61	Simkoko, Edwin	Malawi Agric-Extension: Luwerezzi EPA, Mzimba District	Agricultural Extension Development Officer (AEDO)
62	Soko, Yohane	FAO-Malawi	M & E Officer
63	Twaibu, Nathaniel	Chididi section, Neno EPA	Agricultural Extension Development Officer (AEDO)
64	Zimba, Lerwick	Kasungu District Agriculture Development Division	Agriculture Officer
Zimbabwe Meetings			
65	Chimwe, Philmon Luke	FAO	Farm Manager- Mugwendi irrigation scheme
66	Chirigo, Kudakwashe	LEAD, Harare	Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
67	Chitima, Reuben	Chivi-District Ward 29	Former ADA Chairperson
68	Fengu, Lungani	Heifer International, Harare	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager
69	Gabayi, Princess	FAO-Zimbabwe	M&E Officer
70	Hove, Geofry	Gwanda AGRITEX Office	District Agricultural Extension Officer
71	Machiya, Ploudiet	Makoni District Office	Agric. Extension staff
72	Magama, Nhlantila	Chipinge Provincial Office	Provincial Mechanization Engineer
73	Magorimbo, Tawanda	WFP-Zimbabwe	Programmes Officer
74	Magwala, Apolonia	Gwanda District Office	Animal Health inspector
75	Makombe, Mark	Chivi	Senior Animal health Inspector
76	Makovere, Alifex	Mberewanga District Office	District Animal Health Inspector
77	Mamhare, Faro	Mberewanga AGRITEX Office	District Crop and Livestock Production Officer
78	Marwa, Lee	LEAD, Harare	Finance and Administrative Director
79	Masoja, Peter	Bulilima District Office	District Crop and Livestock Production Officer
80	Mawandi, Patience	Chivi-Ward 10	Agric. Extension staff
81	Mboko, Jennifer	Mberengwa District-Chizungu	Extension Staff
82	Mbundue,, A.	Zimbabwe Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement	Chief Livestock Officer
83	Mfote, David	FAO-Zimbabwe	Assistant FAOR (Programme)
84	Mkwakwami, Musabani	Chipinge Agriculture Technical and Extension Services (AGRITEX)	Chipinge Ward 1 AGRITEX Officer
85	Mkwakwami,, Evan M.	Chipinge District Office	Agric. Extension staff
86	Mukorera, Rodreck	DFID Zimbabwe	Livelihoods- DFID
87	Mwanasawani, Aaron	Chipinge Provincial Office	Provincial Mechanization Technician
88	Mwanyiso, Lusya	LEAD Lupane	Programme Manager
89	Ngindi, Austin	Practical Action	District Supervisor
90	Nhau, Brighton	FAO-Zimbabwe	M&E Officer
91	Pepukai, Constance	FAO-Zimbabwe	Programme Coordination Specialist
92	Sibanda, Kevin	Bulilima District Office	Animal Health Inspector
93	Sibanda, Nkosinath	Gwanda District ADA	Administrator, Gwanda District ADA

94	Sundawo, Issac	Chivi District Office	District Water and Sanitation Subcommittee Chair
95	Takaindisa, Eliot	LEAD, Harare	Chief Executive Officer
96	Takawira, Delilah	FAO-Zimbabwe	Nutrition and Food Safety Officer
97	Ute, Daniel	FAO-Zimbabwe	Irrigation Agronomist
98	Zibani, Tonnie	Practical Action	Gender Advisor
99	Zinyoro, Thomas Garikai	Heifer International, Harare	Program Manager

Appendix 3. Lessons from other previous evaluations and reviews: common highlights

1. Following the 2016/17 El Niño response in Southern Africa, a number of organizations carried out internal reviews and evaluations to report and learn from the response. At the inception workshop for the FAO El Niño evaluation (June 2018), a broad group of stakeholders comprising staff from SADC, RIASCO Agencies, Government, FAO and implementing partners from Lesotho, Malawi, and Zimbabwe indicated that it will be useful to have a synthesis of the key messages from a range of these evaluations. This appendix presents the key messages emanating from previous evaluations, reviews and stocktaking exercises. The purpose of the synthesis is to ensure the optimization of learning from across the documents and extract evidence-based key messages. In view of the new El Niño response being planned for 2018/19, these key messages will be of particular interest for decision makers in various capacities (governments at central and subnational level, SADC, United Nations agencies, NGOs, donors and technical partners). A video presenting the key messages will also be published on the website of the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED). The evaluations and reviews used for the synthesis are:
 - i. Review of the SADC Response to the El Niño Induced Drought Emergency in Southern Africa (2017).
 - ii. RIASCO Action Plan for Southern Africa: review of the regional response plan for the El Niño-induced drought in Southern Africa (2017).
 - iii. Review of FAO response to 2015/16 El Niño Drought in Southern Africa (2018).
 - iv. WFP After Action Learning Presentation (2017).
 - v. UNICEF: rapid internal stock-taking of UNICEF response to the 2015-2016 Southern Africa El Niño induced drought (2017).
 - vi. USAID Food for Peace El Niño Response After-Action Learning Event Report (2017).
 - vii. CERF: Independent Review of the valued added of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in the Countries Affected by El Niño 2018 (Southern Africa cases).
2. Below are the key messages clustered into common themes:
 - i. **Availability and effectiveness of early warning systems and disaster risk management for decision-making:** The reviews and evaluations concurred that while agro-meteorological and early warning information was available, it was not used effectively to inform decision makers and trigger early action. This was the case for Governments, United Nations and other organizations. Decentralized disaster response mechanisms were more effective than centralized ones as decisions were made closer to areas of need.
 - ii. **Data collection, needs assessments and use of information:** Most sectors and countries lacked real-time and in-depth assessment data, real-time monitoring and established triggers for response. Some data was provided by development agencies but there was low collaboration between the SADC Secretariat and SADC member countries. SADC Secretariat was not seen as playing the think-tank and coordination role expected by SADC member countries.

- iii. **Emergency declarations, preparedness and surge:** Regional response plans and appeals were effective. The SADC declaration and coordination of the response plan was deemed positive, as was the support for RIASCO, through its Action Plan. At country government level, there was high variance in the timings of emergency declarations: Lesotho was the first to declare an emergency in December 2015 while the last one was Madagascar in August 2016. United Nations Agencies were able to activate internal surge capacity and support at the regional level even though some challenges were present at the country office level, especially where there was weak capacity or when it took time to mobilize staff from other countries or levels from within the organizations. The early launch of the RIASCO Action Plan formed the basis for the United Nations agencies (FAO, OCHA, UNDP, UNICEF and WFP) and NGOs to collectively scale-up actions and avert risks, including stabilizing food security through in-kind and cash-based approaches while looking at the economic impact and longer term mitigation solutions.
- iv. **Strategic plans and programmes, and the humanitarian and development nexus:** All the review and evaluation reports highlighted the fact that short-term emergency response by itself is not enough to address drought response but needed to be combined with recovery, resilience building and development interventions. This includes a focus on the development of national policies and strategies, capacity development, disaster risk management and supporting fiscal instruments. Some key elements of the response included: i) expanded and strengthened social safety nets; ii) the use of cash based programming or input trade fairs whenever the national and local systems can support them; iii) expanding or making flexible use of existing development programmes to support additional needs and/or refocusing activities – through crisis modifiers; iv) longer term focus on climate-smart agriculture, access to natural resources, education and building back better for more durable solutions (a good practice example from the UNICEF evaluation was the establishment of sustainable water systems instead of water trucking).
- v. **Leadership, national institutional capacity and coordination mechanism:** A massive humanitarian crisis was averted through early consensus on the scale of the crisis, engagement with donors, concerted response among partners, including the launch of the regional SADC Humanitarian Appeal. The variable levels of effectiveness at the country level were linked to the existence and full establishment of disaster risk management agencies and their level of maturity. There were delays surrounding the release of government assessments, quality gaps and a lack of transparency, with some governments politicizing findings and delaying or avoiding disaster declarations. Early warning, contingency planning, response analysis, beneficiary targeting, and logistics around importing and moving commodities were all cited as areas where capacity, or even effective policy, was often lacking. Coordination was identified as a key contribution for effective action at regional, national and subnational levels. Varying degrees of coordination capacity were identified.

 - a. Regional coordination through SADC and with support from RIASCO was found to be effective, and covered most needs. The national central levels had different levels of capacity for leadership and coordination. In most countries, the official government coordination systems have not assumed leadership in coordinating emergency response programmes with some few exceptions. One good example was highlighted in Zimbabwe, where disaster response was coordinated by the

- Office of the President and Cabinet and helped guide the sourcing, transportation and distribution of relief food to affected communities.
- b. Coordination and harmonization issues were highly context specific with each country identifying challenges and successes across a spectrum of implementation concerns such as assessments, targeting, ration sizes, determining cash vs food equivalency and approaches to community asset building.
- vi. **Coverage of needs and beneficiaries:** SADC, with support from humanitarian agencies, managed to mobilize USD 900 million for the provision of immediate relief to the estimated 13.8 million people who required emergency relief. There was a good coverage of needs in terms of livelihoods support, food and nutrition security, agriculture and social protection, with significant use of cash transfers. More than 10.6 million people were reached with food assistance at the peak of the response (January to April 2017). More than 1.6 million drought-affected households were reached with programmes to boost agricultural production.
- vii. **Operational, technical and administrative capacities:** All the reviews and evaluations found that the single agencies had, or were able to establish, sufficient levels of technical and operational capacities to manage the needs of the surge and emergency response activities. National governments were found to have weaker capacities in terms of surge support, emergency response coordination as well as supporting institutions at the subnational levels.
- viii. **Monitoring, evaluation and lessons learning:** There was evidence of improved and systematic monitoring systems being set up at country level. Several countries, including Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe conducted standardized monitoring and assessment of relief and transitions (SMART) surveys to determine the nutritional status of the population affected by El Niño. Some countries (Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe) integrated nutrition, HIV and gender indicators into their vulnerability assessment and analysis (VAA) for the first time. This allowed for improved analysis and decision-making.

Appendix 4. Summary of FAO's review of the 2016/17 El Niño response

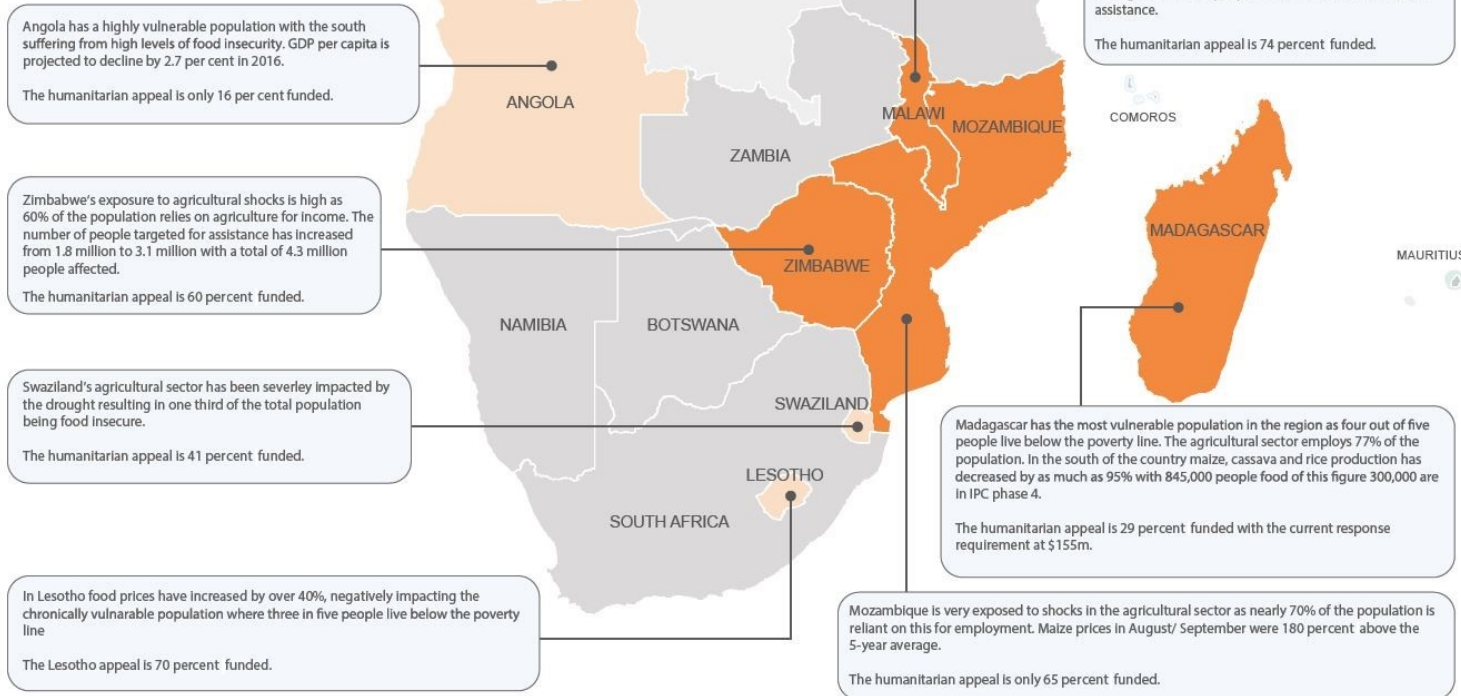
1. This appendix presents the summary of the key findings of the independent review of the FAO 2016/17 El Niño response commissioned by the REOSA and carried out in 2017. The review broadly assessed the timeliness and appropriateness of FAO's preparedness, early and recovery actions; operational and technical support mechanisms and delivery modalities; scope of the resource mobilization actions and how it impacted implementation of the response plan; and relevance and effectiveness of the interventions.
2. The key findings of the review are summarized below:
 - i. Significant progress was made towards strengthening the analysis of food security and nutrition data, national vulnerability assessment, and integration of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC). However lack of data and/or consensus on its reliability delayed the preparation of response plans. There was inadequate reliable data at the country level, specifically there was questionable quality of food security and nutrition data to inform IPC analysis. FAO co-led sector assessments (seed security and livestock) with governments, and enhanced availability of information to inform El Niño drought response interventions.
 - ii. The declaration of the Corporate Surge by FAO triggered full attention and action from all levels (FAO headquarters, FAO Regional Office for Africa, Southern African Resilience Hub, Southern Africa Subregional Office, and country offices). The activated corporate surge however did not fast track the procurement of agricultural inputs as envisaged, as some operation teams tended to adhere to the set FAO procurement procedures and rules. This resulted in significant delays in the procurement of agricultural inputs in Lesotho, Madagascar and Mozambique. Still, the following aspects were highlighted as successful:
 - a. Direct support arrived from headquarters to the country-level through the deployment of operations experts to support processes in FAO representations in Lesotho, Madagascar, Mozambique and Swaziland.
 - b. At the regional level, there was generally fast turn-around time for project proposal clearances by lead technical officers. Demand-driven technical support was provided to countries in areas of proposal development, technical backstopping and assessments. FAO country teams in Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe found the technical support received to be extremely useful.
 - iii. Resource mobilization: The joint missions FAO organized with other United Nations agencies to Lesotho, Malawi and Mozambique increased the awareness of the 2015/16 El Niño impact, enhanced the visibility of FAO's El Niño response plan and influenced resource partners to commit more resources for the response.
 - iv. Capacity constraints of implementing partners, particularly the government structures, ranged from minimal coverage of extension service in Madagascar to limited operational resources such as transport facilities. These limitations prevented them from effectively following up with interventions in Lesotho, Malawi and Mozambique.

Appendix 5. RIASCO prioritization of countries

PRIORITIZATION OF 7 SOUTHERN AFRICA COUNTRIES

Country Prioritization for Southern Africa

- Tier 1 'First priority'
- Tier 2 'Second priority'



Source: RIASCO action plan - adapted from UNITED NATIONS, World Map, February 2019

Annexes

Annex 1. Methodological approach

Annexes available to download at: <http://www.fao.org/evaluation/en/>

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