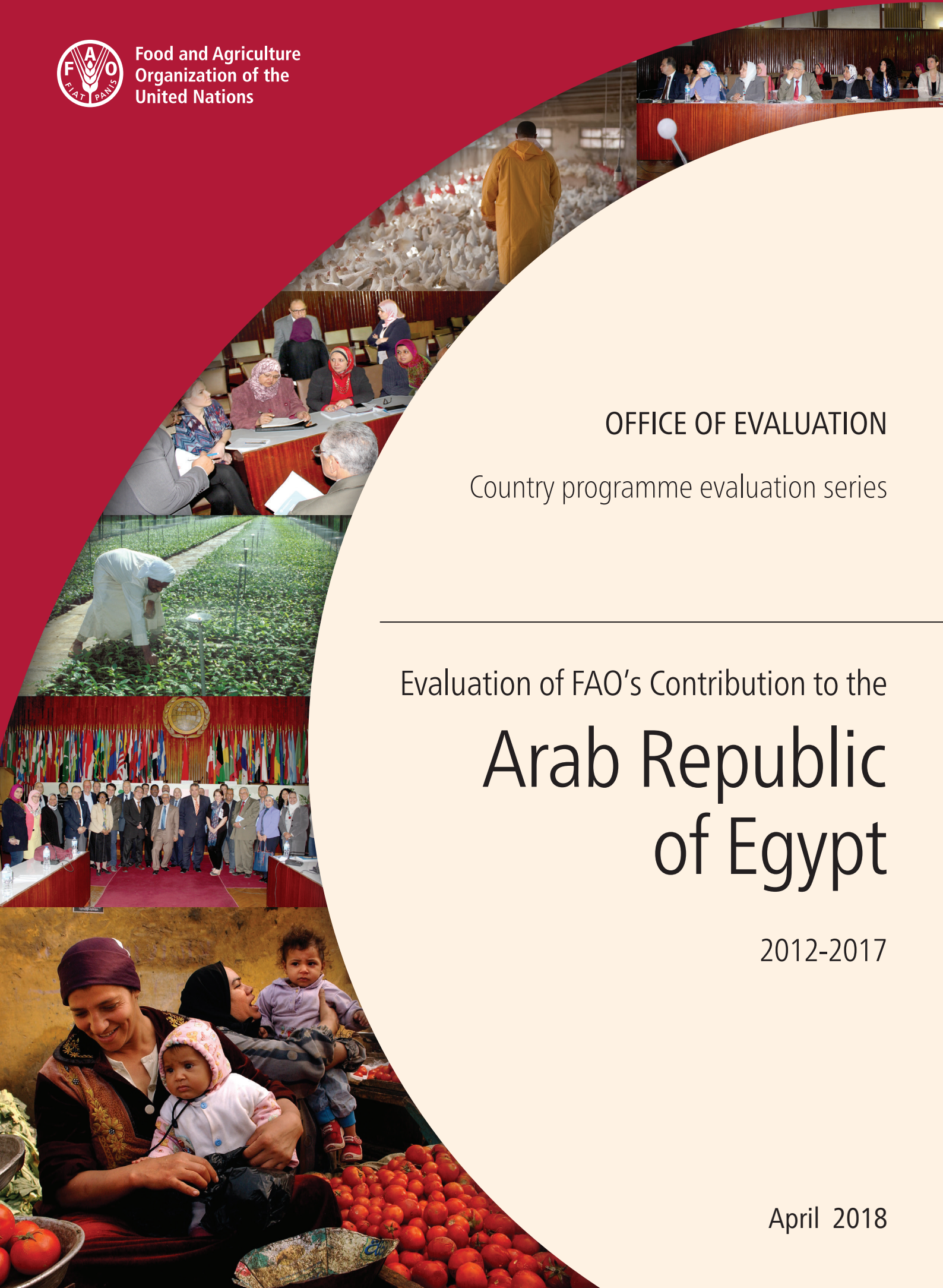




Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



OFFICE OF EVALUATION

Country programme evaluation series

Evaluation of FAO's Contribution to the

Arab Republic of Egypt

2012-2017

April 2018

COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION SERIES

**Evaluation of FAO's Contribution to the
Arab Republic of Egypt
2012-2017**

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

April 2018

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Office of Evaluation (OED)

This report is available in electronic format at: <http://www.fao.org/evaluation>

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The mention of specific companies or products of manufacturers, whether or not these have been patented, does not imply that these have been endorsed or recommended by FAO in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned. The views expressed in this information product are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of FAO.

© FAO 2018

FAO encourages the use, reproduction and dissemination of material in this information product. Except where otherwise indicated, material may be copied, downloaded and printed for private study, research and teaching purposes, or for use in non-commercial products or services, provided that appropriate acknowledgement of FAO as the source and copyright holder is given and that FAO's endorsement of users' views, products or services is not implied in any way.

All requests for translation and adaptation rights, and for resale and other commercial use rights should be made via www.fao.org/contact-us/licence-request or addressed to copyright@fao.org.

For further information on this report, please contact:

Director, Office of Evaluation (OED)
Food and Agriculture Organization
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 1, 00153 Rome
Italy
Email: evaluation@fao.org

Cover photo credits (top to bottom): ©FAO/Mohamed Moussa, FAO-RNE (1st, 3rd and 5th pictures), ©FAO/Giulio Napolitano (2nd picture), ©FAO/Rosetta Messori (4th picture), ©FAO/Ami Vitale (6th picture)

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	v
<i>Acronyms and abbreviations</i>	vi
Executive summary	1
1. Introduction	6
1.1 Purpose.....	6
1.2 Scope.....	6
1.3 Objectives and questions	6
1.4 Methodology.....	7
1.4.1 Evaluation questions.....	7
Evaluation Questions.....	7
1.4.2 Methods and sources.....	8
1.4.3 Evaluation process and team	9
1.5 Limitations	10
1.6 Structure of the report	10
2. Context	11
2.1 General overview of the Arab Republic of Egypt.....	11
2.1.1 National institutions.....	12
2.1.2 Development partners in agriculture sector.....	13
2.2 FAO in the Arab Republic of Egypt	14
2.2.1 The Country Office	14
2.2.2 Overview of FAO's field programme	14
3. Assessment of FAO's strategic positioning in the Arab Republic of Egypt	19
3.1 Strategic relevance	19
3.2 Partnership and coordination	24
3.3 Normative values	28
3.4 Comparative advantage	30
4. Assessment of FAO's Contribution	32
4.2 Effectiveness and impact	36
4.2 Sustainability of results	38
4.3 Coherence and synergies	40
5. Conclusions and recommendations	41
5.1 Conclusions.....	41
5.2 Recommendations	42
6. Appendices	44
Appendix 1. Evaluation matrix.....	44
Appendix 2. List of people interviewed	48
Appendix 3. List of documents consulted	51
7. List of Annexes	52

Figures and Tables

Figures

Figure 1: Geographical coverage of the Egypt portfolio	16
Figure 2: Distribution of FAO's active portfolio in Egypt by sector.....	16
Figure 3: Percentage of funding by donor	17
Figure 4: Portfolio distribution per Strategic Objective based on budget allocation	22

Tables

Table 1: CPF priority areas, outcomes and outputs.....	15
--	----

Acknowledgements

The FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) would like to thank all those who contributed to this evaluation. The evaluation was led by Ms Arwa Khalid, Evaluation Officer; and Mr Ahmedou OuldAbdallahi, Evaluation Associate Manager. The team consisted of Ms Arine Valstar, Nutrition Expert; Mr Salah Shazali, Rural Development and Gender Expert; Mr Walid Gaddas, Value Chain Expert; and Mr Ossama Salim, Policy, Institutions and Water Resource Management.

The Office of Evaluation (OED) would like to extend their special thanks to the staff of the FAO Office in the Arab Republic of Egypt for their support, in particular the leadership of Mr Hussein Gadain, FAO Representative. The Office would also like to thank the participating Government staff at national, governorate and district levels, who supported the evaluation team in building an understanding of the CPE in informing the assessments and in developing recommendations for the future.

Special thanks go to men and women farmers who took the time to talk with the evaluation team and supported the triangulation of evidence.

The Office of Evaluation (OED) also expresses their appreciation to UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative, UN agencies, donors, NGOs and private sector who gave their time to provide information to support the evaluation.

Many FAO staff at headquarters and the Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (RNE) supported the evaluation process, sharing material and information and taking the time for interviews.

The Office of Evaluation (OED) is also grateful for all the logistics and administrative support provided by Ms Sarah Jaff and Mr Martin Corredoira.

Acronyms and abbreviations

CPE	Country Programme Evaluation
CPF	Country Programming Framework
ECTAD	Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
TCP	Technical Cooperation Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive summary

Introduction

- 1 The Office of Evaluation (OED) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, (FAO) is conducting a series of Country Programme Evaluations (CPEs). The main purpose of the CPEs is to better orient FAO's Programme to the specific needs of the country and make the best of use of FAO's comparative advantages. Furthermore, the CPEs aim to enhance the impact of FAO's contributions at the country level to achieve the Global Goals of its members, namely: i) the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; ii) the elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all; and iii) the sustainable management and utilization of natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations.
- 2 This evaluation represents the first comprehensive, independent evaluation of the Organization Country Programme in the Arab Republic of Egypt between 2012 and 2017. The evaluation was conducted at the request of the FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (RNE), with the endorsement of the FAO Representative.

Purpose

- 3 The purpose of the evaluation is to provide inputs to the FAO Country Office and the Government of Egypt to better orient FAO's approach, strategy and programme in Egypt, and to align FAO's approach with the needs of the country. The evaluation supports FAO's accountability to the Government and non-government partners, communities and resource partners in the country, as well as all member countries, by assessing FAO's contribution to Egypt's achievement of its development goals. It will also draw lessons and make recommendations for FAO's future engagement in the country.
- 4 The evaluation provides advice to FAO management and staff at the national, regional and headquarters levels on how to improve the impact and relevance of the Egypt Programme. Further users of the evaluation will be FAO partners within the broader development community, including resource partners, Egypt agricultural producers and private sector stakeholders, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other United Nations agencies, in particular those with whom strategic collaboration was undertaken in the country. The evaluation also identifies potential areas for the next Country Programme Framework (CPF) 2018-2022 in line with FAO's comparative advantages.

Key findings

- 5 **Strategic relevance:** For the period between 2012 and 2017, FAO's Programme contributed to government priorities of the Sustainable Agriculture Development Strategy towards 2030 and its action plan, with the exception of a good prospect for the Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) and the Reform of the Law Governing Agricultural Cooperatives; FAO's contribution to the institutional, regulatory and policy challenges was less evident in most interventions.
- 6 **Partnership and coordination:** Even though the CPF formulation process missed out on the inclusion of wider strategic stakeholders and remained confined to the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation and its relevant institutions, there was no explicit reference to the FAO Strategic Objectives nor adequate consideration of gender dimension. FAO's collaboration remained strong and varied in its support across the many interventions implemented during the assessed period.
- 7 **Comparative advantages of FAO:** FAO's contribution to the agricultural development in Egypt is widely acknowledged by its stakeholders and partners, including multilateral organizations and bilateral donors. Recognition and appreciation were reiterated by bodies within the Ministries of Agriculture, Water and Environment as well as civil society.

Comparative advantage is generally said to stem from FAO's status as honest broker, its knowledge base and its capacity to transfer good practices and experiences from elsewhere.

- 8 **Normative work:** FAO's Programme has perused gender equality objectives as a sector, where the exclusive focus in the project/intervention is on women, as in the case with the Nutrition Project. Likewise, the partnership with the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) on grey water targets housewives. However, in the predominantly technical interventions FAO in Egypt has generally neglected gender equality objectives as a cross-cutting issue.
- 9 It is worth noting that in the Nutrition Project, women and youth are specifically targeted. Although, the sociocultural context in Upper Egypt constrained FAO in organizing mixed groups of participants in the Farm Schools and Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools. Nevertheless, the project did take the initiative to disseminate good agricultural practices. It established a Farm and Life School for women in one village where men have all abandoned farming and sought employment elsewhere.
- 10 **Programme contributions:** Due to challenges in CPF implementation during the post-revolution instability period which halted progress on many fronts as well as subsequent constraints on resource mobilization, FAO's Programme in Egypt largely consisted of small projects with limited contributions to the expected CPF results. Nevertheless, FAO's Programme did contribute to some noted achievements. The exceptions are the relatively large Nutrition Project and ECTAD, in the case of which project identification and formulation, as well as resource mobilization for implementation, related to the pre-revolution period. Satisfactory results were achieved under the two projects on food loss and waste and value chains. A noted result was achieved by the project on date cultivation in Siwa Oasis, which has declared the production system in the Oasis as a Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System and will effectively support the small-scale family farming.
- 11 **Programme contributions:** Most of FAO's projects under evaluation were largely technical pilot projects. This is true of the Technical Cooperation Projects launched by the Country Office as well as the three Regional Initiatives. In terms of planning and design, the projects were undoubtedly appropriate to contribute to the four CPF Priority Areas; however the limited upscaling efforts undermines the sustainability of these results, which made FAO's contribution to food security limited in scope and coverage.
- 12 **Programme contributions:** FAO's Programme in Egypt has actively engaged national government institutions in the design and implementation of the interventions, but has a limited involvement of the farmers and civil society who remain to be passive recipients of benefits.
- 13 **Programme contributions:** The focus of FAO's technical support to the Government has mainly been on the capacity building of individuals. There are, however, few interventions which contributed to capacity development at three levels (individual, institutional and enabling environment) such as ECTAD, Reform of the Cooperatives Law and the Capacity Enhancement to the Food Security Policy Advisory Board projects.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1. Overall, FAO's Programme in Egypt is well aligned with the country priorities for the agriculture and rural development sector. The project portfolio was aligned with the FAO Strategic Framework.

- 14 The CPF under evaluation was found to be relevant and aligned with national strategies and priorities, particularly those of the Ministry of Agriculture. It is also important to note that, historically, FAO has supported the Ministry in the formulation of its strategies, including the current Sustainable Agriculture Development Strategy towards 2030.

- 15 With that being said, a missed opportunity for the FAO Programme is the partnership with and support to the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation at policy and strategy levels. In May 2017, the Ministry of Water launched its new strategy for which support was extended by the European Union with no involvement of FAO in the formulation process.
- 16 With regard to FAO priorities, the CPF formulation predated the adoption of the current Strategic Framework (2013-2019), but all FAO projects were found to be well aligned to at least one Strategic Objective.
- 17 Nevertheless, it is apparent that the preparation of the evaluated CPF did not follow a results-based management approach. The FAO Country Office in Egypt lacks a position of Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, though support of a short-term consultant was recruited under the Nutrition Project to support the Programme as a whole. The type of monitoring carried out at the Regional Office (focusing on FAO Strategic Objectives) does not meet the needs of the Programme in Egypt.

Conclusion 2. FAO Egypt did not succeed in raising sufficient funding for implementation of the CPF. Except for the ECTAD and Nutrition Projects in which design and resource mobilization predated CPF formulation, virtually all other projects in the period under review comprised small TCPs.

- 18 A major challenge faced by FAO in Egypt was engagement in substantial resource mobilization in order to launch projects of relatively large scope covering effectively the CPF Priority Areas and capable of achieving their expected results.
- 19 Most, if not all FAO Programme pilot projects seem to have successfully demonstrated the relevance and feasibility of their respective innovative approaches. The dispersion of the projects, however, seems to have compromised the overall impact, effectiveness and visibility of the programme in the country.
- 20 Ineffective resource mobilization efforts might have been partly due to the absence during that time of a full-time dedicated FAO Representative. The more important factor, however, was uncertainties surrounding the political transition in the country that affected response by prospective sources of funding.
- 21 It is worth noting, however, that since the appointment of a fully dedicated FAO Representative the Country Office has been able to mobilize extra-budgetary funds for a number of new interventions notably from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the European Union. This new development is likely to have a positive impact on the future of FAO's Programme in Egypt.

Conclusion 3. FAO's Programme in Egypt mainly focused on technical issues and neglected other important priorities such as gender mainstreaming, poverty reduction and to some extent policy advice. Equally the programme did not invest effectively in engaging the private sector.

- 22 Although most of the projects' documents refer to the FAO priority and policy relating to gender mainstreaming, these projects did not conduct adequate gender analysis during the design phase nor did they include gender-related activities during implementation.
- 23 Technical staff, both in the Country and Regional Offices, evidently lacked capacity on gender mainstreaming, which is viewed as the responsibility of the Country Focal Point and the Regional Gender Officer.
- 24 Furthermore, progress against the key priority of poverty reduction seems to have been compromised by the lack of diligent and careful targeting.

- 25 The FAO Programme limited engagement of beneficiary communities in project design, particularly their poor and vulnerable members, reveals a heavy top-down approach. These beneficiaries are generally accorded a status of passive recipients whose priorities, needs and interest are better known to the sophisticated technical experts at FAO and partner ministries. The lack of a position of Social Development Officer in the Regional Office, which would support the Country Office, contributed to this shortcoming in substantive stakeholder involvement and participation as well as to the inadequate capacity to integrate social and gender issues in technical projects.
- 26 Similarly, the FAO Programme did not engage actively with the private sector whose role is relevant to many of the technical projects launched by FAO in Egypt. For instance, the role of the private sector is evident in the case of ECTAD projects, where private farms produce the bulk of poultry in the country and their observance of biosecurity practices is imperative in FAO/General Organization for Veterinary Services collaboration to contain and eradicate Avian Flu.
- 27 Furthermore, the two projects on food loss and waste on food value chains are ostensibly aimed to support the private sector. But when training was carried out, only a small number of the beneficiaries were from the private sector. The projects have viewed the sector as passive recipient of information and knowledge generated by assessment of the selected value chains. In short, substantive partnership between FAO and the private sector has a long way to materialize.

Conclusion 4. The technical assistance component of the FAO Programme was characterized by a traditional and limited approach to capacity development as the latter was reduced mainly to training of individuals, instead of institutional strengthening and policy development.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. In formulating future CPFs, FAO Egypt needs to ensure inclusive consultation process to engage all relevant government institutions, the private sector and civil society. The CPF design process should be accompanied by the development of sound resource mobilization strategy, focusing on key priority areas and strategic interventions based on lessons learned from the previous cycle.

28 Suggested actions:

- the new CPF should embrace the government identified priorities relating to food security and nutrition, agriculture diversification, water resources management, and plant and animal health. Resources permitting, the next country programmes could devote greater attention to value chain development;
- the CPF has to link to the country Sustainable Development Plan;
- project design would benefit from greater consultation among stakeholders and clearer segregation of duties.

Recommendation 2. FAO Egypt should apply an inclusive approach in responding to the Government of Egypt's requests related to the 1.5 Million Feddan, or REEF Programme, taking into account importance and future implications of this Programme in Egypt.

29 Suggested actions:

- establishment of a working group composed of members from all the Strategic Programme teams to ensure inclusiveness and strategic positioning of the FAO response.

Recommendation 3. The FAO Country Office needs to strengthen its results-based management capacities and practices to enhance programme design, monitoring and reporting and effective use of lessons learned. Similarly, the Country Office needs to improve the visibility of the programme during the formulation and implementation phases.

30 Suggested actions:

- expand the scope of the work of staff recruited through individual projects to oversee related functions in the programme as a whole. The current Communication Officer in ECTAD unit is one example to oversee the communication function of the programme;
- hire a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer to set-up a system that would capitalize on past experiences and generate lessons learned for enhancing the formulation and design of future interventions;
- secure necessary support from relevant headquarters and regional officers for the CPF formulation process.

Recommendation 4. FAO needs to build capacity among technical staff on the integration of social development and gender mainstreaming issues.

31 Suggested actions:

- providing capacity building particularly in the international policy of social development and gender mainstreaming for the entire FAO Country Team in Egypt as well as staff of partners partaking in the implementation of projects;
- inclusion of social development and gender analysis in the CPF and project documents, especially those explicitly targeting women.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

- 1 The Office of Evaluation (OED) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is conducting a series of Country Programme Evaluations (CPEs). Following consultations with FAO staff in the Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (RNE), it was decided to undertake an evaluation of FAO's Programme in the Arab Republic of Egypt in 2016-2017. The main purpose of the evaluation is to better orient FAO's Programme to the specific needs of the country and make the best use of FAO's comparative advantages. Furthermore, the evaluation aims to enhance understanding and awareness of FAO's contributions under the Country Programming Framework (CPF).
- 2 The evaluation is intended to provide accountability to the Government and non-government partners, communities and resource partners in the country, as well as all member countries. It aims to draw lessons and recommendations that would be useful for FAO's future engagement in the country. In addition, the evaluation will enrich FAO's synthesis of findings and guidance for its country level support.
- 3 The main audience for the evaluation include the FAO Representative in Egypt, the Country Office staff and the Government of Egypt. Other important users of the evaluation are the Regional and Subregional Offices and FAO as a whole, including divisions in headquarters and other country offices that will benefit and build on lessons learned and good practices. Further users of the evaluation will be FAO partners within the broader development community, including resource partners, Egypt agricultural producers and private sector stakeholders, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other United Nations agencies, in particular those with whom strategic collaboration was undertaken in the country.

1.2 Scope

- 4 This evaluation examines FAO's contribution to Egypt's development for the period between 2012 and 2017, with a focus on results and outcomes (anticipated, unanticipated, positive, negative, intentional and unintentional), sustainability and potential impacts. This includes activities funded through the regular programme as well as extra-budgetary resources; national, regional and global projects and initiatives; emergency and development interventions.
- 5 The detailed Terms of Reference are provided in Annex 1 and formulated based on discussions held with a wide range of partners. Focus was placed on evaluating the programme and priority areas through the lens of individual projects.

1.3 Objectives and questions

- 6 The main objective of this evaluation is to assess FAO's overall contribution at two levels. The first level relates to the assessment of the relevance of the programme to the national needs and priorities of Egypt, as well as the extent to which the programme contributed to development changes in the four priority areas defined in the CPF: i) agricultural information generation, sharing and dissemination; ii) improving productivity and efficiency in the agricultural sector; iii) sustaining rural community development; and iv) conserving natural resources and adapting to climate change. At this level, the evaluation seeks to draw lessons and present recommendations to strengthen future performance and enhance impact.
- 7 The other level concerns contribution made by the programme towards the achievements of FAO's Strategic Objectives and Core Functions (Annex 3). Such assessment is expected to highlight the manner in which Strategic Objectives and Core Functions are integrated in the programme. The contributions provided by FAO as part of its core functions, which by their nature are often not necessarily delivered as part of specific projects, will also be covered

by this evaluation. These include the areas of analysing, monitoring and improving access to data and information; policy dialogue; capacity development to prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate evidence-based policies, investments and programmes; assembling, disseminating and improving the uptake of knowledge, technologies and good practices; coordination; partnership; advocacy and communication.

1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 Evaluation questions

- 8 Two overarching evaluation questions were developed to guide the assessment:
- **Is FAO's Programme in Egypt doing the right thing?** Under this question, the evaluation seeks to establish the broad relevance of FAO as a development actor, locally and regionally; which particular projects position FAO strategically; and the coherence of its programme with local needs. Internally, it seeks to examine the links between experiences accruing at project levels and at the strategic and policy levels.
 - **What difference has FAO's Programme made to agricultural and rural development and food security in the Arab Republic of Egypt?** Under this question, the evaluation assesses the results of FAO's Programme including its contribution to gender mainstreaming in the country.
- 9 Under each overarching question, a number of evaluation questions were formulated and contextualized according to the sector, type of activities/projects, and stakeholders. To inform these questions, the evaluation team developed the evaluation matrix with a set of sub-evaluation questions and the relevant method to be used (see Appendix 1) during the preparatory meetings of the main evaluation mission. This matrix applies the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact to assess FAO's assistance in Egypt.

Evaluation Questions

Is FAO's Programme in Egypt doing the right thing?

Strategic relevance

To what extent is FAO's Programme aligned with relevant national development plans, strategies and policies? Are there any gaps or missed opportunities?

To what extent is FAO's Programme in line with, and supportive to, FAO's Strategic Framework?

To what extent has the CPF formulation benefitted from poverty and gender analysis?

To what extent is FAO's programme targeting the neediest?

Partnership and coordination

How does FAO engage in (national, regional and international) partnerships and to what extent were these partnerships complementary and synergetic?

To what extent has FAO supported the coordination of actors working in the agricultural development, and food security and nutrition sectors?

To what extent has FAO influenced the positions and decisions of partners in relation to agricultural and rural development, and food and nutrition security sectors?

Normative values

To what extent has FAO's Programme effectively taken into consideration gender equality objectives?

To what extent has FAO's Programme effectively taken into consideration decent employment (e.g. combatting child labour in agriculture)? How has FAO's Programme promoted youth employment?

To what extent has FAO's Programme effectively taken into consideration environmental sustainability?

Comparative advantage

What has been the added value of FAO in Egypt? How were FAO's comparative advantages perceived by the national and international counterparts?

What difference has FAO's Programme made to agricultural and rural development and food security in the Arab Republic of Egypt?

For each CPF Priority Area:

How appropriate have FAO's activities been to achieve the planned CPF outcome?

How do ultimate beneficiaries engage in the process of project identification and formulation?

How has FAO's Programme benefited the poorest and most vulnerable households and responded to their needs, including women and youth?

To what extent have FAO's capacity development activities addressed the national needs (at individual, institutional and policy levels)?

Overall impact and effectiveness

Have the expected results of the CPF been achieved between 2012 and 2017?

What changes and impacts at sectoral level did FAO bring about that would not have resulted in its absence?

Sustainability of results

To what extent were sustainability considerations (economical, environmental) taken into account in the design and implementation of FAO's Programme/interventions?

What are the prospects of sustaining FAO's Programmes/interventions' results?

To what extent has the knowledge generated by FAO's Programme (including success stories and good practices) been disseminated to partners and other FAO projects and programmes, upscaled and/or replicated?

Coherence and synergies

To what extent has the Country Office been leveraging on the capacities available within FAO (e.g. Regional Office and Strategic Programme teams) to respond to the country needs?

To what extent has FAO's knowledge base (normative products, guidelines, publications, etc.) been used by the programme?

What has been the contribution by FAO headquarters and Regional Office to the programme, particularly in terms of technical and operational support?

1.4.2 Methods and sources

- 10 The evaluation followed the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards¹ (UNEG) as well as ethical guidelines and was in line with the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) Manual and methodological guidelines and practices.
- 11 Through stakeholder mapping carried out with the support from the Country Office, the team identified key informants best suited to respond to each question. Sources of information included internal and external stakeholders at the central, provincial and district levels as well as secondary sources. In addition, the evaluation team carried out a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis of the CPF.
- 12 To answer the first overarching evaluation question: ***"Is FAO's Programme in Egypt doing the right thing?"***, the team started by investigating the extent to which FAO's Programme in Egypt was based on a preliminary assessment of the needs of key stakeholders, including senior Government officials, FAO management and development partners. It sought to identify the nature and magnitude of the assessed needs, and whether the programme has effectively responded to them. To gather information related to this question the team reviewed relevant documents (projects documents, progress reports, related national policies and strategies, etc.) and conducted semi-structured interviews.
- 13 To answer the second overarching evaluation question: ***"What difference has FAO's Programme made to agricultural and rural development, and food security in the Arab Republic of Egypt?"***, the evaluation focused on four sectors: water and irrigation, food loss and waste, food security and nutrition, and livestock and animal health. The team consisted of technical specialist who conducted in-depth analysis to assess the results of FAO's work

1 <http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/21>

in these four areas.² Considering that the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) is conducting an in-depth study on food waste and loss in Egypt under the Strategic Objective 4 evaluation,³ it was agreed to leverage on the external expertise employed by Strategic Objective 4 to answer the evaluation questions related to this sector.

- 14 In addition, group discussions targeting different stakeholders, including youth, women and civil society were organized to identify issues, lessons learned and potential areas for future interventions. Information from different sources was validated through triangulation.
- 15 The assessment covered the positive, negative, intended and unintended changes induced by FAO's activities, including evaluation of their impact on strengthening the sector towards improving the livelihoods of smallholder farmers, young farmers, women, and communities in particular. Three governorates were selected for field visits based on their poverty profiles, relevance to the programme and geographical distribution.
- 16 In answering the remaining evaluation questions, the evaluation adopted a consultative approach, seeking and sharing opinions with stakeholders at different stages throughout the process. Different sources were used to verify information. Triangulation of information across stakeholders was a key approach for validating evidence.
- 17 Interviews took place with:
 - FAO staff at headquarters, Regional Office and Country Office (this includes FAO consultants, gender officer, regional initiatives and strategic programme focal points, project and programme personnel);
 - the current representative from the World Food Programme (WFP), *Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), Italian Cooperation for Development, World Bank, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and a representative from the European Union;
 - government officials and technical experts in the country (at the centralized and decentralized levels), including presidents of the Agriculture Research Center, Desert Research Centre and Director of International Foreign Relations, Minister's Advisers and extension officers in Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, officials from animal health departments /General Organization for Veterinary Services, Deputy Minister of Supply and Internal Trade and his advisers and officials from the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation;
 - beneficiaries of FAO programmes (women's groups, farmer groups, backyard farmers, animal farmers, cooperatives in various localities);
 - representatives from civil society and the private sector.
- 18 Emphasis was placed on assessing FAO's contributions to capacity development, gender mainstreaming and coordination. The definition adopted in FAO's Capacity Development Corporate Strategy (2009), based on the enhanced capacities across three dimensions (individual, organizational and enabling environment) constituted an important analytical framework for this evaluation.

1.4.3 Evaluation process and team

- 19 The preparatory phase of the evaluation was begun by scoping interviews with some of FAO staff at headquarters in Rome. It was followed by an inception mission to Cairo, which was conducted in December 2016 by two staff members from the Office of Evaluation (OED), the Evaluation Manager and Associate Manager and the rural development consultant. The entire evaluation team subsequently met in Cairo for a three-day preparatory meeting before launching the main evaluation mission in the period between March and April 2017. The team conducted field visits to three governorates to meet the local

2 The assessment included a forward-looking question to respond to the demands of the new phase of the agriculture sector development programme.

3 Evaluation of Strategic Objective 4 is currently being conducted by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED).

administration and direct beneficiaries of FAO projects. The evaluation team consisted of the Evaluation Manager, the Associate Evaluation Manager, independent Lead Consultant (focusing on rural development and cross-cutting issues of gender, social inclusion, and targeting and poverty reduction) with three consultants/subject matter specialists (water and irrigated agriculture, policy, nutrition and food security, food loss and waste, and the Evaluation Manager covered the work relating to livestock). The team members were responsible for collecting data and analysing evidence to develop findings, conclusions and recommendations under their respective areas of responsibility, but team discussions were held regularly to identify common issues and future potentials in the cooperation programme.

1.5 Limitations

- 20 The evaluation faced a number of challenges; however, the main stemmed from limitations in the design of the CPF which did not include baseline data, clear expected results (outcomes and outputs), milestones, and lacked gender analysis. Due to these limitations, it was difficult to evaluate with any precision the extent to which the individual projects in FAO Programme have contributed to the achievement of anticipated CPF results. CPF results were rather general, ambitious and at times unrealistic altogether. The evaluation team had to devise appropriate qualitative ways to address the challenge, including carefully comparing and triangulating of stakeholder perceptions, observations and programme activity reports in order to draw conclusions regarding the achievements of the cooperation in country.

1.6 Structure of the report

- 21 The report is largely structured according to the current template employed by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED). The template was slightly adapted to respond to the evaluation Terms of Reference. For ease of reading, the major evaluation questions are included in the text to provide guidance. The report starts with Chapter 1 (Introduction), which provides a brief overview of the purpose, objectives and the methodology of the Country Programme Evaluation. Chapter 2 (Context) highlights key development issues in Egypt and presents an overview of the Country Programming Framework. Chapter 3 (Strategic positioning) assesses the strategic relevance of ongoing and completed projects against the country context and FAO Strategic Objectives. Chapter 4 (FAO's Programme contributions) reviews the performance of the programme in terms of its effectiveness. Chapter 5 (Conclusions and recommendations) includes the main conclusions of the evaluation, as well as recommendations based on the findings presented in Chapters 3 and 4.

2. Context

2.1 General overview of the Arab Republic of Egypt

- 22 The Arab Republic of Egypt is a transcontinental country spanning the northeast corner of Africa and southwest corner of Asia by a land bridge formed by the Sinai Peninsula. The country covers an area of 1 001 450 km². Due to the extreme aridity of Egypt's climate, population, 96 million inhabitants are concentrated along the narrow Nile Valley and Delta, while 98 percent live on only 3 percent of the territory.⁴
- 23 Egypt is divided into 27 governorates, which include four city governorates (Alexandria, Cairo, Port Said and Suez), nine located in Lower Egypt (in the Nile Delta region), nine in Upper Egypt along the Nile River from Cairo to Aswan, and five frontier governorates covering Sinai and the deserts that lie west and east of the Nile.
- 24 Egypt is a lower middle-income country, its Human Development Index (HDI)⁵ for 2014 was 0.690 — which put the country in the medium human development category — positioning it at 108 out of 188 countries and territories. Between 1980 and 2014, Egypt's HDI rose from 0.453 to 0.690, an increase of 52.3 percent, with an average annual increase of about 1.25 percent. It is noted that between 1980 and 2014 Egypt's life expectancy at birth increased by 12.8 years, and the mean years of schooling increased by 4.5 years. Egypt's gross national income (GNI) per capita increased by about 153.9 percent between 1980 and 2014. Demographic factors and an increase in population of 25 million between 2000 and 2016⁶ have direct effects on projections for the economy and the needs for housing, employment, social infrastructure as well as for the provision of water and other basic services.
- 25 Economic growth reached 3.5 percent in 2017, after four years of slow growth.⁷ The first quarter of FY16 witnessed subdued growth (of 3 percent, from 5.6 percent a year earlier), indicating stifled production. Unemployment inched downwards (to 12.8 percent in the H1-FY15 versus 13.3 percent a year earlier), albeit partially reflecting dropouts from the labour force. The latter participation rate dropped to 46 percent of the adult population (those above 15 years of age) versus 50 percent at end of 2010.
- 26 The economy depends heavily on agriculture, tourism and cash remittances from Egyptians working abroad, mainly in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries. The agricultural sector is the third largest economic sector, but its share in the gross domestic product (GDP) declined from 16 percent in the 1990s to almost 14 percent in 2010 and to 11 percent in 2015. It is estimated that about 24 million Egyptians (or more than one-quarter of the population) work in the farming and fishing industries.
- 27 Historically Egypt has always seen itself as a farming nation. Agriculture development is considered a duty of the state, as recently reaffirmed in the 2014 Constitution. The agriculture sector provides livelihoods for 55 percent of the population and directly employs about 30 percent of the labour force.⁸ The sector accounts for about 20 percent of total exports and foreign exchange earnings. However, Egypt imports about 40 percent of its food requirements and incurs a total food import bill of USD 2.5 billion per year.
- 28 During the past years, Egypt has experienced an instable political situation concluded with the adoption of a new constitution by popular referendum in January 2014, and the elections of the President and parliamentarians in May 2014 and December 2015 respectively. The Egyptian political and economic situation is progressively stabilizing.

4 Arab Republic of Egypt Country strategic opportunities programme, IFAD 2012.

5 It is a composite statistic of life expectancy, education and per capita income indicators, which are used to rank countries into four levels of human development.

6 World Bank Population Data.

7 IMF, World Economic Outlook, April 2017.

8 IMF, *Brief: Egypt* (Washington, DC, May 2011).

- 29 Over the last six years, the food security of the population was affected by unemployment (12.5 percent), poverty (28 percent countrywide and 57 percent in rural areas) and relatively high food prices. Egyptians saw their purchasing power decline further in the wake of the revolution.⁹ According to the latest Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) for Egypt (2014), chronic malnutrition or stunting remain high with 21 percent (although apparently down from the peak of 29 percent in 2008), while the highest prevalence since 2000 was recorded for both wasting (8 percent) and underweight (6 percent) in children under the age of five. Children above five suffer considerably more from overweight and obesity than from undernutrition.¹⁰ Egypt is therefore still affected by the double burden of malnutrition: both over- and undernutrition, while micronutrient deficiencies are also prevalent.
- 30 Article 29 of the Egyptians' Constitution¹¹ states that *"The State shall protect and expand agricultural land, and shall criminalize encroachments thereon. It shall develop rural areas; raise the standard of living of their population and protect them from environmental risks; and shall strive to develop agricultural and animal production and encourage industries based thereon"*. It is worth mentioning that a number of articles pointed out the importance of gender issues.

2.1.1 National institutions

- 31 The Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation¹² is the responsible central agency for agricultural development. There are several organizations that affiliate to the Ministry of Agriculture, such as the Agricultural Research Centre, Desert Research Centre, Principal Bank for Development and Agricultural Credit, General Organization for Veterinary Services, General Authority for Fish Resources Development, etc. In addition, there are several central bodies that constitute the institutional framework for agriculture and rural development in Egypt including, but not limited to, the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, the Ministry of Environment, the Organization for the Reconstruction and Development of the Egyptian Village, the Ministry of Health and Population, and the Ministry of Local Development, under which the local administrations and governorates operate. The institutional framework also includes private sector companies that import and manufacture inputs for agricultural production, such as fertilizers; and market agricultural products, such as supermarket chains and exporters. Furthermore, non-governmental organizations, such as Agricultural Cooperatives; and academia and think tanks, such as Faculties of Agriculture, are also involved in the agricultural and rural development of Egypt.
- 32 The Ministry of Agriculture has adopted a strategic planning approach to identify ways and means to continue fostering development of the agricultural sector. The first agricultural development strategy was proposed during the 1980s. By 2006, internal and external factors experienced dramatic shifts in food availability, notably increased food prices that necessitated a revision of the strategy in order to enable the agricultural sector to keep abreast with these changes. Consequently, a decision was taken to develop a new Strategy for Sustainable Agricultural Development towards 2030 to respond to recent global and domestic challenges facing Egyptian agriculture.
- 33 The need to address and incorporate socio-economic considerations assumed high priority during the preparation of the 2030 agriculture strategy in 2009, which prioritize the improvement of farmers and rural household livelihood.
- 34 The Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy towards 2030 is viewed as a live document that sets out a wide array of long-term strategic objectives, addressing dimensions other than the economic one, in the belief that human development also encompasses social and cultural dimensions. An important element of this future vision is a national commitment to promoting economic diversification, away from the heavy reliance on natural resources and particularly through a more sustainable use of water

9 WFP country programme Egypt website. 2 May 2017 - <http://www1.wfp.org/countries/egypt>

10 EDHS 2014, Ministry of Health and Population Cairo, Egypt El-Zanaty and Associates Cairo, Egypt The DHS Program ICF International Rockville, Maryland, USA - <http://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR302/FR302.pdf>

11 The last amended version in 2014.

12 The official abbreviation considered by FAO: <http://www.fao.org/neareast/news/view/en/c/387724/>

resources.¹³ The Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy is implemented through successive short- to medium-term action plans. The first of these plans covered the first seven years of the strategy time frame, from 2010/11 to 2016/17.

- 35 According to the Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy, the most challenging future constraint for agriculture in Egypt is the rapid decline in access to water per capita. The Nile River is the main and almost exclusive source of surface water for Egypt, and there are apprehensions relating to the potentially adverse effects of upstream water resources development projects in Ethiopia. There are also concerns regarding encroachment on arable land at a rapid rate, the potential threats of climate change, and weak technical and institutional capacities. The strategy identified three types of constraints limiting the national developmental efforts in the sector: i) agricultural policy constraints; ii) slow reforms of agricultural institutions; and iii) inefficiencies of production to marketing chain.
- 36 One of the main pillars of the strategy is to promote and drive horizontal expansion, i.e. expansion of the surface area of cultivation of the agriculture sector in Egypt. In pursuance of this expansion the Government has launched the "1.5 Million Feddan"¹⁴ Programme (also known as REEF - from the Arabic word "Reef" meaning "country side") in March 2015 at the Egypt Economic Development Conference in Sharm El-Sheikh. The Programme, as indicated by its title, seeks to reclaim 1.5 million feddan of desert land for agriculture purposes across ten remote sites distributed in the "New Lands".¹⁵ The Programme's overall objective is to create new urban areas away from the delta and Nile valley to ease pressure on these areas, and aims to do so by: i) improving food security and self-sufficiency; ii) creating jobs, especially for the youth; iii) establishing agro-business conglomerates; and iv) increasing export earnings from conglomerates.¹⁶
- 37 The Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation's latest Water Resources Plan was formulated with support from the European Union, and launched in May 2017. The Plan defines future measures to be taken by different ministries in Egypt to reduce water gaps as well as the financial and natural resources requirements for development purpose.

2.1.2 Development partners in agriculture sector

- 38 The donor operating in Egypt established the Development Partners Group (DPG)¹⁷ which aims to enhance coordination among development partners through consultation, cooperation and collaboration on policies, principles and priorities, procedures and practices, as appropriate. The group has three main objectives: i) development coordination and effectiveness; ii) learning; and iii) building partnerships. The Development Partners Group is currently composed of 26 bilateral partners and 21 multilateral organizations, contributing with official development assistance. It comprises bilateral¹⁸ partners and multilateral organizations which include FAO.
- 39 The group is chaired by the United Nations Resident Coordinator and co-chaired by representatives of one bilateral or multilateral organization, selected by the members of the Development Partners Group. Meetings are held bi-monthly and ad hoc meetings are organized upon members' request. In addition to monthly and ad hoc meetings, there

13 UNDAF 2013-2017.

14 A feddan equals 0.42 hectares, or 1.05 acres.

15 The new reclamation project will be carried out in three phases in nine areas of the Western Desert, including the Farafra Oasis, the Qattara Depression, Toshka and areas in the Minya governorate.

16 FAO mission report Egypt – 1.5 Million Feddan Programme

17 In the late 1990s, the United Nations Resident Coordinator launched a platform for policy dialogue and information exchange among donor agencies and organizations providing official development assistance.

18 Australia; Austria; Belgium; Canada; Chile; Denmark; Estonia; Finland; France (Embassy and *Agence Française de Développement* - AFD); Germany (Embassy, *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* - GIZ and *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau* - KfW); Italy; Japan (Embassy and Japanese International Cooperation Agency - JICA); Korea (Korea International Cooperation Agency - KOICA); Mexico; New Zealand; Norway; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland (Swiss Office for International Cooperation); The Netherlands; United Kingdom, and the United States of America (United States Agency for International Development - USAID).

are also 13 thematic groups,¹⁹ including: Agriculture and Rural Development, Gender and Development, Water and; Environment and Energy etc. FAO and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation co-chair the Development Partners Group on Agriculture and Rural Development.

- 40 The aim of these thematic groups is to facilitate information sharing and coordination among development partners based in Egypt supporting the sectors outlined above. Also, one of the main functions of the theme groups is to regularly discuss progress and challenges in the specific area with line ministry representatives.
- 41 The main development partners in the agricultural sector include: International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), World Food Programme (WFP), World Bank, *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the European Union.
- 42 These partners are working mainly on the following sub-sectors, in accordance with Egyptian national priorities:
- land reclamation for rural development;
 - monitoring food security risks, policy and support food-based social safety net reform efforts;
 - enhancing water resources management and irrigation;
 - strengthening agricultural research programmes.

2.2 FAO in the Arab Republic of Egypt

2.2.1 The Country Office

- 43 Egypt is a founding member of FAO. The first FAO field office was opened in Egypt in 1952 to support the Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (RNE). FAO opened a representation office in the country in 1978. During the past four decades the country has benefited from FAO's technical assistance to agricultural development through identification, preparation and appraisal of investment projects, financed from both regular and field programmes funding and which covered food security, rural and agricultural development, policy advice, strategy planning and capacity development.
- 44 It is also worth noting that until last year, the FAO Representative role in Egypt was assumed by the Deputy Representative of the Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa. Following requests from the Egyptian Government, a dedicated FAO Representative was appointed in 2016 to oversee and manage the country programme. The Country Office currently has six Regular Programme staff posts; two professionals and four general service staff; and two long-term international fixed term project posts. The Representation also employs on short-term basis a few national consultants and other non-staff.

2.2.2 Overview of FAO's field programme

2.2.2.1 FAO's Country Programming Framework

- 45 Egypt's CPF for 2012-2017 was formulated to bring a new focus in FAO's field programme for the country, in particular realigning the Organization's development support to the Government's revised priority programmes while contributing to the implementation of FAO's global Strategic Framework 2010-2019. The FAO Strategic Framework has been since

19 Agriculture and Rural Development, Education and Human Resource Development; Environment and Energy; Democratic Governance; Gender and Development; Health; Macroeconomics and Public Finance Management; Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises; Migration and Protection; Transport; Social Protection; and Urban Development; Water.

revised and therefore the CPF was not aligned to it, hence the five strategic objectives of the reviewed framework were not mentioned in the CPF document.

46 The CPF priority areas, expected outcomes and outputs are presented in the table below.

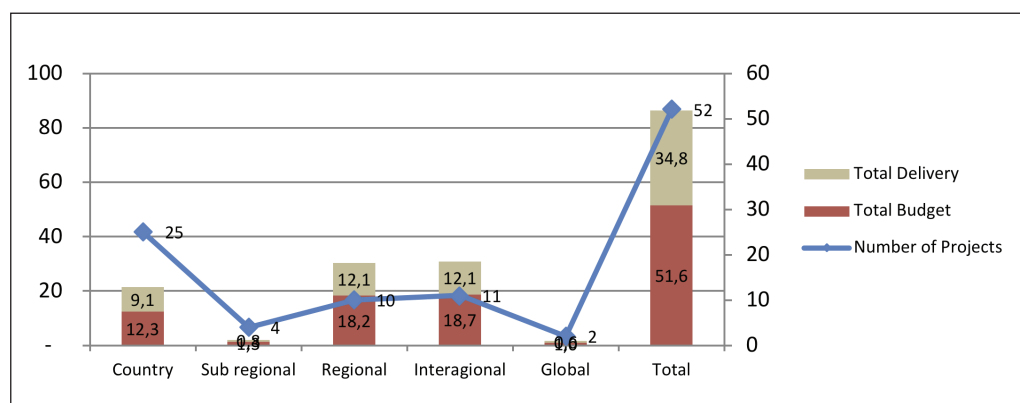
Table 1: CPF priority areas, outcomes and outputs

Priority Area	Outcomes	Outputs
PRIORITY AREA A: Information generation, sharing and dissemination	A decision support system that facilitates the operation of market forces and the mechanisms essential for suitable allocation of investments, exporting agricultural products and raising awareness.	-A functional information system -A mechanism for improved data collection
PRIORITY AREA B: Improving productivity and efficiency in the agricultural sector	Improved nutritional standards and dietary patterns; and rate of self-sufficiency expected to rise by 10 percent	-Land reclaimed and soil improvement programmes planned and executed -Improved on-farm irrigation and modernization of irrigation canals -Agricultural production enhanced via seed industries and other interventions -Production of livestock, poultry and fisheries enhanced
PRIORITY AREA C: Sustaining rural community development	Rural employment will be the driver to food security and poverty reduction if promoted within an overall context of rural development actions and strategies	-People-related and place-related programmes initiated -Social safety nets extended -Facilities for marketing agricultural products availed -Capacities developed and institutional framework governing the Egyptian agriculture transformed
PRIORITY AREA D: Conserving natural resources and adapting to climate change	Conserved energy costs mean savings in the production processes, which will result in greater profits for the farmer. Less waste released to the environment will have direct positive impacts on the health of the people and the ecosystems	-Afforestation projects using treated wastewater for stabilizing sand dunes, thus contributing to efforts to combat desertification -Solar heaters and wind mills installed, and the use of biofuels and agricultural waste (energy carrier) as source of energy encouraged

47 A desk review of the projects implemented in the country indicated that the key sectors targeted by FAO interventions in Egypt are: natural resource management, food security and nutrition, animal health, fisheries, and rural development. The first three constitute more than 85 percent of the total portfolio. Some of these interventions include country-specific projects, regional and global, and therefore their budget is allocated for activities in different countries and not just in Egypt.

48 For the period evaluated, from 2012 to 2017, FAO's portfolio in Egypt had 25 country level projects for a total budget of USD 12.3 million and a delivery amount of USD 9.1 million. In addition, the country received contributions from 27 additional projects, constituting a total of 52 projects, for a total budget of USD 51.6 million and a total delivery of USD 34.8 million. The geographical coverage of the additional projects is as follow: global - two projects for USD 1 million; regional - ten projects for USD 18.2 million; interregional - 11 projects for USD 18.7 million; and subregional - four projects for USD 1.3 million.

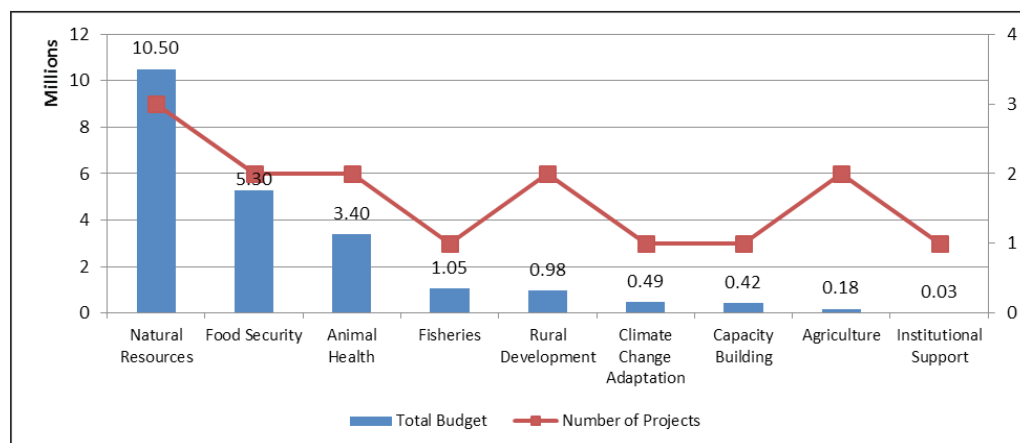
Figure 1: Geographical coverage of the Egypt portfolio



2.2.2.2 Active Portfolio²⁰

- 49 Only 15 out of the 52 projects that constitute the portfolio are currently operationally active with a budget of USD 22.4 million. The remaining 36 projects are either financially closed (34 for a total budget of USD 26.4 million) or operationally closed (2 for a budget of USD 2.7 million).
- 50 Out of the 15 active projects, 6 were implemented at country level for a total budget of USD 6.6 million and a delivery amount of USD 3.5 million. The evaluation team noted that five out of the six projects implemented at country level are contributing directly to the CPF priority areas. The sixth project entitled 'Improving household food and nutrition security in Egypt by targeting women and the youth' (GCP/EGY/024/ITA) (Nutrition Project), corresponds to 50 percent of the total active portfolio budget and was approved in 2011, before the elaboration of the current CPF.
- 51 Out of the five projects mentioned above, two are contributing to CPF Priority Area B (Improving productivity and efficiency in the agricultural sector), one is contributing to Priority Area A (Agricultural information generation, sharing and dissemination), and only one project is contributing to Priority Area C (Sustaining rural community development). In addition, one project (TCPF: Updating Egypt Country Programming Framework 2017 – 2021) is contributing to all the Priority Areas.
- 52 Furthermore, the two projects under Priority Area B are specifically contributing to the Sub-priority Areas 2.2. (Irrigation modernization), and 2.4. (Improved production of livestock, poultry and fisheries).

Figure 2: Distribution of FAO's active portfolio in Egypt by sector



20 FAO FPMIS system.

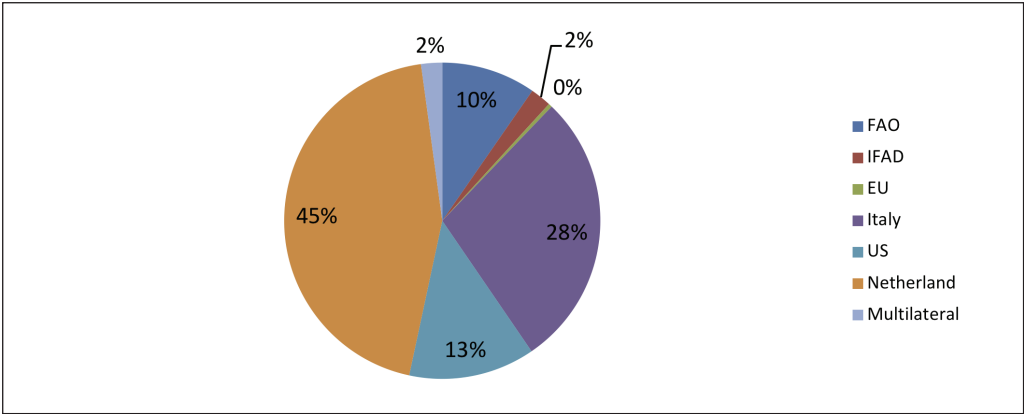
2.2.2.3 Main interventions during the CPF period

- 53 FAO’s Programme includes three major projects in the key sectors selected for in-depth studies in this evaluation, and which will be frequently referred to in the rest of the report. These projects are briefly introduced below:
- 54 Strengthening national capacity for preparedness early detection and response to emerging pandemic threats (EPT-2) - OSRO/EGY/501/USA (referred to in this report as ECTAD) with a total budget of USD 2.9 million. The overall goal of the Emerging Pandemic Threats 2 (EPT-2) program is to mitigate the impact of novel “high consequence pathogens” from animals through: i) new disease threats detected early; ii) national-level preparedness and response to new threats enhanced through effective inter-sectoral collaboration and partnerships; and iii) risk of disease emergence reduced by minimizing practices and behaviours that trigger the spillover and spread of new pathogens.
- 55 Improving household food and nutrition security in Egypt by targeting women and the youth - GCP /EGY/024/ITA (referred to in this report as the Nutrition project) with a total budget of USD 3 million. The project will be centred on three major intervention strategies, namely: i) nutrition and health behaviour through education and behaviour change communication plans comprising mass media, interpersonal communication and social mobilization; ii) homestead food production and income generating activities; and iii) capacity building and institutionalizing of integrated and participatory approaches for improving household food and nutrition security at decentralized levels.
- 56 Food Losses and Waste Reduction and Value Chain Development for Food Security in Egypt and Tunisia - GCP /RNE/004/ITA with a total budget of USD 2.3 million. The project will support countries to develop evidence-based food losses and waste reduction programmes at national, regional and global levels; Governments and relevant stakeholders are provided with support to promote inclusive, efficient and sustainable agri-food value chains.

2.2.2.4 Source and modality of funding

- 57 In terms of funding modality, half of the active portfolio (the 15 projects) are financed under the Technical Cooperation Programme²¹ (TCP) modality for a total budget of USD 2.1 million and a total delivery of USD 0.6 million. This FAO funding accounts for around 10 percent of the portfolio of active projects, (under the TCP modality).
- 58 Only one of the active portfolio projects is an emergency project for a budget of USD 2.9 million. The remaining 90 percent is funded by external donors such as the European Commission, International Fund for Agricultural Development, United States of American, Netherlands and Italy.

Figure 3: Percentage of funding by donor



21 This funding modality was created to allow the Organization, drawing from its own Regular Programme resources, to make its know-how and technical expertise available to Member Countries and respond to its constitutional function “to furnish technical assistance as governments may request”.

2.2.2.4 Partnership and main stakeholders

- 59 FAO is primarily working with the Ministry of Agriculture, which is the central agency in charge of agricultural development in Egypt. Within the Ministry, the Central Administration for Foreign Agricultural Relations represents the entry point and main counterpart of FAO, while the primary partners are the Agricultural Research Centre, the Desert Research Centre, the General Organization for Veterinary Services, the General Authority for Fish Resources Development and the General Directorate for Extension. Historically, FAO has had limited relations with other government ministries, including the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, which plays an important role in the country's agricultural and rural development institutional framework, and the Ministries of Environment, Supply and Internal Trade, and Health and Population.
- 60 It is important to note that during the last five years Egypt has undergone many political changes. For instance, since the formulation of the current CPF, there were seven ministerial changes at the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation and three at the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation. As many other government bodies, the Agricultural Research Centre has also experienced changes in its leadership. These changes naturally had repercussions on the middle management within these institutions. Nevertheless, the Sustainable Agriculture Development Strategy towards 2030 has remained the main policy document for the agricultural sector, though its short- to medium-term action plans have constantly been reviewed to reflect the vision of new leaderships.
- 61 For instance, *"the FAO Representation prepared the CPF by the end of 2012, in close collaboration with concerned parties and major stakeholders, which has been submitted for the approval/signature of the Minister of Agriculture and Land reclamation. The CPF-Joint Statement was signed with the Minister of Agriculture and Land Reclamation on the 1st of August 2013. A workshop chaired by the Minister was held on 9 June, 2014 to review its priorities, one week later, a new other minister took office and on 5 November 2014, he requested a revision to the CPF plan of action to reflect the latest updates of the business plan 2014-2018, of the SADS 2030"*.²²

3. Assessment of FAO's strategic positioning in the Arab Republic of Egypt

62 This Chapter summarizes the main findings and insights of the evaluation team concerning the overall strategic positioning and relevance of FAO's Programme in Egypt. The Chapter follows closely the evaluation matrix and seeks to answer its main questions. Departing from observations and insights relating to individual projects in the programme portfolio, it seeks to extrapolate from specific project level findings to programme level. Insights gleaned from projects are thus used to substantiate conclusions regarding FAO's Programme in Egypt as a whole.

3.1 Strategic relevance

To what extent is FAO's Programme aligned with relevant national development plans, strategies and policies? Are there any gaps or missed opportunities?

Finding 1: The Country Programme Framework is well aligned with the country priorities identified in the Sustainable Agriculture Development Strategy towards 2030 and its subsequent action plan. Alignment with national priorities is further ensured in the projects' formulation phase, as most projects are initially requested and reviewed by the national counterparts. However, the formulation process of the CPF missed out on a number of strategic stakeholders e.g. Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Small Industries, Ministry of Health and Population and Ministry of Education.

63 FAO's Programme in Egypt is well aligned with the Strategy 2030 of the Ministry of Agriculture which has benefitted from substantial FAO support during its formulation in 2009 as well as with the subsequent Business Plan, and the Five-Year Plan. The CPF was prepared in close collaboration with the ministry. It repeatedly quotes from the 2030 Strategy, which it recognizes as the reference document for agricultural development in Egypt. Alignment with national priorities is further ensured in the projects' formulation phase, as most projects are initially requested and reviewed by the national counterparts.

64 The formulation of the Nutrition Project (*GCP/EGY/024/ITA*) predates the CPF. It was reformulated after the Revolution to include youth over and above its focus on women. Its original design was in complete alignment with Egyptian priorities at the time of its formulation. According to the Project Document, the project was conceived in response to a request by the Government to address "persisting malnutrition which perpetuates the vicious cycle of poverty and constitutes a serious burden on Egypt's economy". Later reformulation was in adaptation to conditions of the political transition in the country.

65 ECTAD projects likewise predate the CPF in their initial formulation, but within the CPF period they have entered into a succession of new phases. They are all well aligned with national priorities and strategies in the animal health sector. Their implementation is keenly carried out by the General Organization of Veterinary Services, which is the primary national partner and counterpart in this sector. One major ECTAD country specific project is on Strengthening Avian Influenza Epidemiology, Biosecurity and Coordination (OSRO/EGY/101/USA). It addresses national needs in the livestock sector for avian influenza control tools by improving biosecurity throughout the poultry value chain while simultaneously strengthening public veterinary services to enhance coordination on disease incidence reporting and assessment of vaccination in hatcheries. Another major project is an emergency intervention to improve A/H5N1 HPAI preparedness and responses through enhanced public-private engagement in Egypt (OSRO/EGY/501/USA). The focus of this project has broadened from avian influenza to include other emerging zoonotic diseases.

66 Though not directly implemented by the Country Office, FAO has launched components of regional initiatives/projects that are part of the overall FAO programme in Egypt. These initiatives and projects were conceived as regional priorities by the Near East and North

Africa (NENA) Member Countries in their biannual Regional Conferences in which Egypt actively participates. Regional interventions launched in a member country presuppose country endorsement and thus necessarily tally with national priorities. For example, the Water Scarcity Initiative was adopted by the Arab Water Ministerial Council of the League of Arab States, in which the Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation is an active member.

- 67 The Water Initiative also involves the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation and the Ministry of Environment. But the scope and extent of FAO support to these other ministries seems confined to small and largely isolated projects. Moreover, FAO has missed the opportunity to support the Ministry of Water in formulating strategies, policies and national plans. For instance the latest plan of the Ministry which benefited from support by the European Union was launched in May 2017 and FAO was not involved in the formulation of this plan.
- 68 FAO's support to Egypt actually went beyond the projects described earlier. Requests by Government for technical support in issues bearing no relation to the ongoing projects were received and positively responded to by FAO. In 2016, FAO responded to an urgent request by the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation to conduct a study in order to determine the acceptable level of ergot²³ infestation in wheat. FAO deployed a renowned international expert and settled the matter within 48 hours. The FAO timely response was even more appreciated as it allowed to conclude a controversy between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade. As a result of the FAO study, the Ministry of Agriculture declared that up to 0.05 percent ergot does not pose any health threats from the wheat imports.
- 69 Two other and more substantial requests were to review the wheat sector in Egypt and avail support to the mega project of 1.5 Million Feddan, or REEF Programme.
- 70 FAO has responded to the first request by mounting a mission from the FAO Investment Centre Division (TCI) that culminated in the document "Wheat Sector Review" published in 2015. The Investment Centre Division (TCI) has also organized a workshop in Cairo on Baladi²⁴ bread in which the Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade was involved. Wheat is highly relevant to food security in the country and Baladi bread has for decades received huge annual subsidy. For example, in 2010/2011 these subsidies amounted to 0.8 percent of GDP²⁵. The review included sound recommendations to improve nutrition through reforms of the food subsidy system. The review was followed up with a regional project, TCP/SNO/3501 on Capacity Building for Food Loss Reduction in four countries in the Middle East including Egypt, Iran, Jordan and Lebanon.
- 71 With regard to the request relating to the REEF programme, FAO fielded a multi-disciplinary team to Egypt in March 2016 to explore potential support in four areas:
- groundwater utilization, with special focus on the Nubian Sandstone Aquifer System;
 - fisheries and Aquaculture development, especially in the Red Sea and Lake Nasser;
 - using renewable energy in the agriculture sector, including ways of optimizing the benefits of wind, solar and biomass energy for irrigation;
 - the application of new technologies in irrigation, including solid rain technology.²⁶
- 72 The Mission met with a number of stakeholders and concluded its report that addresses key challenges that might impede the implementation of the REEF Programme. The proposal for collaboration with the Government was anchored on the comparative advantages of the Organization and on scaling up actions that fit its mandate and are aligned with the FAO Strategic Objectives.

23 Ergot or ergot fungi refers to a group of fungi of the genus *Claviceps*. This fungus grows on wheat, rye and other related plants, and produces alkaloids that can cause ergotism in humans and other mammals who consume grains contaminated with its fruiting structure.

24 Subsidized flat bread made from coarse 82 percent flour.

25 Egypt - Wheat sector review, by the Investment Centre Division (TCI), 2016.

26 FAO - (March 2016) Mission Draft Report – Egypt "1.5 Million Feddan" Programme (REEF).

- 73 In follow-up, FAO developed a Concept Note for a funding application to be submitted by REEF Programme to the Global Climate Facility (GCF). After rounds of in-country discussions, the Concept Note was forwarded to the FAO Office of the Director-General (ODG) for further action before the Director-General's visit in March 2017. In addition, FAO plans to organize an "Investment Forum" in Egypt with the aim of guiding agricultural investment packaging of the Government.
- 74 The CPF and its projects as well as the overall FAO Programme in Egypt were no doubt relevant to and well aligned with Egyptian priorities, particularly of the Ministry of Agriculture. Consultations during the CPF formulation, however, did not extend to some important stakeholders such as the Ministries of Local Development and Environment, and Education. This role later became apparent in the course of implementation for some of the projects, as was the case in the Nutrition Project. In implementation of the latter, there emerged a need to use village schools as venues for training women on nutrition kitchens and food processing. Although, the Ministry of Education was involved in the project from the beginning and a representative from the Ministry attended all the preparatory meetings as well as the steering committee meetings. The high turnover of the person in charge might explain their reluctance to collaborate. The Ministry of Education at the governorate level responded negatively to the request to use school premises. The lack of partnership with Ministry of Education at provincial level represents a missed opportunity for FAO in its efforts to promote food and nutrition security in Egypt.²⁷ This is particularly so as the Ministry could incorporate mobile kitchens as part of the Home Science curricula for girls. This constitutes an awakening call for more inclusive consultations in the ongoing process of formulation of the new CPF 2018-2022.

To what extent is FAO's Programme in line with, and supportive of to, FAO's Strategic Framework?

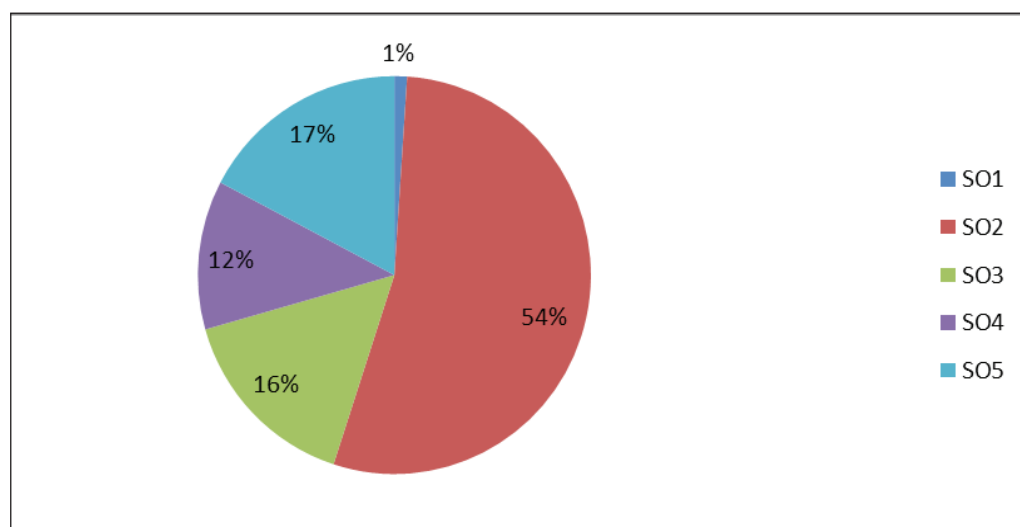
Finding 2: The formulation of the CPF predates the adoption of FAO's reviewed Strategic Framework and for this reason the document does not refer explicitly to the FAO Strategic Objectives. However, most of the projects in FAO's Programme in Egypt are related and contribute to at least one Strategic Objective, particularly Strategic Objective 2. There are issues, however, relating to the incorporation of FAO key priorities and policies in most projects, particularly gender and the focus on poverty reduction.

- 75 The CPF was prepared prior to the formulation of the new Strategic Framework and for this reason there is no reference to the FAO Strategic Objectives in its document. Nevertheless, FAO's portfolio in Egypt contributes to all five Strategic Objectives of the Organization, though with marked emphasis on contribution to Strategic Objective 2 (Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable), followed by Strategic Objectives 5, 3 and 4. The graph below shows the portfolio distribution per Strategic Objective based on budget allocation²⁸.

27 The evaluation team is informed that FAO is implementing the upscale plan of the Project within the secondary school of agriculture in the targeted governorates.

28 These data result from project entries tagged in the FAO database "FPMIS".

Figure 4: Portfolio distribution per Strategic Objective based on budget allocation



- 76 The evaluation team noted an anomaly in the 1 percent contribution to Strategic Objective 1 reported in the FAO Field Programme Management Information System (FPMIS), which does not tag the Nutrition Project to Objective 1. The latter project, which predates both the CPF and the Strategic Framework, is obviously in line with Strategic Objective 1 (Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition) and also falls under the Regional Initiative: "Building resilience for Food and Nutrition Security". Nevertheless, it is not properly reflected in the corporate results of FAO in Egypt as it has been 100 percent tagged to Objective 3. The contribution of FAO portfolio in Egypt to Strategic Objective 1 is thus much higher than what is reported, and could reach around 8 percent of the total active portfolio.
- 77 National projects formulated after the adoption of the new Framework are all contributing to a least one of the strategic objectives. The same applies to the regional projects, in which Egypt is a focus country for three Regional Initiatives in the Near East and North Africa (NENA) Region. These Initiatives are each led by a Strategic Objective (Objective 2 for the Water Scarcity Initiative; Objective 3 for the Small-Scale Agriculture Initiative; and Objective 5 for the Building Resilience for Enhanced Food Security and Nutrition Initiative).
- 78 The Water Scarcity Initiative has, in particular, been active in Egypt as most, if not all, of the work done in the water sector since the establishment of the Initiative has been conducted under this initiative. Recently the Initiative was able to mobilize USD 10 million to support eight countries in the region, including Egypt, to set the proper framework for implementing the 2030 Agenda for water efficiency and productivity.²⁹

To what extent has the CPF formulation benefitted from poverty and gender analysis?

Finding 3: With the exception of the Small-Scale Agriculture Regional Initiative which prepared a study on the typologies of small-scale family farmers, neither the CPF nor the portfolio projects have engaged in a thorough or systematic gender and poverty analysis. The FAO Country Office recognizes the importance of conducting such analytical work, but pointed out limited capacity within the Country Office and non-availability of technical officers from the regional office and headquarters.

- 79 The FAO Policy on Gender Equality was adopted in 2013. It outlines the steps that ought to be taken to achieve gender equality in all of FAO's technical work. This implies that at the organizational level equity and gender equality (as a human right) should be mainstreamed throughout all programmes. To this extent, gender would be expected to figure as both a sector and a cross-cutting issue in FAO's Programme in Egypt.

²⁹ GCP /RNE/004/ITA. Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Water Efficiency/Productivity and Water Sustainability in the Near East and North Africa (NENA).

- 80 The FAO Country Office has clearly addressed gender issues as sector, primarily through the Nutrition Project that specifically targets youth and women, but it did not demonstrate adequate capacity to internalize gender as a cross-cutting issue or dimension in all activities. It no doubt recognizes the importance of conducting analytical work such as poverty and gender analysis to support the formulation of its CPF and project documents. Nevertheless, no diligent or systematic analysis was undertaken regarding those issues. Limited capacity within the Country Office and non-availability of support from regional and headquarters levels were said to be the main obstacles.
- 81 The FAO Country Office has so far relied mainly on secondary data from external sources to build its poverty-related assumptions when developing project documents. These documents in general include a brief overview of the poverty situation in the geographically targeted region, but often without thorough analysis of the main causes and consequences of the phenomena. The gender analysis is even less exhaustive and is represented, in most cases, by a standard paragraph on the importance of promoting gender equality within the planned activities.
- 82 One notable exception is the good analytical work produced by the Small-Scale Agriculture Regional Initiative on the typologies of small-scale family farmers in six countries in the Near East and North Africa (NENA) Region, including Egypt. The study helped identify the different categories of small-scale family farmers and analysed the constraints facing them. It thereby built the evidence to support policies and strategies for sustainable and inclusive development of the small-scale agriculture sector and could lay the foundation for further analytical work in Egypt.
- 83 With regard to gender analysis, the CPF 2012-2017 draws heavily from the 2030 Vision of Egypt and the Strategy 2030. It relies on their gender analysis and goes on to articulate objectives in support of gender equality and poverty reduction. Schematic analysis of poverty and gender issues in the CPF is included under Priority Area C: Sustaining rural community development; and particularly under 3.1.: Sustaining livelihoods of rural population, including gender equity through institutional transformation. The CPF reads:

Poverty is evident in Upper Egypt. Poverty associates with rural areas; and districts with least poverty incidence are those metropolitan... Special attention is given to the role of women, especially those who head households, in the processes of rural and agricultural development, particularly on enhancing their productivity; supporting their role as contributors to the production of labour; and empowering them to play an effective role in community development... FAO will continue to provide Egypt with support to sound rural development plans and population issues in agriculture and rural development. FAO, in collaboration with other UN agencies, such as UNICEF, and within the UNDAF, will contribute to improving the quality of life of many rural dwellers; closing gender disparities (p. 17).

- 84 The CPF thus tends to conceive gender and poverty as comprising distinct sectors and not cross-cutting in all portfolio projects. It thereby did not incorporate a gender analysis in the other priority areas that were generally regarded as "technical". For example, women are heavily involved in poultry production, from backyard or in the informal sector. But these facts are missed in the analysis pertaining to animal health, particularly the concern with combating Avian Flu.

To what extent is FAO's Programme targeting the neediest?

Finding 4: There were limited interventions in FAO's Programme that explicitly targeted the rural poor. The Nutrition Project, which is the most substantial in the portfolio, was designed specifically to benefit youth and women from poor households. The Highly Pathogenic Avia Influenza programme is indirectly targeting the poor households securing cheap protein and contributing to the livelihoods of sector 4 farmers that represents 70 percent of the poultry sector in the country.

- 85 FAO's Programme in Egypt in its entirety may be viewed as a contribution to rural development that benefits all social categories, including the poor and vulnerable farmers. This is true of work oriented to improve irrigation systems and address water scarcity as

well as efforts to reform the law of agricultural cooperatives. The approach of Community Animal Health Outreach under ECTAD also caters for the most vulnerable, namely the poultry backyard farmers. Nevertheless, specific interventions sought to improve the livelihoods of the rural poor, particularly women and youth: The Nutrition Project and the partnership with ICARDA on grey water.

- 86 The Nutrition Project is the single most substantial intervention in the Portfolio. It involves awareness raising, capacity building, agricultural productivity, enhancement and income generation. The project is well conceived and planned; addressing issues of food and nutrition security from different entry points. Income-generation opportunities were availed through the combination of capacity building (training in food processing as well as at the Junior Farmer Field and Life School and Revolving Fund. These features of the project were considerations in the decision of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) to select the Nutrition Project as one of the best UN projects contributing to the lives of people in Egypt in 2017.
- 87 The Nutrition Project selected the poorest governorates and within them worked in 3 out of the 40 poorest villages per governorate. It has specific targeting criteria (for youth: education and age limit; for women: number of children and level of income, etc.). In practice, however, the Agricultural Cooperative Society and the Village Development Society nominated both women and youth groups and extended age criteria to include older farmers as there were only a few young men with access to land in their community. Actual targeting does not seem confined to the neediest, who in most cases did not have title to land, and the project did not have social animators who could have vetted beneficiaries. It is worth noting that the older farmers who attended the sessions on Junior Farmer Field and Life School were considered observers, rather than beneficiaries, who were interested in participating, especially as the schools are held in the open field.
- 88 The evaluation team understands that in the Junior Farmer Field and Life School the project initially invited all farmers in the selected villages to pilot the project with half of their land, but there was general reluctance on the part of farmers. It is worth noting that the selection of experimental farms for demonstration depends solely on willingness of a land owner.
- 89 The evaluation team visited two Junior Farmer Field and Life School sites in the course of the evaluation. In the first school there was separation of the role of Facilitator (who underwent Training of Trainers to guide work in the farm and extend messages to participants) who does not live in the village, although it is understood that one of the main criteria in the selection of facilitators was residency in the village, and Farm Owner (a young man from a landowning family but with modest education attainment). In the second school, the roles of Facilitator and Farm Owner were assumed by the same person (a teacher highly respected in the village and with a good record of service to the community – active member in the Village Development Society and Chairman of the Agricultural Cooperative Society). The latter apparently was effective in disseminating messages to those attending the school, and also convinced farmers in an adjacent village to adopt the innovative (even if relatively more costly) new agricultural practices. The evaluation team also visited a farm in the adjacent village not covered by the project, where a farmer has voluntarily replicated these innovative practices. The evaluation team concluded that village-resident facilitators undoubtedly provide more effective and continuous guidance than outsiders who only come periodically to project villages.

3.2 Partnership and coordination

How does FAO's Programme engage in (national, regional and international) partnerships and to what extent were these partnerships complementary and synergetic?

Finding 5: The programme invested great efforts on building partnerships with the traditional partners, within the Ministry of Agriculture. It has however missed the opportunity to broaden the platform to effectively include other non-traditional partners in the consultation process of the CPF – e.g. Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Industry as well as the private sector.

- 90 In terms of partnership with government institutions, FAO's Programme is primarily working with varied bodies within the Ministry of Agriculture. In addition to the executive General Directorates (Foreign Relations, Extension, etc.) and the General Organization for Veterinary Services, these bodies include Agricultural and Desert Research Centres and the Principal Bank for Development and Agricultural Credit.³⁰ To a lesser extent, the programme has forged partnership with the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation, which plays an important role within the institutional framework for agricultural and rural development in Egypt. But the partnership and collaboration with the Ministry of Water did not extend to policy and strategic levels. It was mainly on individual projects (GCP/INT/124/ITA - Coping with Water Scarcity, TCP/EGY/3604 Support sustainable water management and irrigation modernization for the newly reclaimed areas, and the Water Scarcity Initiative activities).³¹ Other partners within government include the Ministries of Supply and Internal Trade, Environment, Local Development (Village Development Organization) and Health (Nutrition Institute).
- 91 Some important stakeholders stressed that though the Ministry of Agriculture is the main counterpart to FAO, the mandate of the Organization extends far beyond that of Agriculture. Taking the Sustainable Agriculture Development Strategy towards 2030 as the basis for the CPF is thus constrain the scope of potential partnerships outside the Ministry of Agriculture. The consultations on CPF were not inclusive of some potential government partners. In the course of projects implementation, however, the role of the latter transpired. Partnership with the Ministry of Local Development was initiated when the Nutrition Project started to implement its Micro-Credit Component, and a Letter of Agreement was signed. The partnership was inevitable as the mandate of the Ministry includes funding micro and small projects. The experience proved to be challenging due to poor delivery, high turnover of persons in charge and inadequate capacity. It is a lesson to be learned that it is important to undertake prudent assessment of potential government partners before forging partnerships.
- 92 Priorities stated by the Ministry of Water were actually incorporated in the CPF, although they were not given equal weight as those of the Ministry of Agriculture. Projects launched by the Country Office demonstrated this trend. The FAO Country Office, however, has not taken action to balance its partnerships. In this respect, it is notable that regional projects and initiatives within FAO's Programme were not constrained by or even confined to the 2030 agriculture Strategy and would more effectively seek alignment with the water resources priorities of the country. This is particularly true of the Water Scarcity Initiative and the project on using solar energy for pumping water for irrigation.
- 93 The evaluation team noticed that there was inadequate communication between FAO and the Ministry of Water on the relevance of the Water Scarcity Initiative to the National Water Resources Plan 2017-2037. The recently-launched Plan has no reference to that Regional Initiative. FAO could attach more importance to the National Water Resources Plan given the very strategic focus of the initiative and its anticipated impacts on policies and operations of many other organizations working on land and water issues in the country. The National Water Resources Plan develops measures for each ministry to undertake towards achieving certain policy objectives.
- 94 The projects and activities of FAO's Programme in Egypt are to a large extent pilot initiatives that do not clearly link up into a coherent integrated programme. This is partly due to the continuous changes in the leadership of the partner institutions in the country during the period under which the CPF was formulated and its projects were designed and launched. Another factor relates to the limited capacity of the Country Office during that period to mobilize resources.
- 95 Partners from the Government thus found themselves largely focused on their respective isolated interventions, with no clear links or interface among the different projects and/or partners. Partnership is usually instituted by Letter of Agreement. For instance, the

30 Law No. 84 of 2016 has recently been promulgated. It states that the Principal Bank for Development and Agricultural Credit shall be transferred to a public-sector bank under the name of (Agricultural Bank of Egypt) in the form of a Joint Stock Company.

31 A TCP facility to develop the TCP project which was signed end of October 2017.

Nutrition Project has 18 different Letters of Agreement. The Partners within this single project certainly provided complementary and synergetic services to the projects, but they did not have opportunities for all-inclusive consultations. It is understood that each activity was implemented by at least three partners, a practice that availed room for interface at activity level. Their links to the overall project, however, were bilateral, or directly with the management of the Nutrition Project.

- 96 This characterization of FAO's relationship with Government units as generally centred around isolated projects should not, however, imply that partners' role remained marginal in projects. ECTAD, for example, has close partnership with the General Organization for Veterinary Services and has sought to enhance country ownership of joint activities. When the evaluation team went on field visits, it was noted that Veterinary Services' staff often spoke of FAO supported activities as their own but implemented "with FAO support".
- 97 Partnerships with the private sector were found to be minimal if not completely lacking, even in projects where the role of the sector is quite evident. For instance, the Capacity Building for Food Loss Reduction in the Near East subregional project (TCP/SNO/3501), although with limited budget, was designed to build the capacity of leaders of the food production, distribution and processing sectors, agri-business managers and extension agents. In Egypt, the beneficiaries were supposed to be private actors in the wheat value chain, as per the project design. In implementation, a Training of Trainers workshop was organized, but with none of the participants from the private sector or civil society. In fact, 84 percent of the 25 participants were researchers from the Field Crop Research Institute, 12 percent from the Extension Services of the Ministry of Agriculture and 4 percent from the Plant Protection Research Institute.
- 98 Likewise, ECTAD has invested much efforts in building strategic partnership with governmental entities, but missed greatly on the private sector. Since the poultry industry in Egypt is essentially run by the private sector, ECTAD, though it tried to partially involve the private sector, needs to further bridge the gap through stronger relationships with Egyptian livestock and poultry associations, as well as by supporting capacity building opportunities, policy and value chain studies.
- 99 International partners of FAO Egypt are basically those funding its projects (IFAD, European Union, USAID, and Italian Agency for Development Cooperation). However these partners have a different perception of the added value of FAO. Some consider the current role taken by FAO Egypt to be similar to that of an NGO, instead of assuming the leadership of influencing the policies of the agriculture and rural development sector. Others, on the other hand, believe that FAO is playing a key role in agricultural development in the country.
- 100 FAO Egypt has few collaborative projects with United Nations organizations. It collaborates with WFP in the school-feeding programme. FAO collaborates on a date value chain project with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). However, there is an apparent lack of communication between FAO and UNIDO. In 2014 UNIDO launched a Green Trade Initiative in Egypt that involves eight value chains, among which are tomatoes and grapes as the Regional Project 'Food Loss and Waste Reduction and Value Chain Development for Food Security in Egypt and Tunisia' GCP/RNE/004/ITA. The two projects are implementing very similar activities with the same national partners in the same governorate, but neither FAO nor UNIDO were aware about the project details of the other organization at the time of this evaluations,.

To what extent has FAO's Programme supported the coordination of actors working in the agricultural development, and food security and nutrition sectors?

Finding 6: In spite of limited consultation during CPF formulation, many FAO projects have supported coordination among different actors, 'Capacity Enhancement to the Food Security Policy Advisory Board' is perhaps the most notable. The projects on reduction of food losses and waste in value chains include coordination component, while ECTAD projects hosted numerous coordination activities. The Regional Initiative on Water aims to improve coordination among the different ministries, but its impact is yet to materialize.

- 101 The most substantial support by FAO to the coordination among actors working in the agricultural development and food security and nutrition sectors is perhaps the project on 'Capacity Enhancement to the Food Security Policy Advisory Board' (TCP/EGY/3303), which was initially envisaged as a pilot project and developed into a larger partnership programme. The Food Security Policy Advisory Board is an inter-ministerial body housed with the Ministry of Agriculture and its mandate was to deliver policy recommendations to the Minister of Agriculture on a regular basis. It had 15 separate inter-ministerial and departmental working groups that required considerable time investment by participating institutions. The project successfully developed capacities of participating technical institutions. The terminal statement describes the project as "extremely successful" but notes that "the future institutional placement of the Advisory Board has not yet been established". According to several key informants the Advisory Board was initially successful but is no longer active, a situation that was related to change of leadership in the Ministry of Agriculture.
- 102 ECTAD projects have supported a number of coordination activities. Among the main ones is the high-profile coordination meeting involving Directors of Veterinary Services from 16 governorates and held on annual base. ECTAD also convened meetings with partners (National Research Centre, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Environment, Central Laboratory For Evaluation Of Veterinary Biologics, Veterinary Serum and Vaccine Research Institute, World Health Organization (WHO) and the General Organization for Veterinary Services) to set-up the role and responsibilities of each and unify the protocol of testing and sharing of information. Another important meeting was on One health (4 way linking)³² to plan National One Health strategies and action plans. Coordination with partners outside the Ministry of Agriculture, such as the Ministries of Environment, Local Government and Housing is particularly important to minimize impacts of interventions upon the natural habitat of migratory birds (e.g. interventions in wetlands and small woodlots and forests may lead to change in nesting places and bring migratory birds into proximity of farm and/or backyard/roof poultry).
- 103 The Water Initiative has brought together the Ministries of Agriculture, Water and Environment. There are complex institutional challenges facing cross-sectoral strategic planning. The Initiative has the potential for contributing to enhanced synergies and complementarities between these ministries. However, based on meetings at the Ministries of Agriculture and Water, it was not apparent that tangible results were yet achieved in that direction and FAO may in future look into more effective approaches.
- 104 As stated in section 2.1.2, as a member of the Development Partners' Group of United Nations agencies, FAO has established for the first time the thematic working group on Agriculture and Rural Development. It is currently co-chairing the group with the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation to ensure coordinated actions among different Development Partners in the sector. The group has also proven to be an adequate platform for knowledge and experience sharing among the participants. The group meets four times a year with FAO as secretariat and host of all meetings.

To what extent has FAO's Programme influenced the positions and decisions of partners in relation to agricultural and rural development, and food and nutrition security sectors?

Finding 7: Some of the FAO interventions have prospects for direct influence on the policies and decisions of the national partners, namely the ongoing project "Support to the Reform of the Law Governing Agricultural Cooperatives", ECTAD and the Nutrition Projects. However many have not contributed to policy incidence.

- 105 FAO projects have had direct and at times substantial influence on the positions and decisions of partners. The project on "Support to the Reform of the Law Governing Agricultural Cooperatives in Egypt" (TCP/EGY/3503), for example, directly aims at changes

32 FAO/World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)/World Health Organization (WHO) Four-Way Linking (4WL) is to promote the establishing of a national-level joint framework for data sharing, risk assessment and risk communication in order to both improve communications within and among governmental public health and animal health influenza laboratories, epidemiology offices and national partners with the aim of strengthening the national capacity to detect, report and assess risks arising from emerging influenza viruses.

in policy and institutional set-up. It has stimulated introduction of reforms that would lessen control by the Ministry of Agriculture on agricultural cooperatives and enable the latter to enter into partnership with the private sector.

- 106 ECTAD has supported development of varied policies and guidelines that are being utilized across all levels of the General Organization for Veterinary Services, while the Nutrition Project drew the attention of the General Directorate for Agricultural Extension to issues of nutrition. Agricultural workers in project sites now incorporate a focus on nutrition in the course of their work. It is hoped that the Ministry of Agriculture will replicate that approach in other governorates.
- 107 Many TCPs in the FAO Programme started and ended as pilot projects, with little influence on positions and decisions of partners in the agricultural and rural development sector. It is rather difficult to identify a model project that was scaled up and influenced a certain policy.

3.3 Normative values

To what extent has FAO's Programme effectively taken into consideration gender equality objectives?

Finding 8: Gender equality objectives are pursued as a sector, where the exclusive focus in the project is on women, as the case with the Nutrition Project. Likewise, the partnership with ICARDA on grey water targets housewives. However, in the predominantly technical interventions FAO in Egypt has generally neglected gender equality objectives as a cross-cutting issue.

- 108 In all FAO Country Programmes, gender is expected to figure as both a sector and a cross-cutting issue. In the Nutrition Project, for example, women and youth are specifically targeted. The socio-cultural context in Upper Egypt constrained FAO in organizing mixed groups of participants in the Farm and Junior Farmer Field and Life School. Nevertheless, the project did take initiative to disseminate good agricultural practices and established a Farm and Life School for women in one village where men have all abandoned farming and sought employment elsewhere.
- 109 The Nutrition Project likewise supported women groups, through capacity building in the Nutrition Kitchens and Food Processing Components as well as through extension of micro-credit to launch income-generation schemes. One notable achievement of the Nutrition Project was its success in facilitating the travel of young girls and women from their villages to the towns where the training took place. Rural norms and customs constrain such travel, particularly by young girls, if unaccompanied by their male guardians. The girls and women were in fact initially accompanied by several male relatives until trust in the project and its interventions was established. The project nevertheless was prudent, using a government licensed car in order to avert any gossip and/or loss of reputation for the girls attending the training.
- 110 The Nutrition Project has trained women in food processing and is taking steps to avail micro-credit to help them establish small businesses. Inadequate internalization of gender mainstreaming objectives in such an intervention may in instances have detrimental impacts on gender relations (between spouses) or, more common, harming interests of women. If not carefully planned and approached, that intervention is likely to result in additional workload for women over and above their traditional domestic tasks, or take women outside home for extended hours. Not all the income-generating activities that women plan to enter into necessarily require work outside home. Food processing, poultry keeping and backyard gardens, for example, are types of activity that can be practiced at home.
- 111 On the other hand, however, spouses might resent the extensive involvement of their wives outside home and its impact on domestic responsibilities. In such cases, measures to avert conjugal conflicts may be needed otherwise the project might unwittingly contribute to an increase in the number of broken families or divorced women. Husbands need to be

sensitized in advance of what the additional income to be earned by wives might entail, and the project may also look for and recommend labour-saving tools and practices in order to reduce the pre-existing workload.

- 112 In projects and initiatives not specifically targeting women as sector, incorporation of gender issues is minimal. Gender is hardly mentioned in ECTAD project documents, although some sex-desegregated data related to surveillance work and capacity building is available. The project on 'Capacity Building for Food Loss Reduction in the Near East' (TCP/SNO/3501) gave no particular consideration to gender issues. Women were however included in training under the project: 6 out of 25 (or 24 percent) in the Training of Trainers workshop, and 34 out of 204 (17 percent) in the training conducted in the Governorates.
- 113 A major constraint in mainstreaming gender as a cross-cutting issue is that the technical officers generally have inadequate capacity to internalize gender issues in their interventions. In some cases, the officers seemed outright disinterested and saw no value added in gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming is largely considered the responsibility of the Focal Point and/or the Regional Gender Officer.
- 114 The Country Office has a Gender Focal Point who, among other responsibilities, is also the Assistant FAO Representative, and for an extended period was in charge of managing the Nutrition Project. The role as Gender Focal Point is supposedly allocated 20 percent of work time; however even though it could not really be estimated, his real time allocation to gender issues is obviously lower than 20 percent. There is also a Regional Gender Officer in the Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (RNE), located in the same building as the Country Office. Nevertheless, there are obvious gaps in gender sensitization and capacity building among a majority of technical officers. Though all projects have to be approved by the Gender Officer, the latter is not usually involved or consulted in project planning. The Country Office clearly needs to rely more on the Regional Gender Officer during the projects' formulation phase.

To what extent has FAO's Programme effectively taken into consideration decent employment (e.g. combatting child labour in agriculture)? How has FAO's Programme promoted youth employment?

Finding 9: FAO's Programme generally seeks to improve livelihoods and incomes. It thus indirectly supports families in maintaining children in schools. For instance, the partnership with WFP in the School Feeding Programme is aligned with this objective.

- 115 In general terms, FAO's Programme seeks to improve production and productivity in Egyptian agriculture. To that extent, it does not address the objective of combatting child labour as such. However, in supporting livelihoods and increased incomes, FAO is indirectly supporting poor households to maintain their children at school rather than call upon them to work on family farms. Participation in collaboration with WFP in the School Feeding Programme also contributes to the objective of retaining children at school.
- 116 Youth who drop out of school tend to migrate to cities or pursue marginal rural careers such as driving tuk-tuk (tricycles). FAO's Programme is cognizant of the problems of youth in rural Egypt and the concerns of the Government in that regard. The reformulation of the Nutrition Project, after the revolution in 2012, was precisely to promote productive youth employment, the lack of which is considered as one of the causes of the revolution. Youth and women constitute the main target group for training in food processing as well as roof and/or backyard gardening and farming through the Junior Farmer Field and Life School.

To what extent has FAO's Programme effectively taken into consideration environmental sustainability?

Finding 10: Overall FAO's programme in Egypt is perceived as "environment friendly". Additionally, the three Regional Initiatives, the project on date cultivation in Siwa Oasis and the pilot on using solar energy for pumping water are all contributing to environmental sustainability.

- 117 The programme has a number of projects that directly address environmental sustainability. All three Regional Initiatives aim at environmental sustainability as one of their overriding objectives. The Regional Scarcity Initiative has a multi-disciplinary approach as it brings together the Ministries of Agriculture, Water and Environment. It supports participating countries with innovative approaches to identify and streamline policies and best practices in agricultural water management, including cost-effective management practices. In partnership with the Ministry of Water, FAO is piloting the use of solar energy for water pumping in irrigation, a project that obviously promotes renewable energy. Likewise, FAO's efforts to introduce more efficient irrigation techniques serves to rationalize the use of the scarce water resources. This was also one of the aims of the FAO mission in supporting the REEF Programme.
- 118 Last but not least, the project on Palm Dates cultivation in Siwa Oasis has helped in formulating a plan that ensures environmental sustainability and addresses the impacts of climate change.

3.4 Comparative advantage

What has been the added value of FAO's Programme in Egypt? How were FAO's comparative advantages perceived by national and international counterparts?

Finding 11: FAO's contribution to agricultural development in Egypt is widely acknowledged by its stakeholders and partners, including multilateral organizations and bilateral donors. Recognition and appreciation were reiterated by bodies within the Ministries of Agriculture, Water and Environment as well as civil society. Comparative advantage is generally said to stem from FAO's status as honest broker, its knowledge base and its capacity to transfer good practices and experiences from elsewhere.

- 119 The contribution and added value of FAO's programme through its numerous interventions to develop agricultural production and productivity are highly appreciated by varied stakeholders. However, the general public does not seem aware that the value added of FAO rests with its technical advice and capacity building rather than extension of grants and loans (as the case with the World Bank and IFAD, both of which have higher visibility to the public).
- 120 Nutrition is one area in which FAO has both a mandate and distinctive competence. It is often overlooked in national discourse focused on food security and increased food production. Egypt is burdened with chronic health problems relating to malnutrition, undernutrition and obesity.
- 121 There are a number of actors other than FAO in the field of nutrition in Egypt. Save the Children had a community-based project in Minya, while the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is working with the Government of Egypt at the policy and institutional levels to promote maternal and child nutrition. Many NGOs are also involved in nutrition in Egypt. Nevertheless, the Nutrition Project implemented by FAO is considered to play a unique role in developing an integrated approach addressing issues of food and nutrition security from different angles.
- 122 Furthermore, FAO is actually the only Organization in Egypt developing a methodology to assess and reduce food loss and waste. UNIDO and USAID have some post-harvest activities to develop value chains by improving the quality and adding value to the products, but they lack focus on reducing food loss and waste. The two FAO projects addressing this issue are therefore useful and unique contributions.
- 123 In contrast to the above, some FAO interventions in the country did not benefit from FAO's distinctive expertise and know-how; this is particularly true for the project partnering with national universities and research institutions. These projects relied mainly on the technical expertise of the national institutions.

- 124 One technical area in which FAO seems to lack comparative advantage is the micro-credit component of the Nutrition Project. Given that the volume of total credit extended by FAO is virtually "a drop in the ocean" of need among the poor in Egypt, it is expected that FAO would add value by launching a pilot credit scheme with good practice to be emulated by others. In fact, FAO seems to have followed pre-existing modalities by partnering with the Village Development Agency of the Ministry of Local Development and adopted a logic of soft loan in its partnership with Misr El Kheir, in which case 40 percent of the loan is to be repaid interest free while 60 percent constitutes a grant.

4. Assessment of FAO's Contribution

125 This Section seeks to shed light on the difference that FAO's Programme has made to agricultural and rural development, and food and nutrition security in the Arab Republic of Egypt. The task is pursued in terms of four major criteria: appropriateness and responsiveness, overall impact and effectiveness, sustainability of results, and coherence and synergies.

How appropriate have FAO's activities been to achieve the planned CPF outcome?

Finding 12: Most FAO projects under evaluation were largely pilot projects. This is true of the TCPs launched by the Country Office as well as the three Regional Initiatives. In terms of planning and design, the projects were no doubt appropriate to contribute to the four CPF Priority Areas, however the limited upscaling efforts undermines the sustainability of these results.

126 The planned Outcome of Priority Area A is ***"A decision support system that facilitates the operation of market forces, and the mechanisms essential for suitable allocation of investments, exporting agricultural products and raising awareness"***. Elements of this outcome are directly addressed by two projects: 'Capacity Building for Food Loss Reduction in the Near East' (TCP/SNO/3501) and 'Food Loss and Waste Reduction and Value Chain Development for Food Security in Egypt and Tunisia (GCP/RNE/004/ITA)'.

127 The first project (TCP/SNO/3501) focuses on the wheat value chain and is designed to build the capacity of actors from the food production, distribution and processing sectors, agribusiness managers and extension agents in Egypt. The second project (GCP/RNE/004/ITA) focuses on two value chains, tomatoes and grapes. The project is well designed to reduce food loss and waste throughout the selected value chains (focusing on the post-harvest, trader and processing stages). The aim is to enable the value chains to become better organized and more inclusive of smallholders, better positioned to generate added value, provide increased opportunities for rural off-farm and/or agro-industry employment, while at the same time have a reduced environmental footprint. The focus of the second project on women-organizations and private sector (small and medium-sized enterprises) and the development of market linkage activities is also very relevant.

128 The planned Outcome of Priority Area B is ***"improved nutritional standards and dietary patterns; and rate of self-sufficiency is expected to rise by 10 percent"***, which is rather ambitious. It is not clear whether the 10 percent is for Egypt as a whole or just in project sites – notwithstanding absence of baseline data. Though it predates the CPF itself, the Nutrition Project is well positioned to contribute significantly to this outcome. The project aimed to establish a model approach to promote Food and Nutrition Security through existing government institutions, especially the agricultural extension services. These were to be supported by NGOs as they interact directly with the most vulnerable population: the small farmers in rural Upper Egypt. FAO collaboration with WFP in the School Feeding Programme is another contribution.

129 The Nutrition Project design is in line with the current standards for nutrition programming, but severe delays and some inconsistencies or errors in sequencing activities were noted. The behavioural change communication process took place early on through dialogue and iterative training approach implemented with beneficiaries via the Junior Farmer Field and Life School and Nutrition Kitchens. Nevertheless, the development of a Behaviour Change Communication Strategy, which is considered the heart of the project, and compilation of Information Education and Communication materials were both implemented late, towards the end of the project instead of at its start. Moreover, the Behaviour Change Communication Strategy resembled more a workshop report than a normative guide for future implementation of Behaviour Change Communication strategy for nutrition in Egypt.

- 130 The planned Outcome of Priority Area C is ***“rural employment will be the driver to food security and poverty reduction if promoted within an overall context of rural development actions and strategies”***. In general terms, all FAO projects relating to the promotion of agricultural production and productivity contribute to this Outcome.
- 131 Two projects in the FAO Programme aimed at improvements in conditions of smallholders in Egypt. The first project is the ‘Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) for Sustainable Intensification of the Smallholder Horticulture Sector in Egypt’ (TCP/EGY/3402). The second is the ‘Strengthening of the Horticulture Information Support Network for Small Farmers in Egypt’ (TCP/EGY/3403).
- 132 Furthermore, there are several other projects that targeted development of Egyptian agriculture in general, such as ‘Support to Sustainable Water Management and Irrigation Modernization for newly Reclaimed Areas’ (TCP/EGY/3602/C2). The project ‘Using Remote Sensing in support of solutions to reduce agricultural water productivity gaps (GCP/INT/229/NET); is a significant contribution to optimization of water resources. It aims to develop an action framework to provide relevant and specific information on water and biomass status for stakeholders at different scales, from the policy level to the farm level, to develop workable solutions to sustainably increase agricultural land and water productivity.
- 133 The planned Outcome of Priority Area D is ***“Conserved energy costs mean savings in the production processes, which will result in greater profits for the farmer. Less waste released to the environment will have direct positive impacts on the health of the people and the ecosystems”***. FAO's Programme has a pilot project for using solar energy in water pumping irrigation. Visit to the project site confirmed the validity of the approach, though sunk cost remains a challenge for replication. Farmers interviewed seem to prefer using subsidized electricity for water pumping than pay the relatively high sunk cost of solar energy. This situation may change as the Government is gradually removing subsidy on electricity and other forms of energy.
- 134 The two projects on food losses and waste also contribute to this outcome as their direct result is greater profits to all involved in the food value chain, including the farmers.

How do ultimate beneficiaries engage in the process of project identification and formulation?

Finding 13: FAO's Programme in Egypt has a general tendency to adopt a heavy top-down approach, with active engagement of national government institutions in the design and implementation, and limited involvement of the farmers and civil society who remain to be passive recipients of benefits.

- 135 Beneficiaries of FAO's Programme in Egypt may be classified into two broad groups. The first group consists of partners from the Government, mainly the Ministry of Agriculture and its general directorates, organizations and research centres. These partners have personnel with high capacity to identify needs, propose projects and even partake in implementation. All FAO projects are in fact identified and formulated on the basis of close consultations with these partners. Typical examples are found in the ECTAD projects, in which the General Organization for Veterinary Services and other partners partakes in formulation and eventually implements them. In those projects in which the Agricultural Research Centres' institutes are close partners, engagement extends well beyond the processes of identification and formulation; the partners also figure as both implementer and direct beneficiary. This last form of engagement raises questions regarding the specific value-added (beyond funding that is) which FAO Egypt contributes to in terms of comparative advantage as discussed.
- 136 The other category of beneficiaries consists of farmers. They are generally the least involved in processes of project identification and formulation and as such figure as passive recipients of support in the course of implementation. Their perceptions of needs and solutions may be considered in baseline assessments, but such assessments are not normally conducted. The end result is that the pattern of project identification and formulation exhibits evidence of a rather heavy top-down approach.

137 The foregoing discussion is virtually true of the manner in which direct beneficiaries engage in the process of project identification throughout FAO's Programme in Egypt. It is thus pedantic to reiterate the same facts relating to this monolithic approach under separate CPF Priority Areas or in terms of individual projects. The Nutrition Project seems to provide an exception insofar as its logframe includes training on needs assessment, but it is not clear from progress reports if and when this was fulfilled. Field visit reports by the Lead Technical Officer, National Project Manager and others from the Ministry of Agriculture refer to identified constraints that small farmers face, but this seems to be based on discussions with extension staff in the governorates and not on findings following assessments and appraisals at village level. It is noted that representatives of beneficiaries including women farmers participated in all project team meetings with extension staff.

How has FAO's Programme benefited the poorest and most vulnerable households and responded to their needs, including women and youth?

Finding 14: Most projects in FAO portfolio are technical pilots from which benefits are expected to expand to all farmers, including the poorest and most vulnerable. A few projects, however, targeted mainly smallholders, among whom the poorest and most vulnerable preponderate.

138 The FAO Programme in its entirety aims at the development of Egyptian agriculture, contribution to food and nutrition security, and improvements in the livelihoods of rural populations in general. Most projects in the portfolio are technical pilots, such as 'Support Sustainable Water Management and Irrigation Modernization for newly Reclaimed Areas' (TCP/EGY/3602/C2) and 'Using Remote Sensing in support of solutions to reduce agricultural water productivity gaps' (GCP/INT/229/NET).

139 The benefits of these technical projects are expected to benefit all categories of farmers, including the poorest and most vulnerable households. Nevertheless, the technical projects have generally failed to mainstream gender issues both in their design as well as in their implementation, with the exception of two projects. The first is the project on 'Food Loss and Waste Reduction and Value Chain Development for Food Security in Egypt and Tunisia' (GCP/RNE/004/ITA). This project does include in its formulation a focus on the involvement of women-organizations and private sector small and medium enterprises, albeit nothing tangible in the course of implementation was noted by the evaluation team. The second is under ECTAD, where the Community-based Animal Health Outreach teams raise awareness among communities, particularly among women, regarding biosecurity practices in poultry keeping within homesteads and through the Exposure Reduction Programme for safe poultry slaughter for mothers and children.

140 The FAO portfolio includes some projects that aim at creating an enabling environment for the small farmers to reap benefits. The most important is perhaps the project on reform of the law governing agricultural cooperatives. This project seeks to lessen the control by the Ministry of Agriculture over cooperatives and enables the latter to enter into partnership with the private sector. Another project not directly involved in agricultural production but expected to benefit small farmers is 'Strengthening of the Horticulture Information Support Network for Small Farmers in Egypt' (TCP/EGY/3403).

141 Several projects in the FAO programme have aimed at improving agricultural productivity and efficiency with a specific focus on smallholders, among whom the poor and vulnerable farmers preponderate. These include the TCPs on 'Good Agricultural Practices for Sustainable Intensification of the Smallholder Horticulture Sector in Egypt' (TCP/EGY/3402), 'Using Remote Sensing in support of solutions to reduce agricultural water productivity gaps' (GCP/INT/229/NET) and the project on date cultivation in Siwa Oasis (GCP/GLO/469/IFA).

142 The most substantial intervention by FAO Egypt to benefit poor and vulnerable groups, however, is the Nutrition Project, which has as its main targets groups of women and youth. The project selected 15 villages in Upper Egypt to implement its activities that included the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools, Nutrition Kitchens, and training in food processing. The training, which involved women and youth, is followed by availing a revolving fund to support investments by the trainees. The evaluation team visited project sites in Beni Sueif and Assiut, and interviewed farmers who confirmed that the pilot fields had a yield

increase of 150 percent and that they are enthusiastic to adopt the innovative practices and use the improved seeds and seedlings. The beneficiaries of this project, however, were not exclusively selected from poor women and young men and in instances youth from well-to-do families and even old men, were involved.

To what extent have FAO's capacity development activities addressed the national needs (at individual, institutional and policy levels)?

Finding 15: The focus of FAO technical support to the Government has mainly been on capacity building of individuals. There are, however, interventions which contributed to capacity development at all three levels (individual, institutional and enabling environment), such as ECTAD projects, reform of the cooperatives law and the Capacity Enhancement to the Food Security Policy Advisory Board.

- 143 Focus on capacity development at all three levels (individual, institutional and policy levels) was noted in a few projects, notably the one on 'Capacity Enhancement to the Food Security Policy Advisory Board' (TCP/EGY/3303). Although the Food Security Policy Advisory Board is no longer functional, stakeholders generally commended the project achievements in addressing national needs for inter-ministerial coordination relating to food security policy. The design of the Nutrition Project was also linked to the Food Security Policy Advisory Board, with an initial aim to influence policy, which could not be met, as the Board ceased to function in 2014.³³ Other projects that may have bearing on the enabling environment are 'Support Sustainable Water Management and Irrigation Modernization for newly Reclaimed Areas' (TCP/EGY/3602/C2) and 'Using Remote Sensing in Support of Solutions to Reduce Agricultural Water Productivity Gaps' (GCP/INT/229/NET).
- 144 The TCP on 'Strengthening of the Horticulture Information Support Network for Small Farmers in Egypt' (TCP/EGY/3403) is a contribution to institutional capacity building. The project on 'Food Loss and Waste Reduction and Value Chain Development for Food Security in Egypt and Tunisia' (GCP/RNE/004/ITA) also contributes to capacity building in information generation and dissemination. It undertook two studies relating to market assessments and food loss analysis for grapes and tomato value chains and organized a validation workshop. The project organized a Training of Trainers workshop to build capacity in the application of the methodology introduced for assessment of food loss and waste.
- 145 The project on 'Support to the Reform of the Law Governing Agricultural Cooperatives in Egypt' (TCP/EGY/3503) is a clear example of capacity building at the farmer, cooperative and ministry levels. The design of the project included a series of six workshops for Agricultural Cooperatives and Ministry staff and two study tours to Kenya and France. Though project objectives are seemingly focused on legal issues, the ultimate outcome clearly promotes the interests of farmers as their agricultural cooperatives would be allowed to partner with private sector operators. This development amounts to a fundamental institutional change by reducing the control hitherto exercised by the Ministry of Agriculture over the operations of agricultural cooperatives in Egypt.
- 146 Furthermore, between 2012 and 2017 many ECTAD projects provided support to the strengthening of the General Organization for Veterinary Services and building its institutional capacity (Central Laboratory, Surveillance Unit and Community-based Animal Health Outreach at the central, governorate and district levels). For example under project OSRO/EGY/101/USA 'Strengthening Avian Influenza Epidemiology, Biosecurity and Coordination (SAIEBAC)', ECTAD completed the four-way linking platform that served as an efficient information (epidemiology - and genetic data) sharing platform. It produced 11 scientific papers, large numbers of avian viruses were characterized within Egypt and by external partners, and deposited 38 H5N1 sequences to the public domain – shared during the World Health Organization Vaccine Composition Meetings. In terms of capacity building at individual level, ECTAD has organized hundreds of training workshops on, among other themes, surveillance, epidemiology, applied biometric and biostatistics practices and biosecurity. Thousands of participants benefitted from these workshops including high involvement of female professionals.

³³ The evaluation team was informed by the Country Office that this Board was replaced recently by an equivalent Board aiming to improve food and nutrition security in Egypt and the Project gave a presentation in one of its periodic meetings.

- 147 The main focus of the majority of projects was on building capacity of individuals to improve productivity and efficiency in Egyptian agriculture. The most significant intervention among the latter is the Nutrition Project with its distinctive contribution to capacity building among groups of women and youth. As reported by the project team, between April and September 2016, 656 farmers, women and youth have undergone training. The reported results are considered "first batch", and more participants may be trained in future as the project has received a second no-cost extension. Capacity building for women consisted of new models for:
- improved food processing methods and skills which preserve crops and their nutrients;
 - improved nutrition and cooking knowledge and skills;
 - models and methods for multi-layer (multi-store) rooftop and backyard gardens;
 - improved farming practices and crop selection.
- 148 Expert trainers provided young farmers with applied training through Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools. Training started with selection of economic viable crops that would match with the agro-ecological zone and contribute to nutrition. Interviews with beneficiaries corroborated willingness to bear the additional costs at government nurseries given the accruing high returns.

4.2 Effectiveness and impact

Have the expected results of the CPF been achieved between 2012 and 2017?

Finding 16: Due to challenges in CPF implementation during the post-revolution instability period which halted progress in many fronts as well as subsequent constraints on resource mobilization, FAO's Programme in Egypt largely consisted of small projects with limited contributions to the expected CPF results. Nevertheless, the FAO Programme did contribute to some noted achievements.

- 149 The implications of the political transition under which the CPF was formulated and its projects implemented have to be taken into consideration in addressing the extent to which CPF results were achieved. On the one hand, the CPF results were rather vague, ambitious and/or unrealistic at a time of rapid turnover in the leadership of the main partners (more than five Ministers at the Ministry of Agriculture and three at the Ministry of Water). It was a context of frequent changes in the priorities of the incoming leaders, with evident impact on commitment to the agreed results. On the other hand, the political transition adversely impacted the capacity of FAO to engage in effective resource mobilization efforts to launch large projects capable of delivering the expected results. The end result was a situation in which the FAO Programme could only launch small projects during the period under evaluation.
- 150 The exceptions are the relatively large Nutrition Project and ECTAD, in the case of which project identification and formulation, as well as resource mobilization for implementation, related to the pre-revolution period. Under such circumstances, the question should not be whether or not the expected CPF results were achieved; it should rather be whether the results were achievable at all. Nevertheless, the FAO Programme projects did contribute, only if largely as pilots, to the achievement of some of the expected results.
- 151 Satisfactory results were achieved under the two projects on Food Loss and Waste and value chains: TCP/SNO/3501 and GCP/RNE/004/ITA. The methodology developed by FAO in Food Loss and Waste assessment adopted in the two projects is well designed and very effective and demonstrated that losses were much higher than the value chain actors could imagine. The approach contributes to a better understanding of the concept of food losses in post-harvest, to quantify it financially and thus to reduce it. It is notable, however, that the two projects, which were launched sequentially, remained largely unrelated, focusing on different crops. FAO contribution to achievement of results could have been more effective if the results of the first project on wheat, which is a highly strategic crop in Egypt, were included and scaled up in the second.

- 152 Different phases of the ECTAD project also contributed substantially to information generation, sharing and dissemination. In the farms visited, there seems to be a relatively good knowledge and understanding of biosecurity practices and their importance in the safety of those in the farms. However, the disseminated information has been inconsistently adopted as practice. The application of these practices at individual farm are apparently hindered by cost and perception constraints, indicating further need for monitoring, communication to achieve behavioural change, stronger enforcement and improved biosecurity. More targeted work is needed in order to turn awareness of biosecurity measures into action.
- 153 One visible result was achieved by the project on date cultivation in Siwa Oasis (GCP/GLO/469/IFA) which has declared dates production system in Siwa Oasis as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems and will effectively support the small-scale family farming.
- 154 In addition to its results relating to support of women and youth, the Nutrition Project has managed to establish an effective approach to promote food and nutrition security of rural population through existing government institutions, especially the agricultural extension services.
- 155 Most projects in the FAO portfolio in Egypt are small, starting and ending as models but without clear considerations to their replications or even of factors that led to their successes. Major policy development and planning initiatives in the irrigation water sector that were implemented by national organizations during the lifetime of the country programme thus made no reference to the CPF or the FAO Programme more generally. The realm of policy advice in the water sector in particular appears to have been perceived as too sensitive and political to address.

What changes and impacts at sectoral level did FAO bring about that would not have resulted in its absence?

Finding 17: Although it is hard to attribute the progress made in the nutrition, animal health and food waste and loss sectors exclusively to FAO, it is evident that FAO played a crucial role in supporting government actions related to these themes, under the relevant interventions during the CPF time frame.

- 156 FAO is not the only actor supporting Egypt concerning food value chains (e.g. UNIDO and USAID). Nevertheless, FAO is the only Organization in Egypt developing a methodology to assess and reduce food loss and waste. The relevance of this result cannot be overestimated, as it can be adopted in crops other than those on which the FAO projects have focused. Likewise, there are many actors other than FAO working to improve productivity and efficiency in the agricultural sector. IFAD, for example, prides itself with its successful projects, especially on newly reclaimed areas. Its work included irrigation as well as agricultural practices and developing new communities.
- 157 Some stakeholders believed that the IFAD project is the main model referred to in the context of the REEF Programme. Nevertheless, the government has sought technical advice from FAO regarding REEF specifically. Indeed, the FAO mandate in the field of agricultural development is well established, and so is its comparative advantage. No actor other than FAO has extended knowledge-based and sound technical support towards sustainable water management and irrigation modernization and the use of remote sensing to avail solutions to reduce agricultural water productivity gaps.
- 158 In a similar fashion, the distinctive contribution of ECTAD projects pertains to comparative advantages that no other actor has provided. Information generated, shared and disseminated by ECTAD remains important and certainly effective. Outbreaks of pandemics would not have been contained in the same manner or to the same extent.
- 159 A major concern in Egypt is over issues relating to food security, and the Government seeks to address it with support from many other actors (international partners, national civil society and community-based organizations, etc.) It is only FAO, however, that brought to the forefront an integrated focus on food and nutrition security and developed a model approach

to food and nutrition security in the country. The approach is very effective insofar as it depends on existing government structures – what remains is its scaling up and replication.

- 160 Finally, without FAO presence in Egypt, it is doubtful whether an action plan for Siwa Oasis would have been formulated to address predicted effects of climate change.

4.2 Sustainability of results

To what extent were sustainability considerations (economical, environmental) taken into account in the design, implementation and results of FAO's programme interventions?

Finding 18: Economic and environmental sustainability considerations were integrated in the design and implementation of virtually all projects in the FAO Programme. The only exception is in the project using solar energy for pumping irrigation water, where short-term economic feasibility was less acknowledged.

- 161 The design of virtually all FAO pilot projects aiming at improving productivity and efficiency are without doubt conceived with due consideration to aspects of economic and environmental sustainability. The only exception to this categorical generalization is perhaps the consideration of economic sustainability, at least in the short-term, in the project on using solar energy for pumping irrigation water. The challenge faced by the project stemmed from heavy subsidies to alternative forms of energy, but the Government is clearly committed to adoption of a progressive programme for removal of subsidies.
- 162 Economic and environmental sustainability considerations are prime in the design of the two Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems projects. Upon the sharing and dissemination of project findings, the actors in the selected value chains were surprised by the considerable losses they unwittingly incurred into. The reduction of food loss and waste also has environment-friendly impacts, as it serves to optimize use of resources. Likewise, the design and implementation of project on date cultivation in Siwa Oasis (GCP/CLO/469/IFA) address directly conservation of natural resources and adaptation to climate change.
- 163 In assessing the prospects of sustainability of the results (the products and gains) of the FAO projects and interventions in Egypt, it is important to first unpack the concept of sustainability itself into its most significant components. The focus in this assessment will be on only some of the components - those of structure, process, built capacity and accrued benefit, though financial, economic and environmental aspects are also relevant. Expectedly, there are variations among the different pilots in their achievements regarding the different components of sustainability.
- 164 The project on capacity enhancement of the Food Security Policy Advisory Board has successfully supported inter-ministerial coordination and information sharing. Though not officially dissolved, the Advisory Board has become dormant since 2014 due to changes in the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture, which sought advice from alternative bodies. To this extent the sustainability of the structure was compromised by political factors external to the project. But the results relating to capacity for inter-ministerial coordination that the project has built among staff from different ministries stands good chance of being carried over to other similar structures that the Government may establish in the future.
- 165 With regard to the two food loss and waste projects, sustainability of results pertains to two levels. The first concerns scaling up the pilots on the selected food value chains from their specific sites to the country as a whole. Prospects of sustainability at this level are not steadfast guaranteed. The second level concerns sustainability of the methodology developed by the two projects and which appear to be assured whenever Egypt initiates efforts to improve performance of food value chains.
- 166 Furthermore, ECTAD resulting strategies, guidelines and protocols for disease surveillance and control appear to have good prospects of long-term sustainability. They have already exhibited results. For example, a number of avian influenza outbreaks were contained

within one month. Protocols for rapid response and surveillance developed for avian influenza have also been used to respond to other emerging diseases.

- 167 Sustainability of the results of the pilot projects depends on their scaling up and replication. In projects such as the 'Support Sustainable Water Management and Irrigation Modernization for newly Reclaimed Areas' (TCP/EGY/3602/C2) and 'Using Remote Sensing in support of solutions to reduce agricultural water productivity gaps' (GCP/INT/229/NET), scaling up is primarily the task of the Government. It takes both commitment to the priority and availability of funding for such scaling up to materialize. Under the difficult economic conditions which the country is undergoing, it may take some time before resources could be available for that purpose.
- 168 Not all pilot projects depend on the Government for replication, and the role of farmers may be the more decisive factor in determining the sustainability of their results. Interventions such as those of the project on good agricultural practices in horticulture and the Junior Farmer Field and Life School in the Nutrition Project, for example, have good prospects for achievement of multiple facets of sustainability. It is most likely that the direct beneficiaries would continue with the adoption of the introduced innovative practices and new crops (sustainability of benefit), while farmers not directly involved in the project may replicate the intervention on their own (sustainability of process). The achieved higher yields and greater returns from crop sale noted by the evaluation team during field visits seem to have convinced not only the direct project beneficiaries, but apparently also some farmers from other villages.
- 169 At the time of the evaluation, the Information Education and Communication materials of the Nutrition Project were still under development. It is hoped that these and the developed training manuals will be used widely by the Agricultural Extension Services and collaborating NGOs in order to reach out beyond the current 15 pilot villages in Upper Egypt. To that extent, the project has initiated a process that has good prospects for long-term sustainability. The only foreseen challenge is the declining capacity of the Agricultural Extension Services, which for nearly a decade did not recruit new extension agents while older agents are retiring.
- 170 During the 2017 visit of FAO's Director-General, both the Government of Egypt and FAO expressed appreciation for the project and the intention to scale it up to other governorates and possibly link the approach to school gardens and meals. The Nutrition Project was selected by the United Nations Country Team as one of the best United Nations projects that contributed to the lives of people in Egypt in 2017. The project has had a second no-cost extension, during which it may take action to enhance the prospects for sustainability and scaling up. It may, for instance, organize visits for farmers, women and youth from other governorates to see the achievements in project sites. Coupled with the enthusiasm at higher levels, such activities would attract support from both the farming communities and the governorates in which the achievements are to be replicated and scaled up.

To what extent has the knowledge generated by FAO's programme (including success stories and good practices) been disseminated to partners and other FAO projects and programmes, upscaled and/or replicated?

Finding 19: The FAO Programme faces a serious challenge regarding communication and dissemination of knowledge produced and lessons learned. ECTAD is an obvious exception, while the Nutrition Project is exerting efforts to document its lessons learned.

- 171 There is apparently a serious challenge regarding information dissemination and knowledge management in FAO projects in Egypt. The Country Office did not develop a communication and knowledge management strategy for this purpose. There are hardly cases of documenting and disseminating success stories and lessons learned during the implementation phase of the projects. For example, the knowledge generated by the project on food losses in the wheat value chain (TCP/SNO/3501) was not disseminated beyond the 229 researchers, extension agents and farmers who were involved in the Training of Trainers and subsequent trainings. The knowledge was not even disseminated to other FAO projects. Likewise, the food losses assessment methodology developed by FAO was not shared with other partners implementing projects in post-harvest operations and value chain development in Egypt (UNIDO and USAID).

172 Furthermore, no sharing of any knowledge, methods and lessons learned was undertaken by the Nutrition Project. However, at the time of evaluation there was an ongoing attempt to document lessons learned and produce communication material. Within governorates where the project is implemented, there is some effort to disseminate new approaches such as the presentation at the offices of the Extension Directorate in Assiut of backyard/ roof top multi-layer production among the Government and the general public in Assiut.

4.3 Coherence and synergies

To what extent has the Country Office been leveraging on the capacities available within FAO (e.g. Regional Office and Strategic Programme teams) to respond to the country needs?

Finding 20: The FAO programme did not fully benefit from the wide array of capacities available within FAO. Nevertheless, the Country Office has successfully leveraged on capacities at the Regional Office for the Nutrition Project and on headquarters to respond to the special requests by the Government (ergot infestation, wheat sector review and mission to explore prospects of support to the REEF Programme).

173 The technical capacities and expertise of the Regional Office and headquarters are the main element in the unique comparative advantage of FAO. During the period under evaluation, however, the Country Office did not fully tap on those capacities in the design and implementation of most of its projects. In fact, these projects were largely dependent on the Country Office and national expertise in different research organizations and universities, which did not help much especially with regard to providing policy advice and effective engagement of the Government and the private sector.

174 There are exceptions in which expertise from the Regional Office and headquarters were heavily involved in some programme interventions. The Nutrition Project corroborates extensive involvement in both design and implementation by the Lead Technical Officer from the Regional Office. The Country Office has also successfully leveraged on FAO headquarters' capacities to respond to the requests of support by the Government. Earlier there was reference to the cases of advice on ergot infestation, the wheat sector review and the multidisciplinary mission on support to the REEF Programme.

To what extent has FAO's knowledge base (normative products, guidelines, publications, etc.) been used by the programme?

Finding 21: FAO projects have benefited from the Organization's knowledge base in their design. The small projects such as those on good agricultural practices and use of solar energy for pumping irrigation water were mostly illustrations of knowledge transfer. The methodology for food loss and waste assessment developed by FAO is used by the two food loss and waste projects. The larger Nutrition Project has benefited considerably from publications on approaches and the focus on inter-sectoral collaboration.

175 FAO's Programme in Egypt has no doubt benefited considerably from the knowledge base of the Organization. This is true even in the small pilots that characterize the portfolio. Projects on good agricultural practices, using solar energy for pumping irrigation water, etc., are instances of transfer of knowledge supported by the knowledge base. The food loss and waste assessment methodology developed by FAO was used in the two food loss and waste projects in Egypt. The Nutrition Project, moreover, has benefited from earlier published approaches, like the old guidelines for Participatory Nutrition Projects and the focus on inter-sectoral collaboration which dates back to the International Congress of Nutrition 1 (1992) but continuous to be difficult to apply for many countries.

176 The FAO Programme, however, has not used normative products and guidelines to a significant extent, such as the FAO Policy on Gender Equality and the key priority of poverty reduction. As discussed earlier, the prime factor is the inadequate capacity of the technical staff in social development and gender mainstreaming, by which they could have internalized these normative products as cross-cutting issues in their technical projects.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. Overall, FAO's Programme in Egypt is well aligned with the country priorities for the agriculture and rural development sector. The project portfolio was aligned with the FAO Strategic Framework.

177 The CPF under evaluation was found to be relevant and aligned with national strategies and priorities, particularly those of the Ministry of Agriculture. It is also important to note that, historically, FAO has supported the Ministry in the formulation of its strategies, including the current Sustainable Agriculture Development Strategy towards 2030.

178 With that being said, a missed opportunity for the FAO Programme is the partnership with and support to the Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation at policy and strategy levels. In May 2017, the Ministry of Water launched its new strategy for which support was extended by the European Union with no involvement of FAO in the formulation process.

179 With regard to FAO priorities, the CPF formulation predated the adoption of the current Strategic Framework (2013-2019), but all FAO projects were found to be well aligned to at least one Strategic Objective.

180 Nevertheless, it is apparent that the preparation of the evaluated CPF did not follow a results-based management approach. The FAO Country Office in Egypt lacks a position of Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, though support of a short-term consultant was recruited under the Nutrition Project to support the Programme as a whole. The type of monitoring carried out at the Regional Office (focusing on FAO Strategic Objectives) does not meet the needs of the Programme in Egypt.

Conclusion 2. FAO Egypt did not succeed in raising sufficient funding for implementation of the CPF. Except for the ECTAD and Nutrition Projects in which design and resource mobilization predated CPF formulation, virtually all other projects in the period under review comprised small TCPs.

181 A major challenge faced by FAO in Egypt was engagement in substantial resource mobilization in order to launch projects of relatively large scope covering effectively the CPF Priority Areas and capable of achieving their expected results.

182 Most, if not all FAO Programme pilot projects seem to have successfully demonstrated the relevance and feasibility of their respective innovative approaches. The dispersion of the projects, however, seems to have compromised the overall impact, effectiveness and visibility of the programme in the country.

183 Ineffective resource mobilization efforts might have been partly due to the absence during that time of a full-time dedicated FAO Representative. The more important factor, however, was uncertainties surrounding the political transition in the country that affected response by prospective sources of funding.

184 It is worth noting, however, that since the appointment of a fully dedicated FAO Representative the Country Office has been able to mobilize extra-budgetary funds for a number of new interventions notably from IFAD and the European Union. This new development is likely to have a positive impact on the future of FAO's Programme in Egypt.

Conclusion 3. FAO's Programme in Egypt mainly focused on technical issues and neglected other important priorities such as gender mainstreaming, poverty reduction and to some extent policy advice. Equally the programme did not invest effectively in engaging the private sector.

- 185 Although most of the projects' documents refer to the FAO priority and policy relating to gender mainstreaming, these projects did not conduct adequate gender analysis during the design phase nor did they include gender-related activities during implementation.
- 186 Technical staff, both in the Country and Regional Offices, evidently lacked capacity on gender mainstreaming, which is viewed as the responsibility of the Country Focal Point and the Regional Gender Officer.
- 187 Furthermore, progress against the key priority of poverty reduction seems to have been compromised by the lack of diligent and careful targeting.
- 188 The FAO Programme limited engagement of beneficiary communities in project design, particularly their poor and vulnerable members, reveals a heavy top-down approach. These beneficiaries are generally accorded a status of passive recipients whose priorities, needs and interest are better known to the sophisticated technical experts at FAO and partner ministries. The lack of a position of Social Development Officer in the Regional Office, which would support the Country Office, contributed to this shortcoming in substantive stakeholder involvement and participation as well as to the inadequate capacity to integrate social and gender issues in technical projects.
- 189 Similarly, the FAO Programme did not engage actively with the private sector whose role is relevant to many of the technical projects launched by FAO in Egypt. For instance, the role of the private sector is evident in the case of ECTAD projects, where private farms produce the bulk of poultry in the country and their observance of biosecurity practices is imperative in FAO/General Organization for Veterinary Services collaboration to contain and eradicate Avian Flu.
- 190 Furthermore, the two projects on food loss and waste on food value chains are ostensibly aimed to support the private sector. But when training was carried out, only a small number of the beneficiaries were from the private sector. The projects have viewed the sector as passive recipient of information and knowledge generated by assessment of the selected value chains. In short, substantive partnership between FAO and the private sector has a long way to materialize.

Conclusion 4. The technical assistance component of the FAO Programme was characterized by a traditional and limited approach to capacity development as the latter was reduced mainly to training of individuals, instead of institutional strengthening and policy development.

5.2 Recommendations

- 191 The evaluation team notes recent positive developments within the FAO Country Office in Egypt: the appointment of a dedicated full-time FAO Representative. This would undoubtedly enhance capacity of the Country Office in engaging in more frequent and intense consultations with the main partners, especially at higher levels of strategy and policy advice. The ongoing process of formulating a new CPF has indeed broadened, though more improvements are possible. On the basis of its findings and analysis, the evaluation team submits a number of recommendations for serious consideration if not also adoption towards a future FAO Programme in Egypt characterized by enhanced relevance, effectiveness and sustainability.

Recommendation 1. In formulating future CPFs, FAO Egypt needs to ensure inclusive consultation process to engage all relevant government institutions, the private sector and civil society. The CPF design process should be accompanied by the development of sound

resource mobilization strategy, focusing on key priority areas and strategic interventions based on lessons learned from the previous cycle.

192 Suggested actions:

- the new CPF should embrace the government identified priorities relating to food security and nutrition, agriculture diversification, water resources management, and plant and animal health. Resources permitting, the next country programmes could devote greater attention to value chain development;
- the CPF has to link to the country Sustainable Development Plan;
- project design would benefit from greater consultation among stakeholders and clearer segregation of duties.

Recommendation 2. FAO Egypt should apply an inclusive approach in responding to the Government of Egypt's requests related to the 1.5 Million Feddan, or REEF Programme, taking into account importance and future implications of this Programme in Egypt.

193 Suggested actions:

- establishment of a working group composed of members from all the Strategic Programme teams to ensure inclusiveness and strategic positioning of the FAO response.

Recommendation 3. The FAO Country Office needs to strengthen its results-based management capacities and practices to enhance programme design, monitoring and reporting and effective use of lessons learned. Similarly, the Country Office needs to improve the visibility of the programme during the formulation and implementation phases.

194 Suggested actions:

- expand the scope of the work of staff recruited through individual projects to oversee related functions in the programme as a whole. The current Communication Officer in ECTAD unit is one example to oversee the communication function of the programme;
- hire a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer to set-up a system that would capitalize on past experiences and generate lessons learned for enhancing the formulation and design of future interventions;
- secure necessary support from relevant headquarters and regional officers for the CPF formulation process.

Recommendation 4. FAO needs to build capacity among technical staff on the integration of social development and gender mainstreaming issues.

195 Suggested actions:

- providing capacity building particularly in the international policy of social development and gender mainstreaming for the entire FAO Country Team in Egypt as well as staff of partners partaking in the implementation of projects;
- inclusion of social development and gender analysis in the CPF and project documents, especially those explicitly targeting women.

6. Appendices

Appendix 1. Evaluation matrix

Evaluation criteria	Key Evaluation Questions	Methods and sources	Contribution to evidence-based analytical chapters of the report (3-4)
Relevance	<p>Strategic relevance</p> <p>To what extent is FAO's Programme aligned with relevant national development plans, strategies and policies? Are there any gaps or missed opportunities? These national policy documents are: 1. The Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy (SADS) (Current relevance of SADS in an evolving MALR, (for new CPF)) 2. The action plan for SADS 3. National Water Resources Plan (2012-2017) 4. Presidential Programme of REEF 5. Human Development Report 6. Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation's Plan (March 2017)³⁴ 7. Avian influenza strategy (including the communication and compensation strategies) 8. Vaccination strategy 9. Preparedness and response strategy</p> <p>To what extent is FAO's Programme in line with, and supportive to, FAO's Strategic Framework? The FAO Strategic Objectives are: • Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition • Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable • Reduce rural poverty • Enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems • Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises</p> <p>To what extent has the CPF formulation benefitted from poverty and gender analysis? • Did the office conduct a poverty and gender analysis? • Have poverty and gender analysis guided the interventions in the overtly technical projects and initiatives • Did the Programme have a clear theory of change?</p> <p>To what extent is FAO's programme targeting the most needy? • What were the criteria for beneficiary selection? • Did targeted beneficiaries have a decision-making role in the selection/ design of activities?</p>	<p>i. Internal FAO reports and interviews ii. Interviews with government partners iii. FAO CPFs and Country Representative Annual Reports iv. SADS document v. FAO Strategic Framework vi. FAO Strategic Objectives documents vii. Regional Initiatives documents viii. National Water Resources Plan</p> <p>• Document review and interviews at Country Office, Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (RNE) and Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation</p> <p>• Interviews (project staff and in the course of field visits)</p> <p>• Projects reports and documents mapping to see which projects benefitted the poorest governorates (Household Income and Expenditure survey 2004 or more recent poverty map at start of CPF)</p> <p>• Reports, interviews, focus group discussions and field visits, Interview with Gender Officer</p>	3

34 Mentioned in the newspapers of 15 March 2017.

<p>Normative values</p> <p>To what extent has FAO's Programme effectively taken into consideration gender equality objectives?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were FAO gender equality objectives mainstreamed in the interventions' design? <p>To what extent has FAO's Programme effectively taken into consideration environmental sustainability?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the FAO Environmental and Social Standards incorporated in the interventions' design? <p>To what extent has FAO's Programme effectively taken into consideration decent employment (e.g. combatting child labour in agriculture)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the programme include any activities on combatting child labour? <p>How has FAO's Programme promoted youth employment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which mechanisms did FAO use to promote youth employment? <p>Comparative advantage</p> <p>What has been the added value of FAO's Programme in Egypt?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did FAO's interventions introduce innovative approaches to the country? <p>How were FAO's comparative advantages perceived by the national and international counterparts?</p> <p>Partnership and Coordination</p> <p>How does FAO's Programme engage in (national, regional and international) partnerships and to what extent were these partnerships complementary and synergetic?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the types of partnership established by FAO Egypt? • Has FAO gone beyond its traditional partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation at the national level? <p>To what extent has FAO's Programme supported the coordination of actors working in the agricultural development, and food security and nutrition sectors?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What thematic fora related to agricultural development are FAO contributing to? <p>To what extent has FAO's Programme influenced the positions and decisions of partners in relation to agricultural and rural development and food and nutrition security sectors?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Document and Reports. Interviews (project staff) and field observation • Reports, interviews and field visits • Project documents and reports, interviews and field visits • Internal FAO reports and interviews • Interviews with Government partners • Documents and Letters of Agreement • Interviews • Interviews (Country Office, United Nations agencies, donors) • Interviews 	
---	--	--

Effectiveness	<p>For each CPF priority area/sector: How appropriate have FAO's activities been to achieve the planned CPF outcome?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The unit of analysis will be the relevant project/intervention/initiative <p>To what extent has FAO's capacity development activities addressed the national needs (at individual, institutional and policy levels)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can examples of innovative capacity building activities be identified? • Is there evidence of capacity development at the different levels? <p>How has FAO's Programme benefited the poorest and most vulnerable households and responded to their needs, including women and youth?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can examples of successful cases where FAO programme/projects benefited the most vulnerable be identified? <p>How do ultimate beneficiaries engage in the process of project identification and formulation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the ultimate beneficiaries identified? • What mechanisms are put in place to engage these beneficiaries? <p><i>Impact and effectiveness</i></p> <p>Have the expected results of the CPF been achieved between 2013 and 2017?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have the projects' expected results been achieved during this period? • Did the results achieved contribute to the FAO gender objectives? <p>What changes and impacts at sectoral level did FAO's Programme bring about that would not have resulted in its absence?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has FAO contributed to changes at the policy level? • What have been the changes at community level? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal FAO reports and interviews • Interviews with Government partners • Project documents and reports, and field visits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents and reports, interviews and field visits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents and reports, interviews and field visits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Officer and interviews with beneficiaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents and reports, interviews and field visits 	4
	<p><i>Sustainability of results</i></p> <p>To what extent were sustainability considerations (economical, environmental) taken into account in the design and implementation of FAO's Programme/interventions? What are the prospects of sustaining FAO's Programmes/interventions' results?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the projects/programme ensure the sustainability of its results? <p>To what extent has the knowledge generated by FAO's Programme (including success stories and good practices) been disseminated to partners and other FAO projects and programmes, upscaled and/or replicated?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents and reports, interviews and field visits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project documents and reports, interviews • Project documents and reports, interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal FAO reports and interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with Government partners 	

	<p>Coherence and synergies</p> <p>To what extent has the Country Office been leveraging on the capacities available within FAO (e.g. Regional Office and Strategic Programme teams) to respond to the country needs?</p> <p>What has been the contribution by FAO headquarters and the (Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa (RNE)) to the programme, particularly in terms of technical and operational support?</p> <p>To what extent has FAO’s knowledge base (normative products, guidelines, publications, etc.) been used by the programme?</p>		
--	---	--	--

Appendix 2. List of people interviewed

Name	Role	Organization
Professor Dr Mahmoud Medany	President of the Agricultural Research Center (ARC)	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Dr Akila Hamza	Coordinator/Founder Food Security Information Centre	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Dr Abd El-Moneim El-Banna	President of the Agriculture Research Center (He has now become the Minister of Agriculture)	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Dr Mohamed Ismail	Director of Soils, Water and Environment Research Institute	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Dr Sherif El Sharabasy	Director of the Central Laboratory of Date Palm	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Dr Nabih Abd Elhamid Ebrahim	Director of Food Safety Information Center	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Dr Shaban Ali Salem	Director of Agricultural Policy Research and Evaluation Projects Department	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Mohamed Souleiman Mohamed	Director of Field Crops Research Institute	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Ahmed Aouin Ahmed Varaj	Director of Central Laboratory for Agricultural Climate	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Mohamed Mahmoud Abd Eljelil	Director of Horticulture Research Institute	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Wafa Mohamed Ahmed Sediek	Director of the Central Lab for Agricultural Expert System	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Adel Fehmi	Director of Agricultural Extension & Rural Development Research Institute	Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Hany El-Shemy	Dean Faculty of Agriculture	Cairo University
Mr Gamal Hamouda	Director	Central Administration of the Agricultural Cooperative
Mr Maged Polus	Programme Manager	Coptic Evangelical Organisation for Social Services (CEOSS)
Suzan Sedky	Programme and Relief Manager	Coptic Evangelical Organisation for Social Services (CEOSS)
Dr Naaem Mosailhy	President of the Desert Research Center	Desert Research Center
Dr Abdallah Kassem Zaghloul	Vice President for Research Projects and Stations	Desert Research Center
Dr Amro Abou Shaara	Director	Desert Research Center
Dr Ahmed Abdel-Ati Ahmed	Global Bioenergy Partnership Focal Point of Egypt	Desert Research Center
Mr Essam Hanout	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Authority (EEAA) – International Cooperation	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Authority (EEAA) – International Cooperation
Ms Houda El-Shwadfy	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Authority (EEAA) – International Cooperation	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Authority (EEAA) – International Cooperation
Ms Soha Taher	General Manager of International Conventions & Conferences	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Authority (EEAA) – International Cooperation
Mr Jacopo Tavassi	Grants and Procurement Manager, Joint Rural Development Programme	European Union

Stephane David	Programme Manager Agriculture and Rural Development	European Union
Dr Chiara Morini	Programme Officer, Joint Rural Development Programme	European Union/Embassy of Italy
Dr Maamoon Alalawi	Executive Secretary	FAO Central Region Locust Commission Secretary
Mr Hussein Gadain	FAO Representative in Egypt	FAO Egypt
Mr Gebril Osman	Meeting with M&E Consultant	FAO Egypt
Ms Zahra Ahmed	Project Manager "Improving Household Food Security and Nutrition" project	FAO Egypt
Mr Mohamed Yacoub	Assistant FAO Representative	FAO Egypt
Mr Mohamed Al Ansary	Former FAOR Assistant/ retired expert	FAO Egypt
Ms Rawya Eldabi	Communication Officer Nutrition project	FAO Egypt
Mr Lotfi Allal	ECTAD Team leader	FAO Egypt
Mr Toni Ettel	Programme Operations Officer	FAO Egypt
Mr Ahmed Saad	Veterinarian/Team member	FAO Egypt
Jennifer Smolak	Nutrition and Food Systems Officer	FAO Egypt
Jippe Hoogeveen	Technical Officer	FAO HQ
Jorge Fonseca	Nutrition and Food Systems Officer	FAO HQ
Cristina Scarpocchi	Project Coordinator	FAO HQ
Mr Dimitri Prikhodko	Economist TCI Investment Centre	FAO HQ
Mr Abdessalam OuldAhmed	Assistant Director General	FAO RNE
Mr Pasquale Steduto	Regional Strategic Programme Coordinator	FAO RNE
Nabil Gangi	Deputy Regional Representative for the Near East and North Africa.	FAO RNE
Ms Biljana Radojevic	FAO Natural Resources Officer (Climate Change and Sustainability)	FAO RNE
Ms Maria IllanRives	FAO Monitoring and Reporting Consultant	FAO RNE
Mr Ayman Omer	Delivery Manager of the Regional Initiative Building Resilience	FAO RNE
Mr Alfredo Impiglia	Delivery Manager of the Regional Initiative on Small-Scale Agriculture for Inclusive Development	FAO RNE
Ms Malika Martini	RNE Gender Officer	FAO RNE
Mr Dost Muhammed	Plant Production Officer	FAO RNE
Mr Markos Tibbo	Regional Livestock Officer	FAO RNE
Dr Fawzi Karajeh	Regional Water Resources and Irrigation Officer	FAO RNE
Dr Magdi Latif	Knowledge and Information Management Officer	FAO RNE
Shoki Al-Dobai	Regional Plant Protection Officer	FAO RNE
Kayan Jaff	Senior Policy Officer	FAO RNE
Ms Fatima Hachem	Senior Nutrition Officer	FAO Rome (former RNE officer)
Dr Mohamed Abdel Baky Amer	Chairman	General Authority for Fish Resources Development
Dr Mohamed Ezz-Edin	Under Secretary Central Administration of Preventive Medicine	General Organization for Veterinary services

Evaluation of FAO's Contribution to the Arab Republic of Egypt

Mr Hanafi Abdelhaq	IFAD Country Director	IFAD Egypt
Mr Ismail Faramawi	Senior Agricultural Expert	Italian Cooperation
Mr Felice Longobardi	Programme Officer	Italian Cooperation
Professor Dr Hisham Aallam	Supervisor of the Central Administration for Foreign Agricultural Relations	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
Professor Dr Mohammed Abdel Naby Desouky	Head of Economic Affairs Sector	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
Dr Dina El-Khishin	Supervisor of the Central Administration for Foreign Agricultural Relations (she has since been replaced)	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
Dr Sayed Khalifa	Chief Sector Agriculture Extension	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
Engineer Mahmoud Hassan	Head of Central Administration for Afforestation and Environment	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
Dr Saad Nassar	Chairman of the Ministerial Team for the Agricultural policies	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
Mahmoud El Saaid	Senior Advisor to the Minister	Ministry of Local Administration (MOLA)
Ahmed Youssif Mansour	Vice Chairman of General Authority for Supply Commodities	Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade
Mr Ahmed Abou El Kheir	Senior Official	Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade
Mr Ahmed Khorshid	Food Technology Consultant	Ministry of Supply and Internal Trade
Mr Mohamed Saleh El-Bassiouny	Adviser Minister's Office	Ministry of Water Resources and irrigation (MWRI)
Dr Mohamed El-Fetiany	General Manager of Minister's technical office	Ministry of Water Resources and irrigation (MWRI)
Engineer Waleed Hakiki	Coordinator of the National Water Resources Plan Project	Ministry of Water Resources and irrigation (MWRI)
Mr Abdel Aleem Elshafee	Agricultural Extension Officer	Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
Ms Afaf Abdel Fatah Tawfik	Director General	National Nutrition Institute
Mr Said El-Elkosayer	Chairman	Principal Bank Agricultural Developmental and Credit (PBDAC)
Nancy Nour	External Relations Officer	Principal Bank Agricultural Developmental and Credit (PBDAC)
Mr Richard Dictus	UN Resident Coordinator	UNDP
Professor Dr Hussein El-Henawy	President of the Union of Producers and Exporters of Horticultural Crops (UPEHC)	Union of Producers and Exporters of Horticultural Crops (UPEHC)
Mr Yasser El-Khaial	Management Technology and Information Manager	Union of Producers and Exporters of Horticultural Crops (UPEHC)
Akmal Elerian	Senior Program Manager	USAID
Dr Gadallah Ahmed El Khouli	Head of the Veterinary Medical Directorate of the Behira Governorate	Veterinary Medical Directorate of the Behira Governorate
Mr Meghesteb Haile	Country Director	WFP

Appendix 3. List of documents consulted

- 1 TORs, Country Program Evaluation, OED, FAO, March 2017
- 2 TCP/EGY/3503 – Support to the Reform of the Law Governing the Agricultural Cooperatives in Egypt
- 3 Egypt Wheat Sector Review, 2015
- 4 FAO Mission Report on the REEF project, in March 2016
- 5 SADS of the MALR
- 6 MALR's Plan – as published in electronic newspapers of 15th March 2016 after a meeting between HE the President, the Minister of Agriculture and three deputy ministers
- 7 Documentary on Tunisian Organic Sector
- 8 TCP/SNO/3501 - TCP on Capacity Building for Food Loss Reduction; Improving household food and nutrition security in Egypt by targeting women and the youth; GCP/EGY/024/ITA; LOGICAL FRAMEWORK
- 9 "The future of food and agriculture – trends and challenges", FAO, 2017
- 10 Updated version of the CPF, October 2016
- 11 FAO CPFs and Country Representative Annual Reports
- 12 FAO Strategic Framework
- 13 FAO Strategic Objectives
- 14 Regional Initiatives Documents
- 15 National Water Resources Plan (2012-2017) and (2017-2037)
- 16 Projects Documents and Progress Reports (22 projects)
- 17 Documentations provided by the EU-Joint Rural Development Program
- 18 Improving household food and nutrition security in Egypt by targeting women and the youth; GCP/EGY/024/ITA; LOGICAL FRAMEWORK, Project document, Progress Reports, BCC workshop report. BCC Strategy
- 19 Egypt and FAO; Partnering for sustainable food security and climate change adaptation
- 20 Projects Document and Terminal Statement TCP/EGY/3303 Capacity Enhancement to the Food Security Policy Advisory Board
- 21 National Food & Nutrition Policy & Strategy Egypt 2007 – 2017, MOH/WHO/NNI 2007
- 22 WFP country programme Egypt website May 2, 2017 <http://www1.wfp.org/countries/egypt>
- 23 Egypt demographic and Health Survey, EDHS 2014, Ministry of Health and Population Cairo, Egypt El-Zanaty and Associates Cairo, Egypt The DHS Program ICF International Rockville, Maryland, USA <http://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR302/FR302.pdf>
- 24 Global Nutrition Report Country profile Egypt, 2014
- 25 Website National Nutrition Institute
- 26 FAO Gender Policy
- 27 FAO Environmental and Social Standards

7. List of Annexes

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

Annex 1. Terms of Reference

Annex 2. Terms of Reference for the Evaluation Reference Group

Annex 3. Main components of the FAO results framework



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

OFFICE OF EVALUATION
www.fao.org/evaluation