



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the United  
Nations

## Office of Evaluation

### **Sudan Institutional Capacity Programme: Food Security Information for Action – North Programme (SIFSIA-N) - OSRO/SUD/620/MUL**

*Management response to the evaluation report*

## 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>

*Permission to make copy, download or print copies of part or all of this work for private study and limited classroom use is hereby granted, free of charge, provided that an accurate citation and suitable acknowledgement of FAO as the source and copyright owner is given. Where copyright holders other than FAO are indicated, please refer to the original copyright holder for terms and conditions of reuse. All requests for systematic copying and electronic distribution, including to list servers, translation rights and commercial reuse should be addressed to [copyright@fao.org](mailto:copyright@fao.org).*

For further information, please contact:

Director, OED  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 1, 00153  
Rome, Italy  
Email: [evaluation@fao.org](mailto:evaluation@fao.org)

---

*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 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.*

Submitted by – TCE April 2012

<i>Management response to the OSRO/SUD/620/MUL (North Sudan) Final Project Evaluation</i>					Date
Evaluation Recommendation	Management response <b>Accepted, partially accepted or rejected</b> and comment on the Recommendation	Management plan			
		Action to be taken	Responsible unit	Timeframe	Further funding required (Y or N)
<b>Insert title of section, if any</b>					
<b>Recommendation 1</b> As indicated in this evaluation report, there may be a window of opportunity opening to ratify the Rural Development, Food Security and Poverty Alleviation Act and to establish the Food Security Council (FSC) with the support of the ARP. This will require high level political engagement and buy-in. Pursuing this should be prioritised by the programme and by the PSU with the support of the FAO Representative.	<b>Accepted</b> – process has already started	High level group (comprising parliament members, Under Secretaries, representatives of Agricultural Revival program, UN agencies, Univ Professors, etc) formed and necessary memo (of rationalizing the formation of FSC) prepared and submitted to the Vice President Office awaiting for final decisions	<b>FAO and the PSU, in collaboration with the FSTS</b>	Up to end of April 2012	N
<b>Recommendation 2</b> The current composition of the FSTS must be strengthened in terms of its representation of key sectors that are relevant to food security. The Ministry of Welfare and Social Security and the Ministry of Finance must be encouraged to nominate staff and to play a full role in the work of the FSTS.	<b>Accepted</b> – the restructuring proposal has been submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (the host and FS mandated institution).	Restructuring of the FSTS will be done in line with the formation of Food Security Council in which the upcoming project will play a vital role.	<b>SIFSIA SC, Director of FSTS and PSU</b>	End of April 2012	Y
<b>Recommendation 3</b> The online information systems that are close to completion but still outstanding must be rapidly finalised so that there is at least a couple of months for them to be tried and tested before the SIFSIA programme ends. This refers to 'FARMER' under FAMIS and the online nutrition information system. Once FARMER is live, the web location of the market information system should be rationalised so that it presents the most up-to-date information and to avoid confusion. (This may mean ending	<b>Accepted</b> – the esoko web site has been fully replaced by the nationally owned <a href="http://www.farmers.sd">www.farmers.sd</a> website. The Nutrition Information System (NIS) website has already been hosted by the National Information Centre which is run by the MoH experts.	The market information system manager has finalized the process of migrating all ESOKO outputs to FARMERS. The IT expert at the MoH managed to run the system locally.	PSU	End of March 2012	N

<p>ESOKO)</p> <p><b>Recommendation 4</b> The embryonic Food Security &amp; Nutrition Working Group must become fully fledged during the final months of the SIFSIA programme, with the PSU's support, to establish its role and credibility as a forum for food security bringing together stakeholders from government, the international community and the private sector. At least one further well-planned and facilitated meeting, with this objective, should be held before the PSU disbands.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b> – the working group has started to be functional. One meeting planned but it requires a high level engagement and proper Government leadership should be affirmed.</p>	<p>Other operational groups, like the IPC working group, which are currently functioning well will continue to be good entry points. In addition, there is a possibility of restructuring the working group, if recommendation # 1 is executed as the FSC will require new high level establishments.</p>	<p>PSU and FSTS</p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>N</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5</b> A clear strategy for ensuring the continuation and further development of key components of the food security information system that SIFSIA has supported at federal level, that are unlikely to be sustained when Stabex funding is withdrawn, should be drawn up. This includes seeking external funding for activities at federal level that will not be covered by the new food security project, namely the continuation and further development of FAMIS, and the continuation and strengthening of the IPC. It also means ensuring that there is ongoing support to the MoH for the nutrition information system, possibly from UNICEF.</p>	<p><b>Partially accepted</b> – The SIFSIA-N exit strategy has clearly demonstrated how the major outputs of SIFSIA will be sustained when the Stabex resources are withdrawn. Currently some of the established systems are running with minimal support from the Government. However, some of core supports, including the FAMIS and IPC, have already been linked to other institutions which are willing to support, like FEWSNET supporting FAMIS and IPC. Government line ministries are also willing to maintain the service.</p>	<p>Several institutions have adopted the IPC tool for their decision making, including USAID, FEWSNET, CIDA, and the World Bank. Final agreements have yet to be signed in supporting these core elements of food security information. Telephone companies (MTN and Sudani) have also signed agreements with FAMIS in sharing revenues through the FAMIS subscription system</p>	<p><b>FAO and PSU with EU support</b></p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6</b> SIFSIA and the FSTS must develop a clear communication and dissemination strategy to raise awareness of the components of the food security information system it has strengthened and the data available, of the role of the FSTS, and to build support for the continuation of the work. This needs to be carefully targeted so that it is appropriate for different audiences. Consideration should be given to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> organizing a workshop for the Under-Secretaries of the respective line ministries engaging in the SIFSIA programme</li> </ul>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b> – Despite non-committed resources, communication strategies which were developed by FAO-HQ communication officers have been laid out and are being exercised. In addition, additional modifications of the strategy have been introduced during 2011 (by FAO-information officer) and is</p>	<p>Translate the current strategies into Arabic and promote their wide implementations. More awareness creations are expected during the final launch of SIFSIA outputs.</p>	<p><b>PSU and FSTS with support from FAO-R</b></p>	<p>End of April 2012</p>	<p>Y</p>

<p>in a neighbouring country such as Kenya that has a more developed food security information system, to build support for the work of the FSTS and how it can better link to policy-making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ this could be followed by a high-level workshop in Khartoum that showcases some of SIFSIA's work and ends with high-level government endorsement of the food security information system and how it relates to policy</li> <li>□ raising awareness amongst the international community, on both the humanitarian and development sides, of the food security information and analysis that is available and how it might meet their needs, for example through the FSNWG and by raising the profile of the FSTS and its analysis at FSL cluster meetings. Providing ongoing monitoring and analysis of food security conditions during 2012 is an immediate way of demonstrating the relevance and usefulness of SIFSIA's work. As a priority, design of the FSTS website must be completed so that it becomes an effective portal for all food security information. Raising awareness of the website should be a key part of the communications strategy</li> </ul>	<p>being used. However, more needs to be done in ensuring that the strategies are being implemented. In addition, the information strategies need to be translated and be used by the FSTS. The suggestion of making an awareness workshop and taking Under Secretaries to the neighbouring countries is OK but it is too late for the project to conduct it. The FSTS web site is functional and it is expected that all SIFSIA related outputs will be uploaded on it.</p>				
<p><b>Recommendation 7</b> The land cover data has become available late in the life of the SIFSIA programme. Raising awareness of the availability of this data should be a part of the communication and dissemination strategy to promote its utilization. Further training should be provided to the FSTS on utilization of the land cover data to consolidate their GIS capabilities. This should be done as Training of Trainers to promote the continued transfer of skills beyond the end of the SIFSIA programme.</p>	<p><i>Accepted</i> – an atlas which has state level landcover map has been produced, will widely be disseminated with a database (in a DVD). Training of FSTS and FNC experts in utilizing the landcover update has been done.</p>	<p>The database has started to be utilized via some products including WISDOM (Woodfuel Integrated Supply/Demand Overview Mapping) application. Further high level demonstration will be done.</p>	<p>PSU and FAO NRL</p>	<p>Mid April</p>	<p>N</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 8</b> In order to ensure that the new food security project benefits fully from the learning and experience of SIFSIA, some hand-over between the outgoing and incoming CTAs must be planned. Ideally this would happen before the end of the SIFSIA programme. If this is not possible, then ways of ensuring that the CTAs have substantial time together in Khartoum should be planned to ensure transmission of learning and of key contacts and networks</p>	<p><i>Accepted</i></p>	<p>During the briefing of the new CTA at hq, it will be arranged for the previous one to be present in order to ensure transmission of learning and of key contacts and networks takes place.</p>	<p>FAO Rome</p>	<p>End of April 2012</p>	<p>N</p>

<p><b>Recommendation 9</b> The SIFSIA-N exit strategy should be revised and tightened to reflect the above priorities. The current update against each output in the log-frame in the draft exit strategy could usefully be included in an annex but does not currently indicate the strategic priorities for the final months of the programme</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b> – it is being done.</p>	<p>The first draft of the revised document has been finished and some of the recommendations above has been implemented.</p>	<p>PSU</p>	<p>End of April 2012</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>In order to sustain the benefits of the SIFSIA project</p>					
<p><b>Recommendation 10</b> The FSC must be established without delay. At a critical time in Sudan’s political and economic development the FSC could play a critical role in overseeing the food security of the country and taking key policy decisions to promote food security. In order to be effective, it requires a high level of political support, must be adequately resourced and representative of the different sectors that are relevant to food security. Once it is established, one of the 39 first jobs for the FSC is to review and streamline the proposed institutional set-up for food security in Sudan</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b> – Various high level efforts are on going by SIFSIA and by the formed group (Ref. Recommendation # 1) in advocating the establishment of the FSC.</p>	<p>High level committee formed and discussed and memo prepared and submitted to the vice president.</p>	<p>Government of Sudan</p>	<p>On going</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 11</b> Certain sectors that have been poorly represented so far in the SIFSIA programme should be boosted in future food security data gathering and analysis, in particular the livestock sector and ongoing monitoring of poverty and vulnerability. International support for improved data collection in these sectors should be considered.</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b> – Some core sectors of food security, including livestock have been well represented in the market information system, in the livestock monitoring (through CFSAM and PET) but more and stronger representation should be considered.</p>		<p>Government of Sudan</p>		<p>Y</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 12</b> GoS budget commitments for food security for 2012, to fund the FSTS and its operating costs must be fully realised as an indication of government’s commitment to the SIFSIA programme and to food security.</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b> – the Government has already put 50,000 SDG every month for the FSTS to run and more can be done through a proper lobbying by the FSTS and other units of the Government.</p>		<p>Government of Sudan</p>		<p>Y</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 13</b> As indicated in recommendation no.5, continued international funding and technical support will be required to sustain some key elements of the food security information system that SIFSIA has supported, such as the IPC. FAO has a key role to play beyond the end of the SIFSIA programme to ensure this happens and is successful. FAO should also ensure that links are maintained between the FSTS and the GMFS crop production assessment</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b> – Some of the core functions of food security information system will be maintained through international agencies and the new project. More needs to be done through lobbying of maintaining core activities of SIFSIA/FSTS through the Government system.</p>		<p>Government of Sudan</p>		<p>Y</p>

process. The FAO mission in-country should provide ongoing support to the FSTS after the programme ends, to present its ongoing monitoring and analysis to key fora, such as FSL cluster meetings, which are an opportunity to reach the international community.					
<b>Recommendation 14</b> Other components of the food security information system could be taken a stage further in terms of their development and especially how they link together to form a coherent food security information system. To achieve this would require further international support in terms of funding and technical support. For example, the nutrition information system could be more closely linked to other sources of food security information, including the livelihood zoning.	<b>Partially Accepted</b> - Some of the core functions have already linked up with other UN agencies, like support to the Nutrition information system linked up with UNICEF and WHO and IPC and FAMIS with FEWS NET and WFP as they have endorsed the tools. More involvement with other stakeholders will strengthen the system.		Government of Sudan		N
For the new food security project					
<b>Recommendation 15</b> There is a need to secure high-level political buy-in at federal level at the beginning of the project to ensure it gets off to a good start, that adequate government resources are made available, and that there is a strong connection to the FSC (assuming this is established)	<b>Accepted</b> – This will be a “lesson learned” to be applied to the successor project.	The FAO and EU need to organize team of experts in conducting this engagement plan through the inception phase of a project.	FAO and EU Delegation		N
<b>Recommendation 16</b> The project must be based on a wide skill-set that covers both the technical and policy-making dimensions of the project. This refers to the skill-set of the technical advisors and the support provided from FAO HQ	<b>Partially Accepted</b> – It is difficult to have an expert who would have a complete skill set in running a complex project, like SIFSIA. This has been tackled by engaging and hiring various national and international experts on the policy area – in preparing policy briefs, reviewing sectoral policies, policy oriented documents, to conduct applied researches, etc. However, more involvement and regular policy advisory group or experts could have been hired to achieve more through short term stack consultancy and backstopping services.	Strong lessons can be learned in engaging more experts from HQ to get involved in such kinds of action oriented project. Strong coordination skills and understanding the skill sets required is an asset.	FAO HQ		N
<b>Recommendation 17</b> Based on the experience of the SIFSIA programme, recruitment of high calibre national consultants may be a more successful strategy than international recruitment, especially for the state-level technical adviser positions. Such a recruitment strategy would require active head-hunting as well as widespread advertising	<b>Partially Accepted</b> – a combination of the two needs to be exercised – hunting for a national skill without compromising the quality.		FAO		N

<p><b>Recommendation 18</b> Capacity building at state level should be preceded by a capacity needs assessment. Training should focus on key functions within line ministries which contribute directly to the project outputs/outcomes; training must be tailored to deliver the specific skills set required and as far as possible should be cyclical, on-the-job and supported through training of trainers and regular follow-up. It should also be made clear what outputs are expected from trainees after they have completed a training programme, and the institutional support that will be required for the capacity-building to be effective.</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b> – As indicated in the project document, state level trainings were not part of the full responsibility of the project. Trainings at the federal level were conducted on needs basis and focus has been given to on-job trainings for core relevant institutions. Trainings at the state level were done for more awareness creation than proper capacity building. However, this lesson can be utilized to apply it for the next level of extension of the project.</p>	<p>Training assessment tools can effectively be applied but maintaining the trained skilled personnel become the responsibility of the host (Government institution) which is beyond SIFSIA.</p>	<p>FAO</p>		<p>N</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 19</b> The food security policy component of the project should be given greater emphasis than has happened in the SIFSIA programme, should be addressed more strategically and be better supported institutionally by FAO through technical assistance with the appropriate skills set. There should be greater investment in analysis that feeds into policy recommendations and in communication and dissemination, including Arabic translation of all documents produced.</p>	<p><b>Partially accepted</b> – all the necessary support was given to the policy component via training, policy dialogue, preparing policy briefs, policy focussed research documents, etc. The only missing thing had been aggressive dissemination of the service, which does not require any specific skill set – only that SIFSIA did not get enough time due to the delay in the implementation of policy related activities. In addition, the ground level situation is not fully conducive for policy implementations. Furthermore, the new upcoming project will have a more policy focus in taking up many of policy related issues.</p>	<p>This is partially a repetition of recommendation 16 and necessary skill sets acquired in due time but some policy related documents were produced late in the project life span which did not give enough time for aggressive promotion, translation and dissemination of these policy focussed docs.</p>	<p>FAO</p>		<p>Y</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 20</b> A holistic approach to food security must be promoted, supported by a clear conceptual framework that is widely disseminated from the outset. Greater attention must be paid to the livestock sector than happened in the SIFSIA programme, and to access to food as well as food production. A gender-sensitive approach must be actively promoted and mainstreamed from the outset.</p>	<p><b>Partially Accepted</b> – after the mid-term evaluation, which recommended, a holistic conceptual framework, a FS framework was prepared and utilized during the last two years of the project. Despite its late utilization, the conceptual framework did not deter SIFSIA in promoting a holistic approach. However, it is admitted that there had not been any gender streaming activities though more than 80% of the beneficiaries of the SIFSIA capacity building had been women.</p>	<p>Although there had been an improvement in understanding food security as a holistic approach, more needs to be done at a relatively high level.</p>	<p>FAO and EU</p>		<p>N</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 21</b> The project could commence with</p>	<p><b>Accepted</b> – to minimize the problem of</p>	<p>FAO started communicating</p>	<p>FAO, EU and</p>		<p>N</p>

minimal delay to ensure transfer of learning and experience from the SIFSIA programme and to ensure the incoming technical advisory team benefits fully from the experience, knowledge and networks of the outgoing SIFSIA PSU staff.	transition, strong communications with the EU and the Government is critical. This can be merged with recommendation 8.	with the EU in facilitating the process.	Government of Sudan		
<b>Recommendation 22</b> The state-focused food security project should be complemented by internationally-funded technical advisory support to federal level, particularly focused on the areas that have been highlighted in recommendation 5 as requiring ongoing support – for FAMIS and the IPC	<b>Accepted</b> – strong lessons learned – this can be applied in collaboration with the EU – especially for the upcoming project.		FAO, EU and Government of Sudan		
<b>Generic Recommendation:</b> Information systems depend entirely upon the quality of data generated from the field and so the focus of attention must initially be directed towards effective functional specification and building capacity at this level first and work incrementally upwards. Data quality assessments should be built into the information workflow to provide confidence in the products produced or at least information of explicit known knowledge.	<b>Accepted</b> – this looks to be a logical step for the upcoming EU funded project. It will also be a natural growth to move to the state level information system once the federal system is in place. This state level project will work more on improving the state level’s data generation, and analysis which will improve the overall data quality, coming from the States.				Y