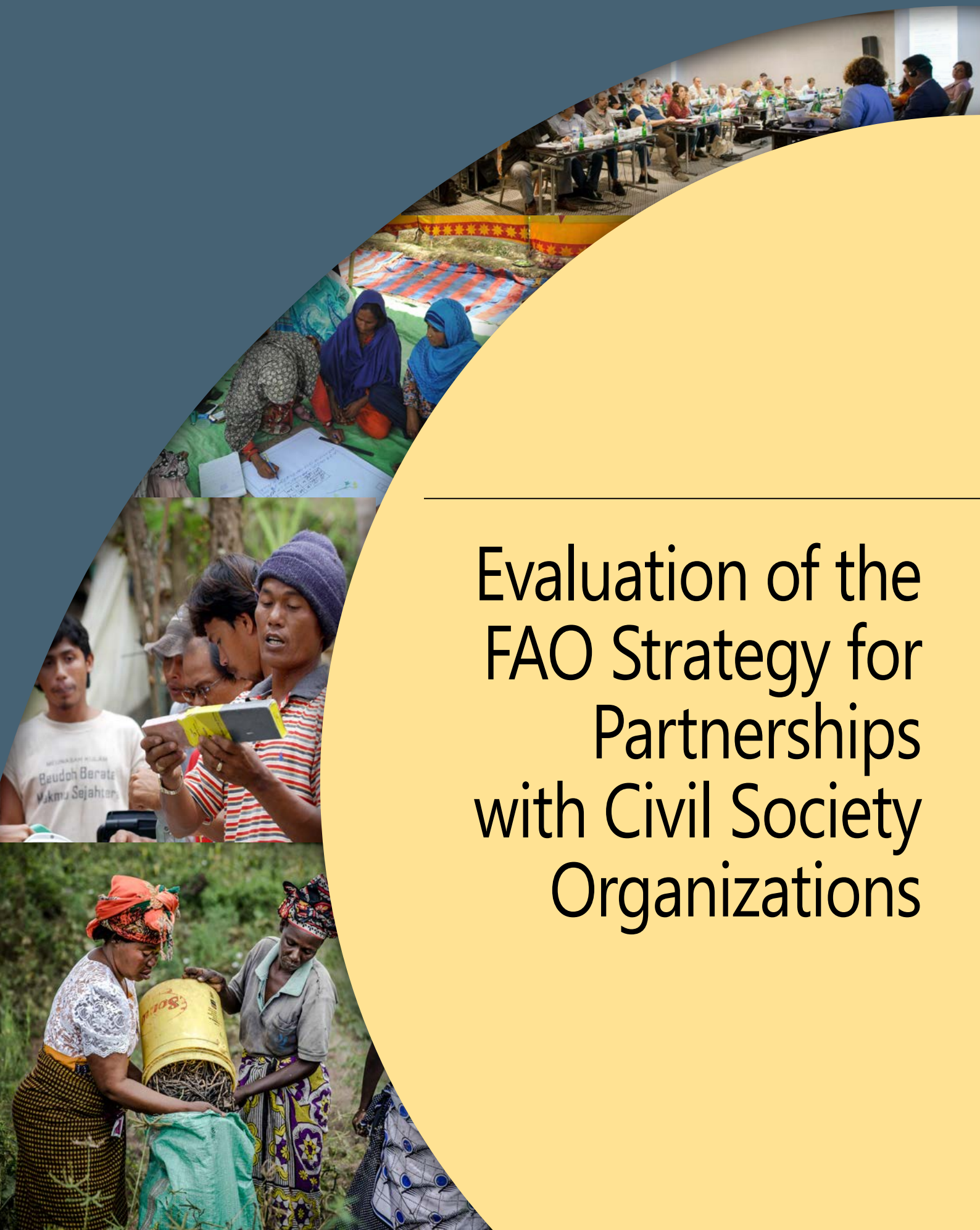




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Evaluation of the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations

Thematic Evaluation Series

Evaluation of the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
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Acronyms and abbreviations

AFA	Asian Farmers Association
AVSF	Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières
CBO	Community-based organization
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CI	Consumers International
CONSAN	Food and Nutritional Security Council
CPF	Country Programming Framework
CSM	Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAOR	FAO Representative
FBRN	Food Bank Regional Network
FIAN	First Information & Action Network
FNPC	Fédération Nationale des Producteurs de Coton
ICN	International Conference on Nutrition
ICO	International cooperation organization
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFOAM	International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPC	International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
OPA	Operational partner agreement
OPC	Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity
MoU	Memorandum of understanding
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OED	Office of Evaluation
OPIM	Operational Partners Implementation Modality
PS	Programme Support and Technical Cooperation Department
PSA	Personal Services Agreement
PSD	Programme Support and Technical Cooperation Department
PSDU	Due Diligence and Prospect Research Unit
PSP	Partnership Division
PSU	Partnerships and United Nations Collaboration Division
PSUF	Family Farming and Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations Unit
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SubCom-RFA	Sub-Committee for the Review of Financial and other Agreements
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
VGGTs	Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure
WFP	World Food Programme
WVI	World Vision International

Executive summary

1. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has a long history of engagement with civil-society organizations (CSOs) in the fight against food insecurity, malnutrition and rural poverty. The Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations, endorsed by the Organization's Governing Bodies in 2013, has reaffirmed FAO's intention to build upon and expand its long-standing collaborations with CSOs to achieve strategic development results. This evaluation assesses FAO's progress on implementing the Strategy and examines the efficiency of related processes, mechanisms and arrangements. It assesses the results of the Strategy at global, regional and country level.
2. The evaluation notes the Strategy's relevance in providing a framework for enhanced partnerships and collaborative initiatives and its role in supporting the engagement of CSOs in policy dialogue through a range of multi-stakeholder platforms, international forums and initiatives to foster regional and South–South Cooperation. FAO's partnerships with CSOs have contributed to its Strategic Objectives and the substance of the Strategy has remained relevant in the context of global commitments, emerging development priorities and the 2030 Agenda. While this is commendable, most CSO partnership initiatives, particularly at country level, were found to lack strategic focus on long-term relationship building, co-creation and burden-sharing.
3. FAO's partnerships with CSOs have contributed to several areas of work identified in the Strategy, most notably in field-programme implementation and policy dialogue. However, the majority of partnerships at regional and local level have been limited to one-time engagements, with limited replicability and sustainability of results. Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) were meant to be the main instrument for implementing the Strategy and identifying potential areas of CSO involvement. However, in most FAO CPFs reviewed for this evaluation, partnerships with CSOs were either not mentioned or given minimal consideration. Most CSO collaborations at country level are not planned through the CPF, but based on specific project needs, generally through service-delivery arrangements, with CSOs referenced as implementing partners or beneficiaries. Nonetheless, FAO's interventions to foster civil-society engagement have resulted in productive partnerships. Its efforts to support national implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGTs), in particular, have been an effective avenue for greater civil-society engagement at country level.
4. The challenges in establishing collaborations and partnerships between FAO and civil society were attributed to time-consuming and complex processes, inconsistent procedures and reactive, rather than strategic, approaches. FAO's risk management and due diligence mechanisms have protected the Organization from risk, but are seen as cumbersome and lengthy, restricting greater collaboration. In dealing with a wide variety of organizations, FAO must consider partners' capacity and make further efforts to clarify the taxonomy, roles, levels, scope and principles of demand-based engagement.

Conclusions

5. The Strategy underlines FAO's commitment to continued engagement with CSOs. Despite the limited number of formalized partnerships, there has been a growing trend towards greater collaboration with civil-society entities. FAO needs to capitalize on these arrangements and effectively guide its units towards strategic, long-term engagements to achieve the SDGs.

6. Most of FAO's partnerships with CSOs have not been strategically planned, with minimal integration into FAO programmes and workplans. To fully capitalize on the potential for joint global action for Agenda 2030, FAO needs to make a concerted effort to forge demand-based partnerships and effectively identify and engage appropriate CSOs as equal and long-term development partners, rather than contract their services for short-term assignments.
7. The overall method of operation for partnership arrangements appears to be limited to a few models for and instruments of collaboration that do not foster demand-based engagement with CSOs as development partners. FAO needs to consider improving its procedures for entering into partnerships by expanding its range of agreements and partnership instruments.
8. Partnership development efforts are not underpinned by an effective guidance and knowledge-management system that could serve as an organizational hub for best practices and well-documented approaches to partnership development and collaboration.

Recommendations

9. The Strategy should continue to serve as a framework for FAO's engagement with civil society, facilitating shared-value collaboration based on equality, trust, inclusion and mutual benefits. The Partnerships and United Nations Collaboration Division (PSU) should guide FAO technical divisions in undertaking an analysis of the opportunities and benefits of bringing CSOs into their main workstreams, focusing on partnerships that would mobilize an appropriate mix of knowledge and resources to achieve FAO's Strategic Objectives and the 2030 Agenda. Each programme country should map out relevant non-state actors and analyse where and how demand-based engagement with them could contribute to the objectives of the new United Nations Cooperation Framework and CPFs. As stipulated in the Strategy, PSU should enhance its efforts to assist the decentralized offices in the mapping exercise.
10. In the context of the 2030 Agenda, FAO should consider expanding its engagement in effective multi-stakeholder partnership networks and mechanisms, moving beyond bilateral partnership agreements. FAO Country Offices should assess complementarities and synergies with other development actors' work in priority areas of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and choose to lead or participate in forming multi-stakeholder partnerships between CSOs, United Nations agencies and other development actors in UNSDCF priority areas.
11. FAO should review and develop a coherent approach to developing partnership arrangements, streamline its processes and revisit its instruments for engaging with CSOs to ensure that safeguards are commensurate with the level and scope of the engagement. In this regard, FAO could seize opportunities for innovation and for building on and scaling up best practices and existing models that may inform the creation of a one-stop-shop official portal through which it can interact with (prospective) partners.
12. FAO should improve its assessment of the value and impact of ongoing and past partnerships and draw lessons to develop updated guidance for initiating effective collaboration approaches, making necessary updates to Strategy implementation. In line with the arrangements originally proposed for Strategy implementation, PSU should significantly strengthen its partnership monitoring system, ensure timely updates of the partnerships database and assess the impact and benefits of partnerships, as well as the challenges faced, for accountability and learning purposes. The resulting information should be included in guidance materials and knowledge products, as well as in regular reporting to the FAO Programme Committee and other reporting mechanisms.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the evaluation

13. This report outlines the main findings and conclusions of an evaluation of FAO's Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (FAO, 2013a). The evaluation was requested at the 125th session of the FAO Programme Committee in November 2018.¹
14. The main purpose of the evaluation is to provide an objective assessment of FAO's progress on implementing the Strategy and to examine the extent to which it has contributed to FAO's overall Strategic Objectives.

1.2 Scope and objectives

15. The evaluation covers the period from Strategy adoption in 2013 to the end of 2019. It examines whether the Strategy's design and approach to partnerships are appropriate, assesses implementation and reports on the achievements of FAO's CSO partnerships. It also provides an analysis of why certain results did or did not materialize. The evaluation encompasses all FAO processes, mechanisms and other strategic implementation arrangements, including CPFs, guidance, tools, capacity and resources used. The results of the Strategy are assessed at global, regional and country level, according to the Strategy's key categories of CSO contribution.
16. The evaluation uses the definitions of 'partnership' and 'civil-society organization' used by FAO in its Strategies on partnership, which deem a collaboration a partnership if there is active engagement in a joint or coordinated action by two or more partners, with a long-term commitment, where all parties contribute to the output towards achieving a common goal (FAO, 2012a). Civil society has been described as "the sphere in which social movements organize themselves around objectives, constituencies, and thematic interests"; CSOs often share certain common goals, resources and/or approaches to maximize their decision-making capacity, advocacy and knowledge (United Nations General Assembly, 1998).
17. The evaluation focuses on partnerships formalized through a legal agreement, such as a memorandum of understanding (MoU), partnership agreement or exchange of letters, all of which are tracked in the Partnerships Division's (PSP) database (currently 28 partnerships). It also reviews partnerships based on letters of agreement in selected countries, as well as examples of collaborative initiatives with CSOs that have not been formalized.
18. The evaluation focuses on three overarching questions:
 - i. **Strategic relevance:** To what extent has the formulation and implementation of the Strategy responded to global development priorities and the needs of FAO Members and provided strategic direction and guidance to FAO units?
 - ii. **Effectiveness and contribution to results:** To what extent have FAO's partnerships with CSOs contributed to FAO's Strategic Framework results and to results at regional and country level?

¹ For a full report of the 125th session of the Programme Committee, see:
<http://www.fao.org/3/my401en/my401en.pdf>

- iii. **Efficiency of partnership development modalities:** Do the Strategy and its implementation mechanisms provide a coherent framework for promoting CSO partnerships?

1.3 Methodology

- 19. The evaluation was conducted by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) with the support of a team of external consultants with thematic and country-specific expertise. Throughout the process, the evaluation benefited from the insights of the Family Farming and Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (PSUF) Team and other FAO units. Further information on the methodology can be found in the evaluation terms of reference in Annex 1.
- 20. The evaluation relied on multiple sources and mixed methods of data collection: document review, data analysis, a meta-analysis of evidence from past evaluations and interviews with stakeholders at global, regional and country level. Country selection was based on the extent and diversity of FAO's engagement with CSOs, identified through a secondary data review, in consultation the PSUF Team. The Evaluation Team conducted case studies of the following countries (in addition to interviews at all Regional Offices and headquarters):
 - i. Africa: Cabo Verde, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania.
 - ii. Asia and the Pacific: the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Nepal, the Philippines and Viet Nam.
 - iii. Europe and Central Asia: Georgia, Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Portugal.
 - iv. Latin America and the Caribbean: Brazil, Colombia, Guatemala and Paraguay.
 - v. Near East and North Africa: Jordan and Lebanon.

1.4 Limitations

- 21. As mentioned, in setting the scope, the Evaluation Team focused on CSO partnerships that fell within the definitions of 'civil society organizations' and 'partnerships' set out in the FAO Strategies on partnership. The Evaluation Team found different interpretations of these definitions within FAO. Consequently, the evaluation focused its analysis on partnerships formalized through legal arrangements, such as MoUs, partnership agreements and exchanges of letters, referenced in progress reports submitted to the FAO Governing Bodies. The team complemented this analysis with an assessment of selected partnerships formed at country level.
- 22. The Evaluation Team faced challenges when it came to travel and working arrangements due to COVID-19 and experienced delays in reaching key informants and in compiling and obtaining data and information. Because of the travel restrictions in many countries during the evaluation period, the methodology was adjusted to include a mix of country case studies conducted by consultants based in those countries, as well as interviews and case studies conducted remotely by consultants with specific expertise. Because of these limitations, the evaluation does not pretend to be exhaustive in its description of the results achieved.

2. FAO's Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations

2.1 The Strategy

23. FAO's Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations was endorsed by the Organization's Governing Bodies in 2013. FAO partners with CSOs on the understanding that "the basic texts, rules, procedures or composition of FAO's Governing Bodies will not be affected" (FAO, 2013a). The basic texts set out FAO's relationships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the procedures and policies for CSO involvement in FAO's standard-setting processes (FAO, 2017a).
24. Recognizing CSOs as a key stakeholder in the fight against food insecurity, malnutrition and rural poverty, FAO has endeavoured to ensure better coordination and collaboration between public organizations and CSOs in a bid to engage and scale up successful programmes to transform agricultural production and to meet future food and employment needs. It pays particular attention to assessing the mutual benefits of partnerships and the risks that could potentially affect FAO's objectives as an impartial forum and knowledge-based intergovernmental organization. The Strategy identified six areas of collaboration and two levels of interaction with CSOs, with different rationale and methods of operation: (1) global, headquarters-based cooperation and (2) decentralized (regional, national, local) collaboration. The main focus of the Strategy is FAO's work with CSOs at the decentralized level.

2.2 Strategy implementation arrangements

2.2.1 The Family Farming and Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations Unit (PSUF)

25. The responsibility for Strategy implementation rests with the PSUF, which lies within the former Partnerships and South–South Cooperation Division (DPS). In January 2019, DPS was integrated into the new Programme Support and Technical Cooperation Department (PS) and rebranded the Partnerships Division (PSP). PSP's mandate includes initiating proposals together technical divisions and Regional and Country Offices, vetting proposed partners through a due diligence process and submitting proposals to the Sub-Committee for Review of Financial and Other Agreements (and, on rare occasions, to the Partnership Committee) for approval. At the time of evaluation, PSP's database listed 28 partnerships formed with CSOs since 2013. PSP's key performance indicators (KPIs) included 30 strategic partnerships brokered and sustained by end 2019 and 30 for the period ending 2021.

2.2.2 Implementation mechanisms

26. Arrangements for implementing the Strategy were first established for the 2014–15 biennium and complemented by a set of principles and guidelines for partnering with CSOs. In 2013, FAO adopted its staff guidance on working with CSOs, as well as guidelines to ensure the balanced representation of civil society in FAO meetings and processes (FAO, 2013c and 2013d). The FAO Logo Policy and Guidelines (2013) also regulate the conditions under which the FAO logo can be used within the framework of partnerships with CSOs.
27. FAO's intention is to rely on a network of partnership focal points to support engagement with CSOs and to ensure coherent and effective implementation of the Strategy across the Organization (FAO, 2013a). For partnerships at global level, discussions are held between PSP

and FAO's Strategic Programmes in the course of the annual planning processes, manifesting in service agreements with each one. FAO's partnership focal points in technical divisions at headquarters and partnership officers in the regional centres guide the decentralized offices in identifying and submitting all proposals for partnerships with non-state actors. At national level, Strategic Programme managers and FAO Representations determine whether prospective CSO partners can help bring about the delivery of specific CPF outputs.

28. PSUF has established a system for monitoring the implementation of partnerships in line with the Strategic Programme framework, which is applied across the Organization, in liaison with the responsible technical officers (RTOs). RTOs prepare annual progress reports on the partnership(s) for which they are responsible. PSP consolidates these reports into an annual report to FAO's Governing Bodies. Since 2018, PSP has maintained a corporate database of past and ongoing partnerships that serves as a repository of accumulated experience of working with CSOs (see Figure 2, Annex 2).

2.2.3 Due diligence process for the approval of partnerships

29. FAO has established mechanisms to identify and manage potential risks that could affect its intergovernmental character, independence and impartiality. Its risk management and due diligence functions aim to provide data and metrics to assess these risks and support informed decision-making on engagements with non-state actors, including CSOs.

2.2.4 Resources

30. The number of human resources dedicated to the headquarters team responsible for CSO partnerships has been largely stable since 2012, at two staff members (P4 and P1) and three consultants.

3. Findings

3.1 Strategic relevance

Finding 1. The Strategy reaffirms FAO's intention to build upon, expand and improve its long-standing collaborations with CSOs, providing a framework for enhanced partnerships and collaborative initiatives to achieve strategic development results and meet the Organization's mandate.

31. The evaluation found broad consensus among FAO management, staff and selected CSO representatives that FAO's Strategy had built on the foundations of past CSO engagement and alliances to enhance collaboration, streamline associated processes and provide strategic direction for possible areas of cooperation in relation to the development outcomes of FAO's reviewed Strategic Framework.
32. FAO has a long tradition of collaboration with the CSOs. Its partnership development efforts saw renewed impetus with the 1992 Summit on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, a recognized milestone in global efforts to achieve sustainable and equitable development. Since then, the United Nations has called for the increased engagement of civil society in a participatory development process, building on Agenda 21, adopted at the Rio Summit, which formalized nine sectors of society (dubbed the "major groups")² as the main channels through which the United Nations would facilitate broad participation in activities related to sustainable development (United Nations, 1992).
33. The 1996 World Food Summit, hosted by FAO, was a turning point in ensuring the participation of a wide range of CSOs in global policy dialogue. Civil society's participation was prominent during the preparatory process, with NGOs contributing to summit documents, regional and global consultations, and meetings of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). Some 500 CSOs attended the summit, while an NGO forum held in parallel welcomed 1 300 representatives from 80 countries. These meetings prompted the creation of global networks on food security that subsequently continued to function.
34. After the summit, FAO issued policy statements intended as a basis for greater collaboration. From 2000, it supported a series of regional NGO/CSO consultations, culminating in a joint pledge at the 26th session of the CFS to reinforce activities in support of food security. Key initiatives included the participation of CSOs in the preparation of the Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides (adopted by the FAO Council in 2002), the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security (adopted by the FAO Council in 2004), the inclusive process for developing the VGGTs in 2009–2010 and the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in 2015.
35. In preparation for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, FAO supported broad networking processes around the world to promote the active engagement of farmers' representatives and CSOs in the conference and related events. Since 2012, FAO's senior management has continuously emphasized the need to strengthen partnerships with all non-state actors, including CSOs, in light of FAO's reviewed Strategic Objectives to step up progress on ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. This renewed focus was reflected in the process to develop the updated

²The "major groups" include women, children and youth, indigenous peoples, NGOs; local authorities, workers and trade unions, the scientific and technological community, farmers, business and industry.

Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations, which was the result of extensive engagement with Members and civil-society representatives, in line with the participatory approach promoted in the Strategy itself.

36. The consultation process with Members started with a provisional outline of the Strategy in March 2011, followed by endorsement in April 2013. The Strategy's acknowledgement of the mutual benefits of collaboration with CSOs was seen as a significant step forward, by FAO and civil-society representatives alike. The strategy identified key areas of collaboration on top of CSOs' traditional engagement in field-programme and capacity development activities. Since the Strategy was adopted, the number of partnership initiatives and thematic areas involving CSOs has increased significantly, reflecting FAO's efforts to promote their participation in development work, as well as in the Committee for Agriculture (COAG) and FAO Conferences (with observer status). FAO achieved its KPI of 30 strategic partnerships with non-state actors to be brokered and sustained by 2019 in 2015. While the Strategy was developed before the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, its main principles seem consistent with the prevalent United Nations-wide approach to building open and collaborative engagement with key stakeholders and non-state actors in the context of sustainable development.

Finding 2. In line with Strategy objectives, FAO has been promoting the greater participation of CSOs in global policy discussions, regional and national consultations, multi-stakeholder mechanisms and international forums associated with the Organization's mandate.

37. FAO supports the engagement of CSOs in policy dialogue with Members and decision makers through a range of multi-stakeholder platforms and international forums. This engagement spans the facilitation of intergovernmental platforms, such as the CFS, to the promotion of knowledge exchanges in thematic forums and conferences, initiatives to foster regional and South-South Cooperation, the FAO Regional Conferences, Technical Committees and other processes, such as the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Convention on Biological Diversity.
38. The Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSM), set up in 2010, serves as an autonomous, self-governed space for social movements and civil-society actors to discuss and coordinate on food security- and nutrition-related issues. The CSM facilitates the participation of non-state actors in the main CFS processes, fostering their engagement in policy discussions, developing guidelines and policy recommendations, and contributing to the formulation of global policies on issues of food security and nutrition.
39. Since the Civil Society Forum held in conjunction with the World Food Summit in 1996 and following its formalization in 2003, the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) has been creating alliances between social movements and institutions, providing space for the effective participation of representatives of small-scale food producers and indigenous peoples' organizations in international forums on agriculture and food systems. FAO has contributed to the IPC's work, formalizing its first MoU in 2003, then renewing it in 2014 and updating it in 2019.
40. The new 2013 Strategy prompted FAO to engage CSOs in a global debate on nutrition, with meetings in Rome in June 2014 to prepare for the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2). The ICN2 Civil Society Organizations Liaison Group was set up to support effective communication between a large group of interested parties and to facilitate positive engagement in the ICN2 process and outcome documents (the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and Framework for Action) (FAO and WHO, 2014). Similar FAO-led global events

provided opportunities for CSOs to engage in policy dialogue in other thematic areas, such as the International Symposium on Agroecology for Food Security and Nutrition (Rome, September 2014) and the International Symposium on the role of Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition (Rome, February 2016).

41. The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM-Organics International) contributes to policy dialogue on topics related to sustainable agriculture through the CFS, focusing on advocacy for agroecology and nutrition and taking part in negotiations and discussions with FAO Member delegates. It has contributed to normative activities, such as the drafting of the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management (FAO, 2017b) and the International Code of Conduct on Sustainable Use and Management of Fertilizers (FAO, 2019), and provided inputs to FAO statistical data on organic agriculture. IFOAM actively participates in global events, such as the International Year of Family Farming, International Year of Soil and the Decades of Nutrition and Family Farming, through the Coordination Committee for civil society.
42. FAO's Pastoralist Knowledge Hub (PKH),³ provides an institutional space for coordinating work on pastoralism and channels information across the pastoralist–science–policy interface. The PKH strives to provide authoritative advocacy on pastoralists' right for representation in decisions concerning the future of their livelihoods. PKH acted as a sounding board in the dissemination and implementation of the VGGTs, reaching out to pastoralist communities, organizing training and producing the requisite information in local languages. In July 2015, the PKH coordinated and financed the regional meeting for Central Asia, culminating in the creation of the Pastoralists Assembly of Central Asia, representing 400 communities in Mongolia, two in Russia, two in Kazakhstan and one each in Uzbekistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and India. The Assembly makes policy suggestions and advocates for mobility rights, customary laws and traditions, and pastoral community products.
43. La Via Campesina is an international movement with the world's largest constituency of smallholders and farmers. It comprises about 150 organizations in 70 countries, representing more than 200 million farmers. It has a long track record of working with the United Nations System, particularly FAO, to defend policies and positions that support smallholder-based sustainable agriculture and fisheries and food sovereignty. La Via Campesina developed a strategy to bring smallholder and peasant voices to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in 2023, notably, that of the Farmers Major Group.⁴ It also promoted the agroecological production model as a way of coping with sustainable development, stressing the need for a new value-chain approach and formulating proposal contributions relevant to the Rio+20 agenda. La Via Campesina, the World Farmers' Organization and the World Rural Forum were also engaged in consultations to develop the Global Action Plan to implement the United Nations Decade of Family Farming, a joint initiative by FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
44. The Development Association World Rural Forum (WRF) is an international association comprising 42 institutional partner organizations, including national and regional farmers' organizations – such as the Confederación de Organizaciones de Productores Familiares del MERCOSUR (COPROFAM), the Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network, the Programa Diálogo Regional Rural, the Pan African Farmers Organization and the Asian Farmers Association (AFA) – rural associations (such as Inades) and agricultural research centres (such as CIRAD) in 45 countries. It promotes family farming and sustainable rural

³ Project codes: GCP/GLO/536/GER and GCP/GLO/611/GER.

⁴ For more, see: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/majorgroups/farmers>

development. The informal relationship between the WRF and FAO dates back to 2010 and has centred on the coordination of international events of mutual interest. The first letter of agreement was signed in 2012 and, in 2015, the WRF won FAO's Jacques Diouf Award for individuals or institutions that have made a significant contribution to the improvement of global food security. The Organization signed its first MoU with WRF in 2019, focusing on advocating for and raising public awareness of family farming to enhance sustainable agriculture, ensure food security and nutrition, and advance rural development.

45. The Global Food Security Cluster, led jointly by FAO and the World Food Programme (WFP), has been operating since 2011 as part of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. It is a partnership of 64 institutions, including NGOs, such as RedR Australia and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, focused on coordinating the food-security response in humanitarian crises, and addressing issues of food availability, access and utilization. The non-governmental partners make their personnel and in-kind resources available to United Nations agencies operating in humanitarian contexts.
46. Regional consultations with CSOs prior to the FAO Regional Conferences have proved effective in securing civil-society inputs to discussions on development challenges pertinent to the regions. These consultations are organized by the IPC, a global platform of small-scale food producers, rural organizations and social movements. More recently, the organization has engaged with CSOs to solicit innovative ideas relevant to FAO's work, for example, through the FAO Innovation Symposium (Rome, 2018) or the framework of the FAO Symposium on the Future of Food (Rome, 2019), where CSOs shared their experience and innovative ideas on sustainable food systems and healthy diets.

Finding 3. At decentralized level, FAO efforts to develop partnerships with CSOs are guided by the local context and Member priorities, yet these efforts are not reflected in CPFs and related workplans.

47. The Strategy declares its main focus to be working with civil society at the decentralized level, with CPFs the main instrument of implementation. The evaluation found a diverse range of engagement in this regard, with some offices and technical divisions interacting more with CSOs, partly due to the focus and nature of their work, and others largely engaging in policy dialogue. Depending on the national development context, in certain countries, FAO's engagement with CSOs has come fairly naturally as part of its activities, while in others, such engagement has proved more challenging. The evaluation found that FAO has generally made efforts to promote CSO participation, even where this has been taxing. Even so, in the majority of FAO CPFs reviewed for this evaluation, partnerships with CSOs were either not mentioned or given minimal consideration, with CSOs only briefly referenced as service providers or beneficiaries.
48. FAO's Smart Adaptation of Forest Landscapes in Mountain Areas (SALMA) project in **Lebanon**, for example, includes extensive interaction with CSOs and local communities and is perceived to contribute to the National Afforestation and Reforestation Plan. FAO's efforts to make the government aware of the role of CSOs in forest management culminated in the establishment of a multi-stakeholder platform, enabling collaboration between CSOs, the Ministry of Agriculture, local authorities and communities in forest management and reforestation initiatives. At the same time, the 2016–2019 CPF document for Lebanon includes only general references to the involvement of CSOs, mainly as part of value-chain or agribusiness development, with limited indications as to their involvement in other development aspects.

Finding 4. FAO's partnerships with CSOs have contributed to the Organization's Strategic Objectives. The substance of the Strategy has remained relevant in the context of global commitments, emerging development priorities and 2030 Agenda. While this is commendable, further work is needed to systematically assess and document the contributions of these partnerships, their value and their overall development impact.

49. The expected contributions of FAO's partnerships with CSOs are linked to specific Strategic Objectives. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other international agreements (such as the Paris Agreement and Addis Ababa Action Agenda) accentuated the potential role of CSOs in helping to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). While the Strategy was developed before the 2030 Agenda, its substance and approaches are consistent with the prevalent United Nations-wide approach to building open and collaborative engagement with key stakeholders and non-state actors in the context of sustainable development. Since adopting the 2030 Agenda, FAO has endeavoured to link any partnership agreements to support for one or more of the SDGs as a precondition to completing the signing process. At the same time, the Evaluation Team did not find any evidence of a systematic assessment of the contributions of partnership initiatives to Strategic Objectives, related indicators or SDG targets.

3.2 Effectiveness and contribution to results

Finding 5. FAO's partnerships with CSOs have contributed to several areas of work identified in the Strategy, most notably, in field-programme implementation and policy dialogue. However, most partnerships at regional and local level have been limited to one-time engagements, with little replicability and sustainability of results.

50. The Evaluation Team categorized CSO partnership results according to the six areas of work identified in the Strategy. These are not necessarily mutually exclusive, however, as a single partnership (or partnership-related output, in some cases) can produce results in more than one area. While results were evident in all areas, the Team found the most meaningful ones to be in the areas of programme implementation and policy dialogue. Most partnerships in those areas have also produced results in other areas, such as emergency response, knowledge generation and normative activities. The likely explanations for this are (1) that these are some of FAO's major areas of operation (regardless of partnerships efforts) and (2) they are also the areas that CSO interviewees identified as their primary area of interest in terms of collaborating with FAO. We provide a selection of global, regional and national-level examples in the following paragraphs.
51. Of the 28 partnerships formalized with CSOs since the Strategy was adopted in 2013, 21 were ongoing and implemented as of June 2020, 2 were being discussed for possible renewal and 5 were inactive. While these partnerships generate positive results, much fruitful cooperation between FAO and many NGOs continues at the technical level. The evaluation found that most FAO collaborations and partnerships with civil society had been one-time events specifically designed to form or promote partnerships on specific development issues in the context of dedicated initiatives or programmes. There is potential to develop longer-lasting collaborations and partnerships with CSOs that could translate into more sustainable and scalable solutions to meet the SDGs.

Global level

52. The Strategy recognizes FAO's facilitation and brokerage roles in global policy discourse as a prime way of ensuring greater civil-society representation. The evaluation noted FAO's effective role in promoting civil-society participation in these processes, acting as a trusted and neutral broker.
53. Prior to the Strategy, one of the major achievements of FAO-CSO engagement had been the establishment of regional CSO consultations to collate views and priorities and to provide inputs to FAO Regional Conferences and Technical Committees (the Committee on Fisheries, Committee on Forestry and Committee on Agriculture). This links CSOs directly to the FAO Governing Bodies, as the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees report to the FAO Conference. Such consultations are organized through the IPC, formally established in 2003 when FAO signed its first civil-society MoU. Another regional mechanism, the Ad Hoc Committee, was set up in the Asia-Pacific region in 2010. When FAO adopted the Strategy in 2013, those CSOs involved in the processes welcomed the Organization's enhanced efforts to ensure civil society's voice was heard by FAO Members.
54. FAO's technical support for the IPC and its role in coordinating a number of CSOs also resulted in the 2016 publication of the IPC People's Manual on the Guidelines on Governance of Land, Fisheries and Forests (IPC, 2016). The manual was developed with the participation of several IPC organizations, with technical support from FAO. Among other things, the manual offers ways in which social movements and organizations can contact FAO Country Offices to propose joint activities and invite FAO or other organizations to take part in civil-society activities. It also suggests avenues to help secure funding for activities related to the VGGTs and governance of natural resources, as well as possibilities for technical assistance from FAO and other mechanisms (to conduct studies on the governance of land tenure, for instance).
55. In October 2016, FAO published a manual developed in collaboration with several NGOs to provide information for project managers on the right to free prior and informed consent. The work was undertaken through participatory consultative processes, involving Action Aid, Action Against Hunger, Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and World Vision International (WVI). Similarly, FAO's collaboration with Consumers International (CI), a global federation of consumer rights groups and observer on the Codex Alimentarius, resulted in a regional study in Latin America on the role of consumer organizations in transforming food systems, making them fairer, more transparent and better able to deliver on the Zero Hunger Challenge. CI used the study's findings in the publication it launched at the Global Forum on Food and Agriculture in Berlin in 2020 and contributed to the Guide to Consumers' Right to Food. FAO and CI have also conducted training and awareness initiatives globally to highlight the potential role of consumer organizations in steering agricultural production towards a more sustainable pathway.
56. Other global partnerships, such as that with the Self Employed Women's Association, which promotes a gender-sensitive approach to supporting poor women in accessing resources, highlight the funding challenges involved in carrying out the activities set out in the MoU, which depend on project funding from FAO's technical divisions. Results from FAO's partnership with RedR Australia, an organization specializing in disaster response, relief, risk management and medical assistance in the Asia-Pacific region, for example, fell far short of

expectations. So, too, did FAO's partnerships with The Food Bank Regional Network (FBRN) on food-loss and waste-reduction initiatives and Asociación Panamericana de Ciencias Veterinarias on antimicrobial resistance training in Latin America.

57. CSOs involved in FAO's global processes said one area for improvement was a perceived lack of coordination when FAO was presenting itself to members of CSO coordination platforms (such as the IPC and Ad Hoc Committee). As well as participating in global meetings and developing guidelines, CSOs want to engage with FAO's technical departments and offices in implementing the guidelines and recommendations. Here, they come up against difficulties, however, as each FAO division/office pursues its partnerships independently. Several CSOs noted that PSP would benefit from a stronger role as broker between the multitude of FAO offices, programmes and civil-society platforms.

Regional level

58. FAO also participates in multiple regional policy processes in which it actively involves CSOs. These events, which focus on regionally relevant themes and priorities, are perceived as important opportunities for CSOs to connect with each other, with governments and with other stakeholders.
59. In **sub-Saharan Africa**, regional meetings in Senegal in 2015, organized jointly with CSOs, brought together 300 representatives of government, civil society, research and the private sector to make recommendations on agroecology and sustainable food systems. Building on these recommendations, CSOs in Senegal, supported by FAO, set up a multi-actor platform for policy dialogue called Dynamics for Agroecological Transition (DyTAES). With technical and financial support from FAO and other partners, DyTAES organized a third series of agroecology days in Senegal from 30 January to 28 February 2020, bringing together more than 400 participants, including representatives of CSOs, the private sector, the Governments of Senegal and Burkina Faso, technical and financial partners, and countries in the West African subregion, Europe and Canada. The FAO agroecology platform has published a total of six scientific outputs on agroecology in Senegal.
60. In **South-East Asia**, a notable example is FAO's Regional Fisheries Livelihoods Programme for South and Southeast Asia (RFLP, 2009–2013), an initiative to strengthen capacity among small-scale fishing communities and their supporting institutions in Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste and Viet Nam. In Viet Nam, RFLP supported the initiation of fisheries co-management systems in Quang Nam and Quang Tri provinces and facilitated a series of community consultation meetings based on a needs assessment. FAO worked with local partners, mobilized local inshore fishers and assisted in the establishment of five pioneer fisheries associations in Quang Tri Province and six in Quang Nam Province. The fisheries associations were established to facilitate dialogue on fisheries resource management between local government and communities (FAO, 2013e).

National level

61. At national level, the Evaluation Team found that the majority of results stemming from partnerships with civil society involved facilitating CSOs' participation in policy processes (for example, in developing national policies, strategies and normative products) or engaging CSOs as implementing partners in FAO's field programmes, including in emergency situations. Such engagement was found to have clear mutual benefits, as the Strategy projected, however, it was usually something that arose from an identified need rather than a planned initiative through the CPF.

Finding 6. Certain FAO interventions promoted partnership between Members and CSOs on national policy dialogue and multi-stakeholder coordination forums. They contributed to the establishment and functioning of national platforms and consultation mechanisms for governments and civil society, allowing CSOs to participate more actively in policymaking.

62. The FAO-European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Programme funds the forest governance projects of governments, civil-society and private-sector organizations, seeking to reduce illegal logging. Among these, 64 projects were implemented by CSOs, with most related to ensuring their broader representation and participation in multi-stakeholder negotiations. The FLEGT programme helped to build a coherent and informed civil-society voice on forest governance in many of the countries supported, in particular, Cameroon, Ghana and Viet Nam.
63. In **Paraguay**, CSOs widely acknowledge FAO's role in promoting participatory approaches and integrating civil-society perspectives into the design of public policies. FAO has supported the government in designing and implementing a draft law on the Right to Food, and food and nutritional security – the National Plan for Food and Nutrition Sovereignty and Security – as well as policies on gender equality and interculturality in agriculture. The Organization has thus created space for policy dialogue on issues relevant to numerous CSOs, including those representing indigenous peoples. In 2014, a National Committee was established for the International Year of Family Farming, which brought together the country's most active peasant organizations.
64. In **Lebanon**, within the framework of the “Support to the Ministry of Agriculture to update its National Strategy integrating the SDGs in its National Agricultural Planning” (TCP/LEB/3702 C2) project, FAO held consultations with CSOs on the formulation of the Agriculture Sector Strategy for 2021–2025. In October 2019, FAO assisted the Ministry of Agriculture in launching the strategic formulation process by organizing a high-level workshop, engaging representatives from government, the private sector, civil society, research organizations, academia and international organizations. The event culminated in a ministerial decision to intensify multi-stakeholder consultations to produce a vision document for the strategy, highlighting the respective roles of each stakeholder. FAO also assisted the Ministry in developing forestry and fishery laws, integrating the consultative processes and ensuring the engagement of relevant NGOs and the fishers' association.
65. In the **Kyrgyz Republic**, FAO has availed of emerging opportunities to engage CSOs in interventions that address national priorities. FAO has collaborated with CSOs to support the development of the National Food Security and Nutrition Program, to undertake forestry assessments, to introduce the VGGTs and to develop the capacity of the non-state actors and other partners. In **Portugal**, FAO's Lisbon office built a wide network of civil-society contacts and worked with CSOs in the food-security area to create a unified stance through initiatives such as the Family Agriculture and Food and Nutritional Security Forum and meetings with all of the political parties in parliament. FAO's lobbying efforts within the Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa (CPLP) resulted in the signing of the Lisbon Charter for the Development of Family Farming (of which IFAD is also signatory). This was followed by the creation of the Council of Food and Nutrition Security for the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CONSAN-CPLP), which convenes the agriculture ministers of all of member states, along with its civil-society mechanism.
66. FAO played an essential role in facilitating the participatory process for the development of the PROBOSQUE law in **Guatemala**, as well as providing technical assistance on specific topics (Centro Nacional de Análisis y Documentación Judicial, 2015). FAO supported the

Alianza Nacional de Organizaciones Forestales Comunitarias of Guatemala by facilitating the start of community forestry organizations, which initially lacked human and financial resources. FAO also created training and dialogue opportunities, rolled out a communications strategy and strengthened capacity for participation in forest-policy dialogue, micro-enterprise development, the collective restoration of natural resources and the development of inclusive rural businesses in indigenous peasant organizations. FAO also engages CSOs in other processes related to agricultural development policy, food security and the implementation of the VGGTs, especially actions against land- and water-grabbing and on the land rights of rural women, peasants and indigenous peoples.

67. In **Senegal**, at the institutional and political level, the Evaluation Team noted the establishment of a multi-stakeholder platform on the VGGTs, which held five national workshops between 2014 and 2018 for more than 100 members, including CSOs, government ministries, the private sector, universities, research institutes and local authorities. One of the collaboration's greatest achievements is a land policy document, which includes substantial references to the VGGTs and was submitted to the President of the Republic of Senegal on 7 April 2017. Moreover, the consultation process resulted in a strengthening of the technical capacity of several CSOs, which in turn contributed to the creation of a 2016 proposal document on land reform, entitled "Position paper of the Framework for Reflection and Action on Land on land reform in Senegal" (IPAR, 2107).
68. In **Jordan**, the Evaluation Team found that interaction with CSOs was recent and limited in scope. For the past two years, FAO has been coordinating the Jordan Development Partners Group on agriculture, food security and water, which includes United Nations agencies, international NGOs, embassies, international donors, the private sector and producers' associations. Government representatives attend some group meetings. The international NGOs and producers' associations, however, are the sum total of CSO participation, which may reflect the difficulties CSOs face in engaging in policy discussions. One of the CSOs interviewed said they had participated in FAO-organized meetings to get feedback on the design of a strategy for extension services for the Ministry of Agriculture. In 2013, a stakeholder consultation was held to develop a water-harvesting sub-strategy and policy options, in which the Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD), a Jordanian NGO, and farmers' cooperatives participated. However, JOHUD says it did not receive any feedback from those meetings or on the final strategy. In 2016, FAO and WFP assisted the government in updating its draft security strategy, engaging non-government actors to review existing food-security information systems alongside government bodies.
69. In **Nepal**, a policy dialogue on the Right to Food initiated by FAO in 2012 offered a platform for interaction between the government and CSOs. The FAO global project on Integrating the Right to Adequate Food and Good Governance in National Policies, Legislation and Institutions (GCP/GLO/324/NOR) supported extensive dialogue and workshops with parliamentarians, government institutions, farmers' organizations, national human rights institutions and CSOs, culminating in the inclusion of the Right to Food in the country's new constitution in 2015. The project combined technical assistance, capacity development, awareness-raising and advocacy to bring on board wide-ranging segments of the civil society (from the Peasant Coalition to right-leaning groups). The Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act was enacted in 2018 and, in November 2019, the Civil Society Working Group on the Right to Food, led by Food First Information & Action Network (FIAN) Nepal, submitted its practical recommendations for implementation to the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Livestock.

70. In **Viet Nam**, FAO supported the government in organizing consultations to establish an alliance for climate-smart agriculture in the Asia-Pacific region. These have attracted more than 100 participants, including representatives from farmers' organizations, unions and civil society. Consequently, the Global Alliance for Climate-Smart Agriculture was launched in 2014. It is an inclusive, voluntary and action-oriented multi-stakeholder platform – a coalition of 14 governments and 32 organizations – which aims to catalyse and help create transformational partnerships to encourage the three pillars of climate-smart agriculture: productivity, adaptation and mitigation. Similarly, in 2015, FAO supported the Government of Viet Nam in launching the National Zero Hunger Challenge, a platform from which government, civil society, the private sector, the United Nations System and others could have a collective impact in the area of food security, nutrition and sustainable food systems.
71. In the **Philippines**, FAO partnered with the national branch of the Asia NGO Coalition (ANGOC) to facilitate a multi-stakeholder dialogue to draft the national Land Use Law (negotiations are ongoing). ANGOC coordinated and facilitated meetings and workshops, involving an extensive network of CSOs, in consultation with the government and parliamentarians. While the legislative drafting process on issues of land use is long and complex, the CSOs interviewed expressed their appreciation for FAO's support and facilitation of their involvement in and contribution to the process.

Finding 7. CPFs were meant to be the main instrument for implementing the Strategy and identifying potential areas of local CSO involvement. However, most CSO collaborations at country level are not planned through the CPF, but formed based on specific project needs, generally through service-delivery arrangements in letters of agreement.

72. Most of the 21 CPFs reviewed for this evaluation make generic reference to or a broad call for partnerships and lack specific plans for strategic engagement with non-state actors. Thus, the country-level partnerships identified by the Evaluation Team were mostly formed for project-level interventions and in reaction to emerging needs, rather than planned through CPFs or strategic work areas. The most common partnership tool by far for engaging CSOs in FAO field programmes at country level is the letter of agreement, a contract signed between FAO and a registered non-profit entity, requiring that entity to deliver a set of products or services. Letters of agreement entail a transfer of financial resources from FAO to the CSO under the procurement rules set out in the FAO Administrative Manual (FAO, 2011a; 2015b). Many of these contracts analysed by the Evaluation Team showed that while the collaboration was fruitful and, in some cases, the CSO had retained some contact with FAO, there was limited follow-up and collaboration after the contractual arrangement had concluded.
73. In **Senegal**, the integration of CSO partnerships into CPF planning from 2013 to 2019 was found to be weak, unlike other United Nations agencies, which made clearer commitments to partner with CSOs in their programmes. IFAD, in its Country Strategic Opportunities Programme (COSOP) 2019–2024, cites its commitment to strengthening partnerships with CSOs and other actors at national and sub-regional levels, to implementing pro-poor policies in rural areas and to scaling up good agricultural practices (IFAD, 2019). The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has included CSOs in its list of strategic partners for collaboration to accelerate structural transformation for sustainable development, as set out in the country programme for Senegal 2019–2023 (UNDP, 2019). WFP plans to collaborate with CSOs and other partners to achieve its second strategic objective, aimed at improving the nutritional status of children, girls, and pregnant and lactating women (WFP, 2018). Despite the lack of strategic planning, FAO programmes in Senegal effectively engaged CSOs in project activities and regional policy dialogues (see Finding 5).

Finding 8. FAO interventions to support national implementation of the VGGTs have offered an effective avenue for greater civil-society engagement at country level.

74. FAO has promoted the implementation of the VGGTs in more than 58 countries since their endorsement in 2012, providing technical assistance, training and capacity development, as well as support for the assessment, formulation and implementation of associated national policies and laws. FAO's main activities with a view to implementing the VGGTs at country level revolve around building awareness and capacity, multi-stakeholder consultations and promoting the VGGTs in national policies, laws and strategies.
75. Through its global project to "Increase the use of the VGGT among CSOs and grassroots organizations (FMM/GLO/111/MUL) (2015-2018)", FAO partnered with CSOs in 21 countries to enhance civil-society knowledge and capacity to advocate for the VGGTs and boost their participation in policy dialogue. The evaluation found several examples of FAO's role in promoting and implementing the VGGTs at national level, particularly in **Colombia, Guatemala, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Nepal, the Philippines, Senegal, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam**. Most of these involved training and awareness-raising for senior and technical staff of government institutions and CSOs, as well as the establishment of multi-stakeholder platforms. In some cases, such as in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, these processes have reached the stage where proposals and policy papers are being submitted to the national parliament.

Finding 9. In general, the results arising from CSO partnerships tend not to be linked directly to the Strategy, but to the specific needs of FAO programmes or activities. However, in a few cases, the Organization's drive for more civil-society engagement has fostered and led to the implementation of productive partnerships.

76. Some Country Offices said that the Strategy had inspired their engagement with civil society and that they had stepped up their efforts to partner with CSOs since its roll-out. The FAO Country Offices in Paraguay and the Philippines, for instance, have been very responsive to corporate efforts and used the Strategy to steer their engagement with CSOs. Other offices, however, have demonstrated limited knowledge of the Strategy or its implementation mechanisms (such as the guidance materials developed by FAO headquarters and Regional Offices or other corporate initiatives). In most countries analysed for this evaluation, CSO engagement was pursued without the specific intention of following the Strategy (or, indeed, knowledge of it). The impetus of the Strategy was felt mostly at headquarters, where several partnerships were signed in the years after approval.

Finding 10. The limitations on further engagement with CSOs at country level stem from country context, FAO's positioning as a primarily government-oriented organization and the limited resources available to FAO offices to proactively seek new partnerships.

77. A country's civil-society environment is one of the main determinants of the extent of CSO involvement in FAO programmes and processes. Countries such as **Nepal, Colombia and Senegal**, for example, where civil society is active and organized, with strong capacity, are more conducive to extensive partnerships than countries such as Jordan or Tajikistan, where civil society is a relatively smaller player in the food and agriculture sectors. This is down to historical and institutional dynamics, over which FAO has limited control. Within these diverse environments, FAO's overall approach to engaging CSOs inevitably leads to differing outcomes and levels of interaction.

78. The strong positioning of some CSOs in areas linked to FAO's mandate also limits the opportunities for collaboration in some countries, as these CSOs promote an agenda that does not align with that of FAO's government counterparts. In such situations, FAO has had to balance its primary role of supporting the government and its facilitating role of outreach and ensuring the participation of all development stakeholders, especially the most vulnerable. Such issues occur rarely, however, and were not found to be major hindrances to effective and productive collaboration between FAO and civil society.
79. As mentioned, the main partnership tools used by Country Offices are letters of agreement, which set out clear and time-bound engagements with CSOs. This suggests that FAO can only enter into such partnerships when implementing a funded project. Consequently, the decentralized offices perceive engagement with CSOs and other non-state actors to be constrained by funding. Decentralized offices often cite dedicated funds for partnership development as necessary seed-funding for engagement with multiple stakeholders, which can then produce momentum or ideas for new activities and resource mobilization.
80. The identification of civil-society actors at country level occurs mostly through networking and events, which enable FAO offices to build their directory and knowledge of potential partners. Open calls for expressions of interest for potential implementing partners are also a means of identifying new partners, however, they are often too time-consuming and hamper the timely implementation of activities. In such cases, FAO frequently resorts to known CSOs based on their positive track record.

Finding 11. Collaborations and partnerships with CSOs have broadly resulted in mutual benefits, as envisaged by the Strategy. FAO has benefited from CSOs' knowledge of local context, their better understanding of the needs of beneficiaries and their ability to implement interventions in remote, hard-to-reach areas or crisis-affected settings. CSOs have gained access to FAO knowledge and information on innovative practices and sustainable food and agriculture approaches, as well as capacity development activities.

81. FAO has drawn on CSOs' comparative advantages, including their knowledge of local context and their ability to implement interventions in remote, hard-to-reach areas, crisis-affected settings and vulnerable communities. Furthermore, FAO's policy support activities, both at country and global level, have benefited from CSOs' inputs and knowledge – for example, of the needs of specific stakeholder groups (such as indigenous peoples and small-scale farmers) and of specific technical aspects. We provide just a few examples in the following paragraphs.
82. In **Viet Nam**, in its 2017 response to Typhoon Damrey, which caused an estimated economic loss of USD 996.92 million, FAO signed a letter of agreement with the Vietnam Red Cross to implement a cash transfer programme funded from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). The "Restoring food security and provide livelihood support to rural communities affected by Typhoon Damrey in the Central Region of Viet Nam" project (OSRO/VIE/703/CHA) supported more than 29 872 individuals in the two worst-affected provinces, distributing 1 250 vouchers for agricultural inputs and 6 218 unconditional cash grants (worth USD 602 016 in total) and 1 250 vouchers for agricultural inputs.
83. In **Lebanon**, through Project OSRO/LEB/601/NET, together with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), FAO has successfully partnered with the Association of Volunteers in International Service (the AVSI Foundation) to carry out short-term vocational training courses for Syrian refugees. Another Lebanese NGO is developing curricula for agricultural training. The networks, as well as the technical and programmatic expertise of these CSOs, were instrumental in the successful delivery of

FAO's activities. In a separate project, FAO collaborated with WFP's cash-for-work scheme and local NGOs tasked with reforestation activities to create synergies that led to a larger area of reforestation, as well as greater financial benefits for the Lebanese and refugee communities involved.

84. In the **Philippines**, during FAO's response to Typhoon Haiyan in 2014–2015, FAO projects engaged community-based organizations (CBOs) in relief and recovery efforts. The CBOs were chosen for their existing networks in farmer and fisher communities, their knowledge and their capacity to organize and mobilize rural people. FAO engaged with the CBOs to conduct needs assessments, to implement distribution and rehabilitation work and to sustain the productive activities after the projects closed. However, the informal and, in some cases, unstructured nature of some CBOs was a hurdle to greater collaboration, as they lacked the necessary capacity to implement activities such as the restoration of mangroves or management of fish nurseries.

3.3 Efficiency of partnership development methods and approaches

Finding 12. Civil society is a broad category encompassing a wide variety of organizations, from the extensive networks and platforms of key interest groups to NGOs and CBOs. Collaboration with these diverse groups has not been accompanied by the requisite clarity on taxonomy and principles of engagement, roles, levels and the scope of demand-based engagement, however.

85. FAO's Basic Texts noted that growth in the number of organizations working with the Organization called for proper classification of those ties and a formalization of "ongoing fruitful cooperation" (FAO, 2017a).⁵ The Evaluation Team notes that from September 2014 to February 2020, only BROOKE – Action for Working Horses and Donkeys had been granted specialized consultative status, while the number of CSOs with liaison status had increased by just one (URGENCEI), bringing the total to 76. The Strategy aimed to involve networks and organizations with the broadest possible representation. However, the PSU database, internal SharePoint, shows that since the Strategy was adopted, of the 43 international NGOs with specialized consultative status and the 9 with consultative status, only 4 have a formal partnership agreement with FAO.⁶ Of those CSOs with liaison status, only five have a formal partnership agreement setting out the framework for joint activities.⁷ Thus, since 2013, **only 9 of the 129 CSOs listed as having formal status**⁸ have signed a formal partnership agreement with FAO. Put differently, only 9 of FAO's 28 partnership agreements are with CSOs, which, particularly at the technical level, fruitful cooperation has been recognized by the organization in granting them formal status.

⁵ The criteria for granting consultative status and specialized consultative status are outlined in FAO's Policy on Relations with International Non-Governmental Organizations (Resolution No. 74/51 of the sixth session of the Conference, Resolution No. 37/53 of the seventh session; Resolution No. 39/57 of the ninth session).

⁶ They are: CI, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) (specialized consultative status), Caritas Internationalis and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (consultative status).

⁷ The five partners are IFOAM, the International Slow Food Movement, the International Union of Latin Notaries, URGENCEI and the World Rural Forum.

⁸ As of February 2020, 9 international NGOs had been granted consultative status, 43 held specialized consultative status and, in recognition of their cooperation, particularly at the technical level, 76 had been granted liaison status.

86. Different types of engagement require different partnership arrangements to reflect varying levels of commitment and accountability.⁹ Partnerships may be formalized through a MoU¹⁰ to establish a framework for significant collaboration, or an exchange of letters if the collaboration is limited in time or scope and does not entail any financial commitment. In the presence of political pressure to formalize a partnership, it may be advisable to start the formalization process with a letter of intent, which establishes the intention and process for preparing a more comprehensive agreement. This creates the opportunity to explore partnership opportunities and come to a mutually agreeable arrangement.
87. Civil society is a broad category that encompasses a wide variety of organizations,¹¹ with diverse expertise, human and financial capital, assets and capacity development strengths, as well as challenges, such as staff turnover, financial constraints and competition for resources. Engagement with civil society entails negotiating targets, providing support and incentives to reach those targets and facilitating shared-value collaboration. Demand-based and results-driven engagement is a responsibility shared on numerous levels, depending on the scope of the engagement. When pursuing fit-for-purpose collaborations and shared-value partnerships with CSOs, FAO must consider partners' capacity – based on their expertise, resources and access – throughout the partnership-building process. Concretely, this translates into FAO headquarters exercising its powers when Country Offices are unable to achieve the objectives of a proposed action satisfactorily and where added value can be provided at global (headquarters) level. FAO may consider the following when determining levels of demand-based engagement with partners, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity: (a) the area concerned does not fall within the competence of FAO headquarters (Country Office competence); (b) the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Country Offices (necessity); (c) the action can therefore, by reason of its scale or effects, be implemented more successfully by FAO headquarters (added value).
88. A global-level example is that of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), which signed a MoU with FAO in 2014. From IUCN's perspective, the MoU was meant to help address some of its challenges in advocacy, communication and field programming. However, the two organizations not only overlap in terms of work area, but compete with one another on fundraising and policy outreach. The MoU does not set out a clear differentiation and delineation of competencies, calling into question the effectiveness and sustainability of the partnership. IUCN does not believe the newly signed MoU in 2018 to have made any difference to the collaboration to date. Moreover, FAO's economies of scale allow it to extrapolate IUCN policies and transform them into more significant initiatives, creating friction when IUCN fails to get appropriate international

⁹ These include MoUs, exchanges of letters, cost-sharing agreements, contribution agreements, pro bono agreements, small grants/contributions agreements, knowledge management and dissemination statements, partnership statements (which are formal documents, usually signed by an Assistant Director-General or Division Director) and project documents/grant agreements approved by donors, pre-defining the implementing partner(s) (on the initiative of FAO, so as to avoid any potential question of tied aid), operational partners agreements and letters of agreement.

¹⁰ However, nothing in a MoU imposes financial obligations on either party. Per the above, and particularly for the implementation of joint activities within the MoU framework that might involve payment of funds, a specific separate legal arrangement will be entered into by the parties, as appropriate, taking into account relevant administrative and financial rules and applicable procedures.

¹¹ See FAO (2013a; 2013b). FAO has identified 12 different constituencies in line with the main groups of FAO beneficiaries: small farmers, the landless, agricultural workers, fishers and fish workers, pastoralists and herders, forest dwellers, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples, the urban poor, consumers, NGOs, women and youth. They ensure that the diverging interests, voices and concerns of society are included.

recognition. Also, FAO has tended to expect IUCN to play more of subcontracting role and implement its policy initiatives. Thus, the relationship with FAO tends to be hierarchical and is not methodologically replicable among IUCN's other international partnerships, limiting the mutual benefits.

89. We Effect's experience and presence through long-term agreements on the ground, and capacity-building and networking with local staff, coupled with FAO's considerable influence and ability to secure governmental attention mean this partnership should be a mutually beneficial arrangement. Nevertheless, while the Swedish organization wants to take on a more policy-oriented role and is striving to become involved with FAO on gender issues, it has assumed more of an implementing role. FAO has faced challenges in developing joint proposals with We Effect, which has seen some turnover in personnel, reportedly due to structural changes at headquarters. The partnership has trickled down to forest-producer organization relationships, but the results have been scattered. We Effect has a decentralized structure – a challenge when it comes to deepening the strategic collaboration. Ultimately, the MoU signed in 2015 seems to give We Effect an added layer of political legitimacy, but is not operationally crucial for FAO or the Forest and Farm Facility.
90. Interviews suggest that partnership activities carried out at the decentralized level do not stem from formalized agreements at FAO headquarters, but from the proactive initiatives of stakeholders. The partnership agreements signed between FAO and La Via Campesina and ActionAid International lack visibility. In **Senegal**, a partnership formed locally between FAO, ActionAid and the Conseil National de Concertation et de Cooperation des Ruraux (CNCR), a member of La Via Campesina, received USD 2.48 million in funding from the World Bank's Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) to implement a project on "Strengthening the livelihoods of rural women for sustainable economic development in the Tambacounda region". Even so, the project document does not make any reference to the partnership agreement.
91. In Senegal, the FAO has favoured partnerships with local CSOs – such as Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (AVSF), the Fédération Nationale des Producteurs de Coton (FNPC), Symbiose Sénégal and the National Network of Trainers in Integrated Production Management – and other institutions on implementing the Global Environment Facility-funded project GCP/SEN/065/LDF, "Integration of climate resilience in agro-sylvo-pastoral production for food security in vulnerable rural areas through the farmer field school approach". Civil society has benefited from FAO's agro-pastoral field school experience, which has supported pastoral households in setting up 80 village chicken coops and vegetable community gardens. AVSF, meanwhile, has made its Pastoral Warning and Information System for the Ferlo region available to the FAO project, sending SMS alerts to 518 participants.
92. FAO should ensure the resulting collaborations and partnerships are of mutual value. It should share the burden by mobilizing an appropriate mix of resources to achieve jointly defined and common objectives. FAO should review its principles of engagement and ensure roles, levels and scope of demand-based engagement are conducive to developing strategic and sustainable collaborations and partnerships with civil society.

Finding 13. FAO's risk management mechanisms, due diligence and associated processes were embedded in Strategy implementation, so that the neutrality, independence and impartiality of FAO as an intergovernmental institution was in no way compromised. While these mechanisms served their purpose, they are perceived as cumbersome, lengthy and restrictive, limiting the number of partnerships struck.

93. The Strategy states that a thorough risk-assessment process has been developed to explore proposed partnerships with CSOs and that this may be improved with more experience in this area (FAO, 2013a). FAO embedded risk management mechanisms in its Strategy implementation because of the various standards involved in developing food and agriculture systems and the need to ensure that the neutrality, independence and impartiality of FAO as an intergovernmental institution is in no way compromised. Similar risk management mechanisms prevail across the United Nations System, where functions related to the assessment and management of risks are separate to partnership advocacy and catalytic functions. Some United Nations agencies have tailored and adapted their prospect research and risk management functions for effectiveness and efficiency; these are carried out in proximity to and even under co-working arrangements with partnerships teams.
94. DGB 2014/14 sets out FAO's corporate risk factors and corporate social responsibility standards and provides the framework for the formal risk assessment and approval process of all partnership proposals.¹² Until May 2019, when the Due Diligence Team was formally established, reporting to the PSP Deputy Director's Office, due diligence functions had been carried out by individual PSP staff members/or consultants. The change had been recommended by an internal audit, which identified a lack of dedicated capacity.
95. The Strategy established the Partnerships Committee (PC) as the approving body for proposed partnerships. It, therefore, follows that the Sub-Committee for the Review of Financial and other Agreements (SubCom-RFA) is the body with the power to endorse or recommend proposed partnerships (see Figure 1, Annex 2). In January 2020, the Due Diligence Team was transferred to Private Sector Development (PSD) division to establish a dedicated Due Diligence and Prospect Research Unit (PSDU), comprising two staff (one P3 and one P2) and two non-staff. Between 1 January 2019 and 30 June 2020, the team received 641 screening requests (including those withdrawn, ineligible and/or outside the PSP remit), in addition to requests for co-publication, the co-sponsoring/co-organization of events, participation in meetings, the disposal of assets and information/guidance.
96. The non-staff budget allocated for due diligence activities for 2020 is USD 40 000. Since March 2020, PSDU reports to the Deputy Director General, while the people and non-staff budget continue to sit with PSP. It would, therefore, seem that PSDU is ill-equipped to support timely and well-developed analysis for decision-making on engagement with non-state actors (including CSOs) in an adequate manner. Moreover, as previously noted, the current taxonomy (including roles, levels and scope of engagement) does not differentiate between civil-society entities. There is, therefore, currently no differentiated and simplified risk-assessment mechanism in place.

Finding 14. The challenges in establishing collaborations and partnerships between FAO, its Members and civil society lie in limiting policies, time-consuming and complex processes, inconsistent procedures and reactive, rather than strategic approaches.

¹² Director-General's Bulletin (DGB) No. 2014/14, published 31 March, says "a revised DGB on Policy Guidelines on the Preparation, Clearance, and Signature of Agreements is under review" (FAO, 2014a). However, DGB No. 2014/13 on the "Procedures for the preparation, clearance and signature of Agreements" (FAO, 2014b) had already been published on 18 March. DGB 2014/13 and DGB 2014/14 were, therefore, not connected. Moreover, DGB No. 2014/14's "Review of Partnerships with Non-State Actors and Composition of the Partnerships Committee and the Sub-Committee for the Review of Financial and other agreements" did not specify which financial agreements the Due Diligence Unit would handle. It stated that all "eligible proposals will be passed on to the Sub-Committee for Review of Financial and other Agreements (SubCom-RFA), along with recommendations regarding benefits and potential risks", without specifying which were eligible to go through to the Sub-Committee.

97. The Strategy is intended to be a framework for collaboration with civil society. It also outlines institutional arrangements for its implementation, offering FAO staff guidance on establishing effective partnerships with CSOs. Even so, the Evaluation Team found that FAO staff at country level and in some technical divisions had a somewhat limited understanding of the scope of FAO's policies and instruments on collaborative arrangements and the regulations governing various levels and types of interaction with civil society. This limited knowledge has resulted in a risk-averse approach to partnerships and has meant little action on building the foundations of strategic partnerships.
98. Several interviewees, both internal and external, cited the administrative procedures involved in setting up partnerships as cumbersome and time-consuming. CSO representatives observed that the short-term duration of the letters of agreement and limited flexibility to adjust planned activities were not conducive to developing prolonged, longer-term collaborations for strategic and sustainable results. Smaller NGOs with few personnel often found themselves in unfair competition with larger international NGOs or CSOs that were more experienced in dealing with the administrative issues involved in major development-partner agreements. Furthermore, complex and time-consuming reporting requirements were seen as incommensurate with the level and size of the interventions involved. Interestingly, even at the time of Strategy adoption in 2013, CSOs had requested that FAO review and upgrade some of its administrative tools (FAO, 2013a).
99. The Strategy recognizes that a legal structure is necessary to conclude formal agreements. Civil-society platforms or CBOs with no legal status need the assistance of CSOs with juridical standing to enter into any structured cooperation agreement with FAO. FAO has developed tools and procedures for any collaboration with CSOs, involving several steps before signing. These, coupled with FAO's rules and regulations on the procurement of goods and services, have delayed the implementation of activities in a number of cases. It was noted that among the tools for collaboration set out in the Strategy, the letter of agreement (LoA) - an administrative tool for contracting services from CSOs - should not exceed 18 months, unless justified by the Authorized Official after an assessment of the potential risks. FAO's Operational Partners Implementation Modality (OPIM) allows potential operational partners to be identified and chosen without a competitive selection process when they are considered FAO Strategic Partners and subject to a framework partnership agreement, such as a MoU.¹³ The prescribed administrative tools state that where the service provider can be referred to as an implementing partner, a formal partnership agreement may preclude a competitive selection process to obtain the best value for money.
100. The evaluation notes, however, that nothing in the MoU imposes financial obligations on either party. Thus, joint activities implemented within the MoU framework that might involve the payment of funds will be set out by the parties in a separate legal arrangement spanning all relevant administrative and financial rules and applicable procedures. Among other things, the names and signed declarations of recommended non-state operational partners and their subcontractors must be submitted for a due diligence screening per DGB 2014/14 and, where applicable, the Strategy (FAO, 2015).
101. In the Strategy, FAO acknowledges that the chain of accountability to affected populations stretches from the funding source to the end recipient. Between 2013 and May 2020, five civil-society implementing partners were awarded a total of eight operational partner

¹³ These organizations are in a unique position to leverage political support, specialized expertise and/or operational capacity to achieve results. Also, their technical capacity supports or complements FAO's mandate.

agreements (OPAs) or execution agreements through direct and comparative selection, worth a total USD 32 395 950.¹⁴ Reviewed records and references available in the SubCom-PC-Archive mailbox at the end of June 2020 showed none of the eight OPAs/execution agreements had been endorsed by the SubCom-RFA/PC on OPIM/OPA.¹⁵

102. During the same period, through partnership arrangements and direct selection, FAO signed six OPAs/execution agreements with four formalized civil-society partners, worth a combined USD 11 096 206. In 2016–2017 alone, FAO signed three OPAs with two of these partners by direct selection, worth a total USD 4 018 555. Two of the OPAs were for work on a regional project in Latin America, while the other was for a global project spanning Burkina Faso, Kenya, the Kyrgyz Republic, Niger and Uruguay. The evaluation further notes that notwithstanding its application to both the direct selection and comparative selection of non-state operational partners, PSP conducted no screening of the recommended non-state operational partners and their subcontractors per DGB 2014/14 and the Strategy. The

¹⁴ OED notes based on information received from PSDN/OPIM that execution agreements were signed with the following CSOs in 2014 (as the OPA instrument did not exist before the release of MS701):

Deutsche Welthungerhilfe

- 1) GCP/MAG/081/EC, "Actions Intégrées en Nutrition et Alimentation (AINA)", USD 2 191 543 (signed July 2014); and
- 2) GCP/ZIM/025/UK, "Livelihoods and Food Security Programme (LFSP) Agricultural Production and Nutrition (APN)", USD 11 836 577 (signed November 2014).

World Wildlife Fund (WWF) – United States

- 1) GCP/GLO/365/GFF, "Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)", USD 4 386 108 (signed September 2014).

¹⁵ The FAO Administrative Manual, Chapter VII, Operational Modalities, Section 701, Operational Partners Implementation Modality came into effect on 30 September 2015 (FAO, 2015). However, the two DGBs had been in place since the first execution agreement on the list was signed in July 2014. Reference was made to:

DGB 2014/13 (FAO, 2014a) and DGB No. 2014/13 (FAO, 2014b). Paragraph 2 of DGB 2014/13 states that "the term 'agreement' is a generic one [...] *irrespective of their actual denomination*, entered into by FAO and establishing relations with partners such as [...] civil society organizations. Footnote 3 says: "For the policies and procedure governing agreements with civil society organizations [...] reference should also be made to [...] the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (Council document CL 146/8). Footnote 8 states: "Agreements providing for a collaboration to be executed under an existing project (TCP, GCP, UTF, etc.) will only require clearance by the technical department concerned and the Legal Office. Clearance by OPC, Sub-Committee for Review of Financial and other Agreements and/or Partnerships Committee should be sought, if necessary. The duration of these agreements cannot go beyond the duration of the project under which they are being implemented." Paragraph 4 of DGB 2014/13 says: "Agreements with Non-State Actors: In addition to the procedures set out in this Bulletin, draft agreements with Non-State Actors (for example [...] civil society organizations) must be first submitted to the Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development (OPC) at an early stage to ensure coherence as well as consistency with the corporate strategies and specific rules of the Organization. OPC will perform functions related to brokering the partnerships, performing due diligence processes, coordinating global and regional frameworks of collaboration, maintaining oversight, quality review and clearance by the Sub-Committee for Review of Financial and other Agreements and/or Partnerships Committee, as described in the relevant Director General's Bulletin." DGB 2014/14 says: "In order to ensure effective risk management in the implementation of FAO's partnerships with non-state actors, the Director-General has decided to streamline the procedures for reviewing and assessing such proposals for partnerships. These include [...] NGOs, social movements, cooperatives, farmers' organizations [...]. The Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development (OPC) will coordinate the process." On the review process, it says: "All partnership proposals from Headquarters and Decentralized Offices, including FAO Representations, should be sent to OPC. OPC will review all proposals through a due diligence screening in accordance with the common UN and FAO principles for partnerships. *All eligible proposals will be passed on to the Sub-Committee for Review of Financial and other Agreements (SubCom-RFA)*, along with recommendations regarding benefits and/or potential risks. The SubCom-RFA will then perform an in-depth analysis and directly approve any proposed partnerships which are considered unlikely to present any significant risks and entail clear benefits."

- Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development (OPC) confirmed that because the partners had collaborated with FAO in the past and had partnership agreements,¹⁶ it did not believe Sub-Committee clearance was necessary. Between 2013 and May 2020, these same two partners, this time through letters of agreement, had been granted (through direct and competitive selection) service contracts worth a total USD 7 797 512.
103. The Evaluation Team further noted that from 2013 to May 2020, the LoA had been used extensively, with 21 partners listed as CSOs receiving service-provider contracts, through direct and competitive selection, worth a combined USD 25 569 839.¹⁷ In the same period, 11 partners listed as CSOs received implementing partner/service-provider contracts through direct selection, worth a combined USD 2 492 316.
104. An example at the global level is IUCN, which focuses primarily on projects in Africa, with 1 400 member entities. Consequently, its influence and reach in environment ministries around the world is on a par with FAO's relationships with ministries of agriculture. In practice, however, FAO enjoys far greater resources and political currency, and its work often juxtaposes with IUCN's perceived mandate. Consequently, IUCN is frequently a service provider/funding recipient, while FAO takes on the contractee/donor position.
105. The partnership signed in 2018 between FAO Country Office Senegal and six international cooperation organizations (ICOs) (the Quebec Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI), Carrefour International, Solidarité Union et Coopérative (SUCO), Union des Producteurs Agricoles – Développement International (UPA-DI), Société de coopération pour le développement international (SOCODEVI) and Mer et Monde) aimed to establish a community of practice on resilience to climate change for food and nutritional security in Senegal. It led to the mobilization of USD 5 million (through the Ministry of International Relations and La Francophonie of Canada) for the financing and joint implementation of project GCP/GLO/921/GQC on "Capacity-building for climate-change adaptation planning for food security and nutrition in Senegal", or SAGA-Senegal. However, the negotiation and signing phase for letters of agreement saw numerous delays due to ICOs' difficulty in following FAO procedures. Furthermore, the funding model of pre-financing the ICO, then reimbursing the second and third tranches, was a substantial constraint on some organizations, such as SUCO, which is voluntary. All ICOs bemoaned the sluggish pace of negotiations and letters of agreement with the Senegal Country Office. The longest delays were seen in relation to the agreement with UPA-DI. Talks started in November 2018, but it took until February 2020 to sign an agreement. Further delays were caused by FAO's validation of technical and financial reports, which stalled the payment of second instalments for CSO services, slowing down progress of activities in the field. Also, cumbersome FAO procurement procedures were cited as a factor limiting the achievement of project results.
106. The "Emergency assistance for securing the livelihoods of vulnerable pastoralists affected by the pastoral crisis in Senegal" project (OSRO/SEN/801/BEL) has helped to strengthen the resilience of 7 199 affected households. Between May and December 2018, the FAO Country Office in Senegal signed letters of agreement worth USD 400 000 with local CSOs AVSF and Réseau Billital Maroobe.

¹⁶ In both cases, the recommended non-state operational partners had already signed formal partnership agreements (MoUs) in 2014, endorsed by the Partnership Committee.

¹⁷ Of the 21 partners, 6 had letter-of-agreement service-provider/implementing-partner contracts worth a combined USD 21 714 097: Deutsche Welthungerhilfe (USD 3 838 138), WWF (USD 2 270 900), WVI (USD 6 150 301), Action Aid (USD 1 168 727), PLAN INTERNATIONAL (USD 2 759 418) and IUCN (USD 5 526 611).

107. Determining the appropriate instrument and procedure is a matter of judgement,¹⁸ which should take into account all relevant factors.¹⁹ An eligible entity that is uniquely qualified, mandated and/or alone in providing the required services effectively has a monopoly. However, the Evaluation Team notes that while evidence of an entity's eligibility – including under manual section (MS) 507.3.12 (iii) partnership arrangements – is a prerequisite to choosing a LoA, it may not, alone, be sufficient reason for doing so. FAO may also contract a legal NGO entity to procure goods, works or services under MS 502.²⁰
108. Accordingly, the evaluation notes that while a LoA may be used to obtain services related to the implementation of activities, sub-components or components of a project or programme, the regulations and associated procedures for service-provider selection, as well as for quality assurance and letter-of-agreement approval, as set out in MS 507, are not adequate for managing the additional risks associated with outsourcing the implementation of an entire project or major component of a project. FAO is responsible for ensuring that the funds entrusted to it are spent correctly and transparently, in accordance with the highest standards of accountability, to ensure the utmost degree of public trust. The evaluation notes the importance of respecting rules and regulations. The Organization must pursue a coherent approach, ensuring that safeguards in place are commensurate with the level of engagement and, above all, that no exceptions are made.

Finding 15. The majority of partnership initiatives with CSOs, particularly at country level, are not focused on long-term relationship building, co-creation and burden-sharing. This is partly due to limited planning, a lack of appropriate knowledge management and a dearth of guidance on capitalizing on and nurturing existing partners or seeking out new ones.

109. In the face of current trends and challenges, strategic partnership-building is necessary to find long-term solutions to the root causes of global problems. Even so, there is a perceived lack of dedicated action plans capitalizing on and nurturing existing partners and seeking new strategic areas of collaboration. FAO engagements with CSOs are not based on strategic assessments of potential complementarities and synergies with its programme areas, particularly at the technical level. Interviews with decentralized offices and technical divisions indicate that collaborations and partnerships with civil society are mostly confined to current cycles of programme implementation, generally based on current needs and not planned to address long-term strategic imperatives.
110. Except for the annual progress reports on partnership development submitted to the FAO Programme Committee, FAO's partnership knowledge-management, monitoring and reporting systems are insufficient to facilitate the sharing of best practices or lessons learned for Strategy implementation. This is partly down to its limited technical and human capacity. Effective management of partnerships first requires clarity as to the divisions and/or individuals within the Organization responsible for managing specific partnerships, as well as an ability to maintain that clarity when individuals move to other positions. FBRN claims that FAO has not been adequately committed to their partnership. While expectations were high, the collaboration has not progressed as hoped, aside from some preparatory study work. The level of engagement has also been affected by FAO staff turnover, a lack of continuous cooperation and failure to ensure a holistic and sustainable

¹⁸ Options include a contract under MS 502, a letter of agreement under MS 507, an OPA under MS 701 and others.

¹⁹ In other words, the nature of the services, availability in the place where they are to be delivered and characteristics of the service provider.

²⁰ For example, the procurement of services and inputs typically available on the commercial market, as well as the procurement of works, should be undertaken in accordance with MS 502.

approach. Notwithstanding an invitation to attend the 2020 Regional Conference, there have been no discussions on scaling up the partnership.

111. Second, FAO staff need clear operational guidelines, coherent guidance on mechanisms and tools to support partnership efforts, practical advice and streamlined internal processes to ensure responsiveness and avoid delays in addressing partners' concerns. Bureaucratic procedures were cited as the main difficulty at the start of FAO's partnerships with Slow Food and URGENCI. FAO's City Region Food Systems Programme offered opportunities for collaboration with URGENCI through a mapping and multi-stakeholder decision-making processes. In practice, FAO suggested working in cities where URGENCI did not have an active network on the ground, while the cities proposed by URGENCI were not of interest to donors, leading to missed opportunities. Subsequently, following FAO staff turnover, the partners had to establish new contacts and interact with a different FAO department, as well as deal with the reporting requirements of the new workplan template. At country level, the start of the "Improved Land Governance for Shared Prosperity in the Senegal River Basin" project was delayed by two years. A lack of clarity over institutional arrangements and the management of resources between FAO and the Agricultural and Rural Prospective Initiative, which jointly developed the Senegal River Basin project, funded by Germany, have reportedly contributed to the delay.
112. It became evident from interviews and reports that PSU had limited ability to render effective and timely advice on partnership approaches or guidance on identification of prospective partners. The e-learning tools it provided were perceived to provide a general introduction to the need for partnering with CSOs, with limited practical guidance on how to go about it. The capacities and skills of regional partnership officers varied, with most acquiring on-the-job experience of engaging with CSOs and lacking systematic training on the subject. No specific backstopping for establishing partnerships was expected from or provided by PSU or the Regional Offices to Country Offices during the evaluation period.
113. WVI has an extensive network in 100 countries and 30 000 staff, presenting unique outreach opportunities. In developing this partnership, FAO wanted to draw on WVI's ability to distribute funding and materials for generating sustainable sources of income and improving food and nutrition security in vulnerable rural communities in Africa and Asia. FAO and WVI also signed a MoU in 2015, which was extended to 2023 in 2018. The partnership's first workplan was deemed too vague, while the next envisioned closer collaboration at country level. These have been operationalized exclusively through letters of agreement. Interviews conducted with both FAO and WVI officials concur that FAO provides irregular responses and has different priorities at local level, while more prominent Country Offices tend to be more reactive. Conversely, Regional Offices are helpful, in general, on administrative procedures, funding and intermediary work. Despite efforts by PSU focal point to streamline cooperation at both headquarters and regional level, the consensus is that the approach must be bottom-up from Country Offices.
114. Collaborations and partnerships at country level are handled according to pre-defined areas of specific interventions, as Country Offices do not have a dedicated function for promoting a holistic approach to partnerships. Collaborations with CSOs are primarily project based, with those projects allocating budgets for advocacy and communication. The funds are mainly used to raise potential partner awareness of critical issues being addressed by the project, but are insufficient to ensure a strategic and holistic approach to partnerships. According to FAO project stakeholders, funds are allocated only to implement activities, leaving a gap when it comes to partner management and administrative costs, hampering the possibility of more structured involvement. Furthermore, the Country

Offices do not use any formal system to evaluate or document lessons learned so as to capitalize on the work done by CSOs. Hence, knowledge acquired at country level is not shared and valued beyond those individuals involved in the partnerships, so capitalizing on results is challenging.

115. Through the "Strengthening the governance of food and nutritional security in Senegal" project framework, CNCR expressed an interest in promoting CSOs' active participation in political dialogue on agriculture, food security and nutrition by conducting a broad consultation and complementary, parallel or contradictory studies. This collaboration did not materialize, however, reportedly as FAO officers opted to not take risks by limiting their partnerships to state institutions. The "Strengthening the livelihoods of rural women for sustainable economic development in the Tambacounda region in Senegal" project was jointly implemented by FAO, ActionAid and CNCR, but disagreements over the latter's positioning continue to stall the formalization of the collaboration, with negotiations ongoing since October 2019.
116. While some knowledge exchange happens at special events, FAO does not have a distinct platform for sharing its expertise in developing and implementing partnerships with interested users, resources, experts or units. Communication on partnership development practices between the various FAO units is limited, even among regional partnership officers. Aside from the latest news, the FAO partnerships website is not updated regularly with documented best practices on partnerships.
117. Most interviewees, both from CSOs and FAO Country Offices, have limited knowledge of regional and global processes and opportunities for engagement. In **Lebanon**, this has hindered potential participation in broader dialogue and the opportunity to build capacity in policy dialogue, which is quite weak among Lebanese CSOs. In **Asia**, collaboration with FAO has significantly expanded the AFA's sphere of influence, increasing its regional and global space for policy dialogue and expanding the network through new alliances. AFA is represented at regional level, with little to no engagement of farmers' organizations at country level. While the workplan attached to its MoU with FAO mentions involvement in the CPF and some actions have been effectively implemented in several countries, AFA did not report any CPF participation by its members – another missed opportunity to engage with farmers' organizations on national initiatives. In **Sierra Leone**, the FAO Country Office team lacks knowledge of the Strategy, its principles and CSO partnership guidelines, experiencing delays in forming partnership agreements, partly due to lengthy procedures for the procurement and approval of deliverables. FAO has collaborated with several local CSOs under letters of agreement on project implementation in the field. This collaboration was confined to specific activities, however, and was not strategically planned. As in several other Country Offices, the Sierra Leone office does not have a focal point for partnerships. The only partnership focal point is based in the Regional Office, covering several countries, suggesting a hefty workload and scant support or assistance for Country Offices when it comes to partnerships.²¹
118. Notwithstanding the Strategy's emphasis on monitoring and evaluation systems to measure the performance of partnership initiatives, the corporate partnerships database – internal SharePoint – lacks this information. The evaluation notes that there may be gaps

²¹ Despite repeated requests, FAO Country Office Sierra Leone was unable to provide the independent evaluator with signed agreements and progress reports on implementation for CSOs listed as partners of FAO. Also lessons from partnerships with CSOs were not provided, while the results of the collaborations were only partly provided.

in the institutional memory of partnerships established prior to the Strategy, however, documentation was also missing on partnerships established after its adoption. PSU also noted that it had not received some information from the technical units responsible for these partnerships. Some of the progress reports on partnerships were either missing or not duly prepared.

119. PSU does not perform any quality assurance of the completeness and content of the progress reports submitted by the RTOs. Indeed, the evaluation notes that partnerships are not part of technical officers' workplan, nor are they included in the Performance Evaluation and Management System. Although the database is available to other divisions, its use across FAO is minimal. The Evaluation Team communicated at length with PSU, identifying and retrieving missing documents on formal partnership agreements. However, in most cases, the information provided in the progress reports was of minimal help in assessing the results or level of engagement. For example, in the case of FAO's partnership with FBRN, the progress reports for 2014, 2015 and 2019 were missing from the internal partnerships database.
120. In a further example, the PSU database documentation on FAO's partnership with Caritas Internationalis (accessed in April and May 2020) consisted of a MoU signed with Fondazione Caritas Roma in 2016 (although the partnership in the database was entitled "Caritas Internationalis"), progress reports for 2017 and 2018 and an empty 2019 progress report. The 2017 and 2018 progress reports referred to activities implemented with both Fondazione Caritas Roma and Caritas Internationalis, with no distinction. An interview with PSU confirmed that the MoU pertained to the channelling of FAO's food and non-food surpluses to Caritas. As far as the awareness-raising and communication activities cited in the reports were concerned, PSU said they were not included in the MoU, but implemented as supplementary joint actions.
121. An interview with the MoU contact person clarified that the agreement had been signed with Fondazione Caritas Roma to distribute excess food, beverages and self-medication products from the FAO's commissary, which was closed in 2017. The MoU signed specifically for that purpose was facilitated by Caritas Internationalis, which had no further engagement in MoU implementation. Caritas Internationalis is independent of Fondazione Caritas Roma and has consultative status with FAO. In 2014, an exchange of letters aimed to reinforce that collaboration on knowledge-sharing, advocacy and communication. This included FAO's participation in the One Human Family Food for All campaign, advocating for the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security, including the development of proposals for model framework laws, joint resource mobilization and alignment of international campaigns and mutual visibility (FAO, 2005).²²

²² Following an interview with Caritas Internationalis, as suggested by the PSU Liaison Officer, the independent evaluator requested that the PSU focal point provide further documentation on implementation of the MoU with Fondazione Caritas Roma to assess the quantitative and qualitative data and information on food and non-food distribution. However, the evaluation notes that the independent evaluator did not receive any feedback, and it was not fully clarified who the evaluand should be.

The evaluation notes that by June 2020, the Partnership Database was eventually calling the partnership "Fondazione Caritas Roma" rather than "Caritas Internationalis" as before. As of June 2020, the 2019 progress report had been updated and provided some brief information on the conclusion of the partnership with Fondazione Caritas Roma. The partner contact person had not been changed and was still as indicated by Caritas Internationalis.

122. A further example can be found in the case of Federazione Organismi Cristiani Servizio Internazionale Volontario (FOCSIV). While this MoU was signed in 2017, planned activities to deploy Italian volunteers in Colombia, Guatemala, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania have not materialized. FOCSIV required FAO accreditation, which was not completed until the end of 2019. The first two pilot projects (in Ecuador and Peru) were started in February 2020, with the first operations to be launched by the end of 2020. Lastly, due diligence processes and reviews of partnership proposals are not well documented, so do little to facilitate further development based on lessons learned. The records available on formalized partnership agreements with CSOs in the SubCom-PC-Archive mailbox offer only a partial trail of the review processes.

3.4 Integration of cross-cutting themes

Finding 16. Effective gender mainstreaming has been demonstrated to some extent in the design and implementation of the partnership initiatives developed.

123. As the *Evaluation of FAO's Work on Gender* (FAO, 2019c) noted, while FAO has lagged in forging collaborations with non-state actors to promote gender issues and women's empowerment, there were instances in some of the countries visited by the Gender Evaluation Team where CSOs had a growing role in raising awareness and advocating for gender issues, such as women's access to land, IT services, the economic empowerment of vulnerable women and women's representation in farmer and producer organizations. Noteworthy examples were found in Paraguay, Guatemala, Mauritania, Tunisia, Ghana, Kenya, Nepal, Georgia, Turkey and the Kyrgyz Republic. The Strategy explicitly recognizes gender equality among the mutual principles that must form the basis of its partnerships with CSOs for food security and improved livelihoods. At country level, the evaluation noted some initiatives that incorporated gender issues in developing partnerships.
124. In **Cape Verde**, Caritas projects in the field of family farming feature women in both coach and trainee roles. Lending institutions working in micro-credit have also conducted workshops aimed at women to balance the tendency for men to take charge of financial matters as heads of household. In some cases, project approval requires up to 70 percent female inclusion. FAO has set an example by having mostly female local staff and insisting that a minimum 40 percent of project beneficiaries be women and youth. The Morabi association carries out such projects in some of the most vulnerable communities in Praia and Santo Antão. In **Lebanon**, FAO organized dedicated training on gender in forestry, targeting representatives from CSOs, municipalities and the Ministry of Agriculture. Moreover, the Organization ensured equal participation of male and female representatives in community meetings, training and awareness activities. Through CSOs, it also facilitated women's direct involvement in reforestation.
125. In **Paraguay**, FAO addresses gender aspects by collaborating with CSOs that work with indigenous groups, on the situation of women and youth in rural areas, particularly indigenous women, and the nutritional and food security and sovereignty of rural people. In **Senegal**, as part of efforts to promote the right to development of indigenous peoples, ActionAid and FAO published the 2016 manual, *Prior, free and informed consent: A right of indigenous peoples and good practice for local communities* (FAO, 2016). FAO, together with AVSF, FNPC and Symbiose Sénégal, has enabled 7 245 women to participate in

The 2017 and 2018 progress reports also continued to include information on both Fondazione Caritas Roma and Caritas Internationalis.

planning their villages' development and implementing economic, cultural and religious activities at community level through Dimitra Clubs, a local platform for consultation. In the **United Republic of Tanzania**, the FAO Country Office conducted a gender stocktaking exercise, which also assessed the level of gender integration in projects and programme formulation and implementation, as part of improving FAO Representation in the United Republic of Tanzania's (FRURT) gender work for 2020 and the years ahead.²³ The VGGT multi-stakeholder platform in the United Republic of Tanzania mainstreams gender as one of its 10 principles of VGGT implementation.

Finding 17. Climate-change adaptation and resilience considerations are integrated to some extent into partnerships with an explicit focus on promoting environmental sustainability.

126. The Strategy's basic principles imply that partnership activities should be planned to promote economic, environmental and social sustainability. The evaluation found examples of partnerships formed for climate-change adaptation and the promotion of environmental sustainability. Action Against Desertification was launched in 2014 to assist local communities, government and civil society in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal in combating the effects of climate change and desertification by promoting the sustainable management and restoration of dryland forests and rangelands. The National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction and Management of **the Lao People's Democratic Republic**, developed with FAO's technical support, calls for cross-sectoral partnerships to address the complexity of climate change. Hence, partnerships with farmers' groups and NGOs were formed as part of the Disaster Risk Management Working Group, contributing to national efforts on climate-change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. Group members are active in all 17 provinces of the country, enabling them to respond more flexibly and quickly to urgent needs in communities affected by disasters. **The United Republic of Tanzania's** climate-smart agriculture guidelines were developed between 2014 and 2016 in a partnership-driven, multi-sectoral approach, led by a multi-stakeholder task force comprised of agriculture, environment, climate and development experts from the public and private sectors, as well as CSOs (FAO, 2017c).

Finding 18. In terms of public discourse on governance-related issues, FAO's Basic Texts provide mechanisms for the engagement of non-state actors, including CSOs.

127. Non-state actors and international NGOs can attend and participate as observers in FAO Governing Bodies and Technical Committees and may be invited to expert meetings, conferences and seminars (FAO, 2017a, Volume II, section M). Some of these associates participate in the CFS through the CSM and contribute to the negotiation of CFS policy outputs. FAO has supported multi-stakeholder forums and platforms that set international norms and standards and foster participatory decision-making and policy discourse at global and regional level. FAO ensures CSO engagement in these platforms, such as the International Plant Protection Convention, the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, and the FAO Technical Committees on Fisheries (COFI), on Forestry (COFO) and Agriculture (COAG), as well as the FAO Regional Conferences and regional bodies, such as Africa's regional economic communities. The Evaluation Team also found examples of FAO support for integrating the VGGTs into national policy based on participatory consultations with CSOs. The IPC Working Group on Fisheries was recognized in the background papers for COFI 2016 and 2018, with specific mention in COFI 2014 for the high participatory level of

²³ This exercise forms part of the minimum standard requirements under the FAO Gender Equity Policy to provide a basis for gender mainstreaming. It is also part of the periodic review to assess how well gender equality has been incorporated into FRURT projects and programmes. See FAO (2019), p. 1.

small-scale fisheries organizations for the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (FAO, 2015a).

128. After advocacy by La Via Campesina, supported by FAO and other partners, the United Nations Human Rights Council adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas in September 2018 (United Nations Human Rights Council, 2018). La Via Campesina subsequently published a popular illustrated booklet on the Declaration (La Via Campesina, 2020).

Finding 19. Nutrition considerations have not been well integrated into partnerships, apart from a few initiatives specifically targeting nutrition-related issues.

129. FAO engages CSOs in the global debate on nutrition-related issues through consultations within the framework of the Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition and the International Conferences on Nutrition (ICN), as well as through global events, such as the International Year of Pulses or the Symposium on the Future of Food. However, these efforts have not led to any significant partnerships with CSOs on nutrition-related issues. Still, there is great potential for more emphasis on nutrition-related topics in future FAO partnership initiatives. A recent agreement with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition offers the potential for a more active collaboration to increase the availability of nutritious food in developing countries.
130. **Brazil's** Zero Hunger programme has proved effective in reducing food insecurity. With strong civil-society participation, it serves as a model to be replicated in other countries through South–South cooperation. The Brazilian National Council for Food and Nutritional Security, a policy coordination body established under the Office of the President, has been promoted as a successful model for integrating various policy areas (such as social protection, agriculture and health) towards the elimination of hunger. FAO has worked with Brazil to disseminate best school food, nutrition and education practices, based on lessons learned from its experience of food acquisition.
131. In **Guatemala**, FAO has collaborated with Asociación de Desarrollo Integral de Jóvenes Emprendedores (ADIJE)²⁴ to support the use of sustainable agricultural products for school feeding. In the **Kyrgyz Republic**, FAO's "Productive Social Contract/Cash Plus" project, implemented together with the Alliance of Civil Society for Nutrition and Food Security, has promoted the cultivation of nutritious crops and nutrition education among low-income residents of the Jalal-Abad region. In the **Lao People's Democratic Republic**, the REACH initiative is a government-led inter-agency process that engages stakeholders across different sectors, including international NGOs, to tackle the causes of child undernutrition and food insecurity.

²⁴ ADIJE provides services for the implementation of risk-management practices in the agricultural business.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. The Strategy underlines the Organization's commitment to continued engagement with civil society in its programmatic, operational, policy and advocacy work. Despite the limited number of formalized partnerships, there has been an increasing trend towards greater collaboration with a variety of civil-society entities across FAO's thematic areas of work, particularly at the technical and decentralized level. FAO needs to capitalize on these arrangements and effectively guide its units towards strategic, long-term engagements with a view to achieving the SDGs.

132. During the evaluation period (2013–2019), a total of 28 CSOs partnerships were formally established, of which 21 are still active, five are inactive and two are being considered for renewal. The evaluation notes that only 9 of the 129 partnerships listed as having formal status²⁵ have signed a written partnership agreement with FAO since 2013. This aside, FAO's technical divisions and decentralized offices have been pursuing engagement with civil-society entities and there are positive examples of engagement with CSOs, in broad alignment with the Strategy's main principles. FAO should draw valuable lessons from these areas of work to produce more transformative and sustainable development solutions.

Conclusion 2. Despite the progress made since 2013 and the opportunities arising from the growing contribution of CSOs to achieving the SDGs, most of FAO's partnerships with CSOs have not been strategically planned, with minimal integration into FAO programmes and workplans. To fully capitalize on the potential for joint global action for Agenda 2030, FAO needs to make a concerted effort to forge demand-based partnerships based on equality and mutual trust, effectively identifying and engaging appropriate CSOs as equal and long-term development partners, rather than the prevailing practice of contracting their services for short-term assignments and interventions.

133. While FAO partnerships with CSOs have, to some extent, realized mutual benefits, these have generally been based on arrangements where CSOs were either service providers or beneficiaries of capacity development or knowledge transfer. The evaluation found good examples of fruitful cooperation, yet most of FAO's partnerships with civil society have been opportunistic and/or one-time events in the context of dedicated initiatives or programmes designed to address specific development issues or problems. Except for partnerships forged around global policy discourse and initiatives that required the active engagement of civil society (such as the introduction of VGGTs), the majority of partnership contributions have not been very visible or sustainable beyond the duration of the agreement. FAO should consider taking a more strategic approach to mapping, identifying and planning partnerships with CSOs, fostering inclusive and mutually beneficial partnerships to promote innovative, sustainable food and agricultural practices, and to develop the capacity of CSOs and other key stakeholders.

²⁵ As of February 2020, nine international NGOs had been granted consultative status, 43 held specialized consultative status and, in recognition of their cooperation, particularly at the technical level, 76 had been granted liaison status.

Conclusion 3. The overall method of operation for partnership arrangements appears to be limited to a few models for and instruments of collaboration that do not foster demand-based engagement with CSOs as development partners. FAO needs to consider improving its procedures for entering into partnerships by expanding its range of agreements and partnership instruments to facilitate collaborative and mutually beneficial cooperation.

134. The Strategy is intended to be a framework for collaboration and partnership with civil society. When selecting CSOs to work with, it says the Organization must consider the level of collaboration with other institutions and actors in the country, their technical expertise and their outreach capacity in rural areas (FAO, 2013a). Paradoxically, the collaborative tools used to manage such partnerships have notably been limited to letters of agreement, which place external partners in a broad category of 'service providers'. Moreover, there have been issues in relation to co-publishing and copyright, as well as an overall sense of hierarchy between FAO and its partners, for instance, where deliverables are to FAO and not to both parties.
135. The original intention was that FAO staff be offered guidance on establishing effective partnerships with CSOs. However, it is generally agreed that the main factors limiting the success of CSO partnership arrangements within FAO include limited understanding of the scope of FAO's policies and instruments on such collaborations and limited knowledge of the appropriate areas and levels of interaction with CSOs, due to varying rationale and methods of operation. Time-consuming and complex processes, inconsistent procedures and unsophisticated (reactive) tactics, combined with risk-averse approaches to partnerships, are mechanisms that protect FAO from risk, but give staff and the Organization little flexibility in dealing with external partners, limiting fruitful partnership opportunities with civil society.

Conclusion 4. Partnership development efforts are not underpinned by an effective guidance and knowledge-management system that could serve as an organizational hub for best practices and well-documented approaches to partnership development and collaboration.

136. While the Strategy stipulated the development of a results-oriented monitoring and evaluation system, the current reporting system, including the internal SharePoint on formalized partnerships, is inadequate for measuring the performance and effectiveness of partnership initiatives. Apart from rather general guidance on integrating partnerships into CPFs and a limited content offering in terms of online training courses, Country Offices do not have access to guidance materials or a well-constructed knowledge base for capitalizing on best practices and the results of partnership initiatives. FAO needs to establish a system for the robust monitoring and assessment of partnership efforts to assist the Organization in improving the quality of its partnerships and making changes to Strategy implementation based on the information generated. This system would also respond to the recent call by FAO's Governing Bodies for an assessment of progress against objectives as well as a focus on the impact on the ground, the benefits achieved, the challenges faced, an exchange of experiences and lessons learned, constraints within partnerships and Strategy implementation.

4.2 Recommendations

Rating criteria	Potential impact			Urgency (years)		
Recommendation	High	Medium	Low	<0.5	0.5-1	1-2
1. Ensure mapping and strategic planning of potential partnerships						
2. Engage in multi-stakeholder initiatives, moving beyond bilateral partnerships						
3. Review and further develop partnership arrangements and processes						
4. Improve monitoring and knowledge management systems						

Recommendation 1. The Strategy should continue to serve as a framework for FAO's engagement with civil society in the broad areas of food security and agricultural sector development, facilitating shared-value collaboration and demand-based partnerships based on equality, trust, inclusion and mutual benefits.

- i. In each technical area of work, PSU should guide the FAO technical divisions in undertaking an analysis of the opportunities and potential mutual benefits of bringing CSOs into their main work streams, focusing on partnerships that would mobilize an appropriate mix of knowledge, resources and assets to achieve organizational objectives and the 2030 Agenda.
- ii. Each programme country should undertake a mapping of relevant non-state actors and an analysis of where and how demand-based engagement with them could contribute to the objectives of the new United Nations Cooperation Framework and CPFs. As stipulated in the Strategy, PSU should enhance its efforts to assist the decentralized offices in conducting these mapping exercises.

137. The 2030 Agenda, with its commitment to leave no one behind, calls for robust partnership development efforts. To respond to the new development paradigm, in which civil society is no longer only a development tool, but a development agent, FAO will need to expand its engagement with non-state actors, including CSOs, and focus on fostering partnerships centred on inclusion and equality, which target common solutions and mutual benefits and move beyond information-sharing and consultations to embrace effective involvement, mutual empowerment and a collaborative drive to eradicate hunger and food insecurity. PSU should provide guidance to both technical divisions and Country Offices in mapping and identifying potential opportunities for and the effective realization of partnerships. It should also provide advisory support on developing and maintaining regular dialogue and broadening consultations with civil-society partners, as well as in designing and implementing collaborative partnerships and initiatives.

Recommendation 2. In the context of the 2030 Agenda, FAO should consider expanding its engagement in effective multi-stakeholder partnership networks and mechanisms and move beyond bilateral partnership agreements.

- i. FAO should become more responsive to growing partnership opportunities, particularly when it comes to implementing the 2030 Agenda and promoting the establishment of multi-stakeholder initiatives aimed at the inclusive and effective engagement of civil society and other actors to achieve the SDGs.

- ii. **FAO Country Offices should assess complementarities and synergies with other development actors' work in priority areas of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). Drawing on FAO's comparative advantages, Country Offices may choose to lead or participate in forming multi-stakeholder partnerships between CSOs, the UN agencies and other development actors in UNSDCF priority areas.**

138. The Organization should take necessary steps to reinforce synergies at all levels, making FAO open to collaboration with all relevant actors, while pursuing fit-for-purpose collaborations and shared-value partnerships. FAO may consider the following preconditions when determining levels of demand-based engagement with partners in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, that: (a) the area concerned does not fall within the purview of FAO headquarters (Country Office competence); (b) the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Country Offices (necessity); (c) the action can, therefore, by reason of its scale or effects, be implemented more successfully by FAO headquarters (added value).

Recommendation 3. FAO should review and develop a coherent approach to developing partnership arrangements, streamline its processes and revisit its instruments for engaging with CSOs to ensure that safeguards are commensurate with the level and scope of the engagement.

- i. **FAO could seize opportunities for innovation and for building on and scaling up best practices and existing models that may inform the creation of a one-stop-shop official portal through which it can interact with (prospective) partners.**
- ii. **The newly established PSDU should be adequately organized and equipped to manage potential demand and exercise its role in the most objective and effective way possible.²⁶**
- iii. **FAO could explore the circumstances under which a LoA, and the use of the letter-of-agreement accountability framework alone, is deemed sufficient to achieve the FAO's objectives without necessitating additional or different partnership arrangements, such as those under the OPIM.**

139. The Strategy states that it is crucial to involve networks and organizations to ensure the broadest possible representation. FAO must use its existing tools and technical expertise to foster better quality, increased accountability and transparency. A one-stop-shop portal could serve as a tool for integrity, openness, transparency and accountability. It would facilitate inclusive, transparent and streamlined engagement and help to improve efficiency, while ensuring that rules and regulations were respected. The portal could also include due diligence and related approval procedures tailored to the level of risk presented by the partnerships in question. In this regard, FAO could consider delegating authority for initial screening and risk assessment to (sub)regional and Country Offices, provided that the due diligence review did not reveal any risks to the Organization. The *ex ante* assessment and due diligence process should be reinforced by a retrospective analysis based on performance benchmarks, with indicators connected to the fulfilment of SDG contributions, civil-society partners' fulfilment of their commitments and the value generated by such partnerships. FAO

²⁶ It comprises two staff (one P3 and one P2) and two non-staff (one COF.LOC and one PSA). From 1 January 2019 to 30 June 2020, the team received a total of 641 screening requests. The non-staff budget for due diligence-related activities in 2020 is USD 40 000. Since March 2020, PSDU reports to DDG Beth Bechdol. However, the evaluation notes that despite the change in reporting line, the PSDU posts and the non-staff budget remain based in the PSU.

could also consider more flexible approaches that offer additional means of engagement with CSOs, perhaps on an ad hoc basis (for example, in relation to knowledge or skills transfer). This could entail a less formalized approach if the relationship were not structured as a "partnership", but as "knowledge exchange," dialogue or interaction.

140. The following provisions of the FAO Administrative Manual could be considered in deciding on the proposed partnership arrangements, particularly when the service provider can be referred to as an implementing partner.
141. *Operational Partners Implementation Modality (OPIM)*. The description of the purpose of OPIM overlaps with the Organization's definition of 'partnership' (FAO, 2012a). It may be used when there is a definitive advantage for FAO in terms of achieving and supporting the sustainability of results based on shared and jointly defined objectives within individual projects. It is a structured approach that culminates in an OPA, a legally binding instrument that outlines both FAO's and the operational partner's roles and responsibilities, as well as other conditions for collaboration. It incorporates embedded due diligence screening of the recommended non-state operational partners and their subcontractors, ensuring that FAO's neutrality and impartiality is not compromised.
142. *LoA*. Over the years, FAO has disbursed large amounts to CSOs through letters of agreement. While useful, this tool comes with its own risk to transparency, accountability and, ultimately, the Organization's efficiency in conducting its core work. First, it relegates civil society to the role of service provider and, if used extensively, adds to the risk of perpetuating a civil-society 'dependency' on donor resources. Its limited 18-month duration often coincides with limited scope and impact. The evaluation notes that when the selection of a service provider under a letter of agreement is precluded by the upstream process, such as the signing of a partnership agreement, discontinuity or the risk of moral hazard may ensue. The authorized official that signs the LoA is required to validate a previous decision, while accepting full accountability under MS 507 rules for the selection and its approval, among other things. FAO should explore when and under what circumstances a LoA, and the use of the letter-of-agreement accountability framework, alone, is deemed sufficient to achieve FAO's objectives without necessitating additional or different partnership arrangements, such as the OPIM. The evaluation notes the utility of this exercise, especially as, for example, the avoidance of conflicts of interest and adherence to the procurement code of ethics may not apply equally and in the same manner to the signing of letters of agreement and partnership agreements.

Recommendation 4. FAO should improve its assessment of the value and impact of ongoing and past partnerships and draw on identified best practices and lessons learned to develop updated guidance for initiating effective collaboration approaches and partnership initiatives, making any necessary updates to Strategy implementation.

- i. **In line with the originally proposed arrangements for Strategy implementation, PSU should significantly strengthen its partnership monitoring system, ensure timely updates of the partnerships database and develop tools to measure partnership effectiveness.**
- ii. **In addition to strengthening its monitoring system, PSU should assess the impact and benefits of partnerships and the challenges faced for accountability and learning purposes. The resulting information should be included in guidance materials and knowledge products, as well as in regular reporting to the FAO Programme Committee and other reporting mechanisms, such as the Programme Implementation Report, Mid-Term Reviews and Resources Partnership Impact reports.**

143. FAO should expand its monitoring efforts beyond simple references to activities and outputs and focus on generating evidence to help assess the development outcomes and effects of partnership initiatives. This would provide FAO management with valuable information for determining the most effective ways to partner with CSOs. FAO should ensure that, as part of its organizational learning and accountability process, it measures performance, impact and outcomes of engagement with CSOs; adapts such engagement as needed to ensure it meets its intended purpose and objectives; and produces relevant guidance materials and knowledge products to steer FAO units in developing and implementing partnership initiatives.
144. An effective system should be put in place to develop an evidence-based database of successful collaborative initiatives and best practices to assist FAO in improving the quality of its partnerships. This information could be used to make necessary updates and improvements to Strategy implementation. Current reporting mechanisms, including the biennial report to the Programme Committee on partnerships and progress reports for each partnership, should be strengthened by incorporating a detailed assessment of progress against objectives, the impact on the ground, the benefits achieved, challenges faced, experience exchanged, lessons learned, and any constraints on the partnership and/or implementation of agreed strategies.

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Appendix 1. List of people interviewed

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Organization
1	Abe	Kaori	Partnership Officer	FAO
2	Adhikary	Shrawan	Programme Officer	FAO
3	Ainura	Imanbekova	Chair	Cooperative Union of the Kyrgyz Republic
4	AKA	Kader	Head of the Pastoralism Division	Ministry of Livestock and Animal Production, Senegal
5	Akiko	Inoguchi,	Forestry Officer	FAO
6	Al Hayari	Muttasim	Director of the Natural Resources Management Programme	JOHUD
7	Alekseyeva	Darya	Officer	FAO
8	Alfayez	Talal	Government Relations and Liaising Officer	FAO
9	Almeida	Marina	Secretary General	Caritas CV
10	Alvarado	Yovani	Director	UTZ CHE (nacional)
11	Alvarenga	Faustina	Representative	Articulación de Mujeres Indígenas del Paraguay
12	Alves	Fabiana Villa	Representative	Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária
13	Amaral	Nemo Andrade	Assistant	Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura (Brazil)
14	Amaro da Costa	Cristina	College Professor and CONSAN member	Politécnico de Viseu/CPLP academic mechanism (Portugal)
15	Ampilan	Datusikie	Executive Director	Magungaya Mindanao, Inc., the Philippines
16	Angelowsky	Dragan	Technical Adviser (Programme Team Leader)	FAO
17	Anna	Korzenszky,	Family Farming and Partnerships Consultant	FAO
18	Antun	George	Country Director Lebanon & Regional Programme Adviser	MERCY CORPS
19	Asmar	Fady	SALMA Project Manager	FAO
20	Assogba	Christelle Nickie	Project Coordinator	Mer et Monde (Senegal)
21	Avazov	Shahzod	Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Officer	FAO
22	Ba	Cheikh Omar	Executive Director	Initiative Prospective Rurale
23	Ba	Colonel Baba	Technical Adviser	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Senegal
24	Ba	Malick	Executive Director	ONG SYMBIOSE
25	Bac My	Mai	Vice Director of International Cooperation	Vietnam Farmers' Union
26	Badiane	Abdou	Nutrition Consultant	FAO
27	Badiane	Ndeye Yacine Ndour	National Project Coordinator, SAGA-Senegal	FAO

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Organization
28	Baena	Pablo Manzano	Former Coordinator of Pastoralist Knowledge Hub	FAO
29	Balde	Moussa	National Coordinator	ONG AVSF
30	Baniya	Sundar	Monitoring and Documentation Coordinator	National Land Rights Forum (NLRF)
31	Barrios	Elmer	Executive Director and Legal Representative	ADIJE (Regional)
32	Barry	Oumar	Operations expert	FAO
33	Bayate	Rande	Executive Director	Silangang Dapit sa Habagatang Sidlakang Mindanao (SILDAP) (Philippines)
34	Beatha	Mborow,	LAND OFFICER	FAO
35	Beishenaliev	Janybek	Farmer	Kemin, Chuy region, Kyrgyzstan
36	Benicia	AlmeidaInsfran,	National Consultant on Indigenous Peoples	FAO
37	Benítez	Lorenza	Representative	Abordaje Intercultural del Plan Nacional de Reducción de Pobreza, Paraguay
38	Berman	Sally	Partnerships Officer	FAO
39	Bermudez	Sandra	CSO Specialist, Project GCP/GLO/347/MUL, FAO Colombia	FAO
40	Bini	Edoardo Calza	Partnerships Consultant	FAO
41	Bokuchava	Marika	National Specialist on Institutional and Regulative Framework (Veterinary and Food Safety)	FAO
42	Brady	Guilherme	Chief of Unit; Family Farming and Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (PSUF); Partnerships and United Nations Collaboration Division (PSU)	FAO
43	Broch	Alberto	Secretary General, COPROFAM	Confederação Nacional dos Trabalhadores na Agricultura
44	Bruges	Alfredo	M&E specialist responsible for annual reporting	FAO Colombia
45	Brun	Laur	M&E Adviser	ENDA PRONAT
46	Burkhanov	Aitkul	Director	Association of forest and land users of the Kyrgyz Republic
47	Caballero	Salustiana	Representative	SUNU, Acción Intercultural
48	Camara	Ngouye	President	Fédération Yakaar Niani Wulli
49	Campbell	Jeffrey	Manager	FAO
50	Carrascal	Wilberto	Legal Representative	Fundación Jóvenes Visionarios
51	Castillo	Patrica	Programme Manager	Action Aid (Global)

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Organization
52	Cavalcante	Marcos	Productive Inclusion Coordinator	BNDES
53	Cesar	José Renato de Castro	Professor, Universidade Federal de São João del-Rei (UFSJ)	Fundação Nacional do Índio - FUNAI / UFSJ
54	Charles	Tulahi,	Assistant FAOR (Programme)	FAO Tanzania
55	Chhatkuli	Ek Raj	Executive Director	Forum for Community Upliftment System (FOCUS)
56	ChicasMartinez	Veronica Patricia	Gender and Indigenous Peoples Specialist	FAO
57	Chinchilla	Alberto	Representative	ACICAFOC
58	Chintana	Chanthavisouk,	National Adviser, ECTAD	FAO Lao People's Democratic Republic
59	Cisse	Elhadj Thierno	Executive Secretary	CNCR
60	Cisse	Yacine	Communications Assistant	FAO
61	Cissokho	Mamadou	Honorary President	ROPFA
62	Claros Oviedo	Manuel	Partnerships Consultant	FAO
63	Claudio	Triani	Regional programme officer	Save the Children
64	Conti	Mauro	President	IPC Secretariat
65	Cordinet	Geraldine	Senegal River Basin Project Consultant	FAO
66	Cumes	Aura Marina	Programme Assistant	FAO
67	D. Ramirez	Marlene	Secretary General	ASIA DHRRA - Secretariat
68	Davies	Jonathan	Global Drylands Coordinator / Senior Agriculture Adviser	IUCN
69	Delgado Méndez	Leonardo Otoniel	General Manager and Legal Representative	FEDECOVERA (Regional)
70	Dell'Angelo	Andrea	Chair	Association for International Solidarity in Asia (ASIA)
71	Demers	Isabelle	Field Director	Mer et Monde (Senegal)
72	Dhungana	Sindhu Prasad	Joint Secretary; Planning, Monitoring and Coordination Division	Ministry of Forests and Environment
73	Di Paoli	Luca	Director – Colombia	Agencia Italiana de Cooperación para el Desarrollo
74	Dia	Isseur Dieye	Gender Manager	CNCR
75	Dia	Moustapha	Focal Point	Réseau Billital Maroobé
76	Diagne	Bassirou	M&E Officer, GAFS Project	FAO
77	Diallo	Hamdiatou	Technical Manager	FNPC
78	Diallo	Imam	Farmer field school facilitator	RNF/GIPD
79	Dias	Joana	Coordinator	Actuar / CONSAN
80	Diaw	Coumbaly	Regional micro-gardening project coordinator, Milan Dakar	FAO

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Organization
81	Díaz	Eberto	Focal point for La Via Campesina representation in Colombia (member of FENSUAGRO)	La Via Campesina
82	Dieng	Barka	President	RNF/GIPD
83	Diouf	Adboulaye Didi	FAO CPP Steering Committee President, 2019–2023	Ministry of Finance and Budget, Senegal
84	Diouf	Amacodou	Former President	Conseil des Organisations Non Gouvernementales d'Appui au Développement (CONGAD)
85	Diouf	Omar	Former ProAct Project Coordinator	FAO
86	Dosso	Abdoul Karim	Programme Director	Energy For Impact
87	Duarte	María Luisa	Representative	Organización Kuña Aty (Indigenous)
88	Dzadzamia	Beqa	National Project Coordinator	FAO
89	Ekaterina	Lazarova,	Human Resources Officer	FAO
90	Eresta	Ignacio Martin	Senior Specialist in Strategic Policy Dialogue	FAO
91	Estrada	Maynor	Assistant FAOR (PROGRAMME)	FAO
92	Facco	Luiz	Assistant	CONTAG
93	Fall	Ndiakhate	West Africa Coordinator	La Via Campesina
94	Faucet	Jerome	Country Representative	German Red Cross
95	Faye	Elhadj	Director of Programmes	ENDA PRONAT
96	Faye	Ibrahima	Programme Associate	FAO
97	Fazzone	Marcos Rodriguez	Senior Specialist, Family Farming and Inclusive Markets	FAO
98	Fernandez	Jose Luiz	Former FAOR Philippines	FAO
99	Ferrari	Serena	Pastoralism Specialist	FAO
100	Florence	Andrea	Human rights activist	Formerly with Amnesty International
101	Fonseca	Zulma	Director of Nutrition	Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar (ICBF)
102	Franco	Lina	Representative	Instituto Paraguayo del Indígena (INDI)
103	Frere	Pablo	Executive Secretary	Redes Chaco
104	Fujiwara	Kazuyuki	Partnerships Officer	FAO
105	Gagnon	Linda	Programme Manager	Solidarité Union et Coopérative (SUCO)
106	Galvan	Cesar	National Agronomist	FAO
107	Galvão de França	Caio	Senior Secretary	Ministry of Agriculture
108	Gamboa	Clemen	Programme Associate	FAO
109	Gano	Ibrahima	Programme Coordinator	SOCODEVI

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Organization
110	Gayl	Caroline Von	Programme Officer	FAO
111	Gil	Gregorio Velasco	Coordinator - Pastoralist Knowledge Hub	FAO
112	Gonçalves	Lina	President, Morabi	Morabi micro-finance cooperative
113	Greco	Rodolfo Gonzalez	IPC Secretariat for Latin America and the Caribbean (with a political role)	MOCASE (La Via Campesina)
114	Grouwels	Sophie	Officer	FAO
115	Guarascio	Francesca	Officer	FAO
116	Gueye	Aliou	Farmer Field School Coordinator	Réseau National des formateurs en Gestion Intégrée de la Production et des Déprédateurs
117	Gueye	Cheikh Christophe	Former Assistant to the FAOR	FAO
118	Ha	Nguyen Song	Assistant FAOR (Programme)	FAO
119	Haddad	Anwar	Chair	Jordan Dates Association
120	Halawani	Bouchra	Agricultural Project Specialist	CONCERN
121	Hane	Sérigne Mbacké	G50 Technical and Financial Partners Platform Coordinator	UNDP
122	Hernandez	Martina Buonincontri	Resilience Partnerships Coordinator	FAO
123	Hoffmann	Irene Maria	Secretary	FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
124	Ibraimova	Aliya	Director	CAMP Alattoo
125	Jaff	Kayan	Senior Policy Officer	FAO
126	Johansson	Kajsa	Strategic Adviser	WeEffect
127	Jonas	Tammi	Regional Coordinator	International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty – Asia-Pacific region
128	Jorjadze	Mariam	Director	Association ELKANA
129	Jumabekov	Adilet	Farmer	Kemin, Chuy region, Kyrgyzstan
130	K.C.	Hari Bahadur	Joint Secretary	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development Nepal
131	Kane	Atoumane	Pastoralism expert	ONG AVSF
132	Kanoute	Amadou	Director	Institut Panafricain pour la citoyenneté, les consommateurs et le développement
133	Kaseeva	Gulnaz	Head of Office	Agrolead, Kyrgyzstan
134	Kasymbekova	Lira	Head of Unit	Ministry for Agriculture, Food Industry and Melioration, Kyrgyzstan

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Organization
135	Kawand	Rita	General Coordinator	SOILS Permaculture Association, Lebanon
136	KevinWayne	Jeanes,	Chief Technical Adviser	FAO
137	Khetereli	Andro	Director	Agrarian Movement of Georgia
138	Kuttubaeva	Asel	Manager	PF Community Development Alliance
139	Laferte	Danielle	Principal Officer in charge of programme development	Carrefour International
140	Lakkis	Rami	President	Lebanese Organization for Studies and Training (LOST)
141	Leye	Mouhamadou	National Director	Quebec Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI)
142	Lind	Hans	Member of the Board of Directors	WeEffect
143	Lopez	Dina	South-South Cooperation Officer	FAO
144	Lopez	Mayra Vazquez	Executive Assistant	FAO
145	Lorenzo	Laura	Director	World Rural Forum (WRF)
146	Louteiro	Ana	National Specialist Consultant in inclusive productive strategies and rural enterprise	FAO
147	Lova	Marina Molino	Country Representative	AVSI
148	Luc	Phan	Representative	VIPA/ Vietnam Poultry Association
149	Lunas	Alessandra	President of FETAGRO	CONTAG Women
150	Machado	António Montalvão	Secretary General	ADRAT Associação de Desenvolvimento da Região do Alto Tâmega
151	Magtibay	Jasmine	Programme Assistant	FAO
152	Mamadalieva	Mukhabbat	Peasant, SCO Head	Zan va Zamin, Tajikistan
153	Manh	Tran Duc	DRR Focal Point	Save the Children
154	Martires	Janet	Project Officer	Yakap Kalikasan
155	Massoy	Theresia	Agriculture Officer	FAO Tanzania
156	Mazo	Santiago	Consultant on projects with civil society	FAO
157	Mbaye	Fatou	Social protection consultant, gender focal point	FAO
158	Mboup	Modou	Technical Adviser	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Equipment Senegal
159	Mbow	Modou Fanta	Information and Education Officer	RNF/GIPD
160	McKeon	Nora	CSM representative	CFS
161	Medina	Javier Lautaro	Board Member, Programas de Desarrollo con Enfoque Territorial	Centro de Investigación y Educación Popular (CINEP)
162	Medina	Victoria	Regional Facilitator	Margaridas network

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Organization
163	Meskhi	Mamuka	Assistant Representative in Georgia	FAO
164	Meza	Jorge	FAOR	FAO
165	Miguel	Antonio Cerca	Liaison staff	Planning Office of the Agriculture Ministry / Comissão Nacional Combate Desperdício Alimentar, Portugal
166	Millán	Juliana	President	Red Nacional de Agricultura Familiar (RENAF)
167	Mohanna	Chadi	Director	Rural Development and Natural Resources Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Lebanon
168	Monica	Petri,	Project Coordinator	FAO
169	Munzara	Angeline	Senior Adviser	World Vision International (WVI)
170	Murray	Josil	FAO-EU FLEGT Programme Consultant for Asia-Pacific	FAO
171	Musni	Denise	Project Officer	Asian NGO Coalition for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (ANGOC)
172	Nasar	Hayat,	FAO Representative	FAO
173	Natalie	Kapinga,	National M&E Specialist	FAO
174	Naungayan	Marianne Jane	Project Officer	ANGOC
175	Ndiaye	Gora	Founder of the Kaydara Agro-ecology Farm	Jardins d'Afrique
176	Ndiaye	Maguette	President of the FAO CPP Steering Committee 2013–2017	Ministry of Finance and Budget, Senegal
177	Ndiaye	Malick	Project Coordinator	FAO
178	Ndiaye	NdeyeYandé	Land Program Officer	AJS
179	Ndiobo Diene	Mame	Policy and Institutions expert / Climate Resilience Project Coordinator	FAO
180	Ndour	Arfang	M&E expert	Fonds National de Développement Agro-sylvo-pastoral
181	Nehme	Maya	Executive Director	Lebanese Reforestation Initiative (LRI)
182	Neves Sancha	Katya Mascarenhas	Executive Assistant	FAO
183	Ngom	Kader Fanta	Consultant Land Lawyer	Projet ASAM
184	Niasse	Madiodio	Former director	International Land Coalition
185	Nino	Carolina Santos	CSO Project Coordinator	FAO
186	Niokane	Abdoulaye	Global Agriculture and Food Security Program - National Project Coordinator	FAO
187	Oanh	Nguyenphuong,	Operations Specialist	FAO
188	Obied	Hamza	Project Manager	CONCERN

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Organization
189	Ocal	Asli	Representative	La Via Campesina
190	Olayvanh	Singvilay	National Agriculture Adviser	FAO
191	Palisduran	Tamara	Assistant FAOR (Programme)	FAO Philippines
192	Pant	Krishna	Team leader, FAO CCA Project	FAO
193	Pastores	Maria	National Food Security and Nutrition Specialist	FAO
194	Pathak	Bharati	Chair	Federation of Community Forestry Users Nepal (FECOFUN)
195	Pawin	Padungtod,	Senior Technical Coordinator	FAO
196	Pene	Cheikh Sadibou	Agronomics Expert, Climate Resilience Project	FAO
197	Penunia	Estrella	Secretary General	AFA
198	Pinheiro	Manuel	President	Vinho Verde demarcated region
199	Pinto de Moura	Ana	Professor	Universidade Aberta interlocutor with FAOPT
200	Pipoppinyo	Somsak	FAO Representative	FAO
201	Poberezhna	Katerina	Project Coordinator	FAO
202	Poirier	Jean-Luc	Strategic Management Consultant	UPA-DI
203	Pongmala	Chanthalath	Assistant FAOR (Programme)	FAO
204	Quiceno	Derly Aldana	Project Coordinator, GCP/GLO/347/MUL	FAO Colombia
205	R. Sfeir	Patricia	Programme Manager	Social Economic and Environment Development Services (SEEDS International)
206	Rahal	Lilian	Expert	Ministry of Social Development / Ministry of Citizenship, Brazil
207	Rahmanian	Maryam	CSM representative	CFS
208	Rai	Tunga Bhadra	National Coordinator	Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN)
209	Rakhmanova	Dinara	Assistant FAOR	FAO Kyrgyz Republic
210	Ramadneh	Wafaa	National Programme Coordinator	FAO
211	Ramirez	Marlene	Secretary General	Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia (AsiaDHRRA)
212	Recalde	Diego	Assistant FAOR (Programme)	FAO
213	Reyes	Michela Espinosa	Senior Specialist in nutrition and the fight against malnutrition	FAO

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Organization
214	Robu	Tudor	FAO Assistant Representative	FAO Moldova
215	Rocha	Sara	Technical Officer	ReAlimentar (Actuar) CONSAR
216	Rodrigues	Fernando	Accountant	National Development Bank Brazil (BNDES)
217	Rodriguez	Alejandra Vega	Senior Technical Specialist for land and DVGT; Technical Team Coordinator	FAO
218	Rodriguez	Juan Fidel	National Programme Assistant	FAO
219	Rupakheti	Gokarna	Secretary	FIAN
220	Saade	Maurice	FAOR	FAO
221	Saade	Solange Matta	Assistant FAOR (Programme)	FAO
222	Sabaly	Moussa	President	FNPC
223	Saha	Binod	Assistant FAOR	FAO
224	Sall	Nadjirou	President	CNCR
225	Salomão da Luz	Ricardo Alex	Fisheries Department Official	Cape Verde Ministry of Agriculture and Environment
226	Samb	Babacar	Country Representative	Carrefour International
227	Samb	Cheikh	Executive Secretary	Association des Producteurs de Banane de la Vallée du fleuve Gambie (APROVAG)
228	Sambakhé	Zakaria	National Director	ActionAid Senegal
229	Santos	Aristides	President	CONTAG
230	SanzAlvarez	Javier	Programme Officer	REU/FAO, Georgia
231	Sarmento	Francisco	Head of Office, FAOPT	FAO
232	Sarr	Leopold	Expert	Fonds International pour le Développement Agricole (FIDA)
233	Sarr	Makhfousse	Assistant to the Country Representative, Country Programme Officer	FAO
234	Schechla	Joseph	Facilitator, International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty, Near East/North Africa region; Coordinator, Housing and Land Rights Network – Habitat International Coalition	Housing and Land Rights Network – Habitat International Coalition
235	Seck	Nafissatou	Land focal point	Association des Femmes Juristes du Sénégal (AJS)
236	Segnane	Sérigne	Environmental Management Specialist	Conseil National de Concertation des Ruraux (CNCR)
237	Seitkasymov	Meder	Head of Office	Central Asian Regional Ecological Center Unit in Bishkek
238	Sene	Jean Michel Waly	Programme Manager	ENDA PRONAT

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Organization
239	Seremet	Mariana	Peasant, SCO Head	Gradina Moldovei
240	Sharon	Hauser	Director, Programme Development, Quality and Advocacy	Save the Children Vietnam
241	Silva	Givanilson	Presidential Adviser	CONTAG
242	Silva	José Luís Coelho	Diplomat	Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs
243	Simeoni	Laura	Officer	FAO
244	Singh	Ashok Bahadur	Executive Director	FIAN
245	Sonko	Mamadou	Humanitarian/Resilience expert	FAO
246	Soumahoro	Nathaly	Programme and policy manager/Monitoring and evaluation	ActionAid Senegal
247	Sow	Abdou Aziz	Project Coordinator	Projet Agriculture Irriguée et Développement Economique des Territoires Ruraux (Podor-Sénégal)
248	Sow	Demba	National project coordinator: Support for the dissemination and operationalization of voluntary guidelines	FAO
249	Stella	Kimambo,	National Programme Officer – Food Security & Nutrition	FAO
250	Sternadt	Dulclair	Partnerships Officer	FAO
251	Swaray	Foday	Country Director	ActionAid Sierra Leone
252	Syll	Oumar	API Project Coordinator	FAO
253	Taillon	Marie-Annick	Programme Officer	SOCODEVI
254	Temishev	Kyialbek	Programme Specialist	WFP
255	Thaiahn	Nguyen,	National Project Officer on Climate Change and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration	FAO
256	Thapa	BB	Executive Director	NGO Federation of Nepal
257	Thioune	Cheikh	M&E expert	FAO
258	Thioye	Yoro Idrissa	Agricultural Policy Adviser	Conseil National de Concertation des Ruraux (CNCR)
259	Thu	Ta Huong	Award Manager/ Viet Nam Country Office	Save the Children
260	Tilebaeva	Kyial	Supervisor	Taaiy Rural Women's Organization, Chui Oblast
261	Toria	Tamar	Executive Director	Georgian Farmers' Association
262	Tran	Le Huy	Representative	Binh Dinh Forest Product Association
263	TuanAnh	Tran,	National M&E Coordinator	FAO
264	Umbrero	Rafael	M&E Specialist	FAO

No.	Surname	Name	Position	Organization
265	Upreti	Padam	Representative	Community and Rural Development Society (CARDSN)
266	Urrego	Manuela	Former director of the Land Intervention Directorate	Agencia de Renovación del Territorio (ART)
267	Vinod	Ahujia	FAOR	FAO Mongolia
268	Viscay	Lautaro	Secretary	REAF Mercosul
269	Vukadinovic	Luka	Liaison Officer	FAO
270	Watt	Alioune	M&E Project Officer: 1 000 cisterns for the Sahel	FAO
271	Williamson	Darren	Director of Operations	RedR Australia
272	Woldop-Bosien	Martin	Coordinator	CSM of the CFS
273	Yade	Ibrahima	President	CONGAD
274	Zacarias	Ursula	Gender focal point	FAO Brazil
275	Zarzar	Andrea Lorena Butto	Formerly with MDA Women	Programa de Documentação da Trabalhadora Rural; Secretária de Desenvolvimento Territorial MDA; Federal Rural University of Pernambuco
276		Phouttasinh	Focal point	Lao Farmer Network/AFA

Annexes

Annex 1. Terms of Reference

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb1382en/cb1382en.pdf>

Annex 2. Evaluation synthesis study

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb1383en/cb1383en.pdf>

Annex 3. Logical map of findings, conclusions and recommendations

<http://www.fao.org/3/cb1384en/cb1384en.pdf>

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