



End-of-Cycle Evaluation

Promoting Food and Water Security Through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab Region

Location: Regional- Arab States

Project Duration: December 2014- December 2019

Commissioned by: ESCWA

Evaluation Timeframe: September 27, 2019- January 30, 2020

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January 2020

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Acknowledgement

This final evaluation report of the project “Promoting food and water security through cooperation and capacity development in the Arab region” was prepared in my capacity as external evaluator to the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

Special thanks go out to Ms. Roula Majdalani, Ms. Reem Nejdawi and Ms. Julie Abou Arab of the Sustainable Development Policies Division at ESCWA for their much-valued cooperation in being interviewed for the evaluation, sharing project related documents and facilitating my linkage with the evaluation stakeholders. I would like to also thank Ms. Katrin Aidnell from the Embassy of Sweden at Jordan for openly discussing her project experience with me.

Mr. Felix Herzog of the Organizational Learning Team at ESCWA, I thank you for valuable support and collaboration during the planning and execution of the evaluation.

I would like to equally acknowledge the generous support received from the project partner organizations from FAO, LAS specialised agencies AOAD, ACSAD, AMWC, member State representatives, experts and academia and all other participants who helped inform this evaluation and accommodated my interview requests. My thanks are therefore extended to the numerous people listed in (Annex 2) who took serious interest in sharing their perspectives on the project.

In view of shared learning, I hope that the conclusions and recommendations contained in this report will be useful to help inform ESCWA’s future similar programming towards promotion of food and water security in the Arab region.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACSAD	The Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands
AMWC	Arab Ministerial Water Council
AITRS	Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics
AOAD	Arab Organization for Agricultural Development
CEDARE	Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EA	Expected Accomplishment
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEPS	Food and Environment Policies Section
FS	Food Security
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
HLM	High Level Meeting
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
LAS	League of Arab States
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
NFP	National Focal Point
NSO	National Statistics Office
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RB	Regular Budget
RICCAR	Regional Initiative for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources and Socio-Economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region
RPTC	Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDPD	Sustainable Development Policies Division of ESCWA
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TOC	Theory of Change
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group

1. Executive Summary

The Sustainable Development Policies Division of ESCWA (SDPD) launched in 2014 the extra-budgetary project “Promoting Food and Water Security Through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab region”. The project was funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) with a total budget of 20 Million SEK, equivalent to 2,696,872 USD. However due to currency fluctuation, 20 Million SEK were exchanged to USD 2,483,371. The project aimed to strengthen food and water security in the Arab region through improved and coordinated policy design, strategy development and programme implementation. The project was implemented in partnership with FAO, League of Arab States, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) and the Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD) with contribution from research institutes. The project aimed to realize the following Expected Accomplishments (EA):

- **EA-1** Strengthening the capacity to assess impacts of changing water availability on agricultural production in the Arab region.
- **EA-2** Enhancing the capacity for intra-regional coordinated policy development on food and water security in the Arab region.
- **EA-3** Enhancing the capacity for efficient food production in the Arab region.
- **EA-4** Enhancing the assessment capacity of the status of food security in the Arab countries.

ESCWA shared the project concept and strategies with 18 ESCWA member countries during inception period. Twelve of ESCWA Member States¹ nominated focal points for the project, including Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Tunisia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

This end-of-cycle evaluation of the project covers the entire duration of the project from December 2014 to its completion in December 2019. The evaluation is carried out in accordance with ESCWA’s Evaluation Policy 2017 and in line with the UNEG Norms and Standards. It aims to systematically and objectively assess the overall achievement of objectives and intended goal, the project’s design and outputs, and consolidate the main findings, challenges, and best practices. The evaluation addresses three DAC criteria; Relevance, Effectiveness, and Sustainability.

The evaluation utilized a Reflexive Comparison design and partly drew on the project Theory of Change (TOC) developed in the project’s final year of implementation. A participatory and collaborative evaluation approach was followed to gain inputs and perspectives of direct and indirect project stakeholders. Qualitative research methodologies were adopted and comprised of a comprehensive desk review of project documents, individual /collective interviews, and observation of two project activities. Human rights and gender considerations were also maintained throughout the planning and execution of the evaluation and reflected in the sampling strategies and analysis.

¹ ESCWA Member states are Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, The Sudan, The Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, The United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Main findings and conclusions

1. The project is relevant to the needs of the region. It builds on the Sustainable Development Policies Division (SDPD) previous work and emboldens the food dimension of the Food-water-energy nexus approach to regional development and meeting the SDGs. Most selected interventions are very relevant to the needs of the region and participating Member States.
2. Despite the changes in activities corresponding to evolving Expected Accomplishments and outputs, the activities and outputs still largely serve the wide scope of the project objective and most of the Expected Accomplishments with stronger emphasis on food security. The project is found largely effective, it fully realized its intended expected accomplishments and outputs and almost all target indicators as it:
 - i) strengthened the capacity to assess impacts of changing water availability (climate change) on agricultural production in the Arab region enabling policy makers to become better informed to formulate national strategies and development plans to adopting measures to face climate change;
 - ii) established and institutionalized an intergovernmental coordination between the water and agriculture sectors at the highest (ministerial) level with processes and action plan to support policy coordination and coherence for addressing challenges in the water & agriculture sectors and the regional work on food-water nexus;
 - iii) developed national guidelines on applying Good Agricultural Practices for local food safety and await official adoption and certification in Jordan and Lebanon; and
 - iv) developed a regional food security monitoring framework, that was endorsed and institutionalized at League of Arab States specialized and mandated organization Arab Organization for Agricultural Development. Building national capacities in the assessment and further internalization of the food security monitoring report is not consumed but the framework lays the essential foundation to enhancing the assessment capacity of food security in the Arab region and informing policy makers on policy interventions to enhancing food security.
3. Women involvement in the implementation of the project was noticed in addition to the role of women in leading the Good Agricultural Practices process, whereby both Jordanian and Lebanese officials leading the technical team for Good Agricultural Practices formulation were women as well. Beyond the proactive push for women's participation in the project activities, gender considerations were not sufficiently integrated into the project's design and implementation. The project adhered to human rights-based principles.
4. The project results are largely sustainable. The project generated interest and demand from Member States for technical support and capacity development building on project results. Implementation of the project created further opportunities for collaboration for the near future and capacity building at the regional and national level. Continued utilization of most project outputs is likely as there evidence of sufficient ownership and collaboration, and there are institutionalized mandates of project partners.

Recommendations

1. **SDPD** is advised to build on findings of the regional reports and policy briefs in devising future programming in food and water security programming. SDPD should encourage and respond to MS requests:
 - for the national internalization of project outputs;
 - for scaling of the AquaCrop assessments in cooperation with ACSAD and FAO (to other countries, expand other crops and other areas to cover the entire country);
 - for internalizing findings and policy recommendations from component 1 including water management at national level as well as 4 (the FS monitoring framework). This can ideally be done through working with national teams that include decision makers, technical staff from the ministries as well as civil society organizations and research institutions.
 - a) **SDPD** can assist MS in promoting the outcomes for funding and implementation at national level.
 - b) **SDPD** can consider the proposal for supporting the regional AquaCrop network.
2. **ESCWA alongside the other partners in the Advisory committee** should continue to support the High Level Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee's through supporting the set action plan and pilot projects and linking it with other supporting organizations and actors working on water and food security in the region.
3. **SDPD and ESCWA's statistics function** should provide technical backstopping and support to AOAD over the next two years to disseminate and scale the monitoring framework to other countries and cooperate with AOAD and ATRIS in building MS capacities in generating national data in the FS framework and applying the model.
4. **The Project Team** should maintain its support until Jordan and Lebanon have a working GAP mechanism in order to showcase it and replicate it at the regional level.
5. **The Project Team** should mainstream gender in devising and implementing future projects. Specific attention to gender issues is needed across the project cycle: design, analysis and research representing how women are affected, and how gender issues are being advocated for in matters related to food and water security.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

Ensuring sustainable and inclusive food security² for all is one of the main priorities of the Arab region. Achieving this goal, however, remains plagued by environmental factors, particularly rising water insecurity and impact of climate change and extreme weather conditions, degraded and limited amount of arable land, uncertainty due to the ongoing socio-economic and political unrests, rapidly changing production and consumption patterns and greater dependency on food imports. Arab countries import about half of their food requirements and are considered the significant importers of grain in the world³.

Food production is affected by low resource productivity for water, land and human capital. Water availability is a critical issue for the region that has 5% of the world's population accessing merely 1% of the world's total water resources. Most Arab countries have a shortage of rainfall and according to United Nations estimates, around 12 Arab countries suffer from severe water shortages. It is exacerbated by the impact of climate change and extreme weather events. The per capita availability of renewable water resources is less than 500 m³ per year. At a regional level, agriculture uses around 85% of the total water withdrawals. With increasing scarcity and greater demand for water as essential element for every form of life and for all aspects of socio-economic development, water use grew at almost twice the rate of population increase in the last century.

ESCWA's Sustainable Development Policies Division (SDPD)⁴ works on supporting member States in their efforts to improve the efficient use of natural resources, facilitate regional cooperation and coordination to enhance food, water and energy security, promote the application of appropriate technologies and the alleviation of rural poverty. During 2014-2015⁵, ESCWA aimed on enhancing member countries' capacity to develop and implement national, sub regional and regional policies, strategies and action plans for the sustainable management of water, energy and land in line with agreements reached at major United Nations conferences on sustainable development and provisions of relevant multilateral environmental agreements. During 2016-2017⁶ the focus was maintained on the 'integrated management of natural resources leading to improved food, water and energy security and enhanced resilience to climate change, and to mainstream sustainable development goals into regional and national policy processes'. During 2018-2019, ESCWA-SDPD worked on building resilience to climate change impacts by supporting various mechanisms and initiatives to address climate change, including its impact on water resources, promoting renewable energy use and energy efficiency and the resultant consequences for the poor. ESCWA also serves as a forum for multisectoral policy dialogue on sustainable development issues to forge regional positions based on an enhanced science-policy interface, coherence across different sectors and institution-building. ESCWA uses its convening power to gather member States to discuss and share views

² The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines food security as a state when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life². Food security is one of the essential elements of national security

³ Nassar Atef & Fawzy Gamal-2019; World Journal of Agriculture and Soil Science. ISSN: 2641-6379 DOI: 10.33552/WJASS.2019.02.000532

⁴ Formerly named Sustainable Development and Productivity Division.

⁵ Programme 19 of the biennial programme plan for the period 2014-2015

⁶ Programme 19 of the biennial programme plan for the period 2016-2017

on common and coordinated solutions to address the root causes of instability and the effects of this instability on people and their environment.

2.2 Project Overview

Through a strategic partnership with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), ESCWA developed the project titled “Promoting food and water security through cooperation and capacity development in the Arab region”. The project budget was total budget of 20 Million SEK, equivalent to 2,696,872 USD. However due to currency fluctuation, 20 Million SEK were exchanged to USD 2,483,371. The project aimed to enhance food security in the Arab countries through improved and coordinated policy design, strategy development and programme implementation, which is to be achieved by strengthening the national and regional knowledge base, capacity development and greater regional cooperation.

The project was implemented in partnership with FAO, League of Arab States, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), the Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD). Contributing research institutes to the project included the American University of Lebanon, the Arab Gulf University, and the King Saud University.

The expected achievements (EA) set out of this project are:

EA-1 Strengthening the capacity to assess impacts of changing water availability on agricultural production in the Arab region.

EA-2 Enhancing the capacity for intra-regional coordinated policy development on food and water security in the Arab region.

EA-3 Enhancing the capacity for efficient food production in the Arab region.

EA-4 Enhancing the assessment capacity of the status of food security in the Arab countries.

Twelve of ESCWA’s 18 Member States⁷ nominated focal points for the project. These included Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, Tunisia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain⁸.

Originally, the project was to be implemented between December 2014-December 2018. The first six months comprised the inception period where SDPD further engaged with relevant stakeholders and partners to more concretely define the project actions and partners’ roles. Formalizing partnerships with FAO took longer than expected due to procedural formalities that had to be followed. Also, with AOAD, and due to governance constraints, the partnership was only materialized in 2017. Therefore, in November 2018, a no cost extension was granted by SIDA to extend the project period through December 2019 to allow needed time to deliver on the project’s 4 main outputs.

⁷ ESCWA Member states are Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, The Sudan, The Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, The United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

⁸KSA and Bahrain’s participation is covered by ESCWA’s Regular Budget (RB).

- Output 1:** Mapping of national and regional agricultural production under anticipated impacts of climate change on water availability in the Arab countries.
- Output 2:** A regional institutional arrangement that facilitates and supports a higher coordination level between existing water and agricultural structures.
- Output 3:** National guidelines on applying Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) for local food safety. Initially, the output was set for developing “A framework guideline to promote and adopt Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) in the Arab region”.
- Output 4:** A regional food security monitoring framework that contributes to better clarity on the state of food security in the Arab countries, taking into account all elements that contribute to food security.

3. Purpose, Scope and Objectives of the Evaluation

Purpose and objectives: This end-of-project evaluation is carried out in accordance with ESCWA's Evaluation Policy 2017 and in line with the UNEG Norms and Standards. The evaluation aims to systematically and objectively assess the overall achievement of objectives and intended goal, the project's design and outputs, and consolidate the main findings, challenges, and best practices.

Utilizers of the Evaluation: The evaluation should be judged on its usefulness to its intended users. The evaluation is intended as forward looking aiming to generate lessons learnt and recommendations for future similar programming by ESCWA and its partners. As such, the users of this evaluation will be the project team and ESCWA at large as well as the Project donor (Sida), AOAD, FAO, ACSAD and member countries.

Scope: The evaluation covers the entire duration of the project in the Arab Region (December 2014 to December 2019) considering whether the project was able to fulfil its overall objective. It also strives to employ development best practice regarding promoting gender equality and a human rights-based approach. The evaluation assesses the project against three OECD-DAC criteria, namely: Relevance, Effectiveness, and Sustainability. More specifically, it seeks to answer the following evaluation questions:

Relevance

- 1) To what extent did the project build upon SDPD's previous work?
- 2) To what extent was the project relevant to the needs of the region?
- 3) To what extent was there consistent participant and stakeholder engagement? Was gender considered in the selection of participants?

Effectiveness

- 4) To what extent were the project's activities and outputs consistent with the project's Goal and Expected Accomplishments?
- 5) To what degree were the project's Expected Accomplishments, Outputs, Indicators and Activities achieved?
- 6) To what extent did the project bring together regional and national partners to work together and to enhance their capacities?
- 7) Were gender and human rights considerations integrated into the project's design and implementation?

Sustainability

- 8) To what extent will the project results create in the near future further opportunities for collaboration and capacity building at the regional and national level?

4. Methodology

Evaluation Design

The evaluation utilized a Reflexive Comparison design to assess whether and what changes had happened⁹ against the set indicators of the project's Expected Accomplishments (EA). It also partly draws on the targets defined in the project Theory of Change (TOC) that were developed in the project's final year of implementation¹⁰. Human rights and gender considerations were maintained throughout the planning, design, and execution of the evaluation. These were reflected in the sampling strategies and analysis (i.e. selection of the stakeholders, disaggregation of data, separate analysis of male and female responses as relevant, consideration to gender and human rights in the project design, implementation and outputs, etc).

Approach

In realizing the evaluation objectives, a participatory and collaborative evaluation approach was followed. Qualitative research methodologies were adopted. These included comprehensive review project documents (Annex 3), individual /collective interviews (Annex 2- list of people consulted), and observation of two project activities: the "First Joint High-Level Meeting for Water and Agriculture" that was held in Cairo 23-24 October 2019, and the final Project activity "Regional meeting on promoting Food and Water Security" held in Amman 27-28 November 2019.

Sampling

The evaluation used Multistage Cluster Sampling; starting strata by selecting actors per their role in the project (donor, project management, implementing partner, expert/ consultant, beneficiary (MS)); then clustering actors according to their involvement in the project per Expected Accomplishment (EA 1, EA2, EA 3, and EA4); and geographical location (Mashrek and Maghreb Arab states). To the extent possible, gender was also taken into consideration (Male vs. Female participants). Non-random Purposive Sampling was applied to identify informants with a higher level of engagement and more knowledge about the project/ intervention and its work.

⁹ Reflexive comparisons examine the effectiveness of the project through the difference between the baseline and the achieved targets.

¹⁰ Initially, a theory-based approach was considered but the reviewed TOC is more suited as a result chain than a TOC.

Table 1-1 Profile of Stakeholders Consulted

Informant & Data Collection Method							
Stakeholder/ Role in the Project	Scope/ Involvement					Number of Informants	
	Project-wide	EA 1	EA 2	EA 3	EA 4	Male	Female
Participating Member State	Focal Points MOA- Palestine , MOA- Jordan , MOA- Sudan , MOA- Tunisia , MoA- Lebanon DOS-Jordan (EA3)					3	4
ESCWA- SDPD Project Team	SDPD Director Chief FEPS-SDPD FS project coordinator Gender Focal Point-SDPD					1	3
Donor	Sida -Regional Program Manager (Env., C. Change, Water, Ren-Energy, FS)					0	1
Project Partners	LAS -Sustainable Development and International Cooperation - AMWC Project Counterpart (FAO)	ex-FAO staff responsible for project Water Development Program (ACSAD)	Technical Secretariat of AWMC	AOAD staff	AOAD staff	7	1
Consultant/ Experts		Consultant	Consultant	Expert	Expert-AUB	4	0
Other ESCWA Divisions/ section			Water Resources Section/ SDPD			0	1
Total						15	10

Analysis

Interviews were transcribed, coded and analysed using grounded theory methods. Data collection and analysis also include data disaggregated by sex, when applicable. Triangulation was maintained through cross verification from different sources/ stakeholders to arrive at findings and conclusions that answer all the questions and issues stipulated in the TOR and as elaborated in the evaluation matrix (Annex 4). Only triangulated data substantiated through different methods is reflected in the findings of this Evaluation Report.

Limitations and Considerations

No major limitations to the evaluation were encountered. Financial and time resources did however influence the evaluation's reliance on qualitative approach. The selection of this approach was also influenced by the nature of indicators reflected in the project's result framework that are mostly qualitative in nature. Still, the proposed evaluation methodology uses a combination of data collection tools that mitigate any of the limitations that could arise in case of using one of the tools in isolation. The following table displays the limitation of each data collection tool and the mitigating measures that were taken.

Table 1-2 Limitations and mitigating measures

Data Collection Tool	Limitations	Mitigating measure
Desk review and analysis of secondary documents	Documentation might not cover all information to conduct a thorough analysis	Missing information was obtained through the interviews or by requesting further documentation from ESCWA
Semi structured individual interviews	Semi-structured interviews do not allow to build up on the opinion of other interviewees	Triangulation was maintained through cross validation from multiple sources & instruments (documents & interviews of different stakeholders).
Observation	Two events will be not be enough to reflect all work done under the four EA of the project.	The evaluator further obtained information on the results of project events through interviews and document review

Primary data gathering was carried out on the side lines of the project’s observed activities where around half of the sampled participants were interviewed as well as via virtual means (Skype, telephone calls). Observation of the project’s final workshop in which most countries participated was also a valuable opportunity enabling face to face interviews with some of the sampled participants and being introduced to the others thus expediting follow up requests for interviews. The nature of the final workshop and presentations by participants including participating country focal points also enabled the evaluator to capture supporting input that fed the evaluation such as main achievements and challenges encountered, lessons learnt, and recommendations. This enabled the evaluation to draw on views from the wider group/ workshop participants and countries including those not sampled. It must be noted however that 5 of the countries responded to request for interviews. Yemen, Iraq and Morocco were also sampled but the evaluation coincided with a period of unrest in the region, especially affecting participation of Yemen and Iraq.

Quality Assurance

The evaluation adhered to the systematic application of evaluation principles during the evaluation process and delivered products. The principles of independence, credibility, utility and quality are interrelated and underpin the evaluation objectives of:

- Accountability in that they provide the framework to ensure independent, credible, high-quality and useful evaluation of results, whether they are successes or shortfalls.
- Learning in so far that it requires independent, credible, high-quality and useful evaluation to generate essential lessons that will help improve performance and outcomes.

An internal quality assurance mechanism was be applied in this evaluation ensuring completeness of all elements requested in the TOR, logical presentation, objectivity, justification and user-friendliness of the report.

5. Findings

Based on the primary and secondary data collection, the evaluator has reached the following findings that were explored, triangulated and validated.

The evaluation findings were structured around the evaluation criteria of relevance effectiveness and sustainability and clustered around the evaluation questions. There has been no evidence of any differences in opinions and views among female and male respondents.

5.1 Relevance

Evaluation Questions:

- 1- To what extent did the project build upon SDPD's previous work?
- 2- To what extent was the project relevant to the needs of the region?
- 3- To what extent was there consistent participant and stakeholder engagement? Was gender considered in the selection of participants?

Main Findings

1. The project aligns with the SDPD Subprogramme's objective. It builds upon the division's previous work including outcomes of RICCAR and bolsters its programming on Food dimension in the water-food-energy nexus.
2. The project is found relevant to the needs of the region. At national level, some variance was found as to prioritization of the selected priorities/ interventions, largely due to varying priorities and institutional frameworks in dealing with food and water security.
3. The project maintained high engagement with partners and stakeholders across the different components. While ESCWA heavily invested in engaging with partners during the initial year, it was on the account of the implementation timeframe
4. Consistency in participant engagement varied across components. Component 1 and 3 as well as the consultative meetings witnessed a sufficient level of consistency. Some Participants nominated by member States changed over the course of the project period due to the member States' selection procedures and policies, turnover at the level of ministers who nominate them and sometimes shifting agendas over the project period.
5. Amidst low representation of women in environmental governance mechanisms in the region, women participation in the project was proactively sought in selection of participants. Participation of women in project activities varied according to components but overall women comprised around 35% of participants in project activities.

1. Building upon SDPD's previous work

Sustainable and inclusive food security is essential for Arab countries to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Although to food security, agriculture accounts for around 80% of the Arab region freshwater withdrawals on average, these amounts can reach as much as 95% in some developing countries. Agriculture is also a major source of water pollution from nutrients, pesticides and other contaminants, which if unmanaged can lead to significant social, economic and environmental costs¹¹.

Since 2011, ESCWA in collaboration with several partners organized several consultations on enhancing food security in the region and called for greater resource use efficiency and conservation. For example, ESCWA and IFPRI organized the "International Conference for a Food Secure Arab World" in 2012. Also, between 2011 and 2013 three consultations were organized on issues related to improving food availability through a combination of local production and imports, with emphasis on the need for improved natural resources management. These consultations resulted in recommendations, which are in line with those made through other regional initiatives such as the 2008 "Riyadh Declaration to Enhance Arab Cooperation to Face World Food Crises" adopted under the auspices of the LAS, as well as the ESCWA-LAS-UNEP report to the 16th Commission on Sustainable Development, which also called for enhanced food security and resource conservation with a special emphasis on water and land resources conservation (i.e. food security as a function of water security).

Following a previous re-structuring exercise at ESCWA, the issue of food security was given a new impetus by the Commission through the establishment of a new section focused on food and the environment within the Sustainable Development Policies Division (SDPD) responsible for leading the implementation of this project. SDPD also includes sections responsible for the management of water and energy resources.

"Discussions on food security date back to 2008 when prices were hiking and posed access issues. Since 2010 we then started working on the nexus from water/ energy as well as food security/ small enterprise, agriculture. The focus on water and energy were still however more defined. Then overtime, food security was gaining more prominence and with the project conception in 2014 it allowed to focus on food security in this nexus" ESCWA Staff Member

The project aims "to enhance food and water securities in the Arab region through improved and coordinated policy design, strategy development and programme implementation, under the rapidly changing natural, economic and socio-political environment". This objective is **in line with SDPD subprogramme objective** "to achieve the **integrated management of natural resources** leading to improved **food, water and energy security** and enhanced **resilience to climate change**, and to mainstream the SDGs into **regional and national policy processes**". The project is also in line with ESCWA's mandate to follow up on the implementation of the 2030 agenda on sustainable development and its various goals relating to food and water security¹². More specifically, the expected accomplishments (EAs) of the project are also in line with the Secretariat's EAs according to 2018-2019 biennium i.e. Increased alignment of member States' national plans with the SDGs through drawing upon the **water energy-food** nexus; Increased engagement by member States in regional and sub-regional processes in support of agreements, strategies and standards related to water, energy, food and the environment; and Strengthened resilience of member States to climate change and natural disasters and of vulnerable

¹¹ FAO: Water for Sustainable Food and Agriculture. A report produced for the G20 Presidency of Germany. Rome 2017.

¹² Poverty (SDG 1), food security (SDG 2), water (SDG 6), economic development (SDG 8), and sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12)

communities. It can thus be said that project enabled ESCWA to work on the food security and in more specific issues within the Food- Water- Energy nexus.

The project, and more specifically EA 1: ‘Strengthening the capacity to assess impacts of changing water availability on agricultural production in the Arab region’ also builds upon the outcomes of the regional climate and hydrological modelling of the SIDA financed project entitled “Regional Initiative for the Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on Water Resources and Socio-Economic Vulnerability in the Arab Region (RICCAR)¹³. The utilized the agricultural production assessment model (AquaCrop) makes use of RICCAR data that offers projections of climate and hydrological parameters at the regional and national levels.

2. Relevance to the needs of the region

One of the main priorities for countries of the Arab region is to ensure food security for all. Needs of the region are expressed in regional strategies and frameworks that are articulated by Arab Governments including, by the two LAS specialized agencies (ACSAD) and (AOAD), as well as United Nations organizations serving the Arab region through various mechanisms including the Arab Ministerial Water Council (AMWC) among others¹⁴.

Alignment of the project has been recognized in Resolution of the Arab Ministerial Water Council no. 121 in its 7th session held at the LAS headquarters on 27 May 2015 as “**consistent with and in the framework of the Arab Water Security Strategy and the Strategy for Sustainable Arab Agricultural Development for the upcoming two decades (2005-2025) and the Emergency Program for Arab Food Security and its action plan**”¹⁵¹⁶. The Arab Strategic Framework for Sustainable Development (2015-2025), prepared by ESCWA in cooperation with UNEP at the request of the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for Environment, acknowledges the inextricable linkages between water, food and energy security in the Arab region and promotes a nexus approach to water-food-energy sustainability, and as monitoring and planning framework for these three sectors in the Arab region. The Strategic Framework calls specifically for **supporting the implementation of the Arab Sustainable Agricultural Development Strategy for the Next Two Decades (2005- 2025), promoting agricultural research**, addressing food losses and supporting microfinance. The strategy also emphasizes the need to **broaden the concept, definition and programs of food security in order to incorporate an integrated regional perspective of and approaches for food security** rather than the current limited national stance on the issue. To that effect, the project works on increasing the resilience of the agriculture sector to climate change through improved agriculture

¹³ The RICCAR presents a comprehensive picture of the impact that climate change is expected to have on freshwater resources in the Arab region until the end of the century and how this will affect the vulnerability of water resources, agriculture, natural ecosystems, human settlements and people.

¹⁴ The Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) and its technical committee and the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR).

¹⁵ Resolution of the Arab Ministerial Water Council no. 121 in its 7th session held at the LAS headquarters on 27 May 2015: Sixth: Taking note with appreciation that the implementation of the project on “Promoting food and water security through cooperation and capacity development in the Arab region” is consistent with and in the framework of the Arab Water Security Strategy and the Strategy for Sustainable Arab Agricultural Development for the upcoming two decades (2005-2025) and the Emergency Program for Arab Food Security and its action plan.

¹⁶ Moreover, LAS and UNEP are the sole members of the Joint Technical Secretariat that supports the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR), which advises the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE).

production and productivity (EA-1); establishing a region-specific monitoring framework across the four dimensions of food security-Food availability, access, utilization and stability (EA-4); and in (EA-3) on ensuring food safety and the quality of fresh produce through promoting the adoption and institutionalization of good agriculture practices (GAP).

Agriculture is almost entirely dependent on water irrigation. Water availability in the Arab region is a critical issue given that the region merely accesses 1% of the world's total water resources and suffers from rainfall shortage while more than half the region's renewable freshwater resources originate from outside the national borders of Arab countries. The water scarcity exasperated by the impact of climate change and extreme weather events such as droughts and floods. Changing lifestyle adds on, water use grew at almost twice the rate of population increase in the last century. In addition to the high rate of population growth, the dwindling arable land and degrading environment, as well as the unsustainable production and consumption patterns¹⁷.

Attention to water resources management both at the national and regional levels is only a recent development. Ministries of water in some Arab countries were only established during the last twenty years. Responses to water issues vary from one country to country most of them having piecemeal approaches.

At regional level, little has been done. The Arab Ministerial Water Council (AMWC) was established in 2008, the founding meeting of the Council was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on November 2008. The Council aims at developing cooperation and coordinating efforts among Arab countries in order to develop an Arab strategy to face the water challenges and enhance Arab water security as a framework for programs and activities in all fields of water resources. As long as agriculture is the leading water using sector, it is quite **important that greater coordination between agriculture and water institutions takes place in order to develop more appropriate approaches for integrated policy development**. This project thus responds to the coordination concerns at regional level through improving institutional coordination between the agriculture and water sectors (EA-2). This component works on improving intergovernmental coordination between the water and agriculture sectors at the highest (ministerial) level to support policy coordination and coherence for optimizing water use and food production.

“Food security is a major issue facing the region. Some countries have food but not food security. Others lack food in terms of quality and quantity. Issues of utilization and access are not being sufficiently considered. The project anchors a defined concept to food security in the region” Project partner

Almost all interviewed stakeholders including participating MS focal points **support the relevance of the project overall**. Since starting the implementation, ESCWA has further taken several actions to gauge and elaborate the components conceived in the concept note and the project document through consultations with stakeholders to best align with needs and priorities. Some **variance was found as to the selected priorities or interventions of the project** largely explained by varying priorities and institutional frameworks in dealing with food and water security at country level. This could explain countries' response to participate in the project or in certain components of it as well as the low interest in the regional Arab GAP initiative (EA 3).

¹⁷ Project Concept Note. Pg 1

In EA1 (**Agricultural Production and Productivity**), all interviewed countries strongly validated the value of science-based assessment of impacts of changing water availability on agricultural production in their countries as well as the need to building national capacities to do so. It is evident that EA was needed by countries where agricultural production has a significant weight in socio-economic and natural resources terms and are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change in the agricultural sector. This is well in line with and reflects the **suitability of the project selection criteria** of country beneficiaries for the component¹⁸.

“In our case, data and statistics are not utilized to inform our climate change adaptation measures. This model links them both; using the data about climate and water to draw forecasts on agricultural productivity and develop policy recommendations to address or deal with climate change and agricultural productivity” Participating MS focal point

In EA 2 (**Food and Water Security Coordination**), almost all stakeholders validate the value for the inter-ministerial coordination mechanism between ministries of water and agriculture at the regional level. The project coordination assessment reveals the distorted scene and landscape of coordination between the two sectors at the regional as well as national level. At the national level, countries have a different landscape of coordination; some have the functions of managing water and agriculture based in one ministry, others note a certain level of cooperation amongst their national institutions whereas a few noted to lack much-needed coordination. Nevertheless, most stakeholders agree and value the regional coordination in hope for it influencing stronger national level coordination. A few others highlight the importance of coordination in the region even amongst like-minded and like-mandated regional organizations. This was also evidenced in the coordination assessment performed by the project.

“Coordination should focus on preparing joint policies at national level. The regional one is for learning exchange and lesson learning. Coordination on national level should focus on use of water and needs to be supported and owned by member States” Regional Partner

EA 3 initially aimed to develop Arab **Good Agriculture Practices (GAP)** guidelines that would support food safety for the Arab population and to trigger more efficient use of land and water resources and encourage intra- and inter-regional trade. The relevance and prioritization of the initiative, however, was tested as the project received limited **interest to initiate it on regional level** amidst quite complex regulatory frameworks and variances amongst MS countries (structure, adoption and implementation complexities). In fact, some views voiced the alternative to harmonization and enforcement of food safety laws and standards across Arab countries¹⁹.

The component was picked up at the **national level by Jordan and Lebanon** with the aim of catalysing the model towards further replicability in other countries. In Lebanon for example, the National Gap Scheme is in line with its Agricultural Strategy 2015-2019 in which particular focus is made to “food security” and “safe quality food”. It can be argued however that even when the national guidelines are adopted, the

¹⁸ Countries were selected based on the following criteria: a) Countries where agricultural production has a significant weight in socio-economic and natural resources terms; b) Countries that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, notably in the agricultural sector; c) Countries where FAO’s current engagement with national government through the Water Scarcity Initiative and other work is favourable in ensuring commitment and the establishment of multi-disciplinary teams; d) Countries provide a fairly balanced geographic representation across the Arab sub-regions that favours regional-national linkages. The 13 countries selected to be approached are the following (in alphabetical order): Algeria; Egypt; Iraq; Jordan; Lebanon; Mauritania; Morocco; Oman; Saudi Arabia; Sudan; Syrian Arab Republic; Tunisia; Yemen. Source: Project progress report July 2015-june 2016.

¹⁹ Expert group meeting (Cairo, 31 May – 1 June 2016)

standards are still voluntary for farmers which relegates the potential for eventual implementation if the participant country does not make it mandatory (to enforce food safety), or alternatively offers incentives for actors in the market system to adopt them within a wider market development initiative.

“The national GAP scheme increases consumer confidence in local produce and is largely aiming to improve food safety and food quality that is missing through the region. Exported products abide by GAP to export and most of Arab gulf countries request it, but when it is comes to local consumption, nothing is done about food safety. The National Gap is within feasibility of our local farmers and brings in an added value if supported with awareness and enabling regulations and enforcement” Participating MS focal point

In EA-4, (**Food Security Monitoring**), AOAD is the mandated organization by LAS to report on the status of food security in region but as earlier noted it had a limited stance on the issue especially in dimensions of access, utilization and stability²⁰. Almost all Interviewed stakeholders, particularly those engaged in the consultative process, highlight the need at the regional level. They highlight the need and value of the initiative particularly as existing FS monitoring frameworks either fall short of capturing all four dimensions according to UN/ FAO definition or focussed only on some aspects, whereas others don't go in the back engineering and methodologies. At the national level, most consulted focal points offered supporting views and unanimously agreed on the need to define a framework at the regional and national levels to include the use of data produced by the countries.

3. Stakeholder engagement and gender considerations in selection of participants

Stakeholder Engagement: The project **highly engaged** with the relevant **partners and stakeholders**. In the development of the project, FAO, AMWC and ACSAD were consulted on the concept note that was initiated by ESCWA. The consultative process was further elevated during implementation starting with the inception period and then throughout each component. During the inception period, introductory and consultative meetings were particularly held with LAS, ACSAD, FAO resulting in obtaining readiness to fully participate in the project implementation, elaborating the details of the input and substantive contribution of the partners in the implementation phase, refining project activities and identifying focal points to facilitate communication and follow up. The engagement with AOAD was delayed as AOAD senior management did not respond for over 18 months. In 2017 the New Director General was appointed and r AOAD eventually came on board in 2017. Partnership with FAO was also delayed due to procedural challenges. It can thus be said that while the project heavily invested in engaging with partners, it was on the account of the implementation timeframe, a lesson few consulted staff note to be an area of learning for future programming (i.e. to pre-engage in the design phase to allow sufficient time for planning and implementation). During the implementation, continued engagement with stakeholders for supervising and guiding implementation was maintained through the formed project coordination committee that operated on component level. The set up was assessed by all partners to have been conducive for the successful management and implementation of the project and for aligning partners organizations closer towards common objectives.

²⁰ AOAD defined “Food Security as continuously providing all members of the society with food in quantity and quality necessary for their activity and good health, depending first on local food production, second on the basis of comparative advantage for the production of food commodities in each country and third on the availability of food to the citizens at prices that are suitable to their incomes”.

Beyond project partners, the project engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders depending on the nature of each component including academia, experts, research institutes, etc. In EA 3, Lebanon and Jordan also engaged with national actors on the supply chain level including farmer associations and private sector representatives. Some recommendations were made to further engage agriculture institutes besides Ministries of Agriculture (MoAs) such as consultancy group for agriculture research (CGAR) and national research centers in the first component in order to broaden AquaCrop network and national capacities.

Consistency of participants: consultative meetings witnessed a sufficient level of consistency in engagement of participants. Bearing in mind different participants engaged in different components, **consistency in participant engagement varied across components**; in component 1, a good level of consistency was maintained largely due to ESCWA, FAO and ACSAD's continuous push to maintain the national teams that were being trained and eventually developed their case study reports. In component 3, stakeholders involved in GAP capacity building and meetings in both Jordan and Lebanon remained consistent overall especially in the project's final year where most activities were accelerated. EA 2 was consultative in nature up to the joint ministerial meeting in April 2010 where ministries nominated mostly different and higher level representatives to the high level joint coordination committee. Given the variance of the components and the nature of engagement amidst some inclusion considerations²¹. Most consulted stakeholders including from ESCWA highlighted this as a learning for the future-i.e to engage with national teams rather than single focal points.

Gender Considerations in selection of participants: Equal representation of women in environmental governance mechanisms remains very low in the region²². As noted in the project document, ESCWA and its partners continue to pursue promoting women's participation in decision-making in the field of water and food security through improving women's access to and representation in water and agricultural institutions as well as the need for specific attention to gender issues. In its communications, ESCWA **encouraged the involvement of women** from member States to take part in different capacity building and consultation processes. Amidst ESCWA efforts and insistence to include women in the countries' nomination, 35% of the participants in the capacity building process were women. National teams nominated from member countries included at least one woman, except for the Yemeni country team that does not have any woman. In EA 3- emphasis was also placed during the nomination of experts to prepare GAP standards to include women in the team in order to provide their reflections on national practices to be adopted. Around 60% of Jordan technical team consisted of women experts, and in Lebanon the team was 50% composed of women. Overall, an average of 35% of participants in all project activities were women²³.

²¹ Some focal points demonstrated higher inclusivity of their teams than others.

²² In 2012, less than 6 percent of all ministerial positions in the field of environment, natural resources and energy were held by women. Source: project document

²³ The first consulting meeting held in May 2016; 5 women participated out of the 20 participants. Also 10 women out of 27 participants participated in the Expert Group Meeting on Arab-GAP held in May 2016. ESCWA organized a Consultative Governmental Meeting on the project at the UN House in Beirut (February 2017) that was attended by 43 participants, 11 of whom were women. In the First Meeting of Arab-GAP Stakeholders for Jordan (Amman, February 2017), 50 participants attended the meeting including 15 women. The First Consultative Meeting on "Food Security Assessment and Monitoring in the Arab Region" held in Beirut (April 2017) was attended by 44 participants, including 12 women. Nine out of twenty participants were women in the sub-regional training workshop for reporting on the status of food security and related SDGs in the Arab region held in Khartoum (August 2018). The Expert Group Meeting on Tracking Food Security in the Arab Region (Amman, April 2019) was meeting attended by 26 participants, of which 10 women representing partner organizations. Finally, the Coordination meeting for statisticians on tracking and monitoring food security in the Arab Region (Beirut, June 2019) was attended by 26 participants, of which 10 women.

5.2 Effectiveness

Evaluation Questions:

To what extent were the project's activities and outputs consistent with the project's Goal and Expected Accomplishments?

To what degree were the project's Expected Accomplishments, Outputs and Indicators achieved?

To what extent did the project bring together regional and national partners to work together and to enhance their capacities?

Were gender and human rights considerations integrated into the project's design and implementation?

Main Findings:

1. Despite the changes in activities corresponding to evolving EA and outputs, the activities and outputs still largely serve the wide scope of the project objective and most of the EAs with stronger emphasis on FS. The evaluation finds room to further anchor coherence amongst the different interventions in future programming.
2. All the project EAs and Outputs and most indicators were realized. The project i) strengthened the capacity to assess impacts of changing water availability (climate change) on agricultural production in the Arab region enabling policy makers to become better informed to formulate national strategies and development plans to adopting measures to face climate change; ii) established and institutionalized an intergovernmental coordination mechanism between the water and agriculture sectors at the highest (ministerial) level with processes and action plan to support policy coordination and coherence for addressing challenges in the water & agriculture sectors and the regional work on food-water nexus. iii) developed national guidelines on applying Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) for local food safety and await official adoption and certification in Jordan and Lebanon. iv) developed a regional food security monitoring framework, that was endorsed and institutionalized at LAS's specialized and mandated organization AOAD. ESCWA in cooperation with AOAD developed national capacities to use the monitoring framework ESCWA also in cooperation with AOAD applied the monitoring framework at the regional and sub regional report, producing a report documenting the process, composition of the monitoring framework and provided analysis on the status of food security at the regional and sub regional levels. AOAD will take it further to ensure internalization of the FS monitoring at the country level.
3. The project capitalized on various regional mechanisms, institutions and ties that had already existed (and/ or were further expanded) between ESCWA, regional, and national partners. It brought partners closer to work with each other, align their activities and enhance their capacities.
4. Beyond the proactive push for women's participation in the project activities, gender considerations were not sufficiently integrated into the project's design and implementation. Women involvement in the implementation of the project was noticed in addition to the role of women in leading the GAP process, whereby both Jordanian and Lebanese officials leading the technical team for GAP formulation were women as well. The project adhered to human rights-based principles.

Consistency of the project's activities and outputs with the project's Goal and Expected Accomplishments

Despite the changes in activities corresponding to evolving EA and outputs, the activities and outputs **still largely serve the rather wide scope of the project objective and most of the EAs**²⁴. Project actions and outputs arguably serve the food security²⁵ objective at a higher emphasis than water security²⁶. Most consulted partners and stakeholders see the project as four projects with some minor overlap while for LAS for example, the project allows follow up on project components considering other initiatives in the region.

The evaluation finds room to **further anchor coherence amongst the different interventions** in future programming. Coherence as such is usually expressed in a TOC that in this project can be considered more of a result chain. To this notion, SDPD may revisit the project TOC to alternatively read: “to improve the ‘inclusively sustained wellbeing of Arabs’- i.e Impact- the project aims at improving the food security in the Arab states through improving the utilization of safe food (Food safety-GAP), improving the resilience of Arab States to Climate Changes, and adequately increasing the food production in Arab region. Policies and actions for sustainable food and water security must be built on reliable data. Thus, effective monitoring of food security in Arab region and efficient productivity of natural resources particularly water is required which entail developing a monitoring framework, improving safety standards, and understanding the long-term effect (impact) of climate change and water availability on the agricultural productivity. To that effect, regional involvement, coordination, and collaboration are needed to face common challenges and share knowledge and good practices”. If interpreted as such, the knots would rest on informed policy making, regional coordination and capacity building where ESCWA's core functions are crucial and become evident; policy change is pursued through producing knowledge (information collection, synthesizing, and sharing of information, providing informed options or responses and evidence-based argumentation to policymakers from member countries), building consensus on regional issues, providing technical support and capacity building to member States. A few key voices amongst partners recommend to **further enable the policy interface** through working with national teams and advocacy at national level to internalize policy recommendations that are produced by the project. Promising signs for adopting this approach are materializing and were captured during the evaluation through country requests for further support at the national level. The work of JOGAP and LEBGAP with national teams will be discussed next.

²⁴ Less so for EA-3 Enhancing the capacity for efficient food production in the Arab region that was later refined towards national GAPs

²⁵ Food security is an idealised state or goal where all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

²⁶ Water Security: the capacity of the population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human wellbeing, and socioeconomic development, for ensuring protection against waterborne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability. Core elements necessary to achieving and monitoring water security are; (1) protection of values-HR, cultural, etc., (2) preservation & protection of ecosystems in water allocation and management, (3) water supply for socioeconomic development and activities, (4) collection & treatment of used water, (5) collaborative approaches to transboundary water resources management & between countries to promote freshwater sustainability and cooperation, (6) the ability to cope with uncertainties and risks of water related hazards, and (7) good governance and accountability, and due consideration of interests of all.

Realization of EAs, Outputs and Indicators

EA1: Strengthening the capacity to assess impacts of changing water availability (climate change) on agricultural production in the Arab region

Output 1: Mapping of national and regional agricultural production under anticipated impacts of climate change on water availability in the Arab countries

Ten countries took part in this component of which 9 produced their case study reports²⁷. FAO's Aqua Crop Model was selected to conduct the assessments utilizing the outputs of the RICCAR climate and hydrological modelling activities as input for agricultural production assessment models. Each participating country selected two strategic crops (10 crops total). The model was further calibrated to countries' locations and to include other crops considered strategic by some participating countries (such as sesame in Yemen). ACSAD conducted 6 sub-regional and 7 national training sessions for 30 participants from the 10 countries and responded to national requests for technical assistance in country or virtually to apply the model (Sudan, Yemen, Lebanon and Tunisia). The training manual was also developed in Arabic at a high level of detail to train the national teams which all participants highly assess. Interviewed country participants also highly rated the trainings as captured in project monitoring and through interviews in this evaluation. They further strongly appreciated the support received in applying the model and note that their trained teams have improved capacity to apply it. The case studies are a various level of sophistication but reveal appropriateness of the adopted **learning by doing** approach to capacity building which was followed i.e. beyond just trainings to increase knowledge or producing assessments by consultants as originally planned, but rather anchor skills in applying it by countries' own trained teams.

The component's Immediate Result as expressed in project TOC-Nov 2018 is that based on the findings of the assessment reports, 30 regional and national policy recommendations are prepared by 10 countries aiming to increase the resilience of the agriculture sector to climate change through improved agriculture production and productivity. The results presented in the High-Level Meeting show climate change has several impacts on crops: decline in yield affecting food production, decreased crop growth cycles effecting grain qualities and quantities, and higher sensitivity of rainfed crops to climate change, amongst others. The reviewed case studies recommend adaptation measures to climate change considered by some as "no regret solutions"²⁸. At the time of the evaluation, the project was still producing a 10-page report in English to facilitate dissemination at the regional and international level. Also, policy briefs were produced for Jordan, Egypt, Tunis, and Morocco including aspects pertaining to socioeconomic impact of climate change to inform decision and policy makers and other related stakeholders. **The briefs and policy recommendations are viewed as the most important by most consulted stakeholders** who highlighted the importance of the policy interface and empower trained teams and focal points who possess various level of influence in their own settings. A few of the participating countries are showing higher ownership as evidenced when organizing national/ ministerial level consultations on the results of the studies without project support (such as Palestine and Iraq). In other cases, such as Iraq, the member State

²⁷ Morocco, Tunis, Egypt, Sudan, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq, Yemen, Jordan and Bahrain participated. All except for Bahrain produced their case study reports. It is unclear if its due to change in the focal point from Bahrain or the significance of the agricultural sector to the country. Bahrain's participation is covered by RB (regular budget funds) not SIDA funds. Assessing the impacts of changing water availability on agricultural production in selected Arab countries. Source: <https://www.unescwa.org/publications/national-assessment-reports>

²⁸ such as adapting sowing dates according to temperature and rainfall patterns, improved varieties that are better suited to climate conditions, application of conservation agriculture, water harvesting and supplementary irrigation, etc

officially requested support from ESCWA to internalize the findings of the study with different stakeholders and to discuss on how to scale it at the national level to which ESCWA's SDPD responded.

In implementing the project and this component more specifically, the project sought to establish "appropriate institutional arrangements at national and regional levels that allow for effective implementation of the project". At the regional level, the arrangement materialized through the official contractual partnership with FAO and ACSAD as a sub-contractor to lead the implementation of the component in close cooperation with ESCWA. The partnership with FAO faced procedural challenges which caused a time delay (commencing first activity in May 2016), but not affecting the eventual delivery of the output. Also, at national level, a challenge was faced in bringing on board the water focal points. Other noted challenges raised by the interviewed project staff and captured through consultations with other stakeholders include the turnover in some countries' focal points and the extent to which focal points were empowered and/or inclusive of their teams throughout the project components and activities²⁹.

It can be concluded that the project effectively realized EA1 to improve scientific knowledge and capacity of national teams using the AquaCrop model and RICCAR data sets at national levels. The 9 National assessment reports provide information on impact level of water variability due to climate change on agricultural productivity in studied locations enabling policy makers to become better informed to formulate adaptation measures and strategies for climate change and agricultural productivity.

EA2: Enhancing the capacity for intra-regional coordinated policy development on food and water security in the Arab region

Output 2: A regional institutional arrangement that facilitates and supports a higher coordination level between existing water and agricultural structures

Immediate result Indicator: 5 resolutions emanating from joint meeting detailing modalities for future consultations, collaboration and joint areas of work

"The issue of Food security at the AMWC was handled from a water perspective mainly. At the same time, it mattered to us from food accessibility and availability especially from water usage perspective. We highly welcomed the project idea when it was shared with us especially as it brings agriculture and water together in a unique and first-time initiative in the region". Regional Partner Representative

The project actions included assessing coordination on national and regional level between the two sectors. Findings validate the project initial identified gap regarding the lack of coordination (at the regional level and to varying degrees at the national level). When present, coordination was limited to information sharing and on ad hoc/ project-levels.

Based on consultations with member States, councils and organization, it was agreed that national, regional and even national coordination should be enhanced between the food and water sector. Further, these consultations lead to the creation of a High Level Joint Permanent Water -Agricultural Committee that acts as an institutionalized intergovernmental coordination mechanism between the water and agriculture sectors at the ministerial level. This body will support policy coordination and promote coherence to jointly address challenges, optimize water use and food production.

²⁹ The interviews also revealed that in some countries, national participants in certain components had limited knowledge of the work of their peers in the other components.

The consultative process encompassed extensive coordination amongst relevant stakeholders and between members of the technical advisory working group (Technical secretariat of AMWC, ESCWA, FAO-RNE, ACSAD and AOD) to define the joint coordination mechanism and to develop the draft TORS for the Technical Advisory Working Group and High Level Joint Permanent Water-Agriculture Committee which included a detailed description of the objectives, duties, frequency of meetings, chairmanship and other operational matters.

Respective resolutions were finally approved by AMWC (#174)³⁰ and AOAD (#15/49) the dedicated councils for Ministers responsible for water and agriculture respectively,³¹ to conduct a regional joint inter-ministerial meeting between agricultural and water ministers and the establishment of a High Level Joint Permanent Water-Agriculture Committee. In April 2019, the project succeeded in holding the First Joint Meeting of Arab Ministers of Agriculture and Water the at the League of Arab States in Cairo. The meeting concluded with a call for the effective integration of water and food security issues into the national sustainable development strategies and the adoption of the Cairo Declaration urging governments and partners to reinforce regional coordination and harmonize policies across both sectors to face the impacts of climate change and water scarcity³².

“For the first time, we held a joint ministerial meeting. This would have never happened without this project. In the Arab world, there is an unspoken norm amongst ministers to not intervene in each other’s ministries and mandates nor criticize each other. It creates sensitivities amongst ministers and at the level of directorates. That is why the project’s achievement in this regard is significant. I can say now that we have created a nucleus for joint coordination.” LAS Representative

Following the countries’ nominations, the High-Level Joint Permanent Water-Agriculture Committee (the technical arm to follow up on ministers’ decisions) was formed and held its first meeting in October 2019 on the side-lines of 2019 Cairo Water Week. The first meeting resulted in the identification of joint priority areas of work (water allocation in agriculture, water productivity, efficient water usage, use of non-traditional water in agriculture, water-food- energy nexus) and a set of actions and requests to the technical advisory group to support starting with the development of guidelines on coordinating between water and agriculture and on water allocation at the national and regional level. According to FAO, a request was made by Tunisia to develop and pilot national guidelines on water allocation. A few interviewed stakeholders see this an example of regional coordination trickling effect/ replicating at the national level.

Almost all consulted stakeholders who were aware of or engaged in this component consider it to be **one of the project’s significant achievements** as it sets an institutionalized mechanism for coordination combining both technical and decision-making spheres as well as bringing closer regional stakeholders in addressing coming issues. Most of respondents further elevate the expectations and recommend

³⁰ AMWC resolution #174 requesting the Technical Secretariat of the Council and ESCWA to:

- 1- Follow up by the AMWC technical secretariat and AOAD on the nomination from member countries to the High-Level Joint Permanent Water-Agriculture Committee and to cooperate with the Technical Advisory Working Group.
- 2- Coordinate with AOAD the organization a Joint Water-Agriculture Ministerial Councils Meeting in the first half of 2018
- 3- Include in the agenda of the first meeting of the High-Level Joint Permanent Water-Agriculture Committee the review of the proposed TORS towards their adoption in the first Joint Water-Agriculture Ministerial Councils Meeting.

³¹ AOAD resolution #15/49 welcomed the decision to organize a Joint Water-Agriculture Ministerial Meeting and requested AOAD to follow up with partners on implementing the resolutions emanating from that Joint meeting

³² the Joint Ministerial meeting will take place every two years and will promote the cross sectoral exchange of information and will help addressing common challenges in view of ensuring greater cross sectoral policy coherence at national and regional levels

mechanism to address the nexus approach at the regional level and to include projects with other actors and donors.

“The regional coordination mechanism should act as a platform for supporting coherent policy making especially planning and executing efficient and effective water management linked to other sectors as well as national and regional investment towards food and water security and environment sustainability” Regional Partner

EA 2 has been realized through the creation of a joint water-agriculture coordination platform (encompassing technical and decision-making tiers) with its respective action plan and processes institutionalized at LAS at the regional level. This will pave the way to reaching coordinated and integrated policies to addressing challenges in the water & agriculture sectors and the regional work on food-water nexus.

EA3: Enhancing the capacity for efficient, safe and quality food production in the Arab region

Output 3: National guidelines on applying Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) for local food safety

Target Indicator: 2 national GAP schemes adopted (in Jordan and Lebanon)

The project provided support to Jordan and Lebanon national GAPs as means to enhance the production of safe and quality food, especially for their local population and as a catalyst for facilitating regional trade. The project support encompassed technical support to two countries in developing their national GAP schemes which were developed by their own national teams and the development of Guidelines for Gap application. **The project realized its set target indicator in terms of developing National Gap Standards** and approval by MoAs. Furthermore, the support was also extended to scaling down its application in a joint training programme at the local level via national training workshops including training of Agriculture extension agents, chambers of commerce and farmers associations who would in turn reach and increase awareness of farmers on the benefit of application of national GAP for fruit and vegetable production. The adoption and certification process by the relevant institute (national standards institutes) is, however, lengthy and extends beyond the project period. According to the relevant stakeholders the interviewed, Jordan team may take one or two years to be officially approved.

Almost all consulted stakeholders to this component validated the **continued need for the institutionalization process**. The endeavour in National GAPs was probably **overambitious**, not merely due to the time requirements but also in terms of the institutional and programming setup needed to reach actual implementation: actual application at the national level is beyond ESCWA’s scope, and its implementation is subject to further market developments, to creating incentives for the voluntary uptake of the standards by farmers, and to the activity of market actors across the value chain locally and regionally.. A few national and regional stakeholders expressed fear as to sustaining the momentum for institutionalization and follow up programming considering previous experiences with application of global gap or international best practices by previous aid funded initiatives. Initial feedback from Jordan and Lebanon provides for the ‘intention’ to formalize and operationalize their national GAP scheme beyond the project period.

Project reporting notes that “Jordan and Lebanon were selected as pilot countries to implement this component of the project for their proximity and keen interest to adopt and advocate the Arab-GAP framework” , evidenced in their interest to adapt common GAP to promote and facilitate trade between

the two countries. Whereas Jordan and Lebanon are exchanging experiences especially considering similarities in the developed standards, the question remains whether the two countries (or other Arab countries) recognize the developed National GAP standards in their trade.

As noted by a project partner “To us this is pilot project to generate interest and learning for potential scaling later on... we want to see where their products go”.

EA 3 has supported the formulation of National GAP standards for Lebanon and Jordan, awaiting official endorsement. These standards when applied, even though on voluntary basis, will enhance domestic food safety and quality and will also facilitate trade of fresh fruits and vegetables between countries. Additional effort and technical assistance is still needed to finalize the institutionalize and implementation of those national standards.

EA-4 Enhancing the assessment capacity of the status of food security in the Arab countries.

Output: A regional food security monitoring framework that contributes to better clarity on the state of food security in the Arab countries, considering all elements that contribute to food security.

Indicator: Regional report on the status of food security in the Arab region using the endorsed monitoring framework.

The project realized its intended output in terms of developing the FS monitoring framework with a unified methodology for data collection and indicator calculations. The regional report covering the different subregions was produced and published in Dec 2019, while national country profiles will be published early 2020³³ as a few countries were re-verifying their data to be included in the regional report at the time of the evaluation.

Extensive consultations and reviews were conducted with around 100 economists, academia, national focal points, experts from ESCWA, FAO, AOAD and other relevant entities working in the field of food security who all contributed to the development of the framework taking into considerations regional specificities and its alignment with the integrated approach of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The framework was presented to the AOAD technical committee and Ministers of Agriculture provided their technical comments prior to endorsing it in its final version. Partners then engaged in training workshops and offered technical support to countries in providing their data to prepare their national statistical reports.

“I must admit that at the beginning I was very sceptical about this monitoring initiative. Now, however, I am proud and happy that the framework was endorsed and operationalized”. National Focal Point

“To reach a unified framework for the region is a magnificent milestone that we didn’t see three years ago during the extensive consultations and debates”. Expert

The partnership with National Statistical Offices (NSOs) through coordination with ATRIS is considered by most consulted stakeholders a facilitative factor since NSOs are the acknowledged official source of data

³³. <https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/publications/files/tracking-food-security-arab-region-english.pdf>

by countries. The process of developing the framework and the reports faced several challenges, notably in terms of data availability and variance in capacities amongst national statistical offices and accessibility to data and policies in some countries. As such, the framework primarily relies on internationally produced data whereas most interviewed countries note that it opens the need for defining a plan for the data collection and integrate the needed data in the country's statistics work.

“MS vary in their statistical capacities ...They were asked to contribute data, but some didn't give us much to go off.... Even regarding international data, some MS don't recognize them” Consultant

The development of the FS framework is considered another significant achievement by almost all those consulted for this evaluation as it provides countries with statistical evidence on the current state of food security and helps identify deficiencies that need to be addressed and remedied to enhance food security status at national level.

“The framework is crucial especially in light of the responses to the Syrian crisis in our country. Different organizations work off different definitions and one would see reports not comprehensive in all dimensions and many lack addressing the stability or utilization dimensions. The monitoring system helps us anchor and operationalize a common definition that we can now use in all national data and researches. Any report to be produced on the food security situation in our country now needs to abide by the four dimensions and the framework indicators at the bare minimum.” MS participant

“The FS Monitoring framework and indicators is useful to understand the current situation. It helps us determine on projects and coordination and cooperation. It's a very important starting point that we never had. We now have a regional tool on food security not only needed on national level decision making but also on regional level” MS focal point

The training manual with definitions was produced and countries engaged in the training workshops on the use of the framework and analysis. **The process of capacity building of national teams is perceived as not have been consumed or completed.** This is largely **due the different starting points** if compared to component 1 (in component 1, the model and tools were already developed and the investment was made in building team capacities to apply it while Component 4 aimed to developing the framework that consumed most of the time and efforts within the project parameters). Recommendations for continued dissemination of the framework and capacity building of national teams moving forward were proposed by most interviewed stakeholders and partners.

The monitoring framework and its respective report is of **key significance to informing and being utilized by decision makers.** Continued action for policy makers to become informed of hot spot areas to formulate strategies and development plans to improve food security is anticipated on two fronts: at the regional level through AOAD ministerial meetings and the subsequent production of report with recommendations for policy interventions, and at the national level through the national internalization of country reports. Feedback gathered as to national utilization is subject to national will and policy making processes and institutional arrangements at national levels. For example, in Palestine, the framework and the indicators are already being internalized as it coincided with the development of the food security strategy for the country (the current draft produced by the FS national committee is being reviewed by the cabinet for final approval). Other countries don't have such a set up and some are requesting ESCWA's support to producing and internalizing their report findings.

EA4 was effectively realized as a regional food security monitoring framework was developed, endorsed and institutionalized at LAS' AOAD. The framework lays the essential foundation to realize the EA in enhancing the assessment capacity of food security in the Arab region and to inform policy makers on policy interventions to enhance food security.

Regional and national partners and capacity building

The project capitalizes on various regional mechanisms, institutions and ties that already exist between ESCWA and regional partners namely LAS through its specialized intergovernmental institutions; ACSAD and AOAD³⁴ and as well United Nations organizations serving the Arab region including FAO. In this project, ESCWA also leverages the substantive support it provides to the Scientific, Advisory and Technical Committee that advises the Arab Ministerial Water Council (AMWC) on the implementation of its "Arab Strategy for Water Security in the Arab Region to Meet the Challenges and Future Needs for Sustainable Development 2010-2030,". The AMWC was established in 2008 to enhance cooperation between Arab states in setting an Arab strategy to address water security challenges and improve water security in the Arab region.

The partnership of the project with AOAD and ACSAD is also viewed a significant achievement by all consulted stakeholders due to their complementary mandates and regional scopes. Most interviewed stakeholders, and especially those from the agricultural sector highlight that succeeding to engage with AOAD and ACSAD as the most relevant and specialized LAS agencies was important to institutionalize the project at the regional scale, to enhance the capacities of both organizations, and to foster their coordination.

"There were challenges in engaging some partners but ESCWA managed to mobilize people to come to where we are today. Thankfully the project and ESCWA brought partners closer to each other" Project Partner

All interviewed partners and country participants also commend the partnership between ESCWA and FAO in this project all assessing it as successful, effective and synergetic as each partner brought in their comparative advantage combining both technical and policy aspects. Also highly noted is the project's engagement with a wide spectrum of experts and country participants of the different components either through capacity building (EA1) or consultations (EA2, EA3 and EA4).

"Our partnership in this project was very complimentary. FAO has more technical mandate while ESCWA is more on the policy side. Together we have a strategic partnership with each other. We are also aligned in the topics and issues that we address in food security and water... I do appreciate this partnership, especially ESCWA's proactive approach and acting as a dynamo to keep this (project) process moving" FAO staff

Integration of gender and human rights considerations into the project's design and implementation

ESCWA is committed to ensuring women's equal rights, access, participation and leadership in the economy, society and political decision-making as well as adherence to human rights. During the inception period, the project set out a plan to 'engender' activities and outputs. The plan was not fully

³⁴ AOAD was established in 1970 to enhance cooperation and coordination between Arab states and enhance agricultural development in general with special attention to human and natural resources to: (1) improve productivity, (2) enhance food security, and (3) reach Arab agriculture integration

followed. Aspects in which gender considerations appear more vividly in the project are i) ESCWA's push for participation of qualified women in project activities especially EA1, ii) participation of farmer women organizations in EA3 and iii) sex disaggregated data within the FS monitoring indicators and reports (when present) and in the Country fact sheets on food security in the Arab region³⁵. The mere participation of women to represent and advocate women's perspectives on the issues is not enough unless deliberately reflected in the project analysis, design, and actions. Consultations with most partners demonstrate while there is no gender bias, further specific attention to gender issues in future similar programming is needed across the project cycle, design and selection (example gender sensitive crop selection), consultations, analysis and research. This would include representing how women are affected, and how gender issues are being advocated for in policy making process related to food and water security.

"There is room to mainstreaming gender issues such as in selection criteria of crops and sites at national level...we can include areas where small scale farmers or women farmers are mostly covered, poverty pockets, vulnerable areas and their effect of poverty especially livelihoods depending on agriculture." Consultant

"The project can be said to adhere to principles of human rights in terms of promoting population's access to food and water (access as a human rights issue). Another important aspect of the human rights-based approach to programming is the engagement of civil society actors in project actions and more particularly policy making at national level." Expert

"Farmers and women are the end users. Their needs are weakly considered on local/ district level where often CSOs are barely engaged. Human rights can be tackled through NGOS participation and LAS tries to bring regional organizations in such programs. At national level it varies. Arab organizations' and NGOs' participation in policy making is weak" Consultant

³⁵ <https://www.unescwa.org/sites/www.unescwa.org/files/publications/files/food-security-fact-sheets-english.pdf>

5.3 Sustainability

Evaluation Questions:

To what extent will the project results create further opportunities for collaboration in the near future, and capacity building at the regional and national level?

Main Findings:

The implementation of the project created further opportunities for collaboration for the near future and capacity building at regional and national level. Some of these have already started during the project period. The project generated interest and demand from Member countries for technical support and capacity development building on project results. Continued utilization of most project outputs is likely as there is ownership and collaboration, and there are institutionalized mandates of project partners.

The implementation of the project created further opportunities for collaboration for the near future and capacity building at regional and national level. Some of these have already started during the project period. The main sustainability elements of the project and factors are:

The project has generated a demand. Member country request technical support and capacity development building on project results.

ESCWA has received several RPTC requests from MS countries some of which had not participated in the project that is has been responding to. Requests came from Jordan, Lebanon, Sudan, Iraq and Syria. Iraq was supported with a meeting in June 2019 with relevant ministries regarding the climate assessment plan to be conducted nationwide. Iraq requested technical assistance for implementing component 1 at a national level, Jordan requested developing the strategy for MoA aligning between the center for agriculture research and the SDGs and a dedicated workshop on FS monitoring indicators was held to integrate them in the strategy. Syria's request within a dedicated project for 2020 will include an assessment of the FS situation of refugees from hums in Jordan and Lebanon.

Project outputs continue to be utilized as they are owned by the project partners. In addition, the specific mandates of the project partners are a driving force for further collaboration.

- **EA 1:** Almost all consulted country teams and the HLM expressed interest to scaling up the assessment of the impact of climate change and water availability on agricultural production and productivity **at the national level** (expanding locations and crops and including other types such as fruit bearing plants). While the trained national teams are believed to be capable of taking this up, it remains subject to national will and financial factors. The presence and engagement of ACSAD that is mandated by member countries is an important sustainability element in the region since its experience dates back to 2014 in using AquaCrop and it can continue to support and backstop national teams. ACSAD's position as center of excellence in its membership in the AquaCrop network of practitioners (supported by FAO) has a key role to continue to support the regional representation of the Arab countries, coordination and pioneering of model as step in the capacity of the region to cope with food security. Through this project, ACSAD was also supported with some equipment (laptops, printers, servers and software) for furthering research on Aquacrop use, developing adds on modules,

using RICCAR updates, and providing training to MS upon request. ACSAD is challenged in terms of location (Office in Syria- accessibility issue) as noted by some partners.

- On a related front, ESCWA SDPD is also implementing another DA project on supplementary irrigation that acts as a building block like AquaCrop in ESCWA's longer term aspiration to support MS to develop their Nationally Determined Contribution to address climate change impact under the Paris Agreement.

- **EA 2:** The Inter-ministerial coordination mechanism that was created by the **project is sustainable as it is institutionalized at LAS and can continue to help address some of the regional priorities or projects.** Fearing that it would be "just another committee at LAS" aspirations and recommendations remain for the technical advisory committee to continue supporting this mechanism in its initial years of work (knowledge management and information sharing, building capacities, joint programming and crowding-in of other development actors in the region (dissemination, joint funding/ resourcing), as well as through supporting a national level interface for this mechanism enabling bottom up and top down coherence in prioritization, engagement and implementation.

"The joint committee will subsist. It can it be the main platform for future projects. The idea is for the committee to subsist which will depend on its ability to generate future projects for the region. Its financial sustainability is key to this" Regional Partner

- **EA 3:** The sustainability largely rests on the participating countries, i.e. Jordan and Lebanon's ability to formally adopt the national GAPs and enforce the regulatory bodies to certification. This would require further supporting initiatives within a wider market development programming and institutionalization of national GAP as earlier noted.
- **EA 4:** Utilization of the Food security monitoring framework is sustainable as it rests with the mandated organization to assess the status of food security in the region (AOAD). Consultations with AOAD and most other stakeholders provide for AOAD's enhanced capacities and capability to continue utilization of the model. Indeed, during the project period, **AOAD was provided from project with equipment (laptops, software, servers and application development, in addition to succeeding in mobilizing additional funds (for a follow-up project on regional agriculture statistics to address challenges and gaps encountered by this project** (availability and quality of data). The project will support agricultural and food security statistical capacity (including the FS indicators in the framework). ATRIS, ESCWA and other partners are anticipated to continue engaging with AOAD and backstopping it in the follow up project and during the first couple of years of producing the regional FSM report. It is worth noting that the project supported by AOAD to transform the FS excel sheets into a user-friendly data application which is an enabling factor. An important factor helping AOAD's continued monitoring will be its ability to continue engaging with the national focal points in data collection. Most of those consulted recommended to work with the national teams (especially NSOs) rather with individual focal points to promote sustainability and institutionalization.

At national level, all consulted stakeholders demonstrated their intention to continue monitoring FS. At the same time, a variance was found regarding the extent the work towards FS (including monitoring) is institutionalized and enabled within the institutional framework at the national level.

6. Conclusions

1. The project is **relevant to the needs of the region**. It builds on SDPD's previous work and emboldens the food dimension of the Food-water-energy nexus approach to regional development and meeting the SDGs. Most selected interventions are very relevant to the needs of the region and participating MS. The choice of selecting GAP scheme to food safety including the eventual shift to National GAP should have been reconsidered within a clear exit strategy.
2. The project is found **largely effective**, it fully realized its intended EAs and outputs and almost all target indicators.
3. The project maintained **high engagement with partners** across the project cycle and sufficiently engaged with relevant stakeholders across the different components. Consistency of participation varied according to component over the 5-year project period, especially MS nominated experts attending the EGMs.
4. The project **adhered to human rights-based principles**. Beyond the proactive push for women's participation in the project activities, women leading the implementation of the project, women involvement in national GAP schemes, gender considerations were not sufficiently integrated into the project's design and implementation.
5. The project results are **largely sustainable**. The project generated interest and demand from MS for technical support and capacity development building on project results. Implementation of the project created further opportunities for collaboration for the near future and capacity building at the regional and national level. Continued utilization of most project outputs is likely as there evidence of sufficient ownership and collaboration, and there are institutionalized mandates of project partners.

7. Lessons Learnt

1. While ESCWA heavily invested in engaging with partners during the initial year, it was on the account of the implementation timeframe. This could have been avoided. Pre-engagement with partners and stakeholders should take place during the design phase. It validates the intervention design, assesses interest and defines contributions and roles early on thus allowing sufficient time for actual planning and execution during the implementation period.
2. Engaging MS through Focal Points is not necessarily the most appropriate or only modality and especially in varying components. It poses turnover and inclusivity risks and may undermine the project's ultimate change in terms of national internalization and policy action. Alternative modalities such as through working with national teams may prove more conducive.
3. The mere participation of women to represent and advocate women's perspectives on food and security and water is not enough unless deliberately approached and reflected across the project cycle, in the project analysis, design, actions and monitoring.
4. Maintaining flexibility during the implementation is important. Shifting between external consultant support, learning by doing and capacity building activities proves to more effective and strengthens sustainability.

8. Recommendations

1. **SDPD** is advised to build on findings of the regional reports and policy briefs in devising future programming in food and water security programming. SDPD should encourage and respond to MS requests:
 - for the national internalization of project outputs;
 - for scaling of the aqua crop assessments in cooperation with ACSAD and FAO (to other countries, expand other crops and other areas to cover the entire country);
 - for internalizing findings and policy recommendations from component 1 including water management at national level as well as 4 (the FS monitoring framework). This can ideally be done through working with national teams that include decision makers, technical staff from the ministries as well as civil society organizations and research institutions.
 - c) SDPD can assist MS in promoting the outcomes for funding and implementation at national level.
 - d) SDPD can consider the proposal for supporting the regional AquaCrop network.
2. **ESCWA alongside the other partners in the Advisory committee** should continue to support the High Level Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee's through supporting the set action plan and pilot projects and linking it with other supporting organizations and actors working on water and food security in the region.
3. **SDPD and ESCWA's statistics function** should provide technical backstopping and support to AOAD over the next two years to disseminate and scale the monitoring framework to other countries and cooperate with AOAD and ATRIS in building MS capacities in generating national data in the FS framework and applying the model.
4. **The Project Team** should maintain its support until Jordan and Lebanon have a working GAP mechanism in order to showcase it and replicate it at the regional level.
5. **The Project Team** should mainstream gender in devising and implementing future projects. Specific attention to gender issues is needed across the project cycle: design, analysis and research representing how women are affected, and how gender issues are being advocated for in matters related to food and water security.

9. Annexes

9.1 Annex I - TOR

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE FINAL EVALUATION OF
EXTRA-BUDGETARY PROJECT:

“PROMOTING FOOD AND WATER SECURITY THROUGH COOPERATION AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARAB REGION”



PROJECT DURATION: DECEMBER 2014 - DECEMBER 2019

1. BACKGROUND of Project

One of the main priorities for countries of the Arab region is to achieve food security for all. However, with a current population exceeding 360 million that is expected to double by the year 2050 if growth rates persist, ensuring food availability in quality, quantity and over time is not an easy task. Achieving this goal presents a major challenge because of the many constraints faced. These include notably the rapidly increasing water scarcity, which is exacerbated by the impact of climate change and extreme weather events. Other challenges include dwindling arable lands, unsustainable production and consumption patterns, changing lifestyles, the increasingly degraded environment and the rising uncertainty due to on-going socio-political transformations and unrests.

Having realized the importance of an integrated regional perspective on food security, Arab States have taken several steps, under the umbrella of the League of Arab States, towards greater cooperation and coordination in this area. Policy documents developed in recent years include the following:

- Strategy for Sustainable Arab Agricultural Development for the Upcoming Two Decades (2005–2025): the Strategy calls for a joint agricultural policy that ensures the provision of safe food and the sustainability of agricultural resources;
- Riyadh Declaration to Enhance Arab Cooperation to Face World Food Crises: adopted in 2008, the Declaration called for the launch of an initiative on an emergency Arab food security programme and the preparation of a plan of action for the coordination of agricultural policies in Arab countries;
- The Emergency Programme for Arab Food Security and its Action Plan: launched in 2009, the Programme is aimed at improving current agricultural production levels and enabling horizontal agricultural expansion through integrated investment projects and a better management of water resources.

However, commitments made at the institutional level have largely failed to translate into significant improvements on the ground, due to a number of challenges, such as: weak policy dialogue between decision makers of the agriculture and water sectors; lack of knowledge on the impact of water availability and climate change on agriculture; low safety and quality of produce; and lack of clarity on how to monitor food security as a multidimensional concept.

Based on the institutional progress under the umbrella of the League of Arab States and the above mentioned challenges, the Sustainable Development Policies Division of ESCWA (SDPD) launched in 2014 the extra-budgetary project “Promoting Food and Water Security Through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab region”. The project was funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), aimed to strengthen food and water security in the Arab region through improved and coordinated policy design, strategy development and programme implementation. This required a wider national and regional knowledge base, capacity building and greater regional cooperation. The project involved improving assessments of the impact on agricultural production of changing water availability associated with climate change; enhancing the institutional set-up for greater intergovernmental coordination in the water and food sectors; developing a unified regional framework of good agricultural practices; and upgrading the regional food security monitoring system for informed and integrated policymaking.

The project is being implemented by the Sustainable Development Policies Division at ESCWA in partnership with: Member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA); League of Arab States and its ministerial councils and Specialized Agencies; Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD); Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO); International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA); Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ); American University of Beirut; Arabian Gulf University; and King Saud University.

With a total budget of USD 2,346,278, the project will be closing in December 2019. The final activity of the project consisting in a Regional meeting on promoting Food and Water Security is planned to be held at ESCWA in Beirut end of November or early December 2019.

Project evaluation

Purpose of the evaluation

This end-of-cycle evaluation of the project will cover the entire duration of the project from December 2014 to its completion in December 2019. This evaluation will serve as a time-bound exercise aimed at assessing systematically and objectively the project design and outputs.

Undertaken in line with the UNEG Norms and Standards, and in accordance with ESCWA’s Evaluation Policy 2017, the evaluation will seek to assess the overall achievement of the project objectives and intended goal, and will consolidate the main findings, challenges, and best practices of this project. The evaluation will strive at all times to employ development best practice with regard to promoting **gender equality** and a **human rights-based approach**.

The evaluation’s final report will target its findings and recommendations to two audiences:

- the project team, and
- ESCWA at large.

This evaluation is facilitated by ESCWA’s evaluation function.

Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation will be forward-looking, and will assess the project according to three OECD-DAC criteria: **relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability**. It will consider whether the project was able to fulfil its overall objective: “Promoting Food and Water Security Through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab region.” It will cover the entire project duration of the project, from December 2014 to December 2019.

The evaluation will measure the extent to which the project’s Expected Accomplishments were achieved:

Expected Accomplishments & Indicators of Achievement

- (EA 1) Strengthened capacity to assess impacts of changing water availability on agricultural production
- (EA 2) Enhanced regional capacity for coordinated policy development on food and water security
- (EA 3) Enhanced capacity for efficient food production in the Arab region
- (EA 4) Enhanced assessment capacity of the status of food security in the Arab countries

The evaluator is allowed to develop proxy indicators in consultation with ESCWA’s evaluation function.

2. Evaluation criteria

The evaluator is encouraged to consider the below questions, and to adapt and elaborate as needed, in consultation with ESCWA’s evaluation function and the Project Team:

Relevance

- 1) To what extent did the project build upon SDPD’s previous work?
- 2) To what extent was the project relevant to the needs of the region?
- 3) To what extent was there consistent participant and stakeholder engagement? Was gender considered in the selection of participants?

Effectiveness

- 4) To what extent were the project’s activities and outputs consistent with the project’s Goal and Expected Accomplishments?
- 5) To what degree were the project’s Expected Accomplishments, Outputs, Indicators and Activities achieved?
- 6) To what extent did the project bring together regional and national partners to work together and to enhance their capacities?
- 7) Were gender and human rights considerations integrated into the project’s design and implementation?

Sustainability

- 8) To what extent will the project results create in the near future further opportunities for collaboration and capacity building at the regional and national level?

3. Evaluation Methodology

It is expected that the methodology for this evaluation will employ a sufficiently rigorous approach to produce impartial, accurate, evidence-based and forward-looking findings and recommendations. Multiple data sources will be consulted, and a variety of types of data collected and triangulated. All efforts at mitigating bias and ensuring the veracity of findings are expected. **The evaluator will also ensure that all aspects of the evaluation are gender-sensitive.** The below list of evaluation tools is to be further refined in the Inception Report:

a) Desk research

The evaluation will include a comprehensive literature review of documentation provided by ESCWA. The following documents are to be included (the evaluator may choose to include additional data sources): Project Document and Concept Note, Progress Reports and supporting materials, Financial Report, Activities Report, Lists of participants to all workshops and of stakeholders, Formal agreements with partners, Materials related to project implementation, and Knowledge products produced.

b) Interviews or focus groups:

Data collection will occur through field visits and remotely, through telephone or Skype interviews. Fieldwork through visits to member States; in addition to the host country, Lebanon, at least two other member States (one Mashrek and one Maghreb country) to be determined in the Inception Report, in consideration with ESWA's evaluation function and the Project Team. Should a mission to a country be cancelled due to extenuating circumstances or force majeure then the mission will be replaced by a trip to another country. It is estimated that 15-20 interviews will be held, in addition to those with the Project Team and ESCWA staff.

c) Observation

The evaluator will be required to attend and observe the two activities of the project:

- First Joint High Level Meeting for Water and Agriculture, which will be held 23-24 October, as part of the Cairo Water
- Final Project Activity: Regional meeting on promoting Food and Water Security, which planned for end of November or December 2019 at ESCWA in Beirut.

All evaluation tools are to be approved by ESCWA's evaluation function and will be piloted and revised as per best practice.

4. Quality assurance mechanism

The evaluator will employ a quality assurance mechanism of her/his preference (either an internal or an external system can be used), which will provide quality checks throughout the evaluation process. This quality assurance mechanism will be indicated in the Inception Report and in the Final Evaluation Report.

5. Deliverables and Timeframe

Inception Report (see Annex 1): The evaluator will submit a draft Inception Report totalling not more than 10 pages, in addition to associated annexes. The Inception Report will summarize the desk review of documentation provided by the Project Team, and propose the evaluation methodology and sampling strategy/ies to be used in the evaluation, along with a detailed workplan, draft evaluation matrix, stakeholder matrix, and quality assurance mechanism. The preliminary findings will be discussed with ESCWA’s evaluation function and the Project Team, with any revisions implemented no later than one week following receipt of comments. The Inception Report will be gender sensitive.

Final Evaluation Report (see Annex 2): Following the evaluation’s data collection and analysis of findings, the evaluator will submit a draft Final Evaluation Report. The Evaluation Report will be user-friendly, well-structured and evidence-based, totalling not more than 20 pages, in addition to a 2-page Executive Summary and associated annexes. The Final Evaluation Report will summarize the agreed-upon methodology listed in the Inception Report, describe the evaluation’s data collection and analytical approach, and present findings with clear action-oriented recommendations. The Final Evaluation Report will be reviewed by ESCWA’s evaluation function, discussed with the evaluator and a revised Final Evaluation Report is expected 31 January 2020. The Evaluation Report will be gender-sensitive.

Proposed timeline

The evaluation will be held between 1 October 2019 – 31 January 2019.

1-31 October 2019	Desk review and preparation of Inception Report
23-24 October 2019	Attend the First Joint High-Level Meeting for Water and Agriculture in Cairo
1 November 2019	Submit draft Inception Report to ESCWA evaluation function
1-8 November 2019	Review of draft Inception Evaluation Report by ESCWA evaluation function
15 November 2019	Submit revised Inception Report to ESCWA evaluation function (first deliverable)
15 November- 31 December 2019	Conduct data collection
End November/December 2019	Attend the final project activity: Regional meeting on promoting Food and Water Security at ESCWA in Beirut.
1-14 January 2020	Analysis of findings and drafting of Final Evaluation Report
15 January 2020	Submit draft Final Evaluation Report to ESCWA evaluation function
15-22 January 2020	Review of draft Final Evaluation Report by ESCWA evaluation function
23-28 January 2020	Revise and finalize the Final Evaluation Report based on comments received
31 January 2020	Submit revised Final Evaluation Report (second deliverable)

6. Duration

The Evaluator is expected to work between 1 October 2019 and 31 January 2020. Payments will be made lump-sum, based on delivery of outputs.

7. Evaluator's Profile

ESCWA is seeking an evaluator who is well-experienced in the region and possesses the following:

- Experience in undertaking normative evaluations of development projects and/or evaluations working with Arab governmental bodies, including normative evaluation design, data collection, data analysis and forward-looking, user-friendly recommendations;
- Experience in an area related to water and food security is desirable;
- Work experience in the UN environment and in the Arab region is desirable;
- Previous experience in results based management and evaluation;
- A high level of expertise in the distilling, communication and reporting of findings, recommendations, best practices and lessons learned; and
- Excellent oral and written communication skills and the ability to effectively convey complex information in a clear and concise manner to both governmental and UN audiences.
- English and French are the working languages of the UN Secretariat. Fluency in both English and Arabic is required for this consultancy.

8. Evaluation Ethics

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'; and all rights and confidentiality of information providers will be prioritized and safeguarded as per UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation':

www.unevaluation.org/documentdownload?doc_id=102&file_id=548

9.2 Annex II- List of persons interviewed

	NAME	Organization/ Location
1	Roula Madjalani	ESCWA
2	Reem Nejdawi	ESCWA
3	Julie Abou Arab	ESCWA
4	Fidele Byiringiro	ESCWA
5	Carol Chouchani	ESCWA
6	Katrin Aidnell	SIDA
7	Shahira Wahbi	LAS- Egypt
8	Djameledinee Djabballah	LAS-Egypt
9	Mohamed AL-Hamdi	FAO- Egypt
10	Tarek Abdellatif	AOAD- Sudan
11	Ali Mousa	AOAD-Sudan
12	Pasquale Steduto	Ex FAO Staff
13	Ihab Jnad	ACSAD-Syria
14	Tamam Khawaldeh	Ministry of Agriculture-Jordan
15	Mohammedamin Shahbari	Ministry of Agriculture-Palestine
16	Nabeel Mohamed Saad	Ministry of Agriculture-Sudan
17	Nada Fraihat	Ministry of Agriculture-Jordan
18	Tamam Yasin	Directorate of Statistics-Jordan
19	Nadine Abdelkhallek	Ministry of Agriculture-Lebanon
20	Anis Ben Rayana	Ministry of Agriculture-Tunisia
21	Abdallah Droubi	Consultant
22	Hammou Laamrani	Technical Secretariat of AWMC/ GIZ consultant
23	Mohamad el Hiary	Expert (component 1) Jordan
24	Adel Abdul Qader	Consultant- Component 2
25	Rami Zurayk	Consultant- Component 4 (AUB)
26	Haider El Janabi	AITRS

9.3 Annex III- List of documents reviewed or referenced

1) Planning, management and budget

1. Concept Note
2. Project Inception Report
3. Project Document
4. Project extensions emails
5. Progress Reports
6. Project Theory of Change

2) Meetings and products

- Minutes of Annual Meetings between ESCWA & Sida
- Second Coordination Meeting of the Project Promoting Food and Water Security through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab Region
- First Coordination Meeting of the Project Promoting Food and Water Security through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab Region
- Second Coordination Meeting of the Project 'Promoting Food and Water Security through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab Region' 21-22MAY2015
- Expert Group Meeting on the Water-Energy-Food Security Nexus in the Arab Region
- Expert Group Meeting (Cairo 31/5-1/6 2016); On the Scope & Setting of an Arab-GAP (Report, Agenda, Information Note)
- First Consultation Meeting on Component I of the Food and Water Security Project: Criteria for Selecting Geographical Coverage of the Project 29-30 MAY 2016
- Meeting of the National Focal Points for the Project on Promoting Food and Water Security in the Arab Region, 05-06 OCTOBER 2016
- Scope and Setting up of an Arab – Good Agricultural Practices Framework (Arab-GAP), 31 MAY-01 June 2016
- Consultation Meeting on Enhancing Coordination between the Agriculture and Water Sectors, 07-09 FEBRUARY 2017
- First Consultative Meeting on Food Security Assessment and Monitoring in the Arab Region, 11-12APRIL2017
- Second Consultative Meeting on Food Security Assessment and Monitoring in the Arab Region, 01-02 FEBRUARY 2018
- Third Consultative Meeting on Food Security Assessment and Monitoring in the Arab Region, 27-28 MARCH 2018
- Expert Group Meeting on Tracking Food Security in the Arab Region, 24-25 APRIL 2019
- Coordination meeting for statisticians on tracking and monitoring food security in the Arab Region, 26-Jun-19
- Coordination meeting on Applying Nationally Adopted Good Agriculture Practices in Jordan and Lebanon, 23-Apr-19
- Food Security Monitoring and Analysis at National Level –Reflection of Results in the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture Strategy for 2021-2025, 15-Oct-2019
- Regional Meeting on Promoting Food and Water Security in the Arab Region, 27-28-November 2019
- Second Jordanian National Workshop on AquaCrop for Irrigation Water Management, 15-19 December 2019
- Second Palestinian National Workshop on AquaCrop for Irrigation Water Management, 15-19 December 2019
- Country fact sheets on food security in the Arab region

- ESCWA, FAO joint publication: Arab Horizon 2030: Prospects for Enhancing Food Security in the Arab Region, 2017

3) Publications, Manual and communications material

1. Tracking Food Security in the Arab Region: Executive Summary
2. Towards integration of Water and Agriculture Policies: Enhancing coordination between the Water and Agriculture Sectors
3. Moving towards Water Security in the Arab Region
4. Manual for Monitoring Food Security in the Arab Region Promoting Food and Water Security through Cooperation and Capacity Development in the Arab Region Brochure.
5. Training Manual for Using AquaCrop model to evaluate the Impact of Climate Change on crop Production
6. User Guide Manual for AquaCrop Model
7. Guidebook on Using AquaCrop for Irrigation Water Management
8. Training Manual for Using AquaCrop model to evaluate the Impact of Climate Change on crop Production
9. User Guide Manual for AquaCrop Model
10. Assessing the impacts of changing water availability on agricultural production in selected Arab countries
11. Adopting Good Agriculture Practices (GAPs) for Enhanced Food Safety in the Arab Region
12. Project website (www.unescwa.org/sub-site/food-water-security-arab-region)

4) Partners, donors and stakeholders

1. ESCWA-AOAD Funding Agreement 2019
2. ESCWA-AOAD Signed MOU 2018 (Arabic & English)
3. FAO-ACSAD Agreement
4. FAO-ESCWA Agreement
5. List of Participants
6. List of Knowledge Products

5) Project staff and consultants

1. List of project Staff
2. List of project Consultants

9.4 Annex IV - Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria	TOR Questions	Questions to Division/ Project Team	Questions to Project Partners	Questions to Project Participants	Questions to Experts/ Consultants
Relevance	<p>To what extent did the project build upon SDPD's previous work?</p> <p>To what extent was the project relevant to the needs of the region?</p> <p>To what extent was there consistent participant and stakeholder engagement?</p> <p>Was gender considered in the selection of participants?</p>	<p>Can you tell me about your projects in water and agriculture during the last five years and how does this project capitalize on your previous work?</p> <p>How does the project compliment/ Is complemented by other divisions work i.e. statistics, gender, poverty and economic development, others?</p> <p>How were the regional needs identified and prioritized and who took part in designing the project concept/ document? Did you map the regional and national levels initiatives in water and agriculture nexus? and what were the main findings that helped inform the selected interventions</p> <p>To what extent was the project coordinated with other actors and complemented other initiatives? Please explain which ones and how.</p> <p>What is the added value of each project partner in your perspective?</p> <p>To what extent was there consistent participant and stakeholder engagement throughout the project period. Please explain varying trends and reasons. What do you think of their profile (consistency, decision making power, relevance and qualifications to the role anticipated in the project)?</p>	<p>How and at what stage of the project did you engage in the project? How were the regional needs identified and prioritized?</p> <p>How does the project meet your agency/organization objectives, areas of complementarity and how did its implementation fit in your workplan?</p> <p>Please explain the partnership scope and its evolution since project inception period till now. Has it varied during implementation. Can you please describe to me your role in the project?</p> <p>To what extent do you believe that the project was coordinated with relevant actors and complemented other initiatives? Explain please. (ESCWA, FAO, ACSAD, LAS, ICBA, civil society organizations, etc)</p> <p>To what extent was there consistent participant and stakeholder engagement (partners, focal points, committee members, etc)? What do you think of their profile (decision making, relevance and qualifications to the role anticipated in the project)?</p>	<p>To what extent was the project relevant to your country needs and how? (resilience of agricultural sector amidst climate change, national and regional level coordination between water and agriculture, GAP, assessment of food security)</p> <p>To what extent/ and which national priorities are similar to the regional ones? Consideration to be paid to each EA.</p> <p>How do you assess the trainings/ workshops, manuals and reports? Were they relevant to your needs and to what extent were they useful and how?</p> <p>How you were selected by your government to participate in the project events? Was gender considered in the selection of participants?</p> <p>Did you participate in all project activities linked to your field of expertise? why and why not?</p> <p>To what extent were the participants the same? If not, how challenging/ beneficial is it to work with different people each time when you participate in project events?</p>	<p>What was your role in the project, when and how did you get engaged in it?</p> <p>To what extent do you think the project was relevant to the needs of the region and complement other initiatives? What specific needs does it respond to and how do you assess the response. Consideration to be paid to each EA.</p> <p>To what extent was there consistent participant and stakeholder engagement (partners, focal points, committee members, etc)? What do you think of their profile (decision making, relevance and qualifications to the role anticipated in the project)?</p>

Evaluation Criteria	TOR Questions	Questions to Division/ Project Team	Questions to Project Partners	Questions to Project Participants	Questions to Experts/ Consultants
Effectiveness	<p>To what extent were the project's activities and outputs consistent with the project's Goal and Expected Accomplishments? To what degree were the project's Expected Accomplishments, Outputs, Indicators and Activities achieved?</p> <p>To what extent did the project bring r regional and national partners to work together and to enhance their capacities?</p> <p>Were gender and human rights considerations integrated into the project's design and during implementation?</p>	<p>Can you please explain to me the interlinkage between the project components and its objective?</p> <p>How would a voluntary application of GAP enhance national food security? What is the added Value of the project in assessing water impact on agriculture (EA-1) beyond what FAO-ACSAD-GIZ did? and why the assessment shortened/ narrowed down to fresh fruits and vegetables (FFV) and then to 2 crops? What is the role of each EA taskforce, Project coordination committee, and project steering committee?</p> <p>Is there any explanation for some countries not engaging in the project activities (EA-1 9 out of 13 did the assessment; EA-2 8 MC nominated FP; EA-3 2 piloted Arab-GAP)?</p> <p>The project aims at sustainable inclusive food security for all, how does project address these issues in terms of design, implementation, and impacts?</p> <p>To what extent were gender and HR integrated in the project? To what extent was the response to SIDA in terms of gender followed in reality?</p> <p>Was the no-cost extension of the program adequate to achieve the intended results/targets? Are the results likely to be achieved by project end? which ones won't and why?</p>	<p>Are you aware of the project components? Can you please explain to me the interlinkage between the project components and its objective?</p> <p>How would a voluntary application of GAP enhance national food security?</p> <p>What is the added Value of the project in assessing water impact on agriculture (EA-1) beyond what FAO-ACSAD-GIZ did? and how it was the assessment shortened to FFV and then into 2 crops?</p> <p>What is the role of each EA taskforce and the project coordination committee?</p> <p>Why do u think is the reason for some countries not to engage in the project activities (EA-1 9 out of 13 did the assessment; EA-2 8 MC nominated FP; EA-3 2 piloted Arab-GAP)?</p> <p>The project aims at sustainable inclusive food security for all, how the project addressed these issues in terms of design, implementation, and impacts?</p> <p>To what extent were gender and HR integrated in the project implementation?</p>	<p>Are you aware of the project objective, results, and targets? How realistic were the planned targets (at EA level, activity-level)? What were constraints to achieve them and how far has the project been able to remove them?</p> <p>Is there any activity that the project should consider achieving its objective and be more consistent/ congruent?</p> <p>To what degree you were satisfied with the project activities and see it sufficient to contribute to achievement of the project objective?</p> <p>To what extent did you feel that the project brings together regional and national participants to work together and to enhance their capacities?</p>	<p>How realistic and feasible to assume that increasing the knowledge and capacities of actors can led to change in policy and practices of member states?</p> <p>What have been major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of project objective?</p> <p>What contribution has the project made towards increasing the resilience of the Arab state in facing climate change? Food security?</p> <p>What impact has the project on vulnerable groups such as farmers (especially poor, small scale, etc), women, children, elderly, and persons with disabilities?</p> <p>Were gender and human rights considerations integrated into the project's design and implementation/ outputs? please elaborate</p>

Evaluation Criteria	TOR Questions	Questions to Division/ Project Team	Questions to Project Partners	Questions to Project Participants	Questions to Experts/ Consultants
<p>Sustainability</p>	<p>To what extent will the project results create further opportunities in the near future for collaboration and capacity building at the regional and national level?</p>	<p>What are the obstacles that faced the project implementation and those that are threatening the project's sustainability? To what extent will the project results create in the near future further opportunities for collaboration and capacity building at the regional and national level? What are the outlooks for this thus far? Which of the project interventions will continue after the closure of the project and which will not? And Why?</p> <p>More specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country teams that have been trained and guided to prepare crop-specific assessment reports at the local level, would replicate for other crops and areas based on the knowledge gained; - the use of completed reports to inform policy formulation beyond the project cycle. - The inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms as an established intergovernmental process under the LAS will perform regular meetings, projects and reporting back to the ministerial councils responsible for agriculture and water. - Jordan and Lebanon to continue to ensure GAP application at the country- 	<p>Which of the project interventions will continue after the closure of the project and which will not? Why? And How do you envision continuation (separately or in cooperation with other regional partners? Who might those be? More specifically gauge the likeliness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Country teams that have been trained and guided to prepare crop-specific assessment reports at the local level, would replicate for other crops and areas based on the knowledge gained; - the use of completed reports to inform policy formulation beyond the project cycle. - The inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms as an established intergovernmental process under the LAS will perform regular meetings, projects and reporting back to the ministerial councils responsible for agriculture and water. - Jordan and Lebanon to continue to ensure GAP application at the country-level based on the scheme adopted through the project - National country teams formed and trained on the 	<p>What is the potential for GAP to be replicated in other countries and/ or be compulsory in Jordan and Lebanon?</p> <p>How could be the HL joint committee viable while at national level water and agriculture are not coordinated or collaborating?</p> <p>To what extent do you believe that Arab States are going to monitor Food Security indicators and utilize findings in their national strategies and plans? to what extent the results of the impact of water availability assessment will be utilized in Arab States and translate into policies?</p> <p>To what extent do you believe that the availability of funds can affect the continuity of the work of other actors (AOAD, FAO, ACSAD, etc.) and MC?</p>	<p>Which of the project interventions will continue after the closure of the project and which will not? And Why? What issues addressed in the project you think might need further research and preparation of knowledge material to engage stakeholders? Gauge according to EA/ output</p>

Evaluation Criteria	TOR Questions	Questions to Division/ Project Team	Questions to Project Partners	Questions to Project Participants	Questions to Experts/ Consultants
		<p>level based on the scheme adopted through the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National country teams formed and trained on the food security monitoring framework would continue to contribute to regular reporting on food security at the regional and country-level based upon a endorsed set of harmonized indicators? - ACSAD's IT infrastructure, to support continued capacity building and the sustainable provision of technical assistance on these methodologies to other member countries after the project end date? - Supporting AOAD to improve its IT and statistical infrastructure for capacity building and knowledge transfer in the field of monitoring food security in the Arab Region 	<p>food security monitoring framework would continue to contribute to regular reporting on food security at the regional and country-level based upon a endorsed set of harmonized indicators?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACSAD's IT infrastructure, to support continued capacity building and the sustainable provision of technical assistance on these methodologies to other member countries after the project end date? - Supporting AOAD to improve its IT and statistical infrastructure for capacity building and knowledge transfer in the field of monitoring food security in the Arab Region 		