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**Mid-term Evaluation of the Project
“Capacity Development for Agricultural
Innovation Systems” (CDAIS)**

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The Office of Evaluation is especially thankful to the TAP Secretariat, TAP Partners, CDAIS management team, Project Oversight Committee, and the CDAIS partners for their strong engagement, cooperation and insights provided to the evaluation team throughout the evaluation process.

Acronyms and abbreviations

AIS	Agricultural Innovation System
CDAIS	Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems
EEIG	European Economic Interest Grouping
ESS	Environmental and Social Standards
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
NIF	National Innovation Facilitator
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPOC	National Project Oversight Committee
PMT	Project Management Team
POC	Project Oversight Committee
TAP	Tropical Agriculture Platform

Executive Summary

Introduction

- 1 This document presents the results of the Mid-term Evaluation of the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovations Systems (CDAIS) project implemented by Agrinatura and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The project was conceived to support the implementation of the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) action plan by establishing a global mechanism to promote, coordinate and evaluate capacity development approaches to strengthen Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS), with needs assessed and approaches validated in eight pilot countries (Angola, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Laos and Rwanda). The project started in January 2015 and is expected to end in December 2018. It has a budget of EUR 13 356 851, including a EUR 12 000 000 grant from the European Union.
- 2 The Mid-term Evaluation was foreseen in the project document and was conducted for both accountability and learning purposes. It aimed at generating useful information to improve project implementation and future decision-making by the Project Oversight Committee, Project Management Team, national implementing partners, European Commission and other stakeholders. In particular, it had the following objectives: (i) to assess the relevance of the strategy and quality of the design and implementation arrangements; (ii) to assess progress and gaps in achieving established outputs and outcomes, including any initial or preliminary results, and opportunities or risks for future implementation and; (iii) to identify lessons and opportunities from project implementation and propose any corrective or opportunistic measures and/or adjustments to the implementation strategy. The evidence provided by the Mid-term Evaluation could be also useful to leverage additional resources to expand the implementation of the CDAIS approach.
- 3 The Mid-term Evaluation adopted a results-focused approach and was conducted through an inclusive and transparent process. It reconstructed the project's Theory of Change (ToC) as the basis of analysis of the contributions made by the project to the expected results. It addressed five key criteria (relevance, effectiveness, partnerships and coordination, normative values and sustainability) and answered six key evaluation questions (EQ). Several methods and tools for data collection were used to answer the evaluation questions, including a review of existing documentation, semi-structured interviews with key informants, focus group discussions, direct observation and a partners survey. The triangulation of evidence and information gathered underpins its validation and analysis, and supports the conclusions and recommendations.

Main findings

To what extent is the CDAIS project responding and filling the gaps in terms of the specific agricultural innovation and capacity development needs, demands and priorities of the eight pilot countries, as well as the TAP partners?

- 4 The project is well aligned with the national priorities and strategies of participating countries. Its focus on functional capacities are highly relevant to the needs and priorities of targeted AIS. The project is aligned with effective development cooperation and good capacity development practices and it is seen as an attempt to fill capacity development gaps that are not usually addressed by other actors. It is therefore fully coherent with the TAP's mandate and it represents its most important source of financing. The project is also coherent with FAO priorities and strategies (including the decision to host the TAP Secretariat), and is considered a crucial contribution to increasing the impact of FAO country portfolios. It is also well aligned and coherent with the main European Union strategies but the involvement of the European Union services during the implementation has been limited, including at country level.

What are the main outputs and results (intended and unintended) achieved thus far by the project?

- 5 The project has developed the Common Framework and has contributed to develop a shared vision of capacity development for AIS, as the basis of the TAP. The country-led approach and demand-driven methodologies used for identifying capacity development needs in the pilot countries are highly appreciated. It has contributed to build capacities at both individual and organizational level creating the potential for change by helping niche partnerships prioritize challenges and develop detailed action plans to address them, where capacity development interventions can make a significant difference. TAPipedia has been launched as a capacity development portal in support of the Common Framework and TAP. At least two donors are interested in funding capacity development for AIS projects in four other countries. Nevertheless, the delays in implementation and the emerging understanding of what is required to validate the Common Framework make it unlikely that the project will achieve all its targets in the remaining project implementation timeframe. The most important difficulties were related to the need of translation (in terms of concepts rather than language) and the need to adapt the methodology to the local context. An effective mechanism/platform for advocacy, dialogue and action has not yet been established in any country.

To what extent has the current operational modality and project governance structure, including the Agrinatura-FAO-national government partnership at country level, been effective, particularly in terms of coordination, complementarity and decision-making processes?

- 6 The project has put in place a challenging governance and implementation structure that, despite the difficulties and delays, has contributed to deliver some results. However, in two countries some tensions are impacting on national-level ownership of the project and its ongoing implementation. A monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) system is being put in place in pilot countries. It has the potential to deliver on accountability and learning requirements but there are concerns about whether the system can be made workable in the time available, without distracting from implementation through burdensome data gathering requirements. Plans have not yet been made for carrying out transversal analysis, which is key to validating the Common Framework and identifying which organizations find it easier to use it.

To what extent is the project fostering partnerships at the global, regional and national levels? How have these partnerships influenced (positively and negatively) the achievement of the project's expected results?

- 7 The project is fostering partnerships at global and national level through the process of implementation. Niche partnerships are one of the project's main assets and, in general, they have helped the achievement of the project's expected results. In some countries, the selection of niches was nevertheless influenced by political considerations and was not fully transparent or inclusive. Several countries have chosen to work with more than the two or three recommended niche partnerships with possible detrimental results through dilution of support given to each one.

To what extent and how has the project integrated social issues (including gender), and environmental considerations in its design and throughout its implementation?

- 8 The gender perspective was not included in project design. The participation of women in the activities depends on the specific context in each country and niche, with some exceptions in which there was a conscious decision to specifically target women groups. Despite the project not implicitly targeting marginalized groups in its design, both indigenous and marginalized groups have benefited from the activities and will do so in the future, as members of the selected niches and through the implementation of the niche action plans. In particular, the project addressed their working conditions to some extent.

What are the prospects of sustaining the project's approach on capacity development and its results (expected and achieved thus far)?

- 9 The project has two linked mechanisms in place to sustain the project's approach: (i) continued and expanding use of the Common Framework by TAP and national partners; and (ii) through loose networks of National Innovation facilitators (NIFs) supporting niche partnerships reach the point of empowerment. Both will likely require a project extension to survive beyond the end of the project.

Conclusions

Conclusion 1. Alignment with global and national-level demands and priorities (EQ 1)

- 10 The Common Framework is well aligned with the demands and priorities of TAP partners and national priorities of participating countries. The project's approach aims to enhance country ownership through a bottom-up, country-driven and participatory process to achieve more sustainable results.

Conclusion 2. On progress towards the project's three results (EQ 2 and EQ 3.1)

- 11 The project has made good progress towards its three results. In the process, it has started to build capacities at individual and organizational level with a validated action plan to address identified capacity gaps. Moreover, the project has created spaces for dialogue and has enhanced trust and motivation among participants. Nevertheless, the project has experienced significant delays with the risk that participants lose interest and motivation. The project will have difficulties to trigger sustainable processes in the remaining year and a half.

Conclusion 3. On the main impact pathway (EQ 2.1, EQ 2.2 and Section 2.2)

- 12 The project is expected to validate the Common Framework and at the same time deliver developmental outcomes as the pilots are not treatments. The Common Framework, while of high quality, is by its nature conceptual, theoretical and normative. The first task of the project has been to translate and adapt the language and concepts to local contexts. The second task should be to capture and synthesize learning with and across pilot countries for use by TAP, national platforms and niche partnerships. Doing so will maximize the "political" importance of the project by providing TAP with the necessary arguments to engage on a discussion about the use of the Common Framework with different stakeholders, including donors.

Conclusion 4. On the Theory of Change (EQ 2.4 and Section 4.2)

- 13 The Theory of Change developed during the Mid-term Evaluation suggested that the immediate outcome at global level becomes "national and TAP partners promoting and learning about capacity development for AIS through niche, national and global-level mechanisms" which incorporates the three results of the current logframe. The intermediate outcome becomes "improved system capacity to innovate" that is assumed to lead to "social, environmental and economic impacts". The causal pathways to these outcomes will be long and will not occur within the lifespan of the project.

Conclusion 5. On the Agrinatura-FAO partnership (EQ 3.1)

- 14 The project has put in place a challenging governance and implementation structure in which both partners learn and model the Common Framework capacities themselves. The project would not have achieved the same results if led by only one of the partners. As a first experience of working together, it is a learning process for both partners that should

benefit future actions. Major determinants of the project implementation are related with Agrinatura and FAO's work culture. Difficulties are expected in channelling the funds for the implementation of niche action plans in two countries where Agrinatura does not have a legal presence; the potential risks of delays this might entail need to be mitigated.

Conclusion 6. On the critical role of the MEL system in Common Framework validation (EQ 3.2)

- 15 The monitoring, evaluation and learning system has a critical integrating role to play in the last year and a half of the project. The Coaching Plan needs to support NIFs to implement niche partnership action plans while capturing process data and findings. MEL data and lessons learned will also play a central role in the transversal analysis to validate the Common Framework that the project is planning to carry out. There are currently two proposals for MEL that risk not being integrated and made practicable for use by the pilots in time. In addition, the requirements of the MEL system, in particular the Coaching Plan, might delay and distract from implementing niche partnership action plans. The project's monitoring and evaluation team is working on simplifying the Coaching Plan.

Conclusion 7. On the lack of a gender perspective (EQ 5)

- 16 The project has not included any gender analysis and it does not incorporate any gender-specific indicators, targets or activities. As a consequence, there has been no gender mainstreaming in the Common Framework. On the other hand, the implementation of the Common Framework offers an excellent opportunity to address and promote gender equality at both individual and system level (enabling environment) as it already aims at promoting change in attitudes by enhancing functional capacities.

Conclusion 8. On sustaining TAPipedia (EQ 2.1)

- 17 There are high expectations for TAPipedia as TAP's global capacity development and innovation portal. As a portal that explains and promotes the Common Framework, its success depends on the future popularity of the Common Framework. There is a risk that these expectations will not be met because of competition from established portals, the inevitable lag for the Common Framework to become popular and the relatively small amount of budget allocated to developing the platform. TAPipedia will require support after CDAIS finishes if it is to be sustained and grow.

Conclusion 9. On sustaining the project approach and results and partnerships (EQ 4 and EQ 6)

- 18 The project is fostering partnerships at global and national level that have helped progress towards the achievement of the project's expected results and are the main vehicle for ensuring their continuation beyond the end of the project. Nevertheless, the project will hardly achieve its main result and conduct the transversal analysis within the project timeframe. Hence there is an imperative for the project to mobilize additional resources and extend the project lifespan.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. On modifying the project logframe: Agrinatura and FAO should revisit the project logframe in view of the Theory of Change developed based on evaluation findings

- 19 The project should adopt and use the developed Theory of Change adopting the modified Result 1 as its primary result (national and TAP partners promote and learn about capacity development for AIS through niche, national and global-level mechanisms). In this sense, the project should revisit its logframe in light of what is essential to carry out transversal learning. Priority should be given to implementing the niche partnership action plans.

Recommendation 2. On prioritizing transversal analysis: Agrinatura and FAO should plan for transversal analysis of the project at country and national level to be carried out before the end of the project

- 20 The project should engage with TAP and national partners as a matter of urgency to agree the validation questions that the final project report will answer. Answering these questions will require transversal analysis that the project has already identified as part of the project's monitoring, evaluation and learning system. Transversal analysis will be required at country level across niches and at global level across pilots. The project should consider and assess the possibility of requesting a six to eight-month extension to carry out the cross-country transversal learning as this can only be done once the country-level reports have been received. The final evaluation should be incorporated into the cross-country transversal learning as a mainly formative exercise to be carried out during the extension.

Recommendation 3. On partnering: Agrinatura and FAO, in collaboration with host organizations, should give greater priority to developing partnering capacity at organizational level so as to ease ongoing partnering difficulties

- 21 The project should give greater priority to developing partnering capacity at organizational level so as to ease ongoing partnering difficulties. The partnerships that the project is building are what will sustain the project approach in the medium-term, and represent an important asset. Capacity to collaborate is emerging as one of the most valued functional capacities in which progress is being made. The ability to partner is linked to the capacity to collaborate, but goes further.

Recommendation 4. On partnering with donors: Agrinatura and FAO should seek for the project, through its leadership role in the TAP Secretariat and existing network, to partner with donors (both members and non-members of TAP) to ensure the success of the piloting of the Common Framework in the eight countries and its broader adoption and use

- 22 The project, through its leadership role in the TAP Secretariat and existing network, should seek to partner with donors (both members and non-members of TAP) to ensure the success of the piloting of the Common Framework in the eight countries and its broader adoption and use. However, the project team needs to be careful not to oversell the Common Framework before the results from the pilots have been analysed. If the pilots establish that the Common Framework can be adapted and made to work then the next step is to establish whether the outcomes are qualitatively different or better than conventional capacity development. This could be the basis for follow-up research and partnering with other donors or initiatives.

Recommendation 5. On sustaining project approach and outcomes at national level: Agrinatura and FAO should prioritize building national-level ownership of the project approach and its emerging networks and outcomes in countries where host organization appropriation is an issue

- 23 The project should prioritize building national level ownership of the approach and emerging networks and outcomes, particularly in countries where host organization appropriation is an issue (Bangladesh and Ethiopia). This means proactively including the host organization in implementation as well as the analysis of pilot results including the cross-niche analysis. Some of the ownership and appropriation issues may be structural, for example it may be that organizations that promote value chains find the Common Framework more useful than a research organization. Identifying these differences is part of validating the Common Framework.

Recommendation 6. On incorporating a gender perspective: Agrinatura, FAO, host organizations and the TAP Secretariat should consider tracking progress on gender results and measure changes over time on this aspect

- 24 The project should consider tracking progress on gender results and measure changes over time on this aspect. To achieve this, the MEL system should be able to collect sex-disaggregated data and include gender-sensitive indicators. The information collected should be used to inform the country-level reports and the transversal learning. Based on these results, it should be considered to include a gender perspective into the Common Framework, including gender-specific tools in the common toolbox. A gender analysis seems to be particularly important to identify potential risks, benefits and impacts in order to be able to respond to women and men's specific needs and priorities.

1. Introduction

- 1 This document presents the results of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovations Systems (CDAIS) project managed by the Office of Evaluation (OED) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

1.1 Purpose of the evaluation

- 2 This Mid-term Evaluation was foreseen in the CDAIS project document and it is being conducted for both accountability and learning purposes. Therefore, it will serve as an input to improve project implementation and inform future decision-making by the project team and other stakeholders. For instance, the findings and lessons captured by the evaluation could also serve as evidence to leverage additional resources with potential funding partners to expand the implementation of the CDAIS approach.

1.2 Intended users

- 3 The main audience and intended uses of the Mid-term Evaluation are:

Primary audience	Intended use
Project Oversight Committee (POC) Project Management Team (PMT), including Country Management Teams and Country Steering Committees Implementing partners (National Counterparts)	To improve the implementation and make informed decisions on the way forward
The European Commission's Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (DEVCO)	To inform strategic investment decisions in the future
Other government counterparts in the eight pilot countries	For future planning in the agricultural sector
Secondary audience	
Agrinatura network	For strategic decision-making on future AIS interventions
Tropical Agriculture Platform ¹ (TAP) partners	For future decision-making on the TAP Action Plan as well as use and adaptation of the Common Framework concepts and principles
FAO technical departments, including participants of the Inter-departmental Working Group on capacity development	To improve ongoing and future capacity development interventions
Other national governments	To pilot the CDAIS strategy and approach in their countries
Other donors and organizations	To inform strategic investment decisions in favour of projects aimed at improving AIS and practices through capacity development

1.3 Scope and objective of the evaluation

- 4 The Mid-term Evaluation assessed the results achieved until June 2017, covering activities that were implemented thus far in all project components (expected results) and at both the global and national level. The Mid-term Evaluation also assessed the effectiveness of the project's governance mechanism along with the linkages and/or partnerships between the project and other major in-country and global initiatives.

¹ The TAP Platform is a multi-stakeholder platform established by the G20 and comprised of a coalition of national agricultural research, education and extension institutions, as well as the private sector, civil society and farmers organizations from G20 as well as developing countries, and the key regional and international fora, networks and agencies to improve efficiency and effectiveness of knowledge sharing and capacity development programmes to strengthen agricultural innovation systems in the tropics through new and existing mechanisms.

- 5 In terms of geographical coverage, activities in all eight participating countries were considered. Field missions for data collection purposes were conducted in four countries and remote interviews were organized in the other four (see section 1.5 on limitations)
- 6 The Mid-term Evaluation aimed at generating useful information that the primary audience could use to make decisions, take action or add to their knowledge base. In particular, it had the following objectives:
 - assess the relevance of the project strategy and quality of project design and implementation arrangements;
 - assess progress and gaps in achieving established outputs and outcomes, including any initial or preliminary results, and opportunities or risks for future implementation;
 - identify lessons and opportunities from project implementation and propose any corrective or opportunistic measures and/or adjustments to the implementation strategy, based on the evaluation findings.
- 7 In order to achieve these objectives, the Mid-term Evaluation addressed and was organized around five key criteria or areas of analysis (relevance, effectiveness, partnerships and coordination, normative values and sustainability), answering six key evaluation questions (EQ), presented in Box 1.

Box 1: Evaluation questions

Relevance

EQ 1: To what extent is the CDAIS project responding and filling the gaps in terms of the specific agricultural innovation and capacity development needs, demands and priorities of the eight pilot countries, as well as the TAP partners?

Effectiveness

EQ 2: What are the main outputs and results (intended and unintended) achieved thus far by the project?

Partnerships and coordination

EQ 3: Is the current operational modality and project governance structure, including the Agrinatura-FAO-national government partnership at country level, effective, particularly in terms of coordination, complementarity and decision-making processes?

EQ 4: To what extent is the project fostering partnerships at the global, regional and national levels? How are these partnerships influencing (positively and negatively) the achievement of the project's expected results?

Normative values

EQ 5: To what extent and how is the project integrating social issues (including gender), and environmental considerations in its design and throughout its implementation?

Sustainability

EQ 6: What are the prospects of sustaining the project's approach on capacity development and its results (expected and achieved thus far)?

1.4 Methodology

- 8 The Mid-term Evaluation adopted a results-focused approach and was conducted through an inclusive and transparent process. The evaluation reconstructed the project's Theory of Change (ToC) as the basis of analysis of the contributions made by the project to the expected results. The five key areas of analysis and related EQ (see Box 1 above) were further elaborated in an evaluation matrix, including sub-questions, judgement criteria, suggested indicators and data collection methods and sources (see Appendix 1).

- 9 To answer the EQ, the Mid-term Evaluation used diverse methods and tools and triangulation of information. In April 2017, the evaluators attended the Project Oversight Committee (POC) meeting in Rome and the Project Management Team (PMT) meeting in Uppsala. Both meetings served to collect relevant information and present the Mid-term Evaluation methodology to the project team. As a result of the discussions, the methodology was improved in line with the comments provided.
- 10 The Mid-term Evaluation collected information in all pilot countries, including in-field visits to Ethiopia, Honduras, Laos and Rwanda. The country selection for field visits was based on consultations with the project team, using the below criteria:
 - a. coverage of different Agrinatura focal organizations;
 - b. level of progress in the implementation of project activities (ensuring representation of countries where activities are more advanced and countries with a slower progress);
 - c. feasibility of travel; and
 - d. concurrence of Office of Evaluation (OED) evaluation missions (to avoid evaluation fatigue).
- 11 The Mid-term Evaluation used the following qualitative evaluation tools:
 - Desk review of over 150 project and other related documents (see Appendix 2 for the list of the most important documents).
 - 88 (face to face and remote) semi-structured interviews with key informants, stakeholders and project participants both in Europe and in the participating countries (see Appendix 3 for the list of interviewees). Face-to-face interviews were carried out in Ethiopia, Honduras, Laos and Rwanda. Phone and Skype interviews were carried out in Angola, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso and Guatemala. The interviews were guided by interview protocols (see Appendix 4 for the interview guidelines).
 - Eight focus group discussions in four countries with 63 participants and stakeholders involved in the project at the global and national level, including the PMT and focal points, National Innovation Facilitators (NIFs) and niche's stakeholders.²
 - One survey to Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) partners (46 focal points) using a questionnaire of 22 questions; not all respondents had to answer all questions (see Appendix 5 for survey). The survey yielded 22 responses from 18 organizations, with a 48 percent response rate (the list of organizations can be found in Appendix 3).
- 12 In order to answer the EQ on Relevance, the Mid-term Evaluation used the information collected through the review of European Union policies and strategies, FAO country programme frameworks and relevant documents and publications related to the project scope. In addition, the interviews with the European Commission in Brussels, European Union Delegations in the visited countries and FAO country offices provided valuable insights. Interviews with national project stakeholders were used to gather their views on the project's relevance to the national priorities and needs.
- 13 For Effectiveness, multiple tools were combined to answer the different sub-questions. Information on Result 1 was gathered through the review of the available documentation and interviews with the main partners involved under this component (TAP Secretariat) and the survey (TAP partners). Evidence on Result 2 was gathered through interviews with involved partners (national participating organizations, associations and stakeholders) and the exhaustive review of existing project documentation. Under Result 3, the evaluation examined the appropriateness of the plans and arrangements set up to implement the related activities, as well as early outcomes resulting from preparation. Evidence was collected through both the survey and the interviews with key informants. The aspect of capacity development was analysed under all results. Box 2 presents the approach followed for its assessment.

2 An innovation niche, or niche partnership, is defined as "a space where capacity development takes place around a specific innovation agenda" (TAP Common Framework, 2016).

Box 2: Assessing capacity development in the CDAIS Mid-term Evaluation

The CDAIS project centres on promoting capacity development for effective AIS, with a focus on strengthening functional capacities. With this in mind, the evaluation placed particular emphasis on assessing this aspect. The following paragraphs first introduce the concept of capacity development for effective AIS – from the CDAIS lens - and later present the approach used by the Mid-term Evaluation team to assess this aspect.

Understanding capacity development for AIS – Key concepts and definitions

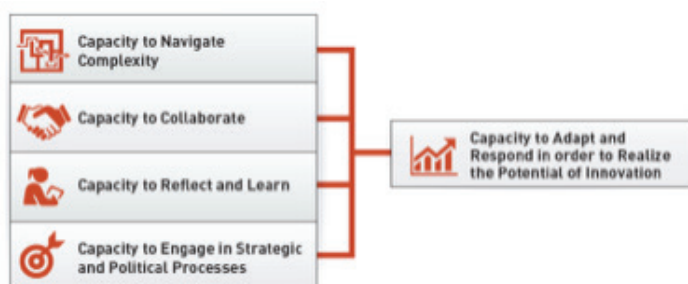
An agricultural innovation system (AIS)³ is “a network of actors or organizations, and individuals, together with supporting institutions and policies in the agricultural and related sectors that brings existing or new products, processes, and forms of organization into social and economic use.” (TAP Common Framework (2016)). **Capacity** is defined as “the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully” (OECD, 2006), while **capacity development (CD)** is understood as “the process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time.” (OECD 2006, 2008).

The approach followed by CDAIS, presented in the TAP Common Framework, combines concepts from AIS and systems thinking, and capacity development literature. The Common Framework can be understood as a set of heuristics to guide and pilot capacity development implementation.

Guided by the Common Framework, the project therefore considers the four elements of AIS (research and education; bridging institutions - partnerships and networks; business and enterprise; and the enabling environment- policies and informal institutions practices, behaviours and mindsets), and integrates them with the three dimensions of capacity development: individual, organizational and inter-organizational and enabling environment (or system).

While capacity development approaches in general identify both technical and functional capacities, CDAIS and the TAP Common Framework developed under it focus on strengthening four functional capacities for effective AIS, which all apply to the three capacity development dimensions (see Figure 1). In addition, the framework and therefore the CDAIS project propose a dual pathway approach, focusing first at the system level and second at the innovation niche level. An innovation niche, or niche partnership, is defined as “a space where CD takes place around a specific innovation agenda” (TAP Common Framework, 2016). Based on the definition above, a niche partnership can also be understood as an Agricultural Innovation System.

Figure 1: The 4 + 1 capacities



Source: TAP Common Framework, 2016

Evaluating capacity development for AIS

First, capacity development was analysed at the design and implementation stages of the project, and then in terms of the results achieved thus far by the project - at the individual, organizational and enabling environment levels (FAO, 2010). The approach used in this evaluation built on FAO's Capacity Development Framework, and the evaluation approach used for the “Evaluation of Capacity Development activities of CGIAR”. Overall, the approach included the following elements:

- a. initial scoping interviews with the project team to better understand the project's capacity development approach: at the planning stage of the evaluation and during the Project Oversight Committee meeting held in Rome from 19 to 21 April 2017;

3 The AIS concept has been developed out of several previous concepts such as “Agricultural Knowledge Systems” (that originated in the 1960s in scholarly work on agricultural advice and extension) and “Agricultural Knowledge and Information Systems” (that popped up in policy discourses at OECD and FAO during the 1970s). The latter has been redefined as “Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation systems”.

- b. mapping of the capacity development related activities under each project result at the different capacity development levels proposed by FAO's Capacity Development Framework;
- c. use of specific evaluation questions as part of the evaluation matrix to assess i) how capacity development aspects were incorporated during the design stage of the project; ii) the approach followed at country level to implement capacity development activities; and iii) the level of satisfaction of project partners and participants with the project capacity development activities.

- 14 Relevant information to answer the EQ on partnerships and coordination was collected through the survey, focus group discussions and interviews with project partners in the participating countries and at the global level. A desk review of secondary information also fed into the assessment. The analysis of the project's effectiveness was also used here.
- 15 Evidence for Normative Values was gathered through a desk review of project and other relevant documents as well as interviews with project stakeholders. Particular attention was devoted to ensure that women were consulted during the evaluation process (see Table 1).

Table 1: Interviewees by the Mid-term Evaluation

	Number of people	Women
Semi-structured interviews	88	26%
Focus group discussion	63	38%

- 16 At the end of each field visit, a debriefing session was carried out to validate preliminary findings at country level and gather complementary data to further support the analysis. At the end of the collection phase, a debriefing session took place (remotely) to validate the preliminary findings and triangulate evidence with the POC and PMT.
- 17 The evaluation report underwent an internal quality assurance process to ensure it met the United Nations Evaluation Group Norms and Standards,⁴ and the evaluation requirements of the Office of Evaluation (OED) as set in its evaluation manual. It also benefited from suggestions and comments from the CDAIS project team and main partners, including the CDAIS Project Oversight Committee, TAP Steering Committee members, and Project Coordination Team and stakeholders in the participating countries.

1.5 Limitations

- 18 The Mid-term Evaluation faced the following limitations:
- Coverage of countries through field visits: the available evaluation budget did not allow for the team to visit all pilot countries for data collection purposes. The evaluators therefore visited four out of the eight pilot countries. While the key actors were interviewed by phone in the other four countries, at the end, the Mid-term Evaluation draws more heavily on the four countries where the evaluators were able to go to the field and talk to people face-to-face.
 - The limited implementation of project activities to date was also a limitation for the evaluation, in particular in relation to Result 3. Full implementation of the niche action plans had not begun meaning that most final beneficiaries had not been reached by the project yet. Therefore, the evaluators based their description and analysis in a limited amount of activities.

1.6 Structure of the Report

- 19 After this introductory chapter, Chapter 2 provides the context and the theory of Change; Chapter 3 provides the key findings of the evaluation questions; and Chapter 4 illustrates the final conclusions and recommendations.

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

2. Context of the project/programme

2.1 Context of the project

- 20 The CDAIS project was jointly developed and is currently being implemented by Agrinatura-European Economic Interest Grouping (EEIG) and FAO. It was conceived to support the implementation of the TAP action plan,⁵ a G20 Initiative on improving the global coherence of capacity development for agricultural innovation. As TAP partners, and in line with their visions, Agrinatura and FAO collaborate towards a coherent approach to strengthening AIS. As such, the project aims at fostering more demand-driven and effective agricultural research and development investments, and capacity development interventions that better respond to specific needs of local and national stakeholders.
- 21 The four-year project started in January 2015 and is expected to end in December 2018. It has a budget of EUR 13 356 851, including a EUR 12 000 000 grant from the European Union and combined contributions from FAO and Agrinatura-EEIG of EUR 1 356 851. It includes activities at a global level as well as in eight pilot countries around the world (Angola, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Laos and Rwanda).
- 22 Its overall objective is to promote AIS that are efficient and sustainable in meeting the demands of farmers, agri-business and consumers. Its specific objective is to establish a global partnership on capacity development in AIS on a sustainable footing, with needs assessed and approaches validated in the pilot countries. To achieve the stated objectives, the project envisaged activities both at the global level (Result 1), and at the national and sub-national level in eight countries (Results 2 and 3). The expected results and outputs per result, as stated in the project's logical framework, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Project's expected results and main achievements

Expected Results	Main achievements
<p>Expected Result 1: An effective global mechanism is established to promote, coordinate and evaluate capacity development approaches to strengthen Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output 1. The coordination and harmonization of global efforts on capacity development for AIS through TAP mechanisms. • Output 2. The analysis, synthesis and documentation of the diversity of capacity development approaches for development, monitoring and evaluation of AIS. • Output 3. The development of a common framework and tools for AIS capacity development assessment, design and monitoring and evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAP Common Framework developed, approved by TAP partners, published in three languages and promoted at various international events. • TAPipedia alpha version fully functional and beta version under development. • TAP further developed as a dynamic platform, managed by the Secretariat and overseen by the Steering Committee and the Partners Assembly. • One F2F partner meeting and Assembly organized in January 2016 (for the first time dialogue between TAP partners and CDAIS country teams). • One virtual Partner Assembly organized in December 2016 to engage partners.
<p>Expected Result 2: Capacity development needs and existing provision for strengthening AIS in eight pilot countries are defined accurately through inclusive country-led multi-stakeholder processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output 1. The development of a shared vision of capacity development for AIS among partners in eight countries. • Output 2. Country-led assessments and development of AIS capacity development action plans available in eight pilot countries. • Output 3. The establishment/strengthening of mechanism/platform for advocacy, dialogue and action on AIS capacity development in eight countries. • Output 4. Lessons learned concerning methods for assessment, and how these support innovation processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host organizations identified in each pilot country. • Country project managers recruited and coordinators nominated in all eight countries. • Inception workshops held in all eight countries. • Modules on training of facilitators to conduct capacity needs assessment developed. • Facilitators identified and trained. • Completion of scoping studies (AIS assessments) in eight countries. • Marketplaces to facilitate capacity development partnerships organized in four countries. • Capacities and capacity development needs assessed/being assessed in selected innovation partnerships in eight countries.

5 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bc455e.pdf>

<p>Expected Result 3: Capacity Development interventions in AIS within eight pilot countries are demand-driven and efficient, integrating the development of individual competencies, organizational capacities and enabling policies around priority themes and value chains.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Output 1. Improved capacity for strengthening capacity in AIS, by key selected organizations and individuals in each country ("training of trainers" principle). • Output 2. Improved capacity for joint innovation by selected local/national innovation partnerships (such as value chains for example). • Output 3. Improved capacity for innovation partnership by key stakeholder organizations. • Output 4. Review, analysis, documentation, synthesis and exchange of lessons learned in the eight pilot countries at global level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country project managers trained on the concepts and practice of facilitating innovation processes. • Niche partnerships identified in all eight countries and action plans developed in most. • Coaching plan developed and currently being validated in the countries. • 92 facilitators in eight countries trained as national innovation facilitators.
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23 In addition, the project identified its main target groups and final beneficiaries:

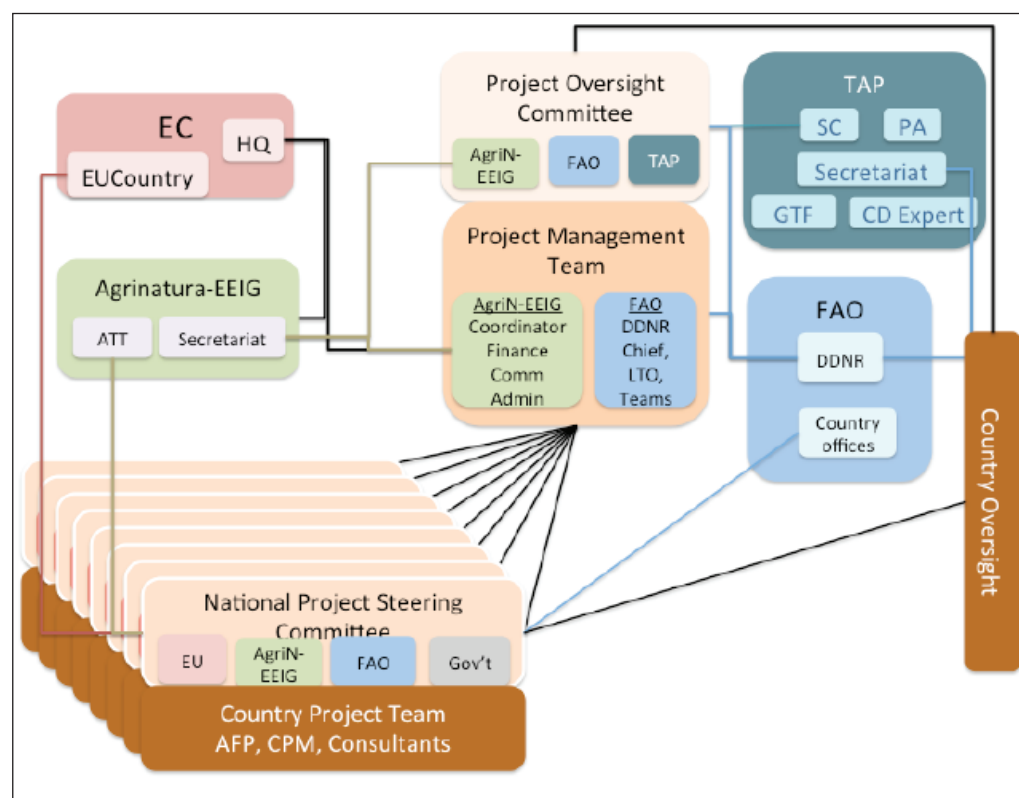
- Target groups
 - 44 International and National Agricultural Research and Innovation Organizations (TAP partners).
 - National Agricultural Research and Innovation Organizations and stakeholder groups in the pilot countries.
 - Core group of National Innovation Facilitators selected in the pilot countries.
 - Members of selected innovation partnerships in the pilot countries.
- Final beneficiaries
 - Smallholder farmers, agricultural food-related enterprises and consumers in the pilot countries.
 - Smallholder farmers, agricultural food-related enterprises and consumers in countries where TAP partners are active.

2.1.1 CDAIS governance structure and implementation arrangements

- 24 The overall project is governed by the POC consisting of two Agrinatura-EEIG and two FAO representatives in addition to the TAP Chair. The project coordinator is an *ex officio* member of the POC. Agrinatura-EEIG is the grantee and Coordinator of the project with FAO as its main implementing partner, through its Research and Extension Division (ADGR). FAO is also a main beneficiary of the action, particularly of activities related to Result 1. FAO leads the implementation of activities under Result 1. The implementation of activities for Result 2 and 3 are led by Agrinatura with FAO's support. The Project Management Team comprises the Agrinatura-EEIG Coordinating Organization (International Centre for Development Oriented Research in Agriculture - ICRA), the FAO Research and Extension Division (AGDR), the Agrinatura-EEIG Financial Controller (Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement - CIRAD).
- 25 At a global level (Result 1), the TAP Secretariat and the TAP Global Task Force are responsible for convening and overseeing the TAP Expert Group responsible for the development of the Common Framework on capacity development for AIS, that includes development of concepts, synthesis of methods for needs assessment and development of implementation guidelines. The TAP Partners' Assembly guides the development of the Platform, with a smaller TAP Steering Committee to oversee the Platform activities and advocate at international level for the common framework.
- 26 At a national level (Results 2 and 3), the activities are implemented by the Agrinatura-EEIG focal organization and the FAO Country Office. The work is closely coordinated with the national government counterpart organization for example in the appointment of a National Project Coordinator (NPC) and in the establishment of the National Project

Steering Committees. In each country, a country project manager was hired by the FAO Country Office, and a National Project Oversight Committee (NPOC) was established. The National Project Oversight Committee is chaired by the National Project Coordinator and consists of the FAO Country Representative, designated Agrinatura-EEIG Focal Person, and a representative of the European Commission country delegation. The National Project Oversight Committee works in close coordination with the Project Management Team and is responsible for: i) ensuring the Project speaks with one voice, avoiding conflicting messages to stakeholders, and disconnected implementation of activities; and ii) coordinating all activities and ensuring integration with ongoing activities, including those of the European Union. Figure 2 summarizes the project's governance mechanism.

Figure 2: Governance mechanism for CDAIS project



Source: CDAIS project governance, communication and management document⁶

- 27 Table 3 presents the Agrinatura focal organization, national counterpart and selected innovation partnerships or niches. The effectiveness of this structure and project implementation arrangements is analysed in section 3.3 (Partnerships and Coordinations).

Table 3: Implementing organizations and selected innovation niches/value chains

Country	Agrinatura Focal Organization	National Counterpart	Prioritized innovation partnerships/ niches
Angola	Instituto Superior de Agronomia, Universidade de Lisboa – ISA/Ulisboa	Instituto de Investigação Agronómica (IIA)	Production and commercialization of quality seeds, rice improvement and associations for rural entrepreneurship. ⁷
Bangladesh	Natural Resources Institute (NRI)	Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC)	Mango, pineapple, tomato, poultry, tilapia and cat fish.

⁶ FAO DDNR division was renamed to AGDR in January 2016.

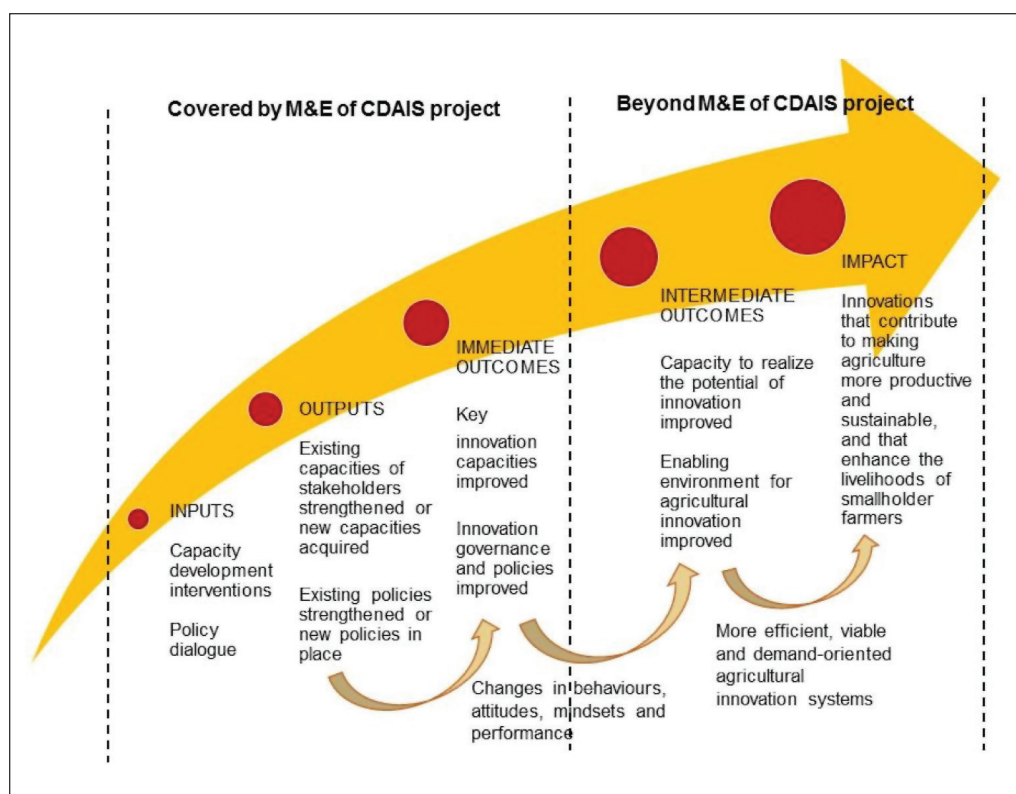
⁷ The innovation partnership of “Producer associations for vegetables, peanuts and cassava” did not continue after the capacity needs assessments were conducted.

Burkina Faso	Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD)	Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, de la Recherche Scientifique et de l'Innovation (MESRSI)	Sunflower, organic certification, agricultural advisory services provided by farmers' organizations to their members, ownership of land charter by municipalities, small innovative family enterprises in agri-food processing
Ethiopia	International Centre for development oriented Research and Agriculture (ICRA)	Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR)	Demand stimulation for pastured milk, livestock feed safety and quality, malt barley seed system, community seed production system, chickpea
Guatemala	International Development Cooperation Agency (AICS)	Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Alimentación (MAGA)	Avocado: increased productivity through genetic diversification, productive technification and producer organizations. Beans: increase production of bio-fortified variety ICTA Chortí. Cocoa: improvement of production and transformation processes, and organizational capacities. Honey: strengthening of producer's entrepreneurship capacities to optimize production and commercialization.
Honduras	International Development Cooperation Agency (AICS)	Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería (SAG)	Cocoa: improved post-harvesting management. Potatoes: integrated pest management (Paratiroza cockerelli). Beans: Improved organizational capacities for the value chain. Coffee: commercialization of specialised coffee
Laos	Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD)	National Agriculture and Forestry Research Institute (NAFRI)	Integrated rice and aquaculture system, better quality process and marketing strategies for organic vegetables, enhance livestock productivity (cattle and pigs).
Rwanda	Natural Resources Institute (NRI)	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI)	Fruits, agroforestry products, medicinal plants, cassava value chain, dairy value chain development through CPC.

2.2 CDAIS theory of change

Finding 1. The reworked CDAIS ToC suggests a modified Result 1 for the project that integrates Results 2 and 3 as progress indicators.

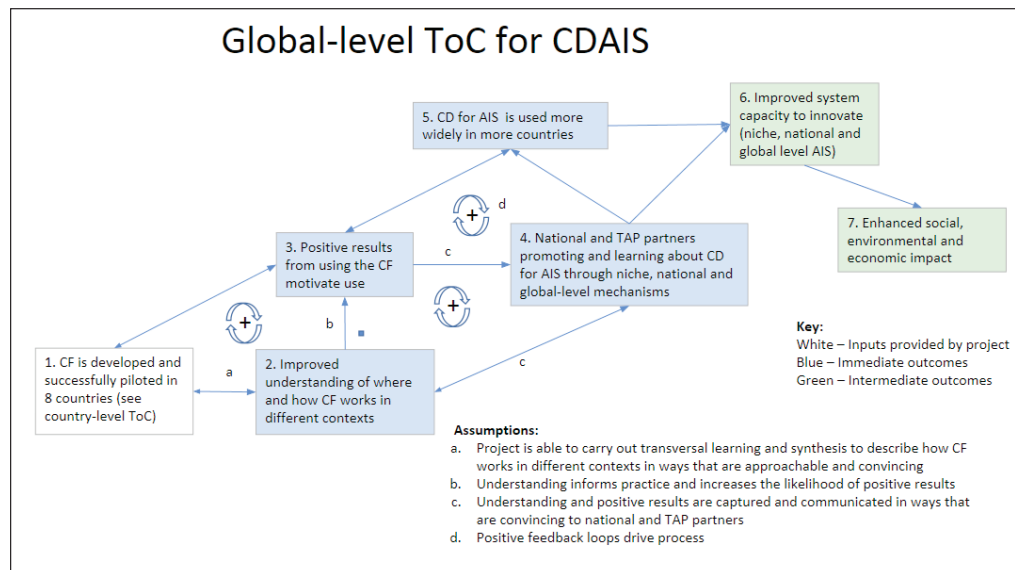
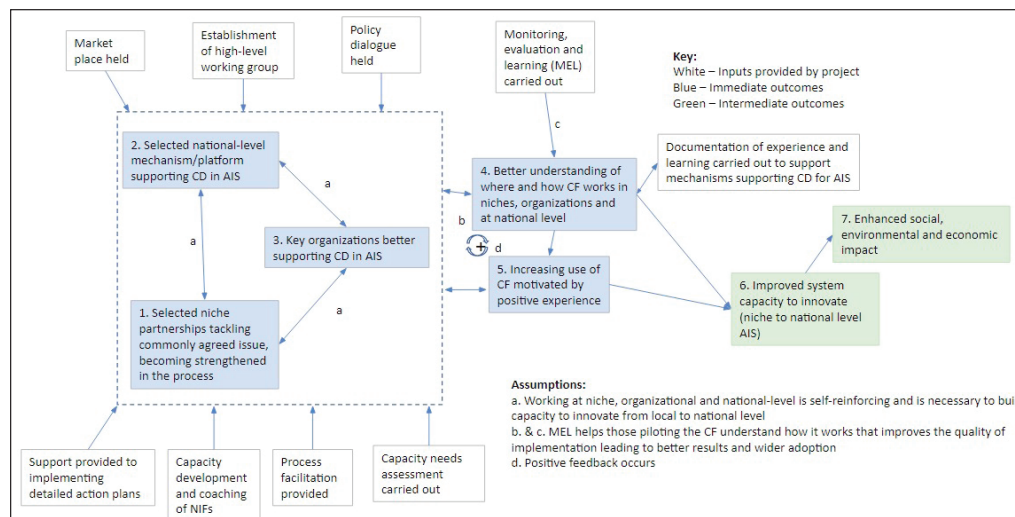
- 28 This section is presented here for the sake of clarity as it underpins all the analysis shown in the following sections. Nevertheless, the reader should be aware that the reworked Theory of Change presented here is based on the Mid-term Evaluation findings and the evaluators' analysis. The Mid-term Evaluation reconstructed the CDAIS Theory of Change in collaboration with CDAIS staff. The aim was to (i) provide a simple model to clarify what had started to happen on the ground; and (ii) help focusing on the main impact pathway by suggesting modifications to the project's logframe (see the following section for a more comprehensive analysis).
- 29 The project proposal did not include a Theory of Change but said that a workshop would be held between Agrinatura-EEIG and FAO to develop one as well as a monitoring, evaluation and learning plan. The subsequently developed MEL plan included an impact pathway shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Impact pathway of CDAIS project⁸

Source: CDAIS monitoring and evaluation system document

- 30 While sharing common features with a Theory of Change, the project impact pathway does not make explicit strategies and causal assumptions by which the outputs will lead to outcomes and primary impacts. It shows a partial listing of inputs, outputs, outcomes, primary impacts and secondary impacts connected by an arrow and as such is not particularly insightful or useful.
- 31 The Mid-term Evaluation worked with CDAIS staff to develop a Theory of Change at the beginning of the evaluation, shown in Appendix 6. The exercise was useful in making it clear that the project needs a simpler Theory of Change that communicates more clearly the causal thinking behind the project design and implementation.
- 32 Based on findings, the evaluators subsequently simplified the Theory of Change by breaking it into two parts: (i) a global-level Theory of Change showing how results of piloting the TAP Common Framework in eight countries is expected to have an impact (see Figure 4); and (ii) a Theory of Change at country level (see Figure 5). Both causal models reflect what the Mid-term Evaluation found was starting to happen on the ground to guide modifications that the project may wish to make to its logframe. The description of the models is provided hereafter [the numbers refer to the boxes in the ToC].

⁸ From CDAIS Guidelines for PMEL document (070217).

Figure 4: Theory of Change at global-level**Figure 5:** Theory of Change at country-level

- 33 The intermediate outcome that the Theory of Change (both levels) aim at is “improved system capacity to innovate” at niche, national and global-level AIS [6]. The Common Framework assumes that improved system capacity to innovate comes about when functional capacities are built in AIS, which is what the project is trying to do at different levels, from niche to global. It also assumes that improved capacity to innovate will achieve impact in terms of enhanced livelihoods of small farmers. This assumption, while justifiable in the literature, would need to be validated by future research which is outside the scope of this project. The evaluation understands that the two intermediate outcomes in the original Theory of Change (see Appendix 6, improved enabling environment for AIS; and, improved national capacity to innovate and realize the potential of AIS) are indicators of achievement of the “capacity to innovate” intermediate outcome in Figures 4 and 5.
- 34 The global-level Theory of Change shows that the project’s main impact pathway relates to Result 1 (an effective global mechanism for CDAIS) as well to the establishment of national mechanisms. The Theory of Change puts the global and national levels together because it considers that the main purpose of the global mechanism is to support country-level efforts and these efforts will reinforce global adoption.
- 35 The Theory of Change shows that the main pathway to improved system capacity to innovate [6] is through improved understanding where and how the Common Framework works in different contexts [2] together with positive results [3] from piloting the Common

Framework in the eight countries [1]. An important assumption [a] is that the project in each country is able to carry out learning and synthesis such that it informs and improves practice to increase the chance of positive results [b]. Positive results build recognition and motivation. Another assumption is that national and TAP partners will promote and use the Common Framework [4] if understanding and positive results are communicated in ways that are sufficiently convincing and targeted to convince them to do so [c]. This leads to the Common Framework being used in the countries in which TAP partners work, beyond the original eight, as well as broader use of the Common Framework in the eight [5]. Reinforcing feedback loops drive the process, for example, better understanding of where and how the Common Framework works leading to better practice, results, wider use of Common Framework, better understanding, and so on.

- 36 The final assumption is that strengthening system capacity to innovate will lead to enhanced social, environmental and economic impacts. The causal pathways to these impacts will be long. For example, if the animal feed quality niche partnership in Ethiopia can establish a regulatory framework then this could improve the market perception of Ethiopian milk production that in turn could increase the income of numerous small farmers. However, this impact, and other impacts possible from other project activities, will not occur within the lifespan of the project. Hence, in the opinion of the evaluators, the quantitative target that the niche partnerships benefit 30 000 smallholder farmers and/or agro-enterprises is more related to the impact level in the logframe.
- 37 The country level Theory of Change expands on the first box in the global Theory of Change diagram [1]. It shows the three levels of engagement being pursued in each country to test the Common Framework [1, 2 and 3]. The white boxes show the inputs the project is providing as part of the piloting. As with the global-level Theory of Change, self-reinforcing feedback involving learning on how and where to use the Common Framework, improvements in practice, positive results and greater use [4 and 5] lead to improved system capacity to innovate [6]. A key assumption is that monitoring, evaluation and learning helps with understanding. Country pilots produce outputs to allow cross-country analysis of interest to TAP and national mechanisms/platforms.
- 38 Niche partnerships are a key concept in the project's Theory of Change. The evaluation understands a niche, or niche partnership, to be an approximation to an agricultural innovation system (see Box 2 for specific definition) that the project identifies to support with functional capacity development. Most niche partnerships chosen by the project have been value chains (see Table 3 in section 2.1 for list of selected niches). However, others are a group of individuals and organizations wishing to make a positive change, for example establishing a regulatory framework for animal feed quality.

3. Evaluation questions: key findings

39 This section presents the main evaluation findings for each specific evaluation question. As explained, these findings are based on a desk review of project, TAP and other relevant documents; interviews (face-to-face and remote) with FAO both at country and headquarters, Agrinatura focal points, CDAIS coordination, national project coordinators and country project managers, TAP Secretariat, European Union both at country and headquarters, and actors of the AIS in the eight pilot countries (including four in-country visits) and; a survey of the TAP partners (focal points).

3.1 Relevance

EQ 1: To what extent is the CDAIS project responding and filling the gaps in terms of the specific agricultural innovation and capacity development needs, demands and priorities of the eight pilot countries, as well as the TAP partners?

EQ 1.1: To what extent is the TAP Common Framework and the project aligned and coherent with the European Commission's policies and mechanisms at global and country level?

Finding 2. The project is well aligned with the national policies of participating countries. Its approach aims to enhance country ownership through a bottom-up, country-driven and participatory process to achieve more sustainable results. Its focus on functional capacities are highly relevant to the needs and priorities of targeted AIS. The project is aligned with effective development cooperation and good capacity development practices and it is seen as an attempt to fill capacity development gaps that are not usually addressed by other actors (e.g. donors). It is also well aligned and coherent with the main European Union strategies but the involvement of the European Union services during the implementation has been limited, including at country level.

40 Innovation is a broad concept. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines it as the implementation of new or significantly improved products (goods or services), or process, a new marketing method, or a new organizational method in business practices, workplace organization or external relations. This implies that innovation activities are all scientific, technological, organizational, financial and commercial steps which actually, or are intended to, lead to the implementation of innovations. The project embraces the broader innovation systems thinking that puts the focus on the interaction between different stakeholders in the innovation process

41 Considering the definition of AIS provided in Box 2, the evaluation understands the AIS concept as an overarching framework that links (i) research and education; (ii) bridging institutions; (iii) business and enterprise; and (iv) the enabling environment to innovation. In this sense, the concept is not used by the project as a fixed and unchangeable definition or *modus operandi*. It is instead used to explain about interaction, collective action, co-creation and generation of knowledge, how knowledge flows take place and how these processes can be strengthened (see a more detailed analysis of the Theory of Change in Section 4.2).

42 The international community's understanding of the role of knowledge sharing and learning in developing sustainable capacity has evolved considerably over the course of the past two decades as highlighted in the TAP Concept Paper⁹ discussed at the G20 Conference on Agricultural Research for Development. There is a common perception of a need for change to increase effectiveness of approaches to build capacity in line with international good practices emerging from the Paris Declaration,¹⁰ the Accra Agenda for

9 <http://www.agropolis.org/pdf/g20/session3/Concept-Paper-for-G20%20Tropical-Agriculture-Platform.pdf>

10 <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/41/34428351.pdf>

Action¹¹ and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.¹² The project is clearly an attempt to advance in this direction.

- 43 The European Commission, among others, has recognized the importance of strengthening innovation systems to enable a greater development impact (Guidelines on Agricultural Research for Development, 2008). A reflection paper published in 2012¹³ highlighted that innovation is an important challenge for agriculture, but little is known about the performance of the agricultural knowledge and innovation systems. In 2007, it was already indicated that the mounting challenges facing the agri-food and rural sectors call for a review of the links between knowledge production and its use to foster innovation. Research could play a stronger role if different actors (farmers, advisory services, consumers, private sector, civil society, policymakers) were better integrated into actual agenda setting and became part of the research process through acting together as innovative networks.
- 44 In 2011, the European Union recognized that capacity development should be more than technical assistance and training by endorsing OECD's Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. The same year, the Agenda for Change (basis for the European Union's development cooperation policy) highlighted that increasing impact was only possible if capacity was installed in the partner countries and referred to the importance of supporting capacity to carry out and use the results of research. In the same line, the European Commission's Toolkit for Capacity Development (2010)¹⁴ highlights that capacity development can entail change of knowledge, skills, work processes, tools, systems, authority patterns, management style, etc. It also points out that capacity development takes place in people or organizations and that it cannot be forced upon them. As a logical consequence, development partners can support capacity development processes, but they cannot manage the actual capacity development of others. The CDAIS project is well aligned with the implications of the toolkit (see Box 3).

Box 3: Current approach to capacity development (2010)

- Capacity development must be owned by those who develop their capacity — otherwise it simply does not happen.
- External partners cannot design and implement capacity development. They can support capacity development processes or help create the right external incentives for capacity development processes.
- Those setting out to develop their capacity must be leading and driving assessment and formulation processes aiming at capacity development to such a degree that their ownership and commitment remains intact or even boosted.
- Implementation of capacity development processes must be organized so that leadership and ownership is strongly in the hands of those who develop their capacity.

Source: European Commission's toolkit for capacity development (2010)

- 45 During the interviews, it was confirmed that the European Commission considers the project of high "political" importance, recognizing the added value of the TAP as a facilitation mechanism that could enable institutions to act collectively in an agile and efficient way in order to: (i) contribute to sustainable changes in the agricultural capacities of target countries; (ii) complement existing capacity development initiatives by providing mechanisms for more harmonized action and support; and (iii) lead to greater transparency and mutual accountability. Therefore, the European Commission does not see the project as a "typical" one-off capacity development intervention but rather as a strategic support to strengthen the role of the TAP.
- 46 The project is almost the only support existing for the TAP. It is therefore not surprising that the majority (73 percent) of the respondents to the survey (16 out of 22) believe that the project is either very (14 percent) or quite (59 percent) effective in supporting the

11 <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/11/41/34428351.pdf>

12 http://www.aideffectiveness.org/busanhlf4/images/stories/hlf4/OUTCOME_DOCUMENT_-_FINAL_EN.pdf

13 EU SCAR (2012), Agricultural knowledge and innovation systems in transition – a reflection paper (Brussels) can be consulted at: http://ec.europa.eu/research/bioeconomy/pdf/ki3211999enc_002.pdf

14 https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/guidelines-toolkit-capacity-development-2010_en.pdf

implementation of the TAP action plan. Only one thought that it is marginally effective (5 percent) and two that it is not effective at all (9 percent). Moreover, 13 respondents (60 percent) believe that the project has contributed to strengthen the TAP as a multilateral dynamic facilitation mechanism in terms of both coherence and impact (18 percent), with coherence accounting for 32 percent) and impact 9 percent). Only one respondent (5 percent) thought that it has not contributed.

- 47 Similarly, the majority of the interviewees (16 out of 22) consider that the project is a useful mechanism for developing and testing approaches to deliver capacity development in AIS. In general, there is agreement that the project activities and outputs are relevant for achieving the expected results. However, there were some concerns about the effectiveness of using a “project mechanism” to deliver some elements of the TAP action plan such as TAPipedia¹⁵ (a capacity development portal developed by the project), advocacy and policy dialogue.
- 48 European Union delegations in the eight pilot countries were not involved in the project design. The project is centrally managed by the European Commission headquarters in Brussels and sometimes it is seen by the European Union delegation’s as additional work “imposed from headquarters” that is not fully aligned with their current priorities (e.g. nutrition in Laos, food security in Honduras, family farming¹⁶ in Guatemala, etc.), even though the CDAIS project through its intervention strategy focused on innovation niches that could ultimately contribute to these priorities.
- 49 As foreseen¹⁷, the European Union delegations in all countries joined the national project steering mechanisms but their ownership remains limited. There are cases in which the European Union has not attended these meetings (e.g. Ethiopia), coordination with other actions has not been systematically ensured and synergies have not been purposefully sought. This is partly attributed to the structural difficulties related to the European Union coordination mechanisms but, in some cases, also to a less proactive attitude of the project team in the countries (e.g. to clearly explain the logic behind the project and its purpose).

EQ 1.2: To what extent is the TAP Common Framework and the project aligned and coherent with FAO policies and strategies at global and country level?

Finding 3. By strengthening capacities in the countries, the project is considered a crucial contribution to increasing the impact of FAO’s portfolios. Therefore, the project is well aligned and coherent with FAO and national priorities and strategies, in particular with FAO’s decision to host the TAP Secretariat.

- 50 The project is aligned with FAO’s second Strategic Objective (SO), “Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner.” It particularly contributes to the achievement of Output 2.1.3, “Organizational and institutional capacities of public and private institutions, organizations and networks are strengthened to support innovation and the transition towards more sustainable agricultural production systems.”
- 51 The project also contributes to FAO’s technical support to promote technology transfer and build capacity. Capacity development is at the heart of FAO’s mandate and, according to its Corporate Strategy on capacity development,¹⁸ Member Countries lead and manage their own development process, while FAO supports them in this endeavour by strengthening their capacities to achieve their own goals in food security, nutrition and agricultural development. This core function involves taking account of three key dimensions: the enabling environment, specific institutions and individuals, with all three dimensions addressed by the project.

¹⁵ www.tapipedia.org

¹⁶ Family farming is a means of organizing agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production which is managed and operated by a family and is predominantly reliant on family labour. Family farmers hold the unique potential to move towards more productive and sustainable food systems if policy environments support them in this path. Source: <http://www.fao.org/family-farming/background/en/>

¹⁷ See GCP/GLO/626/EC, Annex I. Description of the action.

¹⁸ www.fao.org/3/a-k8908e.pdf

- 52 Hosting the TAP Secretariat, FAO has a key position for developing, disseminating and validating the Common Framework and for bringing together a wide range of stakeholders to support it. The contribution of the project to this objective is quite obvious: as mentioned above, it is almost the only support currently existing for the TAP (in addition to the TAP partners' own contributions). The development and validation of the Common Framework by the project responds to TAP expectations of what the project should be doing (see EQ 2.1).
- 53 The Mid-term Evaluation found that the project is an important element of FAO's country portfolios, confirmed by most country offices. In general, the project is seen as a transversal intervention that contributes to improving the basis for a larger impact of the rest of the projects implemented by the country offices. In this sense, it is considered to be a crucial contribution to the Country Programming Frameworks. For example, its contribution to the SOs 2, 3 and 4 was mentioned in Honduras. There are some concerns though about the project adaptation to the national context. This is mostly related to the fact that the country offices were not sufficiently involved in the design and the implementation agreements were mostly discussed after the project was launched. The project developed national project documents for each country which, to some extent, allowed an adaptation to the specific country context. However, the requirement to pilot the Common Framework in a comparable manner across countries limited the degree to which the project design could be adapted on the ground (also see EQ 6).

3.2 Effectiveness

EQ 2: What are the main outputs and results (intended and unintended) achieved thus far by the project?

EQ 2.1: A global partnership on capacity development in AIS has been established (result 1)

Finding 4. The project has made good progress towards Result 1. It has developed the Common Framework, as the basis of the TAP and has become clearer in the importance of adapting and piloting the Common Framework to the future of TAP as a global partnership on capacity development in AIS. The project has launched TAPedia as a capacity development portal in support of the Common Framework and TAP. At least two donors are interested in funding capacity development for AIS projects in four other countries.

- 54 The project has strengthened TAP by providing support to the TAP Secretariat and Steering Committee. The survey of the TAP partners found that 77 percent of respondents¹⁹ were very or sufficiently satisfied with the level of information being provided by the TAP Secretariat and that a similar majority thought that the project is effective in supporting the implementation of the TAP action plan. As one respondent said "It [the project] was designed (partly) to support the TAP action plan and is almost the only support existing for the TAP action plan."
- 55 A major output of the project has been the development of the TAP Common Framework in an extensive consultation process. The project commissioned four experts who worked with the TAP Expert Group as advisors to develop the Common Framework. TAP partners approved the framework in January 2016. The project produced a four-page flyer, a 14-page synthesis document, a 78-page guidance document and a 75-page background document, all to a high standard. The project has also produced and is using a NIF training package and has customized generic capacity assessment tools, which also have the potential to become global public goods.
- 56 There is some evidence that the collective effort involved in developing the Common Framework helped strengthen TAP. As one respondent in the survey said: "Development of the CF has been a very interactive process involving many partners. No single organization had all the answers and so the development of the framework was a useful team-building and learning exercise for all."

19 There were one or more responses from 17 out of the 44 TAP organizations, or 38%. There were 20 responses in total.

Box 4: Essential components of the Common Framework²⁰

The Common Framework consists of the idea that:

- Capacity development should happen across three interdependent levels (individual, organizational and the enabling environment).
- Capacity development depends on developing four so-called functional capacities:
 - i. capacity to navigate complexity
 - ii. capacity to collaborate
 - iii. capacity to reflect and learn
 - iv. capacity to engage in strategic and political processes
- Work to strengthen capacity should occur at niche level and system level in the so-called dual approach.
- Developing capacity should be carried out in five participatory steps:
 - i. galvanizing commitment
 - ii. visioning
 - iii. capacity needs assessment
 - iv. capacity development strategy
 - v. implementation

- 57 While the Common Framework provides an annotated list of practical tools, it does not provide guidance on what tools to use in which context. The case for using the Common Framework as an approach is largely normative, drawing on the literature and experience of those involved in developing it. The project proposal foresaw the need to test the Common Framework in practice and build understanding and evidence of whether it works, how and where. TAP partners agree that validating the Common Framework is important. As one respondent said: "The CF approach is very logical and thorough. However, it needs to be proven in practice that the approach achieves the desired objectives". Another respondent has a complementary view: "The challenge as I see it is that the approach is so broad that it is unwieldy and operationally difficult." Other TAP respondents talk about the need for the project to validate the Common Framework, implying that the project needs to carry out action research to learn how best to operationalize it in different contexts. The POC supports the idea that the project is in part an action research endeavour.²¹
- 58 At global level, there has been success in finding donors to fund CDAIS projects in other countries. FAO is in negotiations with the Italian Government to fund El Salvador, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to fund Nicaragua, Peru and Zambia for approximately USD 800 000 in each country over three years. FAO would contribute with USD 200 000. Planned activities include capacity needs assessments and capacity development interventions as well as contributing to knowledge sharing through TAPipedia. The projects will apply CDAIS learning and tools within existing projects in the respective countries. FAO has had less success in partnering with other donors to build on CDAIS work in the existing eight pilot countries. In line with the project's country level Theory of Change, more time might be required to collect positive experiences in using the Common Framework and thus leverage additional support at country level.
- 59 TAPipedia is conceived as a global information system for capacity development that also helps explain the Common Framework to potential users. As such, it is a main project output. The concept has received support in the G20 Food Security and Nutrition Framework elaborated in 2015 as "the global information system for innovation outputs, success stories, socioeconomic impacts, lessons learned, and analyses of impacts to promote information on innovative approaches in agricultural research and extension".²²
- 60 The project has deployed TAPipedia alpha hosted at www.tapipedia.org and has developed a business plan for the beta version. The business plan²³ carried out a competition analysis that compares TAPipedia alpha against 14 portals that provide capacity development resources. It also carried out a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT

20 Based on the Common Framework Flyer

21 See notes of the meeting of the evaluators with the POC in April 2017 that records a plea to evaluate the project in part as an experiment.

22 TAPipedia Business Plan - For Beta Version. October 03, 2016.

23 TAPipedia Business Plan - For Beta Version. October 03, 2016.

analysis. The business plan concludes that TAPipedia has a unique value proposition in “differing from existing capacity development websites and portals since it aims to build on top of them a meta service that will interconnect these resources,” and in helping with “the operationalization and implementation of the TAP Common Framework, by providing an online, interactive version of the Common Framework and its guidelines.” The business plan envisages a budget of USD 52 000 on top of USD 22 000 already spent. TAP partners are currently developing a new Action Plan for 2018-2021, in which maintenance and possible expansion is included as one of five results.

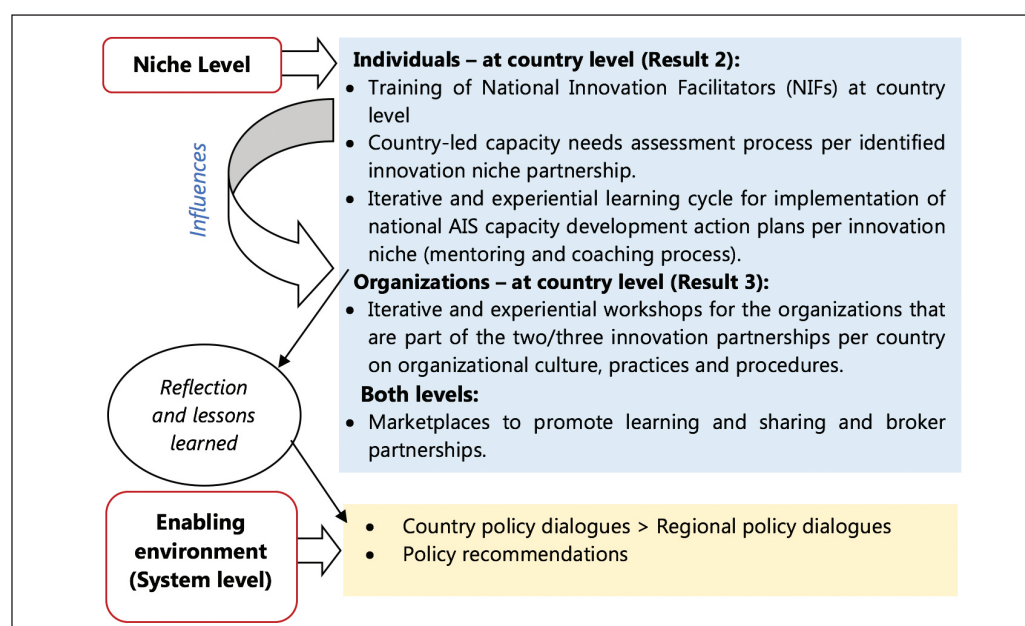
- 61 While identifying strengths and opportunities, the SWOT analysis identifies a number of weaknesses that the Mid-term Evaluation consider will be hard to overcome given the competition that exists for users. The weaknesses relate to low registration, engagement, lack of agreements with TAP partners for content creation and interlinking, and low user rate. A preliminary web analytics exercise carried out by the project team for 2017 shows that TAPipedia was visited by 497 users on the first quarter of the year and 604 users in the second quarter.
- 62 More than half of the respondents to the TAP survey (11 out of 21) thought that TAPipedia is an effective tool for sharing information about capacity development in AIS. However, eight did not know if it was effective and two were skeptical about such platforms working in practice, citing competition with others as an issue and saying that the portal was not sufficiently interactive.

EQ 2.2: Capacity development needs and existing provision for strengthening AIS have been defined in all pilot countries (Result 2)

Finding 5. The project has contributed to develop a shared vision of capacity development for AIS. The country-led approach (vs. a donor-led one) and demand-driven methodologies used for identifying capacity development needs in the pilot countries are highly appreciated. The most important difficulties were related to the need of translation (in terms of concepts rather than language) and the need to adapt the methodology to the local context. An effective mechanism/platform for advocacy, dialogue and action has not yet been established in any country.

- 63 The project has made important efforts to develop a shared vision of capacity development for AIS and the capacity development needs have been defined in all the pilot countries (see Figure 6). In general, the capacity needs assessments have been carried out using a similar multi-stakeholder approach in all countries. One of the most appreciated features of the project in all countries is that it was not led by donors. Most stakeholders consider that the project has provided a demand-driven methodology for identifying capacity development needs.

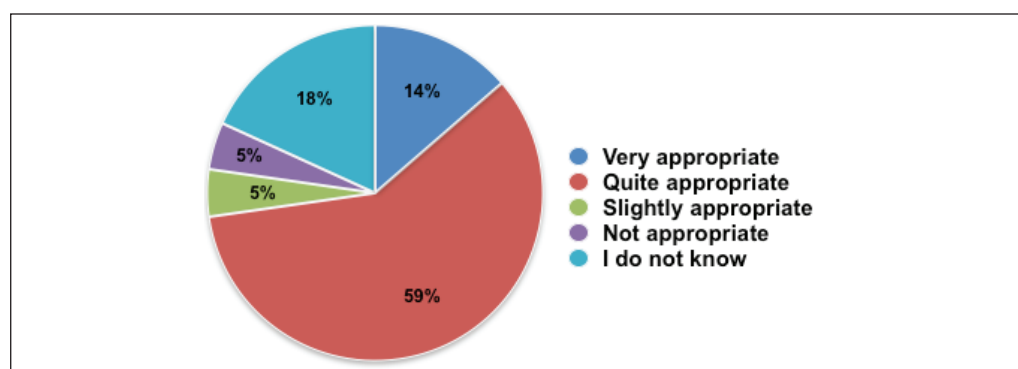
Figure 6: Initial mapping of CDAIS capacity development activities



Source: Evaluation team own elaboration, evaluation Terms of Reference

- 64 The project has shifted from seeing participation as a matter of consulting beneficiaries to one of facilitating engagement for interactive learning between stakeholders, resulting in joint analysis, planning and collective action. As said by one interviewee, “the TAP CF looks at CD for AIS in a holistic way. It promotes change in the mindsets of concerned actors to better understand AIS, assess CD needs, and then plan, implement, monitor and evaluate appropriate CD interventions.” The project approach does not attempt to transmit a single message to farmers (e.g. “improve efficiency”) but rather multiple tasks to change attitudes and improve the conditions for complex innovations. The three dimensions of capacity development have been addressed to some extent:
- individuals: through the NIFs and other niches’ stakeholders;
 - organizations: through the niches’ stakeholders (organizations, associations, etc.);
 - enabling environment: through the government and national institutions (National Project Coordinators).
- 65 All the respondents to the survey (22 out of 22) as well as all the interviewees consider that it is important and particularly useful to build capacity at these three levels. Most of them actually recognized that learning from past interventions that only focused on one level (very often at the individual) did not achieve change, but they also recognized the difficulties to effectively “operate at the three levels”.
- 66 The TAP Common Framework guidance note identifies 39 tools that may be used for the stages in the proposed capacity development cycle (see Box 4). The tools were selected in 2015 by the Core Team of experts contracted to prepare the Common Framework documents with the support of the TAP Expert Group, and were selected based on a conceptual match given that the pilots had not really started. The project then selected a subset to be used for four out of the five stages in the Common Framework cycle. The project set up a monitoring, evaluation and learning Working Group in October 2015 and has proposed and developed a number of tools to use as part of a Theory of Change-based approach, including simplified outcome mapping, enriched timeline, use of progress markers by stakeholder group and Google forms for capacity development activities monitoring and development. These tools (i.e. timeline, problem tree, visioning, network mapping, self-assessment questionnaire and action planning) were largely chosen during a three-day planning (Needs Assessment Design) workshop involving the Agrinatura Task Team (Country Focal persons) and FAO Core Team in Leiden (Netherlands) in March 2016.
- 67 These tools were used to identify issues related to the niche partnership and to assess the attainment of indicators for the four functional capacities (see self-assessment questionnaire in Annex 2 of MEL guidelines). Both the interviews and the survey confirmed that there is a good general opinion on both the methodology and the tools used. Almost 73 percent of the respondents to the survey (16 out of 22) consider that the tools are appropriate to address the challenges and needs related to AIS. Only two respondents thought that they are slightly or not appropriate. There are mixed opinions among stakeholders when asked if the Common Framework is too theoretical or too complicated. This is not surprising given the normative and abstract nature of the Common Framework. Nevertheless, most respondents think that it is operational and effective at system and niche level.

Figure 7: Survey question 5: Appropriateness of the Common Framework’s methodology and toolbox to address AIS challenges and needs



- 68 Among the identified challenges, the Mid-term Evaluation found that the ones that have created more difficulties for the project are the need for translation (in terms of concepts rather than language) and the need to adapt the methodology to the local context. As one interviewee put it, “it is important to pair the diagnostic efforts at the broadest levels with specific approaches tailored to sub-sectors of the AIS.” For example, the original version of the questionnaire (included in the Assessment of Innovation Capacities - A Scoring Tool)²⁴ was used in three countries (Guatemala, Laos and Rwanda) and a customized version was used in the other pilot countries. In general, the modifications were adding, removing or modifying some questions but, in some cases, they involved elaborating two different questionnaires that were used to target different stakeholders (e.g. Burkina Faso). These modifications to the approach and the tools, while an inevitable part of the adaptation to context, have created tensions during the implementation due to the additional efforts required and the potential problems they might create to validate the Common Framework.
- 69 There is broad consensus among stakeholders that the project is right to focus primarily on functional capacities as opposed to technical capacities, e.g. 85 percent of positive answers in the survey (17 out of 22). It is nevertheless recognized that it is difficult and limiting to focus on functional capacities in isolation from technical capacities. This was a recurrent issue raised during the field visits. The technical capacities are often addressed to some extent by other interventions and strengthening functional capacities is seen as a crucial underpinning approach. As mentioned in the survey, “functional and technical capacities are not opposed but TAP proposes a global and integrated approach when, so far, the emphasis was mainly on technical capacities with limited impact”.
- 70 Most of the stakeholders (both interviewees and surveyed) also agree that the four capacities addressed by the Common Framework are crucial for the achievement of the overall functional capacity targeted by the project: “adapt and respond in order to realize the potential of innovation”. The capacity to mobilize resources and attract funding has also been mentioned as an important capacity under the capacity to navigate complexity.

Table 4: Survey question 15: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following capacities are the most crucial to adapt and respond to in order to realize the potential of innovation?

(Number of responses)	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	I do not know
Capacity to navigate complexity	11	7	1	1	1
Capacity to collaborate	14	5	0	1	1
Capacity to reflect and learn	13	4	0	1	3
Capacity to engage in strategic and political processes	12	7	0	1	1

- 71 Four countries have held marketplaces (Guatemala, Honduras, Laos and Rwanda). Market places are emerging as a useful way to put niche partnership members in contact with organizations and donors who have a mandate to support what they are trying to do. Niche members in Laos, for example, appreciated the chance to present their issues to people to which they do not usually have access, e.g. the Vice Minister of Agriculture. Very similar comments were found in the other countries.
- 72 None of the countries have yet established a national level platform or mechanism for advocacy, dialogue and action on capacity development for AIS. This is an activity planned for the remaining implementation timeframe of the project. Nevertheless, the NIFs have been in general strategically identified and they are seen as a network in most countries/ niches. The majority of the NIFs “belong” to the niches which ensures the continuity of the actions. The NIFs have a crucial role in the implementation of the recently developed Coaching Plan.

24 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7014e.pdf>

- 73 Until now, the project has not systematically recorded lessons which is understandable as lessons take time to emerge. It is considered that if too much effort was put at recording lessons at this stage, the project would have been “distracted” from achieving its expected results. As a part of the monitoring, evaluation and learning system, and building on the results of the capacity needs assessments, Agrinatura has recently developed a coaching plan that includes recording lessons. The plan is currently being socialized within the niches in all countries. There are concerns about the need of a simpler mechanism; the project’s monitoring and evaluation working group is trying to simplify the Coaching Plan.

EQ 2.3: Has the project already generated changes or will do so in the future?

Finding 6. The project has built capacities at individual and organizational level. It has created the potential for change by helping niche partnerships prioritize challenges and develop detailed action plans to address them, where capacity development interventions can make a significant difference.

- 74 Although there is not a systematic process in place for identifying expected and unexpected outcomes, the project has already triggered changes at this stage of implementation. At an individual level, the project has built the capacity of the NIFs to carry out capacity needs assessments, specifically the chosen subset of tools as well as learning some facilitation skills. In Laos, for example, NIFs during an after-action review carried out during a focal group discussion, expressed appreciation for the new tools they were learning to use, in particular role-playing, as a better way to engage with farmers and understand their needs and priorities. They also said they were learning to collaborate with farmers to help them find solutions for their problems themselves, rather than provide solutions in a paternalistic manner. Similar comments were heard in other countries visited by the evaluators.
- 75 Despite proving harder in some countries than expected (e.g., Angola), there is evidence in nearly all countries that implementation teams have made good progress in translating the abstract concepts in the Common Framework into practice. The project has identified “niche partnerships” as approximations to the abstract concept of an AIS in the Common Framework (see Section 2.2 on Theory of Change). Although some countries expressed concerns about the lack of clarity of the concept (e.g. Guatemala), detailed action plans have been developed to provide capacity development that could credibly strengthen the niche partnerships and generate outcomes. Teams have been flexible in their understanding of what a “niche partnership” is with the result that the project is now in a good position to “test” and compare how similar capacity development interventions work in different types of niche. The evaluators have noticed that the niches (and actors) are sometimes very broadly defined (e.g. value chains in Honduras) and sometimes very narrowly (e.g. honey in Guatemala). It might be difficult though to strengthen the role of the “NIFs network” in these extreme situations and the project is already working on narrowing those that are too broad and enlarging those that are too thin.
- 76 The capacity needs assessment carried out for the niches has created a space for individuals to better get to know each other and the mandates and expertise of their respective organizations. The process of identifying common issues, prioritizing them and developing a common vision and purpose has built motivation and trust. Some early outcomes are reported even before implementation of niche action plans. These include the Egbet Union Cooperative in Ethiopia engaging two women on their Board of Directors after a discussion about gender in a capacity needs assessment, and that farmers in Laos feel confident enough to not accept any more cattle being provided to them by a company running a calf-raising scheme that are in poor condition.
- 77 None of the countries have yet carried out an organizational-level capacity needs assessment although in most, the organizations have been chosen to support the niche partnership work and/or efforts to build a national platform. The Mid-term Evaluation found evidence that the project has triggered some broader processes such as the “establishment” of a number of value chains (e.g. beans in Guatemala and Honduras or coffee in Honduras). During a focus group with the stakeholders of the beans niche in Honduras, it was confirmed that they met for the first time as a result of the project. Since then, they have undertaken and financed a number of activities to get better organized and develop a shared vision. They are currently entering into a discussion with the national authorities to

formally establish the value chain. A similar situation was found in other niches starting to take their own initiative. This suggests the existence of positive feedback loops (see Section 2.2 on Theory of Change) generating innovative behaviour that should be evidenced as part of country and transversal analysis carried out at the end of the project.

- 78 At the level of the enabling environment, the selected strategic National Counterpart Institutions and the national technical advisory groups have helped the project navigate politics and its complexities, e.g. helping with the selection of niches. In the particular case of Bangladesh, for example, the technical working group is seen as the basis of the national-level innovation platform. The evaluators consider that the selection of the national counterparts was a crucial decision of the project, not only because of their implementing role but also to their role in fostering to an enabling environment for capacity development in AIS at national level.

EQ 2.4: Based on the status of the project implementation, what are the prospects of finalizing the planned activities and achieving expected results by the end date of the project?

Finding 7. Delays in implementation and the emerging understanding of what is required to validate the Common Framework make it unlikely that the project will achieve all its targets in the remaining project implementation timeframe.

- 79 The reworked project global Theory of Change establishes “National and TAP partners promoting and learning about CD for AIS through niche, national and global-level mechanisms” as the project’s main outcome (see Figure 4). The outcome combines Results 1-3 from the logframe. It goes further than Result 1 which is to “establish an effective global mechanism to promote, coordinate and evaluate CD for AIS”. It covers Results 2 and 3 because achieving it depends on validating the Common Framework in the eight pilot countries (Result 2) which in turn is dependent on attempting to establish demand-driven capacity development interventions in the pilot countries (Result 3).
- 80 The Mid-term Evaluation agrees with the majority of TAP respondents who think that the four-year project implementation period is not sufficient to achieve Result 1. As one respondent wrote: “I think the period [the project lifespan] is not enough to achieve the objective. But it can form a good basis. Effort has to continue after four years.”
- 81 The PMT has used the project logframe as a management tool so far and acknowledges that it will require some change given the formative nature of the project so this exercise should not come as a surprise.

3.3 Partnerships and Coordination

EQ 3: To what extent has the current operational modality and project governance structure, including the Agrinatura-FAO-national government partnership at country level, been effective, particularly in terms of coordination, complementarity and decision-making processes?

EQ 3.1: To what extent has the project implementation structure and approach been appropriate to deliver preliminary results? What improvements, if any, can be made?

Finding 8. The project has put in place a challenging governance and implementation structure that, despite the difficulties and delays, has contributed to deliver some results. However, in two countries some tensions are impacting on national-level ownership of the project and its ongoing implementation.

- 82 This is the first experience of joint implementation between Agrinatura and FAO. Both are beneficiaries of the European Union grant with Agrinatura-EEIG acting as Coordinator. Both are co-leaders in the implementation with FAO (through its Research and Extension Unit (AGDR)) leading the implementation of activities under Result 1, and Agrinatura (supported by FAO) leading the implementation of activities under Results 2 and 3. Both

the interviews and the survey showed that there is an added value in the implementing partnership between Agrinatura and FAO. 71 percent of the respondents to the survey (15 out of 21) thought that there is an added value and none thought that there is not (six responded that they did not know).

- 83 The PMT comprises Agrinatura-EEIG's Coordinating Organization (ICRA), FAO's Research and Extension Unit (AGDR) Office and Agrinatura-EEIG's Financial Controller (CIRAD). The strength of the partnership is often seen in terms of complementarities with FAO working more at the political level to mobilize countries and TAP partners and Agrinatura as operator at country level. Nevertheless, the implementation has not been smooth and the project has experienced substantial delays. These problems are partly explained by the different culture, management, work modalities (political, technical, and operational) and procedures of the two partners and the fact that it is the first time they work together. But they are also often attributed to "territorial behaviours" and the lack of communication between them. Greater focus on developing capacity to partner, including the inclusion and use of partnering tools in the Common Framework toolbox, may have prevented some of these difficulties.
- 84 The POC has played a crucial role to ease the tensions between the partners and have made informed decisions to steer the project ahead. At the time of the evaluation, however, the project was facing difficulties funding the implementation of niche partnership action plans in two countries²⁵. By the end of the evaluation process, the project team reported that arrangements had been made by Agrinatura to facilitate the transfer of funds in both countries.
- 85 At a global level (Result 1), the TAP Secretariat and the TAP Global Task Force are responsible for convening and overseeing the TAP Expert Group responsible for the global synthesis of methods for needs assessment, implementation and assessment of capacity development in AIS. The TAP partners' Assembly guides the development of the Platform, with a smaller TAP Steering Committee to oversee the Platform activities and advocate at international level for the Common Framework. Almost 62 percent of the respondents to the survey (13 out of 21) think that TAP partner meetings and assemblies are appropriate fora to gather major capacity development for AIS stakeholders. Only 14 percent (3 out of 21) think that they are not (five respondents did not know).
- 86 At a national level, during the field visits the evaluators confirmed that the partnership was valued at country level and that, in general, there is a good working relation between the three crucial actors (Agrinatura focal organization, FAO country project manager and the National Project Coordinator). In particular, the guidance and support from Agrinatura's focal points was highly appreciated. They have provided adequate and timely oversight and technical support. In addition to the technical support and coaching from headquarters, the presence of FAO has allowed to engage at a political level and the commitment of the national coordinator has resulted, in some cases, in project results being used to inform new strategies or policies (see answer to EQ 6.2). Nevertheless, there have been some issues, for example a six-month delay in replacing a Country Programme Manager in Angola which has now been resolved, ongoing tensions between FAO and Agrinatura in Bangladesh²⁶ which are being addressed through regular weekly team meetings, potential difficulties in funding niche action plans in Ethiopia which have now been resolved, and dissatisfaction on the part of the National Project Coordinator in Ethiopia.²⁷ As for the functioning of the National Project Oversight Committee, in general, this mechanism, which supports the PMT, has allowed for efficient decision making but with limited involvement of the European Union (see the answer to EQ 1). It has ensured that the project "speaks with one voice, avoiding conflicting messages to stakeholders, and disconnected implementation

25 In Ethiopia and Bangladesh

26 Interviews conducted by the evaluation team point to serious difficulties in the initial relationship between Agrinatura and FAO in Bangladesh. Among the main issues the evaluation team identified the lack of clear guidance to the national team, exclusion of key staff from a national-level meeting on the selection and location of niches, differences in the understanding and agreement of what a niche partnership should be (i.e. a group formed by the project or an existing network that the project strengthens), and the challenge of finding a better disbursement modality for implementation of action plans.

27 Some of the issues mentioned were: insufficient autonomy and level of resourcing provided to EIAR by the project, and insufficient information and no real power provided to the Steering Committee to make decisions. This has led to a weak ownership by EIAR.

of activities.” In general, there is good coordination at technical level but the National Project Oversight Committee has not been successful at integrating the project with other ongoing activities, including those of the European Union.

EQ 3.2: How effective has the project’s monitoring and evaluation been?

Finding 9. The project is putting in place a MEL system that has the potential to deliver on accountability and learning requirements. However, concerns exist about whether the system can be made workable in pilot countries in the time available, without distracting from implementation through burdensome data gathering requirements. There is concern that plans have not yet been made for carrying out transversal analysis, which is key to validating the Common Framework and identifying which organizations find it easier to use the Common Framework.

- 87 The project is in the process of developing and putting in place a monitoring, evaluation and learning system. This is being led by a working group made up of Agrinatura and FAO staff that has produced two proposals: “Support for Learning, Monitoring and Assessing Outcomes of CDAIS Guidelines, Resources, Planning” and “Overview of baseline, coaching plan and MEL issues at the niche level”.
- 88 The coaching plan involves a number of steps including:
- design of coaching plan;
 - building a coaching team;
 - kick-off workshop including agreement on mutual commitment charter;
 - remote coaching and bi-monthly check-ins by NIF supervisor during implementation of action plans;
 - an outcomes evaluation workshop for the coaching team at the end.²⁸
- 89 The project has accepted both proposals (see paragraph above) and is working with niche staff to make them practical. There are two risks associated with this work. The first is that adaptation to niche context delays the project from starting to implement detailed niche action plans. Further delays risk dissipating participants’ interest and leave insufficient time for capacity development to lead to outcomes.
- 90 The second risk is that the adaptation is not simple enough for NIFs to be able to implement effectively and capture the requisite information. So far, the reaction from NIFs and most members of the Working Group agree that the large number of tables that NIFs are expected to fill out is overly burdensome. Also, there is some duplication between the proposals. For example, there needs to be clarity on whether the Coaching Plan removes or not the requirement to identify and monitor indicators, and whether the coaching plan tables are to replace Google Forms.
- 91 The Mid-term Evaluation supports the inclusion of transversal analysis, i.e., cross-niche and cross-country analysis, as part of CDAIS’ MEL system. Transversal analysis will be key to validating the Common Framework, including the identification of which type of organization finds it easier and is more adequate to use the Common Framework. However, there is concern that plans for transversal analysis have not been made, and are not being foreshadowed in the Coaching Plan. The national outcome evaluation workshops as part of the coaching plan will need to play an important role in the transversal analysis.

EQ 4: To what extent is the project fostering partnerships at the global, regional and national levels? How have these partnerships influenced (positively and negatively) the achievement of the project’s expected results?

EQ 4.1: Has the project fostered partnerships?

²⁸ See the document entitled “Overview of baseline, coaching plan and MEL issues at the niche level”.

Finding 10. The project is fostering partnerships at global and national level that have helped the achievement of the project's expected results. Partnerships have been built through the process of implementation. There is evidence in some countries that niche partnership selection was influenced by political considerations and was not transparent or inclusive. Several countries have chosen to work with more than the two or three recommended niche partnerships with possible detrimental results through dilution of support given to each one. Nevertheless, niche partnerships are one of the project's main assets.

- 92 The project is fostering a partnership at global level through its support to the TAP. More concretely, it is building a fruitful relationship between Agrinatura and FAO at the global level as described under EQ 3.1. Different work cultures led to delays in implementation as also described in EQ 3.1.
- 93 FAO has had some success in developing proposals with IFAD and the Italian Government to co-fund CDAIS-like projects in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Peru and Zambia (see EQ 2.1). This provides some validation of the revised global project Theory of Change that envisages the Common Framework being used beyond the eight pilot countries. FAO has found it harder to encourage new donors to partner in the pilot countries, possibly because donors first want to see the results of the pilot.
- 94 At national level, linkages and partnership have been established in the process of implementation with the national government. FAO works with a host organization, normally a government institution, as standard practice (see EQ 2.3), which adds a third organization to the core in-country partners (i.e. FAO, Agrinatura and host organization). Managing a three-way relationship has proved difficult as described above and has also led to some delays.
- 95 Linkages and partnerships are being established through the niche partnership work. One of the project's more successful inputs is to provide a facilitated space for farmers and individuals from different organizations to develop trusting relationships while identifying and working to deal with a shared issue (see EQ 2.3).
- 96 There is some evidence that potentially promising niche partnerships have been missed out through the niche selection process. There have been some complaints that niche partnership selection process was not transparent or inclusive (e.g. Bangladesh) and was somewhat political in nature (e.g. Laos). All countries have chosen to work with more than two or three originally foreseen niche partnerships (in the project's logical framework) with possible detrimental results through dilution of support given to each one.

3.4 Normative values

EQ 5: To what extent and how has the project integrated social issues (including gender), and environmental considerations in its design and throughout its implementation?

EQ 5.1: Did the project design and implementation take into account and promote gender equity?

Finding 11. The gender perspective was not included in project design. The participation of women in the activities depends on the specific context in each country and niche, with some exceptions in which there was a conscious decision to specifically target women groups.

- 97 In 2013, FAO developed its Policy on Gender Equality (2013)²⁹ with the purpose of providing FAO with a framework for guiding its efforts to achieve gender equality in all its technical work and for assessing results. In its policy, FAO commits to integrating gender into all facets of its work, ensuring that gender mainstreaming becomes a standard practice in all its normative, regional, subregional and country level activities. The policy identifies five main objectives:
 - 1 Women participate equally with men as decision-makers in rural institutions and in shaping laws, policies and programmes.

29 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3205e/i3205e.pdf>

- 2 Women and men have equal access to and control over decent employment and income, land and other productive resources.
 - 3 Women and men have equal access to goods and services for agricultural development, and to markets.
 - 4 Women's work burden is reduced by 20 percent through improved technologies, services and infrastructure.
 - 5 The share of total agricultural aid committed to projects related to women and gender equality is increased to 30 percent.
- 98 Moreover, in 2015, the environmental and social management guidelines (2015)³⁰ established the mandatory requirements for managing environmental and social performance of FAO field programmes, projects and sub-projects. Although these guidelines were not applicable at the time of the project outset, the Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) are used by the evaluators as relevant benchmarks.
- 99 In particular, the ESS 8 is anchored in the FAO Policy on Gender Equality and recognizes that gender equality is a major factor of sustainability for interventions in the agriculture and rural development sector and, among others, establishes the following requirements:
- FAO programmes and projects are gender-responsive in their design and implementation. FAO seeks to identify and address the different needs, constraints, contributions and priorities of women, men, girls and boys.
 - FAO conducts a gender-sensitive stakeholder analysis to ensure that women's and men's different interests, roles and responsibilities are assessed in project planning and implementation.
 - FAO conducts a gender analysis to respond to women and men's specific needs and priorities, to identify potential risks, benefits and impacts, to overcome their constraints to access productive inputs, resources and services, and to participate in decision-making.
 - FAO projects provide equal opportunities for women and men, and assess the gender sensitivity of planned interventions.
 - FAO projects track progress on gender results and measure changes over time. To achieve this, FAO seeks to collect sex-disaggregated data and formulate gender-sensitive indicators for project's results framework.
- 100 The project did not include any gender analysis during its formulation or implementation in order to ensure that women and men benefited equally, and inequality was not perpetuated. The project does not incorporate any gender specific indicators, targets or activities which results on women's needs and priorities not being documented. Furthermore, the Common Framework does not incorporate a gender perspective and the toolbox does not include any gender tool to strengthen women's role as key actors of the AIS.
- 101 Although women are participating in the activities both as NIFs and beneficiaries (less than 50 percent in any case), most of the interviewees and respondents to the survey think that the Common Framework (tools and approach) should incorporate a gender perspective (only two negative responses in the survey, less than 10 percent). As one of the respondents said, *"it would be helpful to overlay a gender lens on the AIS to be able to track whether improvement is inclusive"*. Despite the shortages, some gender issues were considered in the selection of the niches (at least one selection criteria was related to gender equality) and (ad hoc) addressed during the capacity needs assessments in most countries (briefly discussed during the workshops). Some of the target niches are traditionally dominated by women (e.g. small family enterprises managed by women in Burkina Faso and pig-raising in Laos) and, therefore, it is expected that mainly women and women associations will participate in the capacity development activities. Nevertheless, the project does not sufficiently consider how and why women will benefit from these activities. A gender analysis would be useful for this purpose.

30 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4413e.pdf>

- 102 Although the CDAIS does not aim at being transformative, it could play a positive role (enabling environment) by mainstreaming gender equality and operating at different levels (from individual to organizational and enabling environment). In addition to being a basic human right, gender equality is also an essential means by which FAO and TAP partners can achieve their mandate.

EQ 5.2: Did project design and implementation take into account and promote human rights?

Finding 12. Despite the project not implicitly targeting marginalized groups in its design, during implementation both indigenous and marginalized groups have benefited from the activities and will do so in the future. In particular, the project addresses their working conditions to some extent.

- 103 The ESS 7 recognizes that promoting decent work and full and productive employment is essential to achieving food security and reducing poverty. ESS 7 is anchored in FAO's vision for sustainable food and agriculture, which explicitly prioritizes decent work.³¹
- 104 Among other things, the ESS 7 requires that :
- FAO project formulators and implementers will optimize the potential of agricultural and value chain development, including natural resources management, to create more and better employment opportunities for the poor, especially in rural areas.
 - FAO projects involving capacity development and support to the enabling environment (e.g. policy and regulatory frameworks) for agricultural and rural development should always explicitly consider employment-related capacities.
 - Project formulators and implementers will ensure that all projects do not increase existing discrimination at work and, on the contrary, empower and prioritize disadvantaged categories of workers, including small-scale agricultural producers.
 - When operating in a sector or area with a high risk of child labour, project developers and implementers will include some measures to contribute to address the root causes of child labour (economic, social, political, institutional and cultural).
 - FAO actively supports opportunities for rural workers to join groups, producers' associations or rural workers' organizations. In particular, producers' organizations, contract farming groups, out-growers' associations and other informal groups represent important vehicles to enable rural workers to form representative organizations.
- 105 The ESS 9 recognizes that indigenous peoples' traditions and knowledge present opportunities for many of the challenges that humankind will face in the coming decades. The ESS 9 is underpinned by the FAO policy on indigenous and tribal peoples (2010)³². Among other things, it requires that:
- All projects that may impact indigenous peoples must carry out an assessment and verify: (a) whether indigenous peoples inhabit the proposed project area(s) and, if so, include disaggregated data by indigenous group and geographical location; and (b) whether project activities may impact (even indirectly) indigenous peoples living outside the project area.
 - Before adopting and implementing projects and programmes that may affect indigenous peoples, a process of Free, Prior and Informed Consent is followed and consent given by the indigenous community.
- 106 The project specifically aims at developing two to three multi-stakeholder innovation partnerships in each country that support income generation or job creation along value chains benefiting 30 000 smallholder farmers and/or agro-enterprises (indicator/target 5 of the specific objective). Although the evaluators have doubts about the relevance of this indicator (see Section 4.2), there is evidence of some positive effects during the implementation of the project. Most niches (in all countries) strongly focus on smallholder

31 ILO defines "Decent Work" as "productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity."

32 http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/newsroom/docs/FAO_policy.pdf

farmers and on optimizing the potential of agricultural and value chain development. While some niches target well-connected networks (e.g. cattle in Laos), many others target marginalized and indigenous groups (e.g. Lencas in Honduras, small family enterprises managed by women in Burkina Faso, improved/resistant cassava varieties in Rwanda). These groups, which are represented among the NIFs, have participated in the capacity needs assessments in all countries and will benefit from the capacity development activities. Finally, the capacity self-assessment questionnaire makes specific reference to the value of indigenous knowledge. At the time of the Mid-term Evaluation, it was too early to assess the actual results deriving from the involvement and participation of marginalized and indigenous groups in project activities.

3.5 Sustainability

EQ 6: What are the prospects of sustaining the project's approach on capacity development and its results (expected and achieved thus far)?

Finding 13. The project has two linked mechanisms in place to sustain the project's approach: 1) continued and expanding use of the Common Framework by TAP and national partners; and 2) through loose networks of NIFs supporting niche partnerships reach the point of empowerment. Both will likely require a project extension to survive beyond the end of the project.

EQ 6.1: What measures and systems are in place to ensure the mid-term and long-term sustainability of project outcomes?

- 107 The project has two linked ways to sustain its approach and results after the end of the project. The first is shown in the new global-level Theory of Change, namely, to provide evidence that the Common Framework can be adapted to work in different country contexts and produce positive results together with understanding how the Common Framework works (see Section 4.2). The second is that the work at niche, organizational and national-levels continues after project funding ceases. The two ways are considered in turn.
- 108 As already discussed in Theory of Change analysis (Section 2), providing evidence and understanding about how the Common Framework works will require niche, organizational, national and global-level analysis that is packaged and communicated to encourage greater use of the Common Framework. This analysis, if favourable, can be expected to encourage greater interest and support for capacity development in AIS, and the establishment and strengthening of partnerships to do so. Project sustainability assumes the setting up of a number of positive feedback loop shown in Figures 3 and 4.
- 109 The project is working towards sustaining the niche work through putting in place a coaching plan. The coaching plan seeks to bring niche partnerships to a "point of empowerment" after which they can continue without project support. This idea has resonance with the niche partnerships. For example, the Livestock Feed Safety and Quality Partnership in Ethiopia thought that the niche partnership could continue on their own once they had developed and validated a draft regulatory feed quality framework. For the Improved Organizational Capacities for the Beans Value Chain Partnership in Honduras, this "point of empowerment" could be the moment of the official recognition of the value chain (legal act). In Guatemala, the Council for Agricultural Development of the Ministry of Agriculture supported the development of the Strategic Plan of the Cocoa Value Chain during the period 2016-2017 that is expected to be implemented independently of the project.
- 110 If the project can show that "points of empowerment" exist and can be reached, then this helps build the case for the Common Framework and capacity development in AIS. However, this would require an extension to explore outcomes that emerge after niche funding stops.
- 111 The evaluation judges that the NIFs are likely to continue to use elements of the Common Framework after the project finishes. There is evidence that they have developed a set of

soft skills that they find useful, and in some cases are being employed as consultants to use them. The NIFs have potential to have greater impact if they work as a network.

- 112 While in most countries the niche partnerships have potential to show benefits from capacity development within the project timeframe, this depends on implementation of their respective action plans. As of June 2017, no country has begun implementation, and most were late. There is a risk that putting in place the coaching plan for the NIFs will cause further delay and risk losing the interest and motivation of participants. However, NIFs will require some form of coaching. The risk can be mitigated by keeping the coaching plan simple and ensuring it builds on plans countries already have to support their NIFs.
- 113 So far, no country has carried out an organizational capacity needs assessment nor established a national platform. It is therefore not possible to say anything specific about the likelihood or otherwise of these initiatives continuing after the end of the project.

EQ 6.2: What is the level of country ownership and ability to drive the implementation of the project?

- 114 The level of country-level appropriation of the project approach and early results varies between countries. In Honduras, for example, the host organization is PRONAGRO (Programa Nacional de Desarrollo Agroalimentario) which is responsible for promoting value chains nationally. PRONAGRO is using the approach and tools (used during the capacity needs assessments) in two different beans producing regions in Honduras (Yoro and Paraíso). In Ethiopia, in contrast, the host organization is the Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR) where the national project coordinator has complained about not being able to adjust the project design to meet EIAR priorities and ways of working. The complaint is justified in the sense that the project, in setting out to pilot the Common Framework, needed to keep key elements of the project design standard across pilots. Also, implementation to this point has been driven by Agrinatura and FAO, with key individuals in the host organization sometimes feeling sidelined. In Laos for example, the host organization wants a greater role in implementation of NIF action plans. At the level of the niche partnerships, in nearly all countries, organizations and individuals are appropriating the tools and approach.

EQ 6.3: What are the lessons and opportunities that the project can build on to increase the likelihood of impact?

- 115 The opportunities for the project to achieve impact is through the two mechanisms identified in the response to EQ 6.1. Both mechanisms involve partnerships at different scales promoting capacity development in AIS. It is assumed that the partnerships will be driven by growing recognition of the benefits of increasing the capacity of rural innovation systems to innovate, and the increasing capacity to develop capacity. In practice, FAO has a key role in brokering and supporting these partnerships through the strength of its existing networks.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

116 Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

Conclusion 1. Alignment with global and national-level demands and priorities (EQ 1)

117 The Common Framework is well aligned with the demands and priorities of TAP partners and national priorities of participating countries. The project's approach aims to enhance country ownership through a bottom-up, country driven and participatory process to achieve more sustainable results. The Common Framework's focus on functional capacities is highly relevant to the needs and priorities of targeted AIS. The project is also well aligned with effective development cooperation and good capacity development practices as well as with European Union strategies. Nevertheless, involvement of the European Union services during implementation has been limited. The project is well aligned with FAO's national priorities and strategies, in particular with FAO's decision to host the TAP Secretariat.

Conclusion 2. On progress towards the project's three results (EQ 2 and EQ 3.1)

118 The project has made good progress towards its three results. It has developed the Common Framework, launched TAPedia and set up pilots to validate it in eight countries. It has made progress towards developing a shared vision for capacity development for AIS, identified niche partnerships and identified capacity development needs. In the process, it has started to build capacities at individual and organizational level with a validated action plan to address identified capacity gaps. Moreover, the project has created spaces for dialogue and has enhanced trust and motivation among participants. Nevertheless, the project has experienced significant delays. No country has yet begun full implementation at the organizational or enabling environment scales. Nor has any country begun implementing niche partnership action plans yet. Further delay in the latter entails the risk that participants lose interest and motivation. Although these are activities planned for the remaining implementation period, the project will have difficulties to trigger sustainable processes in the remaining year and a half without an extension to allow learning to be collated and the case made for the benefits of capacity development in AIS based on analysis across pilots.

Conclusion 3. On the main impact pathway (EQ 2.1, EQ 2.2 and Section 2.2)

119 TAP expects that the project validates the Common Framework while at the same time the project logframe commits to deliver developmental outcomes. The evaluation concludes that the project's main impact pathway should be to carry out action research to demonstrate to TAP, national platforms and niche partnerships whether the Common Framework works, for whom, with what outcomes and in what contexts. The Common Framework, while of high quality, is by its nature conceptual, theoretical and normative. The first task of the project has been to translate and adapt the language and concepts to local contexts to achieve beneficial outcomes through capacity development in AIS. The second task is to capture and synthesize learning with and across pilot countries for use by TAP, national platforms and niche partnerships. Doing so will maximize the "political" importance of the project by providing TAP with the necessary arguments to engage on a discussion about the use of the Common Framework with different stakeholders, including donors. The project's developmental objectives are also important because without some success in using the Common Framework to guide capacity development that leads to early outcomes, the case for the further use of the Common Framework will not have been made. While learning from failure will help the project understand the limits of use of the Common Framework, the pilots are not treatments and all reasonable effort needs to be made to deliver beneficial outcomes.

Conclusion 4. On the Theory of Change (EQ 2.4 and Section 4.2)

120 The project had not developed a Theory of Change even though the project proposal said one would be developed. The Mid-term Evaluation developed one at global- and national-level. As suggested in these Theories of Change, at the global level, the immediate

outcome becomes “national and TAP partners promoting and learning about CD for AIS through niche, national and global-level mechanisms” which incorporates the three results in the current logframe. The intermediate outcome in Theories of Change becomes “improved system capacity to innovate” that is assumed to lead to “social, environmental and economic impacts”. The causal pathways to these impacts will be long and will not occur within the lifespan of the project.

Conclusion 5. On the Agrinatura-FAO partnership (EQ 3.1)

- 121 The project has put in place a challenging governance and implementation structure in which both partners learn and model the Common Framework capacities themselves. In this sense, the evaluation finds some cleverness in a design that, despite the difficulties, has contributed to deliver results because it compels Agrinatura and FAO staff to build their own functional capacities, in particular capacity to collaborate. The project would not have achieved the same results if led by only one of the partners. As a first experience of working together, it is a learning process for both partners that should benefit future actions. Major determinants of the project implementation are related to Agrinatura and FAO’s work culture. This should be considered when exploring future funding options (e.g. would it be possible and desirable to work together under a Memorandum of Understanding but with separate financing?). There is indication that Agrinatura will have difficulties funding the implementation of niche partnership action plans in two countries where it does not have a legal presence.

Conclusion 6. On the critical role of the MEL system in Common Framework validation (EQ 3.2)

- 122 The monitoring, evaluation and learning system has a critical integrating role to play in the last year and a half of the project. The Coaching Plan needs to support NIFs to implement niche partnership action plans while capturing process data and findings. MEL data and lessons learned will also play a central role in the transversal analysis to validate the Common Framework that the project is planning to carry out. While developing the MEL system is largely on track, the evaluation identified two risks: 1) that the two proposals for project MEL are not combined and made practicable for use by the pilots in time; and 2) that the requirements of the MEL system, in particular the Coaching Plan, delay and distract from implementing niche partnership action plans.
- 123 For the Common Framework validation to be useful, the project needs to provide TAP partners and key national stakeholders with a critical analysis to answer the following research question, or similar: “Whether, how, for whom, to what extent and in what context can the CF usefully guide CD for AIS at niche, organizational and national-level?” TAP partners and national counterparts need both the validation and learning on where the Common Framework works best and examples to lobby for use of the Common Framework in their 44 respective organizations and host organizations.

Conclusion 7. On the lack of a gender perspective (EQ 5)

- 124 The project has not included any gender analysis and it does not incorporate any gender specific indicators, targets or activities. As a consequence, there has been no gender mainstreaming in the Common Framework. For example, the toolbox does not include any gender tool. The evaluation finds that the implementation of the Common Framework offers an excellent opportunity to address and promote gender equality at both individual and system level (enabling environment) as it already aims at promoting change in attitudes by enhancing functional capacities.

Conclusion 8. On sustaining TAPipedia (EQ 2.1)

- 125 There are high expectations from the G20 for TAPipedia as TAP’s global capacity development and innovation portal. As a portal that explains and promotes the Common Framework, its success depends on the future popularity of the Common Framework. The evaluation is concerned that these expectations will not be met because of competition from established portals, the inevitable lag for the Common Framework to become popular and the relatively small amount of budget allocated to developing the platform (less than 1 percent). TAPipedia will require support after CDAIS finishes if it is to be sustained and grow.

Conclusion 9. On sustaining the project approach and results and partnerships (EQ 4 and EQ 6)

- 126 The project will hardly achieve its main result and conduct the transversal analysis within the project timeframe. Hence there is an imperative for the project to mobilize additional resources and extend the project lifespan. While supporting this endeavour, the evaluation cautions against overselling the Common Framework before the results of the pilots have been analysed and conclusions drawn. Expectations about the usefulness of the Common Framework in supporting capacity development for AIS need to be managed carefully to avoid donor disillusionment.
- 127 The project is fostering partnerships at global and national level that have helped progress towards the achievement of the project's expected results and are the main vehicle for ensuring their continuation beyond the end of the project. At global level, there is evidence that the process of developing the Common Framework and the actions of the TAP Secretariat have begun to build links between the 44 members of TAP. FAO has been able to interest Italy and IFAD to join them to fund capacity development of AIS in existing projects in four new countries. At national level, an early outcome has been the building of trust and common purpose among members of niche partnerships as a result of the participatory process followed for the capacity needs assessments and the development of the niche action plans. This provides a good basis for niche action plans to be implemented. In most countries, technical working groups have provided advice on which niche partnerships to select so as to best achieve project objectives.

4.2 Recommendations

- 128 Based on the evidence and its analysis, the Mid-term Evaluation makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1. On modifying the project logframe: Agrinatura and FAO should revisit the project logframe in view of the Theory of Change developed based on evaluation findings

- 129 The project should adopt and use the Theory of Change developed as part of the Mid-term Evaluation in the last year and a half, specifically to adopt the modified Result 1 as its primary result. In this sense, the project should revisit its logframe in light of what is essential to achieve the primary result in the time available, in particular what is required to carry out transversal learning.
- 130 The modified Result 1 is "National and TAP partners promote and learn about CD for AIS through niche, national and global-level mechanisms". Results 2 and 3 from the original logframe would become progress indicators. The logframe needs modification to include a target at outcome level such as "Global, national and niche mechanisms are strengthened by validation of the CF in eight countries." At the output level, a target should be added related to the production of a final project report that synthesizes the learning from validating the Common Framework in the eight pilot countries. Furthermore, the target that niche partnerships benefit 30 000 smallholder farmers and/or agro-enterprises should be moved to the impact level in the logframe. In the process, the project should also assess the likelihood of completing the indicative activities, outputs and outcomes and manage stakeholder expectations accordingly. Priority should be given to implementing the niche partnership action plans.

Recommendation 2. On prioritizing transversal analysis: Agrinatura and FAO should plan for transversal analysis of the project at country and national level to be carried out before the end of the project

- 131 The project should engage with TAP and national partners as a matter of urgency to agree on the validation questions that the final project report will answer. Answering these questions will require transversal analysis that the project has already identified as part of the project's monitoring, evaluation and learning system. Transversal analysis will be required at country-level across niches and at global-level across pilots. For the latter to happen, a common method and format for the country-level reports needs to be quickly agreed to guide data collection. Country-level reports must be completed by the end of the project. The project

should consider and assess the possibility of requesting a six to eight-month extension to carry out the cross-country transversal learning as this can only be done once the country-level reports have been received. The final evaluation should be incorporated into the cross-country transversal learning as a mainly formative exercise to be carried out during the extension. Holding a summative final evaluation while the country pilots are engaging in learning lessons will be detrimental to the latter as it would make people defensive at a time when they need to reflect on what worked and what did not.

- 132 The importance of the final project report derives from the causal assumption, in the project Theory of Change, that the process of engaging TAP and national partners in synthesizing project findings, through transversal analysis, will foster broader use of the Common Framework. This is the project's main impact pathway and chance to have impact at scale. In practice, the method for gathering data and analysing findings at country level needs to build off the MEL system being put in place. The analysis needs to be of a sufficiently high standard to be credible to TAP partners and national counterparts. The envisaged MEL validation workshops at the end of the project will have an important part to play. The communication plan to write up success stories should be integrated into the transversal analysis.

Recommendation 3. On partnering: Agrinatura and FAO, in collaboration with host organizations, should give greater priority to developing partnering capacity at organizational level so as to ease ongoing partnering difficulties

- 133 The partnerships that the project is building are what will sustain the project approach in the medium-term, and represent an important asset. The ability to partner is linked to the "capacity to collaborate", but goes further. Capacity to collaborate is emerging as one of the most valued functional capacities in which progress is being made. However, the project and the Common Framework have not included partnership tools in the common toolbox, despite the project facing some partnering difficulties between Agrinatura, FAO and in-country host organizations. The project should consider including partnering tools in the common toolbox and using them to alleviate major ongoing difficulties.
- 134 Specifically, FAO and Agrinatura should consider, depending on the available time and resources, bringing in a professional partnership coach to review their partnering arrangement in the first instance, using a tool such as the Partnering Agreement Scorecard. The partnership coach could serve as a mediator that facilitates the collaboration processes and focuses the team on decision-making, problem solving and consensus building, for example, during global consultation meetings or workshops. Another option is to organize a soft skills training programme for the project team focused on collaboration, building team consensus, and continuous learning and feedback loops throughout the management process.

Recommendation 4. On partnering with donors: Agrinatura and FAO should seek for the project, through its leadership role in the TAP Secretariat and existing network, to partner with donors (both members and non-members of TAP) to ensure the success of the piloting of the Common Framework in the eight countries and its broader adoption and use

- 135 The general consensus among TAP partners and project staff is that the project will not meet its objective within its lifespan. However, the project team needs to be careful not to oversell the Common Framework before the results from the pilots have been analysed. If the pilots establish that the Common Framework can be adapted and made to work by the end of this project then the next step is to establish whether the outcomes from capacity development for AIS are qualitatively different or better than conventional capacity development. This could be the basis for follow-up research and partnering with other donors or initiatives (including both members and non-members of TAP) to consolidate the project's success and expand the adoption and use of the project's approach.

Recommendation 5. On sustaining project approach and outcomes at national level: Agrinatura and FAO should prioritize building national-level ownership of the project approach and its emerging networks and outcomes in countries where host organization appropriation is an issue

- 136 The pilot nature of the project limited the scope to adapt the project design to meet the main needs and interest of the host organization in each country. While this allowed an

innovative project design to be implemented consistently across countries, it also led to some complaints about the project being imposed from abroad together with a subsequent lack of national-level ownership in Bangladesh and Ethiopia. This means proactively including the host organization in implementation as well as the analysis of pilot results including the cross-niche analysis. At the same time, some of the ownership and appropriation issues may be structural, for example it may be that organizations that promote value chains find the Common Framework and approach more useful than a research organization. Identifying which type of organization finds it easier to use the Common Framework is part of validating it and hence part of the *raison d'être* of the project and the transversal analysis it will carry out.

Recommendation 6. On incorporating a gender perspective: Agrinatura, FAO, host organizations and the TAP Secretariat should consider tracking progress on gender results and measure changes over time on this aspect

- 137 To achieve this, the monitoring, evaluation and learning system should be able to collect sex-disaggregated data and include gender-sensitive indicators. Particular attention should be given to this aspect without overcomplicating the system. The information collected should be used to inform the country-level reports and the transversal learning (including the MEL validation workshops, communication plan and final evaluation) about the project's gender-specific effects. The implementation of the Common Framework is emerging as an opportunity to promote gender equality. Based on these results, it should be considered to include a gender perspective into the Common Framework, including gender-specific tools in the common toolbox. A gender analysis seems to be particularly important to identify potential risks, benefits and impacts in order to be able to respond to women and men's specific needs and priorities. The financial implications should be carefully considered together with the rest of the tools.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1. Evaluation Matrix

Sub-questions	Judgement criteria	Suggested indicators	Methods (sources)
RELEVANCE			
Evaluation Question 1: To what extent is the CDAIS project responding and filling the gaps in terms of the specific agricultural innovation and capacity development needs, demands and priorities of the eight pilot countries, as well as the TAP Partners?			
To what extent is the TAP Common Framework and the project aligned and coherent with the European Commission's policies and mechanisms at global and country level?	Synergies with the European Commission's policies and instruments at global level were identified at project design. The project responds to the current European Commission's priorities both at global and country level. Synergies with the overall European Union country support have been identified during implementation.	Qualitative stakeholder views. Qualitative assessment. Degree of alignment with European Union priorities (mainly DG DEVCO).	Desk review of project document (section 1.4), European Union policies and strategies on AIS. Interview with European Union counterparts (Brussels) and in the countries (face-to-face for in country visits and skype/phone for countries not visited).
To what extent is the TAP Common Framework and the project aligned and coherent with FAO policies and strategies at global and country level?	The TAP Common Framework and the project are aligned and coherent with FAO's Strategic Framework and Country Programme Frameworks (CPFs). The TAP Common Framework and the project are aligned and coherent with the national priorities and strategies.	Degree of alignment with FAO Country Programming Frameworks (1-6?). Degree of alignment with national priorities and strategies.	Desk review of CPF priorities and project documents/activities. Desk review of national priorities. Interview with FAO Representative and FAO staff (face-to-face for in country visits and skype/phone for FAO focal points at headquarters not visited). Interview with government counterparts and national stakeholders.
EFFECTIVENESS			
Evaluation Question 2: What are the main results (intended and unintended) and objectives achieved thus far by the project?			
A global partnership on capacity development in AIS has been established (Result 1).	TAP mechanisms have been strengthened, including coordination and harmonization. Different capacity development approaches for development, monitoring and evaluation of AIS have been analysed. The TAP Common Framework and the project are aligned and coherent with the interests of the G20 and broader cooperation/ donor community. The project has generated interest in the TAP Common Framework that may lead to its adoption by projects, organizations and donors. Project activities, outputs and outcomes are appropriate to maximize the impact of an experiment.	Qualitative stakeholder views. Qualitative assessment.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation. Questionnaire to TAP Partners (SurveyMonkey). Desk review of secondary information.

Sub-questions	Judgement criteria	Suggested indicators	Methods (sources)
Capacity development needs and existing provision for strengthening AIS have been defined in the eight pilot countries (Result 2).	The project has contributed to develop a shared vision of capacity development for AIS. An effective mechanism/platform for advocacy, dialogue and action on AIS capacity development has been established/strengthened. How effective are the different methods/tools used, including those derived from, but not only, the TAP Common Framework, for identifying capacity development needs? The project is systematically recording lessons on how the methods for assessment support or not innovation.	Qualitative stakeholder views. Qualitative assessment.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation. Desk review of secondary information.
The project has already generated changes (at this stage of implementation) or will do in the future (in relation to Result 3).	Project implementation is adequate to effectively address the three dimensions of capacity development, i.e. individuals, organizations and enabling environment. The four fundamental capacities and/or others have been enhanced in all three dimensions. The project has contributed to change in knowledge, attitudes, perspectives, relationships, behaviours, partnerships and collaborations (networks), etc. The Project contributed to reach agreement on policies or strategies. The project strengthened the capacities of regional, national and local institutions.	Qualitative stakeholder views. Qualitative assessment.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation. Desk review of secondary information (including proxy indicators such as end of trainings or workshops' questionnaires to assess satisfaction).
Based on the status of project implementation, what are the prospects of finalizing the planned activities and achieving expected results by the end date of the project?	Project design addresses the challenges and needs in AIS – at global and national level (theory of change). Project design correctly identified risks and effective mitigation measures. Project was not overly complex or ambitious. Timeframe for project is realistic. Has the project implementation experienced any delays? Has the project implemented corrective measures? Project logframe provided rational linkage between inputs, outputs, outcome and objectives. Project activities, outputs and outcomes are appropriate to reach the project's specific objective (a global partnership on CDAIS) and emerging understanding of the project as an experiment. Project contemplated or considered all relevant activities to reach the expected outcomes. What are the factors contributing to or limiting the effectiveness of the CDAIS project?	Qualitative stakeholder views. Associated logframe indicators and qualitative assessment. Project work plans.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation (interviews with project team, and focus groups at project sites). Desk review of secondary information (project design documents, project monitoring and evaluating records, progress reports, global AIS documents/papers). Reconstruction of Theory of Change with project team. Validation of Theory of Change (ex-post) based on what is actually happening on the ground.

Sub-questions	Judgement criteria	Suggested indicators	Methods (sources)
Partnerships and coordination			
Evaluation Question 3: To what extent has the current operational modality and project governance structure, including the Agrinatura-FAO-national government partnership at country level, been effective, particularly in terms of coordination, complementarity and decision-making processes? (Internal partnerships)			
To what extent has the project implementation structure and approach been appropriate to deliver preliminary results? What improvements, if any, can be made?	<p>Project theory of action (implementation strategy) is appropriate to reach the intended results (including answering emerging project research questions). Project implementation has not been substantially delayed due to the governance structure and institutional arrangements. Project Oversight Committee has made informed decisions to steer the project ahead. Partnership between Agrinatura-FAO at global level is working well (no major issues).</p> <p>At country level: Project oversight and technical support provided by the coordinator has been adequate and timely (for national teams). Decision-making process within National Steering Committees is efficient. Country teams have received sufficient guidance and supporting documentation for implementation. Partnership between Agrinatura and FAO Offices at country level is working well (no major issues).</p>	Quantitative analysis of six scoring levels of satisfaction indicated by stakeholders for each judgement criteria. Quality of outputs, staffing and guidance documentation provided by implementation partners.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation (stakeholder questionnaires and focus groups at project sites) and subsequent coding and analysis of satisfaction levels. Desk-based review of secondary information related to outputs, staffing and guidance documentation (project documents).
How effective was the project's monitoring and evaluation (M&E)?	Monitoring and evaluation in the project design was satisfactory. Implementation of M&E during the project was satisfactory. The project is putting in place an M&E system that fulfils both accountability and learning requirements. Is the logframe used as an effective management tool?	Quantitative analysis of six scoring levels of satisfaction indicated by stakeholders for M&E design and implementation.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation (stakeholder questionnaires) and subsequent coding and analysis of satisfaction levels.
Evaluation Question 4: To what extent is the project fostering partnerships at the global, regional and national levels? How have these partnerships influenced (positively and negatively) the achievement of the project's expected results? (External partnerships)			
Has the project fostered partnerships?	Project team has followed a participatory and inclusive process, involving key actors working in the CDAIS sector in project activities both at global and country level. Government, private sector, civil society, research institutions, etc. have all participated in the project. To what extent has the project explored synergies with similar projects or initiatives? Are there any missed opportunities in terms of partnerships at global and country level?	Evidence of stakeholder participation in project documents. Diversity and interest of participants in project activities (i.e. workshops, trainings, events). Evidence of partnerships with other donor national/local/district/regional governments, private sector, research institutions, civil society.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation (stakeholder questionnaires and focus groups at project sites). Desk review of secondary information (project documents).

Sub-questions	Judgement criteria	Suggested indicators	Methods (sources)
What challenges has the project faced in its partnerships at all levels, and how can these be further improved in the future?		Qualitative stakeholder views.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation (stakeholder questionnaires and focus groups at project sites).
Normative values			
Evaluation Question 5: To what extent and how has the project integrated social issues (including gender and human rights) considerations in its design and throughout its implementation?			
Project design and implementation took into account and promoted gender equality.	A gender analysis was conducted at project design. Project design includes specific gender indicators/targets or activities (at country or project/ regional level). Gender was mainstreamed throughout the design. Equal and active participation of women in the activities. Project activities/outputs/products are gender-sensitive (e.g. niches, needs assessments, capacity development, etc.). Is the project and/or its activities transformative? Could the project play a positive role in terms of enabling environment?	Qualitative stakeholder views. Qualitative assessment by evaluation team.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation (stakeholder questionnaires and focus groups at project sites). Desk review of secondary information (project documents, FAO Policy on Gender Equality).
Project design and implementation took into account and promoted human rights (i.e. social inclusion, marginalized groups).	Human rights were considered during project design. Project design includes specific human rights indicators/targets or activities (at country or project/ regional level). Human rights were mainstreamed throughout the design. Human rights have been considered during project implementation. Marginalized groups have participated in the project activities.	Qualitative stakeholder views. Qualitative assessment by evaluation team.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation (stakeholder questionnaires and focus groups at project sites). Desk review of secondary information (project documents, FAO/UN docs on human rights-based approach).
SUSTAINABILITY			
Evaluation Question 6: What are the prospects of sustaining the project's approach on capacity development and its results (expected and achieved thus far)?			
What measures and systems are in place to ensure the mid-term and long-term sustainability of project outcomes?	Steps have been taken to ensure that project activities or impacts are sustained once the project has finished, including identification risks, opportunities and preconditions. Risks to sustainability of project impacts are minimal and being monitored and mitigated. The project is seeking for political support both at global and country level. There is a favourable environment both at global and country level and the project is creating momentum. What is the likelihood of adoption of the project's approach and lessons learned by other actors?	Qualitative stakeholder views. Documented exit strategy.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation (stakeholder questionnaires and focus groups at project sites). Desk review of secondary information (project documents).

Sub-questions	Judgement criteria	Suggested indicators	Methods (sources)
What is the level of country ownership and ability to drive implementation of the project?	Governments in region are interested in replication of project activities, outputs and outcomes. Beneficiaries feel it is their project, relevant to their needs, and being implemented by them. What is the likelihood of continuation of partnerships at country level after project completion?	Qualitative stakeholder views. Documented exit strategy.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation (stakeholder questionnaires and focus groups at project sites). Desk review of secondary information (project documents).
What are the lessons and opportunities that the project can build on to increase likelihood of impact?	Project staff have identified things they should do differently to improve likelihood of impact. The project is learning from its diversity of experience. The project has catalysed or identified opportunities that if acted on will improve likelihood of impact.	Qualitative stakeholder views. Documented exit strategy.	Primary information collection from face-to-face, telephone and email consultation (stakeholder questionnaires and focus groups at project sites). Desk review of secondary information (project documents).

Appendix 2. Documents consulted

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 1 FAO Corporate Strategy on Capacity Development - Programme Committee Hundred and Fourth Session, Rome, 25-29 October 2010
- 2 FAO Environmental and social management Guidelines, Rome, 2015
- 3 FAO Policy on Indigenous People, 2010
- 4 FAO Policy on Gender Equality - Attaining Food Security Goals in Agriculture and Rural Development, Rome 2013
- 5 FAO (2016), Developing gender-sensitive value chains – A guiding framework, Rome
- 6 Charter for the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP)
- 7 TAP Theory of change
- 8 TAP Action Plan (2013-2017)
- 9 Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) - Transforming agricultural capacities through partnerships
- 10 European Commission's Guidelines on Agricultural Research for Development, June 2008
- 11 A Strategic Approach to EU Agricultural Research & Innovation, Brussels, 2016
- 12 EU SCAR (2012), Agricultural knowledge and innovation systems in transition - a reaction paper, Brussels
- 13 EU SCAR (2013), Agricultural knowledge and innovation systems towards 2020 - an orientation paper on linking innovation and research, Brussels
- 14 Research and innovation for sustainable agriculture and food and nutrition security, European Commission's Directorate General Development and Cooperation - EuropeAid, June 2014
- 15 European Commission's ToolKit for Capacity Development, Luxembourg, 2011

CDAIS PROJECT DOCUMENTS

- 16 CDAIS Project Document
- 17 CDAIS Project Review Sheet
- 18 Grant Contract - External Actions of the European Union (DCI-FOOD/2014/352-658)
- 19 Addendum 1 to Contract DCI-FOOD/2014/352-658
- 20 FAO-Agrinatura Memorandum of Understanding
- 21 Guidelines for the monitoring, evaluation and learning framework of CDAIS
- 22 Support for Learning, Monitoring and Assessing Outcomes of CDAIS - Guidelines, Resources, Planning, February 2017
- 23 CDAIS Marketplace: brokering partnerships for effective capacity development for agricultural innovation - Concept notes
- 24 Assessment of Innovation Capacities - A Scoring Tool, Rome 2017
- 25 CDAIS Coaching Plan
- 26 NIF Needs Assessment Overview
- 27 NIF Needs Assessment Training Programme and Resources
- 28 TAP Common Framework Flyer
- 29 CDAIS Interim Narrative Report Jan-Dec 2015
- 30 CDAIS Guidelines on needs assessment
- 31 CDAIS Project Governance, Communication and Management, 22 June 2015
- 32 Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems - Report on the review phase for the development of a Common Framework, April, 2015
- 33 TAP Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems - Conceptual Background, June 2016
- 34 TAP Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems - Guidance Note on Operationalization, June 2016
- 35 TAP Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems - Synthesis Document, June 2016

- 36 TAPipedia Business Plan - For Beta Version, 3 October 2016
- 37 CDAIS project governance and management presentation
- 38 CDAIS Flow of activities
- 39 CDAIS M&E System presentation
- 40 FAO Back-to-Office Reports (x36)

Angola

- 41 CDAIS Country Periodic Report - Angola (November 2015 - June 2016)
- 42 CDAIS Angola Annual Report (2016)
- 43 CDAIS Levantamento de Competências Necessárias: Relatório das Associações Produtoras de Mandioca, Amendoim e Hortícolas do Bungo
- 44 CDAIS Levantamento de Competências Necessárias: Projecto de Desenvolvimento do Arroz
- 45 CDAIS Levantamento de Competências Necessárias: Relatório Empreendedorismo Rural
- 46 CDAIS Levantamento de Competências Necessárias: Relatório Sementes do Planalto
- 47 Estudo exploratorio
- 48 Relatorio Inception Workshop
- 49 Scoping Studies Report
- 50 Lessons Learnt NIF Training Angola

Bangladesh

- 51 Scoping Studies Report
- 52 CDAIS Country Periodic Report (November 2015 - June 2016)
- 53 CDAIS Project Document - Bangladesh Component
- 54 CDAIS Country Annual report 2016
- 55 National Inception and Planning Workshop report, 6-7 December 2015

Burkina Faso

- 56 Rapport de l'Atelier National de lancement et de planification, 25 et 26 Avril 2016
- 57 CDAIS Country Periodic Report (November 2015 – June 2016)
- 58 CDAIS Country Annual Report 2016
- 59 Démarche de sélection des situations d'innovation localisées pour tester le renforcement des capacité à innover, June 2016
- 60 Innovation Niche Profiles, June 2016
- 61 Etude exploratoire sur les systèmes d'innovation, April 2016

Ethiopia

- 62 Scoping Studies
- 63 CDAIS country update in May 2017 (Uppsala)
- 64 CDAIS Country Periodic Report (November 2015 - June 2016)
- 65 CDAIS Project Document - Bangladesh Component
- 66 CDAIS Country Annual report 2016
- 67 National Inception and Planning Workshop report, 13-14 April 2016

Guatemala

- 68 Reunión del Equipo de Facilitadores Nacionales para el análisis de los resultados y el involucramiento de nuevos potenciales actores a nivel de Nicho de Innovación en la Ciudad de Guatemala, 19 de abril de 2017
- 69 CDAIS Country Periodic Report (November 2015 - June 2016)
- 70 Estudio de Alcance, December 2015
- 71 Documento de Proyecto CDAIS - Componente Guatemala
- 72 CDAIS Country Annual report 2016
- 73 Inception Workshop report, 25-26 November 2015

- 74 Primer Encuentro para la formación de un Equipo Nacional para la Evaluación de Necesidades, 14-15 April 2016
- 75 Propuesta de Plan de Trabajo para la Evaluación de Necesidades
- 76 Taller para la Formación de un Equipo de Facilitadores Nacionales de Innovación para la Evaluación de Necesidades, August 2016

Honduras

- 77 CDAIS Country Annual report 2016
- 78 Ayuda Memoria Reunión equipo nacional para la evaluación de necesidades, 22-23 September 2016
- 79 Primer Encuentro para la formación de un equipo nacional para la evaluación de necesidades, 12 April 2016
- 80 CDAIS Country Periodic report (November 2015 - June 2016)
- 81 Documento de Proyecto CDAIS - Componente Honduras
- 82 Inception Workshop report, 18-19 November 2015

Guatemala and Honduras

- 83 Talleres para la Validación de Necesidades y Plan de Acción para el Desarrollo de Capacidades en Nichos de Innovación Agrícola en Guatemala (20-22 de Marzo 2017) y en Honduras (28-30 de Marzo 2017)
- 84 Workshop report - CNA validation and CD action plans Innovation niches in Guatemala and Honduras
- 85 Lessons Learnt NIF Training Guatemala and Honduras

Laos

- 86 CDAIS Country Periodic Report (November 2015 - June 2016)
- 87 CDAIS Project Document - Laos Component
- 88 CDAIS Country Annual report 2016
- 89 National Inception and Planning Workshop report, 8-9 February 2016
- 90 LoA-signed with EIAR
- 91 Training report to CDAIS Mission, 6-24 June 2016
- 92 Scoping Studies Report

Rwanda

- 93 Lessons learned and action points from the CDAIS Rwanda Validation Workshop (7th December 2016) and the Marketplace (8th December 2016)
- 94 Lessons Learnt NIF Training Rwanda
- 95 CDAIS Country Periodic Report (November 2015 – June 2016)
- 96 CDAIS Country Annual report 2016
- 97 Inception and Planning Workshop report, 10-11 November 2015
- 98 Report on Capacity Needs Assessment Validation Workshop and Marketplace, 7-8 December 2016
- 99 Draft Minutes of the CDAIS Steering Committee and Signatories Meeting
- 100 Documento de Proyecto CDAIS - Rwanda Component

Appendix 3. People interviewed³³

Name	Organization
Agrinatura	
<i>5 Semi-structured Interviews [3 women, 60 percent]</i>	
Guy Poulter	Director Agrinatura (up until 1 May)
Carolyn Glynn	President elect Agrinatura
Richard Hawkins	Director ICRA (Agrinatura-EEIG Coordinating Organization for CDAIS), Member of PMT & POC
Myra Wopereis	Agrinatura Project Coordinator
Hanneke Lam	POC/CDAIS Agrinatura mgt
TAP/FAO headquarters	
<i>8 Semi-structured Interviews [3 women, 37 percent]</i>	
Karin Nichterlein	FAO Lead Technical Officer for CDAIS, TAP Secretariat
Ilka Gómez	FAO Assistant
Andrea Sonino	FAO
Sami Gaiji,	FAO Head Research and Extension
Abdoulaye Saley Moussa	AGDR
Sally Berman	FAO Capacity Development Team Leader
Christian Grovermann	Former FAO
Patrick Kalas	OPCC, FAO Capacity Development Division
Manuela Bucciarelli	FAO CDAIS Consultant
EC DEVCO headquarters	
<i>2 Semi-structured Interviews [0 women, 0 percent]</i>	
Roberto Aparicio Martín	EC Policy Officer
Pierre Fabre	EC Policy Officer
Angola	
<i>9 Semi-structured Interviews [4 women, 44 percent]</i>	
Mamoudou Diallo	FAOR
Ana Melo	Agrinatura Focal Person Angola
Afonso Zola	FAO Project Contact
Madalena Teles	Agrinatura Focal Person
Domingos MPanzo	Former National Project Coordinator
Susana Martins	EU Delegation
Antonino Kamutali	NIF
Imaculada Henriques	NIF
Clemente de Oliveira	NIF
Bangladesh	
<i>7 Semi-structured Interviews [4 women, 57 percent]</i>	
Claire Coote	Agrinatural Focal Person
Kasi Jewel	Super NIF
Roxana Wahab	Super NIF
Nasreen Sultana	Country Project Manager, FAO

33 Some of them were interviewed several times as they had several responsibilities.

Shahjahan	National Project Coordinator, BARC
Sue Lautze	FAOR
Mike Robson	Former FAOR
Burkina Faso	
<i>7 Semi-structured Interviews [3 women, 43 percent]</i>	
Zachary Segda	FAO Country Project Manager
George Yameogo	Project Coordinator
Aurelie Toillier	Agrinatura Focal Person
Nomandé Prosper Kola	Consultant
Raymond Kiogo	NIF
Lassaya Nikiema	NIF
Azara Nfon Dibie	NIF
Ethiopia	
<i>10 Semi-structured Interviews [1 women, 10 percent]</i>	
Heneke Vermeulen	Agrinatura Focal Person
Amanuel Assefa	Country Programme Manager, FAO Consultant
Kebebe Ergano	Assistant to Country Programme Manager, Agrinatura Consultant
Dr Chilot	National Project Coordinator, EIAR
Eshetu Mulatu	EU Point Person
Taffase Mesfin	NIF
Mr Moti	Director of VEDFACA (lead niche partner organization)
Gemchu Nemie	Executive Director, Ethiopian Animal Feed Industry Association (lead niche partner)
Shifa Dilgeba	Board Chair of Edget Union (niche partner; participant in a CNA)
Abrha Mefin	Head of Cooperative Promotions Office (niche partner; participant in a CNA)
<i>Focus Groups [1 woman, 14 percent]</i>	
3 representatives of ADPLAC (1 woman) 4 members of the National Working Group (0 women)	
Guatemala	
<i>11 Semi-structured Interviews [2 women, 18 percent]</i>	
Diego Recalde	FAOR
Mayor Estrada	FAOR Assistant
Julio Catalán	FAO Country Project Manager
Marco Vinicio Cahueque	Project Coordinator
Belarmino Gómez Gálvez	MAGA DIREPRO
Massimo Battaglia	Agrinatura Focal Person
Mayor Estrada	FAO Project Contact
Nury Furlan	CD Regional Expert, Agrinatura Project Support
Belarmino Gomez	MAGA Contact Person
Marlon Fernando Ac Pangán	NIF cacao
Percy Ac Pangán	NIF cacao
Mirna Lissete Ayala	NI frijol
Marcos Martínez	NIF Aguacate

Honduras	
<i>8 Semi-structured Interviews</i> [1 women, 12 percent]	
Maria Julia Cárdenas	FAOR
Lenin Gradiz	FAOR Assistant
Edgardo Navarro	FAO Gerente Nacional del Proyecto
Francisco Herrera	PRONAGRO Contact Person
Stefano Del Debbio	Agrinatura Focal Person
Nury Furlan	CD Regional Expert, Agrinatura Project Support
Laurent Sillano	EU Delegation
Fernando Cáceres	EU Delegation
Antonio Silva	IICA
<i>4 (34 people) Focus Groups</i> [15 women, 44 percent]	
4 representatives of the frijol partnership [3 women] 8 representatives of the frijol partnership [3 women] 10 representatives of the papa partnership [4 women] 12 representatives of the café partnership [5 women]	
Laos	
<i>12 Semi-structured Interviews</i> [2 women, 17 percent]	
Patrick Daquino	Agrinatura Focal Person
Stephen Rudgard	FAOR
Dr Bountong	National Project Coordinator, NAPRI
Oudong Keomipheth	Country Program Manager, NAFRI employee, seconded to FAO
Dalaphone Sihanath	Super NIF
Phouthasen Vongsipasom	Chairman of Cattle Group; part of cattle niche; attended CNA
Koen Eveaert	EU Focal Person
Anongsack Chantavong	Employee of Phonesack Company, part of cattle niche
Thavisith Bounyasouk	Deputy Director, Standards Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, part of vegetable niche
Phouthasen Vongsipsom	Chairman of organic vegetable group, attended CNA
Vank Souksakoun	Banking institute
Mrs Kirivong	Meat processor, linked to pig niche
<i>Focus Groups</i> [4 women, 44 percent]	
6 NIFs (2 women) 3 members of pig raising niche (2 women)	
Rwanda	
<i>9 Semi-structured Interviews</i> [0 women, 0 percent]	
Attaher Maiga	FAOR
Hans Dobson	Agrinatura Focal Person
Gilbert Kaytare	FAO Country Project Manager
Otto Vianney Muhinda	FAO Focal Person
Charles Murekezi	Project Coordinator
Arnaud de Vanssay	EUD
Agustin Mitijima	NIF cassava partnership
Marc Schut	IITA Social Scientist
Yves Nicholas Rutagungira	Cassava Plant Head of Agronomist Department

<i>2 (13 people) Focus Groups [4 women, 31 percent]</i>
6 representatives of the cassava partnership 7 representatives of the Rwangingo Partnership
TAP Survey respondents (list of institutions)
Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa
Consortium national pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation, la santé animale et l'environnement
Associação Brasileira das Entidades Estaduais de Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science
Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International
Brazilian Enterprise for Agricultural Research
Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services
Gesellschaft fuer internationale Zusammenarbeit
International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
African Insect Science for Food and Health
International Centre for development oriented Research in Agriculture
Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Services
National Resources Institute, University of Greenwich/AGRINATURA
Programa Cooperativo de Investigación, Desarrollo e Innovación Agrícola para los Trópicos Suramericanos
United States Agency for International Development
University of Alberta and President GCHERA
Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI)
Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa
Consortium national pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation, la santé animale et l'environnement
Associação Brasileira das Entidades Estaduais de Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science
Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International
Brazilian Enterprise for Agricultural Research
Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services

Appendix 4. Interview guidelines

These guidelines were used to conduct semi-structured interviews with: FAO's Representative and Project Team (including National Steering Committees and National Working Groups), Government counterparts (Ministry of Agriculture), European Union Delegation and National Innovation Facilitators (NIFs).

They will also serve as a guide to the interviews with the different actors in the 'niches' (e.g. farmers, cooperatives, associations, private companies, etc.) and other potential partners (e.g. research institutions, service providers, international organizations, etc.) Nevertheless, we necessarily need to adapt to the heterogeneity of these groups and the interviews will be less structured (we do not know in advance who we will meet during the visits to the niches).

	QUESTIONS	FAOR	Project Team	Government counterparts	EU Delegation	NIFs
EQ1	6) Do the project objectives and expected results respond to the country needs and priorities? Is the project well aligned with the current national policies and strategies?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	7) Does the project and/or the TAP Common Framework offer an appropriate methodology and toolbox to address the challenges and needs in the area of AIS?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	8) Do the project objectives and/or the TAP Common Framework contribute to FAO's Strategic Framework and CPF?	✓	✓			
	9) Do the project objectives and/or the TAP Common Framework contribute to the EU country strategy (NIP, budget support, etc.)				✓	
	10) Do you think that the cause-effect relationships identified at project design are logical and plausible?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
EQ2	11) Does the TAP Common Framework offer a robust and user friendly methodology to identify the CD needs in the different niches?		✓	✓		✓
	12) What were the main difficulties during the process? What could have been done differently?		✓	✓		✓
	13) Have the implemented activities produced any effects/ changes at individual/organization level?		✓	✓		✓
	14) Do you think that the training was provided in a timely and reliable manner? To what extent do you think that your knowledge has increased?		✓			✓
	15) Were there any delays during implementation? Do you know the cause of the delay? Were there any actions taken to expedite processes?		✓			
	16) What are the prospects of achieving the expected results? Is the timeframe realistic (delays)?		✓	✓	✓	

	QUESTIONS	FAOR	Project Team	Government counterparts	EU Delegation	NIFs
EQ3	17) Do you think that the governance and management structures of the project facilitate its implementation?		✓	✓	✓	
	18) Are the roles and responsibilities sufficiently clear (e.g. reporting requirements)? If they have a National Steering Committee and/or National Working Group (Ethiopia): how is the NSC's or NWG's coordination going? Have there been any difficulties in the decision-making process?		✓	✓		
	19) Is there any added value in the implementing partnership? Was it the cause of any delays during the implementation?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	20) Is the coordinator providing adequate and timely support?		✓			
	21) Is the decision-making process efficient? Is the Steering Committee working as planned and is it able to move the project ahead?		✓	✓	✓	
	22) Are you satisfied with your involvement in the project?			✓		
	23) To what extent did the project factor in strengthening local ownership and commitment among key stakeholders?		✓	✓		
	24) [ONLY FOR LAOS] Have the M&E framework been implemented? Is it clear (indicators, sources, etc.) Was it possible to collect all the information as planned? Is it efficient?		✓			
EQ4	25) Has the project followed a participatory and inclusive process? To what extent have all the relevant actors participated in the activities?		✓	✓	✓	✓
	26) To what extent is the project fostering the creation of partnerships?		✓	✓	✓	✓
	27) Were there any complementarities and synergies with the work of other stakeholders?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
	28) Were any of the activities jointly implemented with other partners?		✓	✓		
	29) Were the activities linked with similar initiatives implemented by other stakeholders?		✓			

	QUESTIONS	FAOR	Project Team	Government counterparts	EU Delegation	NIFs
EQ5	30) Do you think that gender, human rights and environment issues were sufficiently considered during project design? FOR FAO PROJECT FOCAL POINTS: are they familiar with the FAO Policy on Gender Equality and FAO Environmental and Social Management Standards?		✓	✓		
	31) Were gender aspects or equality issues (i.e. minority groups, indigenous people) considered during the identification/selection of the niches? If so, how?		✓	✓		
	32) Do the selected niches offer an opportunity to promote equality and women rights?		✓	✓		
	33) Were gender aspects considered during the needs assessments? If so, how?		✓	✓		
	34) Are any of the identified needs related to gender equality? If not, why?		✓	✓		
	35) Could the project 'offer' specific (CD) activities to promote equality and women rights? (enabling environment)		✓	✓		
	36) Do you think that the project is using/will use the resources available in the country (technical, human, etc.)?		✓	✓		
	37) Do you consider that the project is using/will use national-generated knowledge (e.g. to identify good practices, to establish indicators, to generate policies, etc.)?		✓	✓		
	38) Does the project promote partnerships to improve after-project financial capacity?		✓	✓		
	39) Is there any scaling or replication plan envisaged? (budget)		✓	✓		
	40) How will the policy dialogue be implemented? How would the project ensure that all the relevant actors participate in the project?		✓	✓		
	41) To what extent will the policy dialogue succeed in transforming the changes at individual/organizational level into systemic changes? What are the preconditions for success? What could be done to maximize the impact?		✓	✓		

Appendix 5. Survey questionnaire

SECTION A: General information about the respondent

Where do you work?

Association of Agricultural Research Institutions in the Near East and North Africa
African Forum for Agricultural Advisory services
Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
Consortium national pour l'agriculture, l'alimentation, la santé animale et l'environnement
Agrinatura
Asia Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutes
Agricultural Research Council
Associação Brasileira das Entidades Estaduais de Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural
Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science
Centre for Agricultural Bioscience International
Central Asia and Caucasus Association of Agricultural Research Institutes
Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences
Centro Agronomico Tropical de Investigacion y Ensenanza
Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
Consiglio per la Ricerca alla Sperimentazione in Agricoltura
Consiglio per la Ricerca in Agricoltura e l'Analisi dell'Economia Agraria
Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation/EFARD
European Commission, DEVCO
European Forum on Agricultural Research for Development/EFARD
Brazilian Enterprise for Agricultural Research
Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN
Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
Foro de las Américas para la Investigación y Desarrollo Tecnológico Agropecuario
Global Consortium of Higher Education and Research for Agriculture
Global Forum on Agricultural Research
Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services
Gesellschaft fuer internationale Zusammenarbeit
Indonesian Agency for Agricultural Research and Development
International Center for Biosaline Agriculture
International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
African Insect Science for Food and Health
International Centre for development oriented Research in Agriculture.
International Fund for Agricultural Development
Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences
Istituto Nazionale di Economia Agraria
National Institute for the Agricultural and Food Research and Technology
Instituto Nacional de investigación forestales, agrícolas y pecuarias

Instituto Nacional de Tecnología Agropecuaria

International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture Secretariat

Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Services

National Resources Institute, University of Greenwich/AGRINATURA

Programa Cooperativo de Investigación, Desarrollo e Innovación Agrícola para los Trópicos Suramericanos

United States Agency for International Development

United States Department of Agriculture

World Bank

Young Professionals' Platform on Agricultural Research for Development

Other (please specify): _____

What is your position?

Manager/Director

Technical personnel

Administrative personnel

Researcher

Other (Please specify): _____

Please specify your sex.

Female

Male

SECTION B: TAP and CDAIS

Are you satisfied with the level of information that you have received on the CDAIS project, in particular the TAP Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agriculture Innovation Systems?

Very satisfied

Sufficiently satisfied

Somewhat satisfied

Not satisfied

I do not know

In your view, how appropriate is the methodology and toolbox proposed by the TAP Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agriculture Innovation Systems to address the challenges and needs related to Agriculture Innovation Systems?

Very appropriate

Quite appropriate

A little appropriate

Not appropriate

I do not know

Could you please explain why?

In your view, is the CDAIS project effective in supporting the implementation of the TAP action plan?

- Very effective
- Quite effective
- A little effective
- Not effective
- I do not know

Could you please explain why?

TAP is a multilateral dynamic facilitation mechanism, which aims to foster better coherence and greater impact of capacity development for agricultural innovation in tropical countries. In your view, has the CDAIS project contributed to establish or strengthen the TAP mechanism? (Please select only one option)

- Yes, including both coherence and impact
- Yes, coherence
- Yes, impact
- Yes, others
- No
- I do not know

If you think that it has contributed, could you please provide more details?

Do you think the CDAIS project has contributed to generate interest in the TAP Common Framework?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

Please specify interest from who:

If Yes → Q9

If No → Q10

Could you please provide details on how it did it and some examples?

.....

Have you promoted the TAP Common Framework in any way?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

If Yes → Q11

If No → Q12

Could you please provide details on how you did it (e.g. context, instruments, reactions, etc.)?

Is the TAP actively promoting the adoption of the Common Framework by other actors?

Yes

No

I do not know

Could you please explain why? -----

The Common Framework considers it important to build capacity at three levels: individual, organizational and enabling environment. Do you consider this useful?

Very useful

Quite useful

A little useful

Not useful

I do not know

Could you please explain **why**? -----

Is CDAIS right to focus primarily on functional capacities as opposed to technical capacities?

Yes

No

Please explain:

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following capacities are the most crucial to adapt and respond in order to realize the potential of innovation?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagreed	Strongly Disagree	I do not have sufficient information to respond to this question
Capacity to navigate complexity					
Capacity to collaborate					
Capacity to reflect and learn					
Capacity to engage in strategic and political processes					

Do you think that there are other capacities that are equally or more important?

The CDAIS aims at establishing a global partnership on Capacity Development (CD) in Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS) on a sustainable footing. This involves establishing an effective global mechanism to promote, coordinate and evaluate CD approaches to strengthen AIS and pilot the approach in eight countries. Do you consider the CDAIS project's four-year implementation period realistic for the objectives it wants to achieve?

Yes

No

I do not know

Could you please explain why?

Should the TAP Common Framework (including its tools and approach) incorporate a gender perspective?

Yes

No

I do not know

Could you please explain why?

Do you think there is an added value in the implementing partnership between Agrinatura and FAO?

Yes

No

I do not know

Could you please explain why?

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	I do not know
The Common Framework is too theoretical					
The approach proposed by the Common Framework is too complicated					
The tool box offered by the Common Framework is operational					
The approach proposed by the Common Framework is effective at the system level					
The approach proposed by the Common Framework is effective at the niche level					

Please provide any comments you might have.

TAPipedia

TAPipedia, the information sharing system developed within the context of TAP and under the CDAIS project, is designed to enhance knowledge exchange in support of Capacity Development (CD) for Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS). Do you think that TAPipedia is an effective tool for achieving this?

Yes

No

I do not know

Could you please explain why? _____

Has your organization contributed to TAPipedia (design, content development and promotion)?

Yes

No

I do not know

Could you please explain how? _____

Do you think that TAP Partner Meetings and Assemblies are appropriate fora to gather major CD for AIS stakeholders?

Yes

No

I do not know

If not, can you please explain why? _____

Thank you for the time taken to respond to the survey and share your feedback with us!



6. List of Annexes

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

Annex 1. Terms of Reference for the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems Project (CDAIS)

Annex 2. Project's Logical Framework



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