

9.6 | Session D6: Innovations in the rural development and agriculture sectors

Moderator

- ◆ **Renata Mirulla** Facilitator of EvalForward, Office of Evaluation, FAO
- ◆ **Monica Lomena-Gelis** Senior Evaluation Officer, Independent Office of Evaluation, IFAD

Panellists

- ◆ **Rodrigue Siangoye Owoumbou**, Head of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of the Agricultural and Rural Development Project-Second Phase Gabon: (PDAR2), Ministry of Agriculture, Gabon
- ◆ **Mor Seck**, Permanent Secretary, Commission for the Evaluation and Monitoring of Public Policies and Programmes, Presidency of the Republic of Senegal
- ◆ **Konaté Sekou Tidiani**, Director of Coordination, Cooperation, Statistical Planning and Communication, Institute of Statistics of Djibouti
- ◆ **N'Dia Youssouf**, Director of Control, Monitoring and Evaluation, Ministry of Planning and Development, Ivory Coast



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The session addressed the questions on how to strengthen national capacities in M&E and how innovations can reduce the gap between M&E and decision-making. It examined specific challenges and opportunities in environment, agriculture and food security sectors. Representatives from four African countries shared their experiences around strengthening the national M&E systems and its use for decision-making in these sectors.

This session explored innovations in M&E to better respond to the needs of decision-makers, with a focus on agriculture.

- ♦ **The panel addressed M&E capacity-development in four African countries** (Gabon, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Djibouti), focusing on the agricultural sector, environment and food security. Experiences were shared about how to strengthen M&E units in Ministries of Agriculture and how to conceive nascent and embryonic M&E systems in settings/sectors where these are largely absent.
- ♦ **The agriculture sector is fundamental to the economy of many African countries.** The EvalForward platform supports knowledge exchange on evaluation practices in agriculture and food security, with the aim of contributing to the development of national capacity. To strengthen connections to decision-makers, innovations such as geographical information systems are needed, stemming from national or regional agricultural research centres.
- ♦ **Some countries do have agriculture sector specific M&E systems, but they lack capacity and resources.** Reliable agricultural data remains a challenge and a constraint for policymaking and monitoring and evaluation. Supporting national statistical offices is key. The institutionalization of M&E systems is a relative issue; where it is institutionalized it assumes importance.
- ♦ **Country experience illustrated many of these constraints and lessons:**
 - ♦ In Gabon an M&E unit is being developed to monitor and evaluate all agriculture-related projects, including those funded by donors. M&E plans exist at the department level, along with focal points in departments of the Ministry of Agriculture who are working on a common M&E action plan. Implementation of the plan continues to be a challenge.
 - ♦ Ivory Coast adopted legislation on public policy evaluation. However, a challenge in moving forward on this legislation is the availability of evaluators with expertise in the sector.
 - ♦ Senegal recently commissioned an evaluation of its agriculture policy (including other sub-sectors such as fisheries). After the evaluation, there will be revisions to the policy. The country lacks an agriculture sector M&E system and has not established linkages between various ministries in monitoring national programmes. The commission for evaluation and monitoring of public policies and programmes within the President's Office provides an overarching framework, and aims to offer a structure for sectoral monitoring and evaluation.
 - ♦ In Djibouti, the Ministry of Agriculture has yet to start monitoring activities and agriculture currently accounts for less than 1 percent of GDP. The pandemic has prompted key actors to start with an agricultural census. The Association of Evaluators also has a role to play in advancing this agenda.

Conclusion

Agriculture could be the lead sector in M&E systems in some African countries because of its importance for economic and sustainable development, and in the light of renewed attention to the sector. This could spearhead a drive among other sectors to develop NES and evidence-based decision-making.

Quote



“The good news is that you don’t have to fix a broken system – you can build new ones based on international best practice.”

— Participant

Watch the session



Video recording of the Session D6:

[NEC 2022 | Stream D6 | Innovations en suivi et évaluation dans les secteurs de l'agriculture - YouTube](#)

