PROJECT EVALUATION SERIES

Midterm Evaluation - Forest and Farm Facility – GUATEMALA COUNTRY CASE REPORT

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

**OFFICE OF EVALUATION**

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# Acronyms and abbreviations

ACOFOP Asociación de Comunidades Forestales de Petén

ANFOC Alianza Nacional de Organizaciones Forestales Comunitarias

COFO FAO Committee on Forestry

CONAP Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas

COP Conference of Parties

FAO Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FEDECOVERA Federación de Cooperativas de las Verapaces

FFF Forest and Farm Facility

FFPO Forest and farmer producers’ organization

FLEGT Forest law enforcement, governance and trade

IIED Institute for Environment and Development

INAB Instituto Nacional de Bosques

IUCN International Union for Conservation of Nature

MA&D Market analysis and development

MAGA Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganadería y Alimentación

MARN Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales

M&LS Monitoring and learning system

MTE Mid-term evaluation

NGOs Non-governemental organizations

OCRET Oficina de control de reservas territoriales

PFN Programa Nacional Forestal (National Forest Programme)

PINFOR Programa de Incentivos Forestales

PINPEP Programa de incentivos forestales para poseedores

de pequeñas extensiones de tierra de vocación forestal o agroforestal

PROBOSQUE Programa de fomento al establecimiento, recuperación, restauración, manejo, producción y protección de bosques en Guatemala

REDD Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation

SO FAO Strategic objective

Toc Theory of change

UNFCCC United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

USD United States dollar

VCD Value chain development

Contents

[Acknowledgements ii](#_Toc453014225)

[Acronyms and abbreviations iii](#_Toc453014226)

[Executive Summary 1](#_Toc453014227)

[1 Introduction 2](#_Toc453014228)

[1.1 Purpose of the evaluation 2](#_Toc453014229)

[1.1.1 Intended users 3](#_Toc453014230)

[1.2 Scope and objective of the evaluation 3](#_Toc453014231)

[1.3 Methodology 4](#_Toc453014232)

[2 Background and context of the project/programme 6](#_Toc453014233)

[2.1 Context of the project 6](#_Toc453014234)

[2.2 The theory of change 7](#_Toc453014235)

[3 Evaluation questions: key findings 12](#_Toc453014236)

[3.1 Evaluation question 1 12](#_Toc453014237)

[3.2 Evaluation question 2 13](#_Toc453014238)

[3.4 Evaluation question 4 16](#_Toc453014239)

[3.5 Evaluation question 5 30](#_Toc453014240)

[3.6 Evaluation question 6 32](#_Toc453014241)

[3.7 Evaluation question 7 34](#_Toc453014242)

[3.8 Evaluation question 8 35](#_Toc453014243)

[4 Crosscutting issues 36](#_Toc453014244)

[4.1 Evaluation question 9 36](#_Toc453014245)

[5 Conclusions and recommendations 37](#_Toc453014246)

[5.1 Conclusions 37](#_Toc453014247)

[6 Lessons learnt 42](#_Toc453014248)

# Introduction

1. The Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) is a multi-donor Programme hosted by FAO. It is overseen by a Steering Committee, and has a management team including staff from FAO, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). Its vision: “Smallholders, communities and indigenous peoples’ organizations have improved their livelihoods and the decision-making over forest and farm landscapes”.
2. It is set up as a five-year Programme, running from December 2012 to December 2017. The first significant funding was only received in August 2013, and a decision was taken to launch in-country activities in six paired pilot countries during 2013: Guatemala and Nicaragua (Latin America), The Gambia and Liberia (Africa), and Nepal and Myanmar (Asia). In November 23-24th, 2013, four more countries - Bolivia, Kenya, Zambia and Vietnam -, have been selected through a comprehensive selection process during the first six months of 2014 and work began in the second half of 2014 and the beginning of 2015. Expressions of interest have been received in various forms from over 44 countries and 70 forest and farm producer organizations, indicating unmet demand.
3. FFF activities are currently underway across the 10 countries, albeit at different stages of intervention; Guatemala is one of those countries. The interventions of the Project include work by Apex level producer organizations supported through partnership agreements, small grants to producer organizations to support enterprises and other organizational needs, multi-sectoral platforms le by government actors at national and sub-national levels, exchange visits and capacity building.
4. This MTE was conducted in accordance with the Agreements signed with donors. With two years left in the current Project, this Evaluation provides an opportunity to improve implementation and to envisage its future after December 2017.

## Purpose of the evaluation

1. The purpose of the MTE is to inform the Project Steering Committee, the Programme Management Team, the Donor Support Group and other stakeholders about the project’s progress and performance towards attaining the expected outputs and outcomes. The MTE draws specific conclusions and formulates recommendations for necessary further action by the Steering Committee, the Project Management Team and other international and in-country FFF parties. It also identifies specific good practices and lessons learned for the formulation and execution of other similar projects that address forestry governance or/and utilizing a small grant scheme.

## Intended users

1. The intended users of the results of this MTE include the FFF Steering Committee, the Donor Support Group, the Project Management Team the FFF national facilitators, implementing partners, FAO country office staff, government stakeholders, and other international and in-country FFF parties.

## Scope and objective of the evaluation

1. **Scope:** This MTE Evaluation assesses all key elements of the programme in Guatemala up to the date it is conducted (1st quarter 2016), across its interventions as outlined in its Theory of Change (ToC), with a representative set of forest and farmer producer organizations (FFPOs) and government partners.
2. **Objectives:** The FFF mid-term evaluation had the following specific objectives:
3. Assess progress made towards achieving project results; and
4. Identify design and implementation issues that need to be addressed in order to strengthen the project’s implementation towards the achievement of stated project results at the conclusion of the project.
5. In order to achieve these objectives, the evaluation sought to deliver findings under the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact; partnerships and coordination, normative values, sustainability, and coherence and synergies. In this regard, the evaluation was guided by the following preliminary evaluation questions respective to the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, partnership and coordination, sustainability, and FAO’s normative values. In the course of the work, the MTE added a question on the “Likelihood of impact of the Project” to allow capturing the Project’s crucial early effects that are not captured by its M&LS.[[1]](#footnote-1)
6. **Relevance**

* Evaluation question 1: How relevant is the FFF primary focus and logic in terms of its stated mission, in relation to the target countries’ contexts, to broader sustainable development initiatives, and to smallholder farmers' needs?
* Evaluation question 2: How and to what extent does the project contribute to the broader strategic FAO objectives? Sub-questions: (2.1) How coherent is FFF in terms of how it fits in with the policies, programmes and projects undertaken by the governments, FAO and other development partners? (2.2) To what extent has the FFF integrated its programme with other technical teams within the Forestry Department, with the internal priorities within the FAO building on Country Programming Frameworks, Regional Initiatives, and especially by linking with the Strategic Objectives (in this case SO3 Output 1.1 and SO2 Output 2.2)? (2.2) Is FFF coherent with other forestry initiatives operating within the target countries?
* Evaluation question 3: Was the project design appropriate for achieving the mission, vision and outcomes?

1. **Effectiveness**

* Evaluation question 4: To what extent is the FFF on track to achieving outcomes across the three pillars and what changes can be observed that are attributable the FFF’s interventions and are directly linked to the FFF’s main objectives? Sub-questions: (4.1) To what extent were producer organizations strengthened for business development and engagement in policy dialogue? (4.2) Did FFF Catalyze multi-sectoral policy platforms? (4.3) Did FFF Link local voices to global processes?

1. **Efficiency**

* Evaluation question 5: To what extent is the current operational modality contributing to the efficient achievement of the program outcomes?

1. **Likelihood of impact**

* Evaluation question 6: To what extent is FFF contributing to progress towards expected outcomes and impact?

1. **Partnership and Coordination**

* Evaluation question 7: Is FFF having success in engaging other partners in the FFF supported processes?

1. **Sustainability**

* Evaluation question 8: How sustainable is the FFF concept of investing in the organizational capacity of forest farm producer organizations – and how might this be enhanced?

1. **Normative values**

* Evaluation question 9: To what extent have gender and human rights been taken into account in the design of the FFF and during the implementation?

## Methodology

1. To answer the above Evaluation Questions, the MTE’s approach is based on mixed methods and triangulation of information in order to ensure that the evaluation findings fully respond to the purpose of the evaluation. The methods used included the following:

* Review of existing documentation on FFF:
* Analysis of FFF self-reported information on interventions in Guatemala, in particular the Annual Reports 2014 and 2015;
* Semi-structured interviews with key informants, stakeholders and participants, supported by the questions listed in the Evaluation Matrix;
* Target FFPOs discussion and direct observation during the visit in the Country in February/March;
* Validation of MTE mission observations through debriefing discussions with key stakeholders at country and FAO HQ levels.

# Background and context of the project/programme

## 2.1 Context of the Guatemala FFF programme

1. The Republic of Guatemala has an area of 108.889 Km2. The country’s forests cover 3,722,595 ha (34.2% of its total area), of which 50% is located in the North, specifically in the Department of Petén. About 51.0% of the national population is rural and the population that identifies itself as indigenous constitutes 40%. The illiteracy rate is about 16.6%.
2. Guatemala started its national forest program in 1989 under the name “Forest Action Plan for Guatemala”. The country cooperated with FAO in the forest sector under two mechanisms: NFP Facility (2003-09) and Global Forest Partnership (2009-13). These mechanisms have supported the implementation of the national forestry Agenda, of which the National Institute of Forests (INAB) is the focal point. The Forest and Farm Facility began operations in March 2013, with a budget of USD 500’000. It identified two key actors to implement its activities: INAB Institute national of forests of Guatemala, INAB and the National Alliance of Forest Communities and Agroforesters (Alianza). It signed agreements with these two actors with the aim of getting their commitment to promote the visibility and positioning of the forest sector agenda in Government policy agendas.
3. FFF’s beneficiaries in Guatemala are the following:

* 11 second-level organizations (with about 77 000 members managing about 750 000 ha forest) which are members of *Alianza Nacional de Organizaciones Forestales Comunitarias*
* Cross-sectoral Coordination Group: MARN, MAGA, INAB, CONAP
* Technical Committee to support the design and advocacy for the Probosque Law
* INAB / PFN
* Cross-sectoral dialogue platform on energy (Firewood, Forest and Food Security , Forest and Economy)
* 20 Micro, small and medium forest community enterprises forestales comunitarias
* 2 producer’s chains (South Petén, Las Verapaces).

1. With the implementation of the activities aimed at supporting Alianza, it was able to participate in the discussions that led to the adoption of the country’s Forest law, PROBOSQUE. Thus Alianza got linked to policy processes on forest related issues through he Inter-Institutional Coordination Group (GCI), composed of the Ministry of agriculture, livestock and food (MAGA), the Ministry of environment and natural resources (MARN), Nationa Forest Servie (INAB), and the National Council of Protected Areas (CONAP). Alianza links in particular to the cross-sectoral platforms on change climate, indigenous people and climate change, REDD+, and forest landscape restauration.

## The reconstructed theory of change

1. FFF developed a generic ToC that links development results at FFPOs level (organization capacity, access to technologies, access to markets) with voice and participation in policy processes at national and global levels, in order to achieve the intended Impact. The strategies to achieve the Impact are arranged under three Pillars, 4 Outcomes and 7 Outputs as presented in Figure 1. The MTE found that on this basis, the internal logic of the project is largely sound between the Outputs and Outcomes level. However, a close analysis shows that it does not express the conditions that should be in place to allow development results to reach impact. The ToC lacks important building blocks in terms of Assumptions and Impact Drivers[[2]](#footnote-2), between Outcomes level and Impacts level.
2. It should be recalled that it is between the levels of Outcomes and Impacts that the design should express the main changes that are expected to take place as “Intermediate States (IS)”, as the stepping-stones to Impacts in the respective pathways. It is therefore important to indicate explicitly in the ToC what are the required assumptions allowing Outcomes to lead to intermediate results (IR), and from there to planned impacts. The MTE reconstructed the ToC based on the original one in order to include the missing building blocks (Assumptions and Impact Drivers); this provides a framework that more clearly articulates the conditions that are required to reach the expected impact. The reconstructed ToC does not modify the Outputs, Outcomes, Impact and Vision. Rather it places them together with Intermediate Results (the current Pillars), Assumptions and Impact Drivers into a graphic representation of the FFF.
3. The different FFF ToC building blocks are illustrated as shown in Figure 2. The original ToC blocks are illustrated in green color and connecting black arrows, and are unchanged.
4. Dashed black arrows are added to show the actual connectedness from the Project implementation experience to date. Other colors indicate the blocks that are missing in the original ToC: blue for the Assumptions, and dark orange for Impact Drivers.
5. Based on information on FFF implementation in Guatemala, the reconstructed ToC (Figure 2) shows that to reach the FFF Impact, three Intermediary States (IS) that correspond to the 3 Pillars must be achieved; these are:

**Outcome 1:** Strengthened producer organizations engage in policy dialogue

**Outcome 2**: Local communities and producers are organized and thereby have the capacity to invest in sustainable forest and farm management and integrate into market

**Outcome 3**: Cross-sectoral coordination (...) for sustainable forest and farm management operating at national and sub-national levels

**Outcome 4:** National and global agendas and initiatives (…) are informed about the knowledge and priorities of smallholders, women, communities and IPs.

**Vision:** Smallholders, communities and indigenous peoples organizations have improved their livelihoods and decision-making over forest and farm landscapes

**Impact:** Smallholders, women and indigenous peoples groups have improved income and food security from sustainable forest and farm management

**Pillar1:** Strengthen smallholder, women and indigenous peoples’ produces’ producer organizations for business/livelihoods and policy engagement

**Pillar 2:** Catalyze multi-sectoral stakeholder policy platforms with governments at local and national levels

**Pillar 3**: Link local voices and learning to global processes through communication and information dissemination

**Output 4.1**: International and regional organizations representing smallholder-, women-, and IPs groups in international fora and negotiations have established communication and information channels to their respective constituencies at national and local levels (….)

**Output 4.1**: International and regional organizations representing smallholder-, women-, and IPs groups in international fora and negotiations have established communication and information channels….

**Output 1.2:** Collaboration for policy dialogue between smallholder, women, community, IPs groups, large scale private sector and government enhanced

**Output 3.1**: Establishment and coordination of government’s inter-ministerial multi-stakeholder platforms/committees (involving local organizations, CSOs, and the private sector) facilitated

**Output 3.2**: Increased information sharing and coordination between sectors results in improved understanding and implementation of different policies and programs affecting FFPOs within forest and farm landscapes

**Output 1.1:** Dispersed local forest and farm smallholders, women, and IPs are organized and strengthened to cooperate in (effective and gender inclusive) networks, alliances and federations

**Output 2.1**: Local FFPOs have knowledge about business development (…) and access to financing mechanisms

**Output 2.2**: Establishment of services such as producer hubs in support of small scale FFF- facilitated (and actively provided) services to female and male members

**Output 2.3**: Experience sharing and exchanges between FFPOs involving men and women result in increased resilience, improved practices and continued networking

**Figure 1:**

**Figure 2: Reconstructed FFF Theory of Change**

Smallholders, communities and indigenous peoples organizations have improved their livelihoods and decision-making over forest and farm landscapes

FFF Impact/Vision

Intermediary states (IR)/Assumptions (A)/Impact Drivers (ID)

Outcomes

Producers are organized for policy dialogue

Producers are organized for business

Cross-sectoral policy coordination for sustainable forest and farm management

National and global agendas are informed about the priorities of local producers

ID: Women’s organizations entrepreneurship supported in selected value chains.

ID: Lessons and best practices from FFF allow sharing experiences

**A/ID:** Avenues for exchange at regional and global levels are offered

**A:** Authorities at all levels create enabling conditions for FFPOs strengthening

ID: FFPOs access to national & export markets improved through VCD

A: Partnerships with Banks extend loans to FFPOs.

IS-1: FFPOs capacity for doing business is enhanced and they engage in policy decision processes

IS-2: Multi-sectoral stakeholders policy platforms are catalyzed

IS-3: Local voices are linked to global processes

1. IS-1: FFPOs capacity for doing business is enhanced and they engage in policy decision;
2. IS-2: Multi-sectoral stakeholders policy platforms are catalyzed;
3. IS-3: Local voices are linked to global processes.
4. To achieve IS-1, The MTE found that the following conditions must be met:

A: Authorities at all levels create enabling conditions for FFF strengthening

A: Partnerships with Banks extend loans to FFPOs.

ID: FFPOs access to national & export markets improved through VCD.

1. To achieve IS-2, the MTE also found that the following conditions must be met:

A: Authorities at all levels create enabling conditions for FFPOs strengthening

ID: Lessons and best practices from FFF allow sharing experiences.

To achieve IS-3, the following conditions must be met:

A/ID: Avenues for exchange at regional and global levels are offered

ID: Lessons and best practices from FFF allow sharing experiences

The Vision is stated as “Smallholders, communities and indigenous peoples’ organizations have improved their livelihoods and decision-making over forest and farm landscapes» is wider than the context of Guatemala. This is why the MTE added a plain black arrow linking the Intermediary State “Local voices are linked to global processes” to the Vision, while the arrow link to Impact is dashed.

# Evaluation questions: key findings

1. This section presents the findings which are based on the desk review of the FFF documents, interviews with FFF Team, in-country field visits and interviews with target FFPOs at grassroots level.

## Evaluation question 1: How relevant is FFF primary focus and logic in terms of its stated mission, in relation to the target countries’ contexts, to broader sustainable development initiatives, and to smallholder farmers' needs?

1. The FFF approach of supporting producer organizations for business and policy engagement as an effective strategy for achieving the improvement of their livelihoods and decision-making over forest and farm landscapes is relevant to Guatemala’s national policies. The Government welcomed FFF support to its effort in coordinating multi-stakeholder and cross-sector dialogue in forests related agendas, and in the agendas of close sectors such as agriculture, economy, energy, food security, biodiversity and water.

## Evaluation question 2: Consistency with FAO’s strategic objectives: How and to what extent does the project contribute to the broader FAO strategic objectives?

1. The Project is particularly aligned with FAO’s Strategic Objective 3 (SO3), “Reduce rural poverty”, to which it strongly contributes. Under SO3, FAO recognizes that rural poverty is mostly concentrated among households of small-scale subsistence producers and family farmers, among others. It further recognizes that women are often amongst the most marginalized and need strengthened rights to the natural resources on which they depend. Like SO3, its focus target groups are also poor smallholders’ farmers whose livelihoods are tied to small forests and farm assets.
2. Under SO3, FAO’s focus is on a holistic approach to rural development and poverty reduction. Likewise, FFF in Guatemala emphasizes integrated approaches in which forests and other farm components are considered functionally interdependent components of the same rural landscapes that must be sustainably managed and used to improve the livelihoods of their users. FFF also focuses on opportunities that strengthen linkages between forests and crops and animal for sustainability reasons. In this regard, FFPOs met in the country told the MTE Team that they consider trees on their farms as crops like any other crop.
3. More specifically, the FFF is aligned to FAO’s corporate outcome 3.1: “The rural poor have enhanced and equitable access to productive resources, services, organizations and markets, and can manage their resources more sustainably”. The output under this outcome to which FFF is contributing most is Output 3.1.1: Support to strengthen rural organizations and institutions and facilitate empowerment of rural poor. The FFF objectives under pillars 1 and 2 are closely in line with those of SO3. As such, FFF activities may certainly count towards the indicator for output 3.1.1: “Number of countries in which support was provided to create an enabling environment for rural organizations and institutions as well as the empowerment of the rural poor.”
4. At the heart of FFF consistency with FAO’s SO3 are principally FFF’s Outcomes 1 and 2. Outcome 1 is instrumental in enabling poor rural smallholder farmers to get organized and be able to engage in policy dialogue on forest and farm resource management and use related issues. Outcome 2 is instrumental in enhancing the capacity of the same target groups to invest in forest and farm management to participate in value chains and integrate into the markets.
   1. **Evaluation question 3: Was the project design appropriate for achieving the Outcomes and the Vision?**
5. **The appropriateness of the Project’s design for achieving its Outcomes and Vision is unquestionable.** With respect to the appropriateness of FFF’s design for achieving the Vision and expected Outcomes, the main strength of the model resides in its having a wide scope for addressing smallholder farmers’ challenges, being demand-driven, and supporting with direct grants the proposals submitted by FFPOs for funding. While the ultimate goal is ensuring sustainable management and use of forest and farm landscapes, FFF’s niche is in strengthening FFPOs directly, complementing other approaches with focus on rights, legality, payments for environmental services including REDD+ and technical capacity for sustainable forest management. It supports a range of advocacy and policy activities of these organizations, including Indigenous peoples.
6. The MTE finds that the model further proved to be appropriate in terms of providing concrete grassroots level results that, as will be shown later, offer lessons and good practices for future FFF action and upscaling in participating countries. In terms of methodology (concept, implementation, M&LS) the Model is replicable, in participating and other countries as well. Of course, FFF’s ToC robustness must be strengthened and flexible in order to allow taking adequately into account the diversity of rural situations and political economy contexts of participating countries.
7. While the FFF Model is largely appropriate, it was found that the Project document and the M&LS make no mention of value chain development[[3]](#footnote-3) (VCD) approach. This gap is corrected by the fact that the Project built its support around the MA&D trainings which target value chain actions in five separate spheres of interventions: (i) natural resource access, (ii) institutional, legal, (iii) market chains/finance, (iv) social/cultural issues, and (v) technology, research and development. The Model is therefore further strengthened by the degree to which FFF puts the support to FFPOs for their participation in value chains at the core of its work. However, beyond supporting FFPOs to engage with markets, the question is also how to further support enable them in improving the terms of engagement with national, regional and international markets. With the rich experiences that the Project is generating in many countries as the findings of this MTE will show, the VCD will need to be further deepened in this direction in the future.

## Evaluation question 4: To what extent is the FFF on track to achieving outcomes across the three pillars and what changes can be observed that are attributable to the FFF’s interventions and are directly linked to the FFF’s main objectives?

**Pillar 1, “Strengthen smallholder, women, community and indigenous peoples’ producer organizations for business/livelihoods and policy engagement”**

1. **With regarding to progress to Outcome 1, “Strengthened producer organizations engage in policy dialogue”, FFF is on track in supporting grassroots FFPOs and their Apex structures to organize for policy dialogue and engagement.** FFF is effective in supporting FFPOs to engage in policy dialogue. As a result, the FFPOS performed well in: (i) getting issues on political agenda; (ii) securing procedural change at national level, and (iii) affecting policy content.
2. **Getting issues on political agenda.** Under Output 1.1, “Dispersed local producers are organized into effective and gender inclusive groups”, FFF’s approach of targeting smallholders through FFPOs as the vehicle to transfer knowledge and skills for getting organized has led to increased awareness of the many advantages of working together to engage in policy dialogue. The targeted FFPOs and their apex organizations have played a key role in getting their members’ concerns on political agendas. Alianza has developed an agenda for policy advocacy, and this agenda was built on the consensus of its membership. Each member organization brought to the table its main concerns, identified topics of interest and together the organizations prioritized these concerns in order of importance. Alianza’s political agenda prioritized issues according to the following topics of interest: implementation of forestry programs (PINFOR and PINPEP), approval of Probosque Law, protection of mangroves, expansion of community rights (extension of Petén forest concessions contracts), land tenure, agrarian debt, revision of environment, social and economic laws or regulations, FLEGT, REDD+, climate change, OCRET and forest landscape restoration Act.
3. **Securing procedural change at national level and influencing behavioral change in key actors.** FFF was very successful in facilitating the Forest Law (PROBOSQUE) process and in supporting the FFPOs to influence the outcome of the forest law formulation process. PROBOSQUE provides incentives for forest and landscape restoration to smallholders, indigenous peoples, community forests and the private sector.
4. **Affecting policy content.** FFF supported Alianza’s participation in the drafting of the country’s Forest Law. Its interventions, together with other initiatives for strengthening of *Alianza nacional de organizaciones forestales comunitarias* (ANFOC), have enabled the representation of FFPOs public policy processes which will impact on the country's rural development and sustainability of the forest resource. As mentioned above, the example of such participation is the process leading to the adoption of the forest law PROBOSQUE. Alianza was involved in the dialogue at all stages, it generated proposals, and continues to monitor and promote results that benefit its member organizations. The Alianza proposed 6 amendments of which 4 were accepted. It has been and remains active in cross-sectoral platforms on climate change, REDD+, and forest landscape restoration issues. With this involvement, Alianza has become a source of policy proposals and is well positioned to make pressure on policy issues relating to the forest sector.
5. To strengthen its positioning and fulfil duties policy processes, Alianza has developed a communication strategy that defines important aspects to focus on for managing and disseminating information and knowledge generated from member organizations. It implements a communication plan that includes mechanisms to generate contacts with media and to position Alianza as a generator of information of interest in the forestry sector.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Table 1: Progress made by FFF in supporting FFPOs to influence forest and farm related policies | |
| Results levels | Examples of results obtained with FFF support |
| Getting issues on political agenda | FFF supports 3 multi-sectoral platforms at national level (GCI; the Firewood and Energy Platform, and Probosque Committee) and , and 1 regional level in the Petén (MITA). |
| Securing procedural change at national level | Spaces were opened to allow Apex FFPOs organizations to participate in inter-institutional policy platforms and working groups. |
| Affecting policy content | 1. The Alianza OFC Guatemala participated in the process for elaboration of the forest law “PROBOSQUE” and submitted 6 amendments. The law was adopted in September 2015; 2. It also influenced the National Congress and the Government to allocate budget to PINPEP. |

1. An other important activity carried out by Alianza’s in the policy content area is to influence Government’s allocation of budget the PINPEP (programme of incentives for small owners of forest lands) and PINFOR (programme of incentives for property owner of forest lands). The advocacy effort and political pressure on the Congress of the Republic, government ministries, in particular the Ministry of public finance to make the allocation of resources to the PINPEP, allowed the allocation of Q.220 million (around 29 million USD) for the fiscal period 2014 and Q.220 million (around 29 million USD) for the fiscal period of 2015.
2. **With regard to Outcome 2, “Local communities and producers are organized and thereby have the capacity to invest in sustainable forest and farm management and integrate into the market”, FFF is achieving notable progress in strengthening producer organizations’ capacity to engage in business.** Through Output 2.1 “Local forest and farms organizations have knowledge about business development”, Outcome 2 is the key focus of FFF as far as meeting grassroots priority support needs is concerned. It links directly to the expected project Impact and to the Vision.
3. FFF got important results in providing support to FFPOs for products upgrading along value chains. FFF’s support implicitly enhances products upgrading activities that raise the awareness of farmers organizations on the standards and quality that attract consumers. Products upgrading goes hand in hand with process upgrading because improving product quality often involves improving production processes. With products upgrading new livelihoods opportunities are created for the beneficiaries, and smallholders are helped to build up technological skills and are stimulated to participate in value chains and engage in business. Favorable factors influencing product upgrading include a good link of the chains to national and export markets. Many cacao producer FFPOs who participate in Global Value Chains are practicing Fair Trade standards. Many members of the National Alliance of Community Forest of Guatemala are working on high value product processing including timber end products (ACOFOP, FEDECOVERA and others).
4. **FFF experiences in helping FFPOs to know business and access markets.** With the training activities targeting FFPOs’ members, FFF has been effective in the implementation of Output 2.1. The application of the acquired knowledge has further strengthened the motivation of the beneficiaries to orient their production systems to commercialization. FFF’s support to FFPOs to improve their technical capabilities has enabled them to generate productive business. For example, through exchanges producers of COACAP in the South of the Department of Petén are implementing new plant grafting techniques to improve cocoa crops, which has a direct impact on the quality of their plantations.

**Pillar 2: “Catalyze multi-sectoral stakeholder policy platforms with governments and at local and national levels”**

1. **With regard to Outcome 3, “Cross-sectoral coordination (…) for sustainable forest and farm management operating at national and sub-national levels”, countries have made unequal progress in establishing multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder policy platforms.** FFF has been effective in supporting the Government to ensure the cross-sectoral coordination and multi-stockholders dialogue, especially on the agendas of forests with related sectors such as agriculture, economy, energy, food security, biodiversity and water. It has had considerable success in facilitating the Government processes of giving voice to FFPOs so that they can influence policy formation processes. As a result, FFPOs participate in cross-sectoral coordination for policy formation or law formulation processes.
2. **Thanks to FFF support, FFPOs are in a position to influence policy processes through official cross-sectoral coordination, on a permanent basis.** FFF supports four multi-sectoral platforms. At national level, it supports the Inter-Institutional Coordination Group (GCI); Probosque Law Technical Committee and the Firewood and Energy Platform; and at the regional level (in the Petén), it supports the Inter-sectoral Platform for Land and Environment (MITA). The GCI played an active role in the preparation PROBOSQUE, helped integrate issues such as the REDD National Needs Assessment, and convened a workshop on forest degradation under REDD.

**Pillar 3 “Link local voices and learning to global processes through communication and information dissemination”**

1. **With regard to Outcome 4, “National and global agendas and initiatives (…) are informed about knowledge and priorities of smallholders, women, communities and indigenous peoples”**, FFF delivers adequately at national, regional and global levels in the context of Guatemala. As already shown above, the FFPOs supported by FFF are informing the country’s policy agendas on the basis of their priorities and experiences. At regional and global levels, FFF supported the implementation of initiatives of sub-regional organizations with regard to linking local voices to global agendas on forest and farm issue. At local level, it supported the FFPOs members of the Mesoamerican Alliance of People and Forests (AMPB) to access relevant information about issues and challenges faced and possible solutions and actions to sub-regional and regional levels.
2. The members or AMPB in Guatemala got FFF’s support to participate in a sub-regional meeting (Mesoamerica) in Mexico City, in which about 100 representatives of community organizations, indigenous peoples, small-scale producers, NGOs and government organizations from Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Mexico and Nicaragua assembled to exchange experiences on community land and territorial management, forest governance, and market linkages. With regard to voice, the participants identified obstacles to public policy improvements for indigenous peoples, local communities and family smallholders, and generated key messages that its members could take to the political leaders of their countries and to the international community via the XIV World Forestry Congress and UNFCCC COP21.
3. At global level, FFF was effective in making forest and farm messages and voices from Guatemala’s FFPOs delegates heard by the international community via the XIV World Forestry Congress, UNFCCC COP21, and COFO by supporting their participation.

## Evaluation question 5: To what extent is the current operational modality contributing to the efficient achievement of the program outcomes?

1. The MTE found that the FFF’s Steering Committee (PSC) has been very effective across all participating countries in providing guidance and advice to the FFF Team with regard to effective and efficient oversight of the operations of the project at all levels of implementation. There is strong mutual esteem between the PSC and the FFF Team.
2. The MTE also found that FFF project management structure is appropriate. The functions within FFF Team provide the necessary expertise required to keep the Project on track as far as the planned outputs and outcomes are concerned. Through interviews with partners and FFF Team members, the MTE found these are fully committed and enthusiastic; they value partnerships, and are convinced that FFF can make a change, and they are quite open to challenges. Their work is well appreciated by all the partners interviewed at FAO HQs and at country level. Despite being stretched by the workload the Team has had a remarkable performance.
3. FFF provides support to the action of target FFPOs and their Apex for voice and engagement in Guatemala’s policy processes. The program Facilitator’s dedication has made possible the impressive progress made to date.

## Evaluation question 6: What is the likelihood that FFF will contribute to the expected impact?

1. There is a strong likelihood of reaching the Impact of the Project and contributing to its Vision in Guatemala. Full project impact is normally reached some time or many years after completion of its activities. At this stage, the MTE can only assess the likelihood for reaching that Impact and for contributing to the Vision which is “Smallholders, communities and indigenous peoples organizations have improved their livelihoods and decision-making over forest and farm landscapes”. To this end, the main livelihoods “building blocks” that are analyzed for likelihood of impact relate to human, social, and political capital, and to natural, financial and physical assets.
2. Human capital. The strongest potential of impact is the domain of human capital development, in which there are considerable achievements in enhancing the stock of skills in FFPOs members (organizational, managerial, technological, MA&D).
3. Social capital development at grassroots level. FFF’s interventions made a significant contribution to increasing the stock of trust that farmers’ organizations have in the governance of Alianza. Alianza itself is sparing no effort to effectively contribute to the sense of its members of FFF’s results.
4. Political capital. This is understood as the increase in the stock of power held by FFPOs and the apex organizations that can be used to achieve the development goals of their members. FFF supported the enhancement of the political capital of Alianza and its membership through a diversity of trainings and participation in policy processes and cross-sectoral dialogue.
5. Natural assets. FFF’s main focus at the local level has been largely to support sustainable forest management and improvement of cocoa plantations. This contributes to increased natural assets particularly in terms of forests. Improvement of cocoa plantations mitigates environmental vulnerability and contributes to forest landscape restoration and protection of ecosystem resources.
6. Physical assets. In general, FFF grants to FFPOs do not cover investment in physical capital. There is therefore likelihood that FFF will have limited impact on FFPOs physical assets.
7. Financial assets. The MTE believes that production and value addition activities supported by FFF namely for cocoa production are likely to positively affect household income.

## Evaluation question 7: Is FFF having success in engaging other partners in the FFF supported processes?

1. **Partnerships have featured prominently in FFF interventions at all levels of its interventions across all participating countries.** Arguably the main strength of FFF across all participating countries is the strong tripartite partnership FAO-IIED-IUCN. This partnership has allowed synergies of the three at international, regional and country levels, as well as avoiding duplication of effort and overlaps. It has significantly contributed to the efficient use of resources in attaining results that could have otherwise cost several times more under more traditional project formulae. IIED developed the M&LS and is involved in overseeing its implementation and in the use of learning information from its use. It has played a key role in the communication activities and the synthesis of learning information. IUCN has provided support to Guatemala’s apex organizations to organize processes allowing to make sure that local forest issues are taken into account in the preparation of the agenda to influence global processes (XIV World Forestry Congress, UNFCCC COP21, and COFO).

## Evaluation question 8: How sustainable is the FFF concept of investing in the organizational capacity of forest farm producer organizations – and how might this be enhanced?

1. Sustainability is the likelihood of the programme benefits to be delivered for an extended period after its completion. The MTE found that the high political and social ownership of FFF model in Guatemala is a powerful factor of sustainability. The Government has put in place mechanisms that allow FFPOs to be represented in cross-sectoral coordination spaces for policy dialogue. The participation of farmers organizations in national policy processes will allow to sustain the effort that FFF has invested in building the capacity of target FFPOs.
2. Another equally important factor of sustainability is the success of the training activities targeting smallholders through their FFPOs. These activities are transforming forest producers into businesses and motivating them to invest further in commercialization activities.

# Crosscutting issues

## Evaluation question 9: To what extent have gender and human rights been taken into account in the design of the FFF and during the implementation?

1. The main cross-cutting issues with respect to the analysis of the FFF design are Gender and the rights of indigenous people. The design mainstreamed gender and indigenous people in the expected Impact, Pillar 1, and Outcome 4, but at its more strategic levels, gender focus is stronger at Outputs level than at Outcomes level. At Outputs level gender is featured in Outputs 1.1, 1.2, 2.2, 2.3 and 4.1. There is no specific women’s empowerment relating Outcome or Output.
2. The rights of indigenous peoples and women, must be addressed from a comprehensive perspective, which in the case of indigenous peoples should include determining factors such as respect of their worldview, the right to management of their own territory, their models of governance, the implementation of their own production methods, and the right to consultation. In the case of women, the integrality in the intervention is a determining factor also to ensure the participation of women in productive processes and decision-making in their communities and organizations.
3. From this perspective FFF addresses partially the issue of gender through the involvement of women the activities of the program. Women are members of farmers’ organizations and participate the governance structures of these organizations. Among the specific activities that have included women are the exchanges of production experiences made supported by the programme in the Mesoamerica.
4. With regard to Indigenous groups, FFF supports the Mesoamerican Alliance of People and Forests.

Conclusions and recommendations

1. The conclusions and recommendations are formulated in the overall MTE report.

Documents consulted

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1. It should be mentioned here that in order to avoid repetition in the presentation of the findings, some questions from the Evaluation Terms of Reference have been reclassified as sub-questions here in the final evaluation report where it was appropriate. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Distinct from assumptions, impact drivers are factors that project/programme management can influence to a certain extent. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Value chain development (VCD) is understood as a concerted effort to improve the conditions in the value chain. For FFPOs, VCD implies the improvement of their participation in value chains, enhancement of the benefits they get, and reducing the exposure to risks. Benefits and risks should be understood not only in financial terms but also in relation to the environment, livelihoods improvement and gender equity. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)