

SAVING
LIVES
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LIVES



INVESTING IN EVIDENCE TO END HUNGER

A CLOSER LOOK AT NATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

New evidence continues to signal a rise in world hunger and a reversal of trends after a prolonged decline. In 2017, the number of undernourished people is estimated to have increased to 821 million – around one out of every nine people in the world. The alarming signs of increasing food insecurity and high levels of different forms of malnutrition are a clear warning that there is considerable work to be done to make sure we “leave no one behind” on the road towards achieving SDG 2. Achieving it requires renewed efforts through new and innovative ways of working and hinges on effective partnership. Thus, calling for a commitment from the international community, governments and VOPEs to reinforce multi-stakeholders’ partnerships around evidence-generation efforts.

As part of WFP’s work around National Evaluation Capacity Development (NECD) and its commitment to expand the evaluation culture, WFP’s Regional Evaluation Function collaborated with EvalMENA (The Evaluation Association for Middle East and North Africa) for the first time by co-sponsoring and participating

in the 7th EvalMENA General Assembly and Conference that took place in Rabat, Morocco. EvalMENA is a Voluntary Organization for Professional Evaluation (VOPE) which systematically supports the demand and supply of evaluation in the MENA region through catalysing new thinking and adapting innovative approaches.

EvalMENA’s forum offered a unique opportunity for WFP to facilitate an exchange between the regional and global perspective on evaluating the SDGs through a panel consisting of keynote speakers from the Government, national institutes and the academia. The topic of the panel was “Investing in Evidence to End Hunger”.

The panel, moderated by WFP’s Regional Evaluation Officer for the Middle East, North Africa and CIS Countries, Luca Molinas, demonstrated lessons learned and best practices on evaluation use for policy formulation and country capacity strengthening. It raised the importance of accountability and evidence building, hence the need to have robust evaluation systems in countries.



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Moez Boubaker, former Chief of Staff and current Senior Advisor to the Minister of Education in Tunisia, outlined a government’s perspective on utility and purpose of evaluation and the progress that has been made in this area in Tunisia. He gave an overview of Tunisia’s experience in evaluating its national school feeding programme and developing an analysis of the food and nutrition security within the framework of SDG2 with the aim of evaluating progress and identifying gaps and challenges. Recommendations from these findings were reflected on the reform of the education system and national programme design. Mr. Boubaker also highlighted the importance of bridging the gap between evaluators and decision-makers, stating that one of the most common challenges that governments encounter with evaluations is having “problematic” recommendations that are not applicable within certain country contexts and that we have to build the capacities of evaluators to have a better outlook of the topic being evaluated.

Hoda El Enbavy, Research Associate at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), shared the experience of Egypt in the use of evaluation of national development programmes for policy formulation and country capacity strengthening. She presented the findings of an impact evaluation conducted on the “Takaful and Karama” social protection cash transfer program (TKP), that was conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) and the World Bank. Within 3 years only, the TKP was able to reach around 10 million people. The evaluation studied the impact of the programme on total household expenditure, education, nutrition, health, poverty, women’s decision-making and satisfaction of the beneficiaries. Hoda highlighted that what made this experience successful was the continuous consultative process with MoSS and the interest of the decision-makers in the evaluation findings with the aim of developing efficient and sufficient policies. The evaluation resulted in seven policy recommendations, three of which have been already announced by Egypt’s Prime Minister and Minister of Social Solidarity.



Beyond sharing experiences at a national level, Renata Mirulla presented a wider global initiative, called EVAL-Forward, from the evaluation offices of WFP, FAO, IFAD, and CGIAR towards evaluation capacity development and expanding the evaluation culture around SDG2. This community of practice on evaluation for Food Security, Agriculture and Rural Development has the aim of advancing the use of evidence, supporting capacities for evaluation at country level, facilitating dialogue and expanding the outreach of the evaluation community.



UNFPA’s regional evaluation officer, Olugbemiga Adelakin, finally emphasized on the role of expanding the evaluation culture in the creation of demand for evaluations among policy and decision makers. Alongside with capacity development of evaluators, we will be able to supply quality evaluations as an effective and instrumental tool to look at SDGs and SDG2 specifically, through an inclusive and consultative process, bringing all perspectives into the equation and providing us with the “bigger picture”.

