

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE



Regional office / cluster: Rikolto Global

Title evaluation report: CONSOLIDATED END-NOTE OF THE MID-TERM REVIEW OF RIKOLTO PROGRAMME

Date of the Management Response: May 27, 2020

Staff involved in the Management Response: International Management Team, Michaela Boyen, Tom Van den Steen

Cleared by: Board of Directors

Evaluation recommendation / point of attention 1	Categorising and consolidating the many different approaches and interventions for capacity strengthening in an organisational life-time framework might yield interesting insights on the contribution and importance of different initiatives and methods to changes in performance of FOs over time.			
Management response	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p>The organization could indeed benefit from gaining deeper insight into which capacity development approach works best for which type of FO under which kind of circumstances. At the same time, such an exercise would require a considerable amount of resources, which should first and foremost go to ensuring the independisation of FOs and the sustainability of this programme's results. Furthermore, in absence of systematically comparable data, such an analysis would involve partially reconstructing approaches and data, leading to less reliable results.</p> <p>We therefore propose a light approach, led by the Inclusive Business team, mapping the divergent approaches currently applied in the organization and agreeing on a common framework to assess the effectiveness of the respective approaches over time.</p>			
Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
1.1 Map all approaches currently used and available data on effectiveness of each approach	June-December 2020	Inclusive Business Team		[Tracking is for updates to be presented at the bi-annual presential IMT meetings]

1.2 Agree on a common framework to monitor the effectiveness of FO capacity development approaches	September-December 2020	Inclusive Business Team		
1.3 Develop capacity development roadmaps based on AMEA curricula (accounting for maturity and contextual specificities)	2021	Inclusive Business Team		
Evaluation recommendation / point of attention 2	Lessons learnt from this programme could be explored more systematically looking at good practices and challenges encountered in addressing inclusion of women and youth in the actual food systems and value chains. From there, contextualised inclusion strategies can be developed – at commodity level and for specific business cases.			
Management response	Accepted Mapping the good practices and challenges on women and youth inclusion are indeed a good starting point to update the organizational gender and youth inclusion strategies. From there, each cluster should operationalise these strategies into concrete programme proposals and allocate adequate funding to make these strategies a reality.			
Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
2.1 Map evidence from MTR on women inclusion and update global gender strategy	June-September 2020	Cluster coordinators		
2.2 Map evidence from MTR on youth inclusion and update global youth strategy	June-September 2020	Cluster coordinators		
2.3 Benchmark Rikolto practices with those of peers	September-December 2020	Cluster coordinators		
2.4 Operationalise gender and youth inclusion strategies in each cluster	September-December 2020	Cluster coordinators		
Evaluation recommendation / point of attention 3	The information provided in the reports was often descriptive in nature focusing on the nature of the intervention. Very little evidence was presented on whether and to what extent these efforts were indeed successful. Therefore, it is difficult to conclude to what extent the programme has been able to improve the financial sustainability and viability of partner FOs.			
Management response	Accepted We need to better track the financial performance of our partner FOs and include this aspect more explicitly in our monitoring and evaluation practices. It is paramount that this financial sustainability is considered from a market system perspective, tapping into the local business development services ecosystem (if present). For partner FOs whose financial viability is not attainable in the short to medium term, we should explore alternative collective action mechanisms that can include smallholder producers into the value chains in which we work.			
Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible	Tracking	

			<i>Status</i>	<i>Comments</i>
3.1 Map relevant financial data from SCOPE assessments to define financial viability criteria and thresholds, and define follow-up actions from there	June-December 2020	Inclusive Business team		
3.2 Regional teams to operationalise follow-up actions and include them in the business plans of our partner FOs to ensure their sustainability and viability by 2021	September-December 2020	Regional programme teams		
3.3 Open up the conversation to access to finance and how we can improve the (micro) finance environment for FOs in our contexts of intervention (in collaboration with other actors of the agribusiness ecosystem)	2021	Inclusive business team		
3.4 Analyse the business case and financial viability at the moment of selecting partners or setting up collective action mechanisms for smallholder farmers	2021	Regional programme teams		
Evaluation recommendation / point of attention 4	<p>Carry out a brief exercise in each country to further reflect on exit strategies with three stated goals (or measures of success) of such a strategy in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the programme impact will be sustained, expanded or improved, relevant activities are continued in the same or modified format, and the systems developed will continue to function effectively. <p>Review the action plans presented in the MTR report accordingly, especially trimming down the long to-do-lists to more concise strategies featuring key conditions and actions for sustaining relevant activities, systems and impacts. As much as possible, ensure exit strategies are co-created with partners in order to ensure internalisation and operationalisation.</p>			
Management response	<p>Accepted</p> <p>We shall connect the cluster coordinators when reviewing the proposed exit strategies, to ensure alignment with global strategy development for the coming years.</p>			
Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible	Tracking	
			<i>Status</i>	<i>Comments</i>
4.1 Carry out a brief exercise in each country to further reflect on exit strategies with the three stated goals of such a strategy in mind	June-July 2020	Regional directors and cluster coordinators		
4.2 Review the action plans presented in the MTR report accordingly, especially trimming down the long to-do-lists to more concise strategies featuring key conditions and	June-July 2020	Regional directors		

actions for sustaining relevant activities, systems and impacts				
4.3 Organise stakeholder meetings to validate the proposed exit strategies	June-September 2020	Regional programme teams		
Evaluation recommendation / point of attention 5	<p>Methodological guidance of the MTR:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. provide a clear outline for the report from the beginning showing structure, sequence of chapters, type of expected evidence, and indication of volume 2. provide guidance on the nature and content of exit strategies 3. explore if and how to develop a lighter but still functional design of contribution analysis in a mid-term review 4. develop and share an organisational glossary with stakeholders in the reviews to ensure that concepts are understood and applied in the same way by all 			
Management response	<p>Accepted</p> <p>As is customary, after each organization-wide M&E process, the PLA team conducts an internal evaluation and improves tools and processes accordingly. The consultant's recommendations will be included in this process.</p>			
Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
5.1 Elaborate a draft outline for evaluation reports	June-September 2020	PLA team		
5.2 Elaborate a short note on exit strategies	June-September 2020	PLA team		
5.3 MTR approaches to be further investigated	2021	PLA team		
5.4 Elaborate a glossary of terminology	June-December 2020	PLA team		
Evaluation recommendation / point of attention 6	<p>Improvements to the M&E framework & practices</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. revisit monitoring of policy influencing processes and of changes in policy environments 2. revisit the monitoring approach and methods for functioning and outcomes of MAIs 3. "unpack" indicators that are difficult to measure 4. allow sufficient time to develop and contextualise data collection tools 5. support staff with guidelines on how to assess consistency of / match between primary and secondary data 6. embed data analysis primarily at regional level with guidance by global team 			
Management response	<p>Accepted</p> <p>On top of the above-mentioned points, we shall also look into embedding double and triple learning loops in the PLA practices of our programme teams.</p>			

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
6.1 Conduct a review of regional M&E data collection practices, clarify inconsistencies, unpack indicators where necessary and clarify roles & responsibilities of all staff involved	June-December 2020	PLA team and regional programme teams		
6.2 Discuss globally good practices/approaches to monitor policy and MSP work	June-December 2020	PLA review team		
6.3 Embed double and triple learning loops in regular PLA practices	September 2020-June 2021	PLA review team		