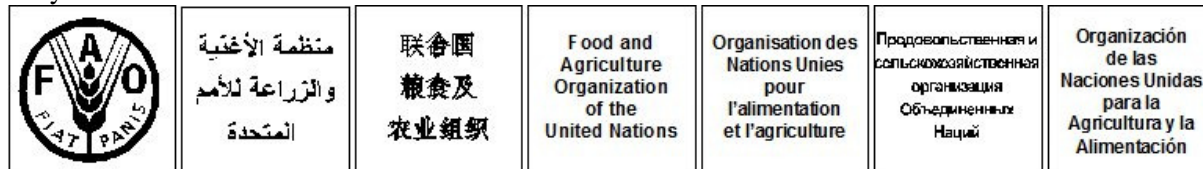


May 2011



## CONFERENCE

### Thirty-seventh Session

Rome, 25 June - 2 July 2011

### Interim Report on the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of the Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System (TCPR)

#### Executive Summary

The UN General Assembly Resolutions<sup>1</sup> on the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System (TCPR) provide guiding principles on functioning and coordination of the UN system at the country level, including interagency collaboration. The adoption of Conference Resolutions 13/2005 and 2/2007 represents a turning point for FAO participation in the TCPR, making implementation mandatory in the Organization.

The present progress report on implementation of the TCPR covers the period 2009-2011<sup>2</sup>. Similarly to previous interim reports<sup>3</sup>, it addresses: (a) funding of operational activities for development; (b) efficiency, effectiveness and FAO participation in UN System coordination mechanisms; and (c) other areas of relevance to FAO.

Fundamental reforms in FAO coincide with the period covered by this report. In response to the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) of FAO, the Conference adopted in November 2008 an Immediate Plan of Action (IPA) for FAO renewal<sup>4</sup>, that is contributing to improved strategic focus, efficiency, effectiveness and coordination at country level.

#### Suggested Action by the Conference

The Conference is invited to take note of FAO's progress in the implementation of the TCPR.

<sup>1</sup> 59/250 (2004) and 62/208 (2007).

<sup>2</sup> Until June 2011.

<sup>3</sup> C 2007/17 and C 2009/14.

<sup>4</sup> C 2008/4 Report of the CoC-IEE on the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal.

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## A. Introduction

1. FAO Conference Resolutions 13/2005 and 2/2007 request the Director-General to take appropriate actions for the full implementation of the UN General Assembly Resolutions<sup>5</sup> on the TCPR.
2. The Technical Cooperation Department (TC) leads follow-up to these Resolutions, in collaboration with the Office of Corporate Communications and External Relations (OCE) and the Office of Support to Decentralization (OSD). This task is coordinated through an Interdepartmental Working Group (IDWG TCPR-DaO). Two interim reports have been prepared in previous years<sup>6</sup>.
3. Since the last report, the UN General Assembly decided to move from a triennial (TCPR) to a quadrennial policy review cycle (QCPR) to allow for better alignment with UN Organizations' medium-term planning cycles. Hence, no new resolutions have been approved, while the next one is planned for 2012. The present report complements document C 2009/14, covering major milestones and achievements in the period November 2009 – June 2011. The structure and choice of topics are guided by the TCPR Resolutions, as indicated.
4. Fundamental reform initiatives in FAO have been under way during this same period, as the Conference adopted an Immediate Plan of Action (IPA) for FAO renewal in November 2008 covering five years<sup>7</sup>. Although it is too early for the full benefits of these extensive reforms to be realized, tangible impact is emerging in terms of improved strategic focus, efficiency, effectiveness and coordination at country level.

## B. Funding of FAO'S Operational Activities for Development

*[Paragraphs 18 through 29, 31- 32 and 34 of GA resolution 62/208]*

### *Overview of FAO Funding Structure and Level*

5. FAO Governing Bodies have approved a new results-based Strategic Framework 2010-2019<sup>8</sup>, which guides how the Organization's work is planned, delivered, monitored and reported. The complementary Medium Term Plan 2010-2013 and Programmes of Work and Budget 2010-11 and 2012-13 specify the outcomes (labelled "Organizational Results [ORs]") to be achieved over a four-year period, along with indicators of performance and the resources required to achieve these outcomes, from both assessed and voluntary contributions.
6. The integrated approach to planning resources, combining net appropriation and voluntary contributions, is to facilitate improved prioritization, effectiveness and oversight. In effect, both funding sources are subject to the same planning and oversight arrangements, encouraging partners to reduce earmarking of voluntary contributions and increase pool funding. This approach is also being applied at country level through the preparation of Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) and country work plans.
7. In 2010-11, total resource planned by FAO are about USD 2.2 billion, with voluntary contributions now accounting for over 55 percent. While partly a reflection of increasing demands for technical support services and public goods from the Organization, this also demonstrates its growing capacity to mobilize resources in recent years. In 2008-09, new approvals for voluntary contributions reached about USD 1.9 billion for development and emergency operations, compared with USD 1.3 billion in the previous biennium.

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<sup>5</sup> 59/250 (TCPR 2004) and 62/208 (TCPR 2007).

<sup>6</sup> C 2007/17 and C 2009/14.

<sup>7</sup> C 2008/4 Report of the CoC-IEE on the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal.

<sup>8</sup> C 2009/3

8. As for the 2012-13 biennium, an integrated budget of USD 2.4 billion is presented to Governing Bodies, 58 percent of which from estimated voluntary contributions. Experience to date highlights continuing challenges in predicting the level of voluntary contributions and in their alignment to the planned results frameworks, which will need to be progressively overcome.

*New Corporate Strategy for Resource Mobilization and Management*

9. The new results-based framework also guides FAO's resource mobilization efforts. In response to the IPA call for coherent activities across the Organization, the recently developed corporate Resource Mobilization and Management Strategy (RMMS) focuses on forging partnerships built on trust and mutual accountability. The RMMS is based on thorough stock-taking and broad consultations with stakeholders. The strategy also sets out how FAO should allocate resources to agreed priorities and report on their use. It includes innovative tools, such as Impact Focus Areas (IFAs), Country Programming Frameworks and a Multipartner Programme Support funding mechanism. The latter ensures that voluntary contributions are no longer tied to specific programmes or projects, so that depending on the partner, resources are either unearmarked or loosely associated to FAO's Strategic Objectives.

10. Taking account of constantly changing environments, the RMMS also aims to expand and diversify partnerships, beyond traditional sources of income. An associated strong communications campaign seeks to emphasize the Organization's comparative advantages and potential as a key partner in addressing the challenges facing agriculture and food security in the 21st Century. This enhanced corporate approach to resource mobilization should lead to more timely, predictable and adequate resources to firmly support the achievement of Organizational Results.

11. Preparation for, and implementation of most, if not all, of specific actions derived from the strategy are making good progress.

*Diversification of the Resource Base and New Opportunities for Country-level Funding*

12. The top twenty partners have contributed 84 percent of all voluntary-funded resources mobilized by FAO in 2010. Fifty-nine percent of the voluntary contributions in 2008-09 came from the European Community and individual European Union countries. However, other countries like Brazil, China, Turkey and Venezuela are emerging as important resource partners.

13. Success in leveraging resources at the decentralized level is reflected by increased delivery through the modalities of the Government Cooperative Programme (GCP) and Unilateral Trust Funds (UTFs), involving approximately 61 partners, as well as through United Nations Joint Programmes (UNJP). Being an active participant in the UN reform process and the "Delivering as One" (DaO) initiative, the Organization is able to capitalize on new opportunities at country level, including various forms of pooled funding for joint programmes and the gradual replacement of project-based funding by a country-based programme approach aligned to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and FAO's own results framework.

14. Funding from the Multi-Donor Trust Funds (MDTF) Office increased from USD 52.5 million in 2006 to 77.2 million in 2010<sup>9</sup>. While the funds received in 2006 were essentially for humanitarian purposes, development-related MDTFs have increased sharply since then. For example, USD 17.4 million were received in 2010 to implement UNJPs at the country level, within the framework of the global Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Achievement Fund, an international mechanism for which FAO is the third most important participating agency (with 12 percent of total resources allocated)<sup>10</sup>. FAO also shared in 14 out of 17 "One UN Funds" under the DaO initiative, to support joint resource mobilization at the country level. UNJP delivery – as part of the field programme in 2010 – increased sharply (156 percent) compared with 2009.

15. Country Programme Frameworks (CPF) which address national priorities in line with the overall results frameworks in FAO's MTP-PWB, facilitate the necessary links to country-level action

<sup>9</sup> <http://mdtf.undp.org>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.mdgfund.org/>

as reflected in UNDAFs and contributions to the Internationally-Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), including the MDGs, in a clear results chain. Hence, the CPFs assist in ensuring that resource mobilization activities are complementary to wider UN efforts. The UNDAF, CPF and DaO pilot initiative are discussed further in the following Part C.

### **C. Efficiency, Effectiveness and FAO Participation in UN System Coordination Mechanisms**

#### *Involvement in UN System Coordination*

16. FAO has been a proactive member of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and its subsidiary working machinery. It held the vice-chairpersonship of the UNDG (assigned to Specialized Agencies on a yearly rotational basis) since 2009. This allowed UNDG to be better sensitized to the challenges Specialized Agencies face to fully participate in system-wide coordination, harmonization and alignment of development activities. FAO was also actively involved in the formulation of UNDG's Strategic Priorities and Work Plan for 2010-2011, and parallel streamlining of working arrangements. Many UNDG strategic priorities are complementary to FAO's areas of mandate. Emphasis is put on upstream policy dialogue, technical support, capacity building, acceleration of national achievement of the MDGs, as well as successful South-South and triangular cooperation agreements.

17. To enhance participation in the UN System's Chief Executive Board for Coordination (CEB) and its three pillars (i.e. the High-level Committee on Programmes [HLCP], High-level Committee on Management [HLCM] and the UNDG), a CEB Committee was established in January 2010 under the chairpersonship of the Deputy Director-General (Operations), advising the Director-General and Senior Management on how to promote agriculture and food security issues in high-level UN interagency and intergovernmental fora.

18. Under the leadership of the Assistant Director-General for Corporate Communications and External Relations, an internal coordination network (with focal points at headquarters and in decentralized offices) was also established to engage concretely with UNDG work at global, regional and country level and to advise on major issues arising from FAO commitments to UNDG. The network also reviews the implications of policy decisions taken by UNDG and its subsidiary machinery, and facilitates representation in working mechanisms at global and regional levels. FAO currently co-chairs - together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) - the MDG Task Force, mandated to guide and support UN Country Teams (UNCTs) in assisting national counterparts to accelerate MDGs achievements up to 2015<sup>11</sup>.

19. Within the UNDG Joint Funding and Business Operations Network, FAO contributed to: 1) the preparation of the Guidance Note on Establishing, Managing and Closing MDTFs, helping with standardization at all stages of MDTFs; 2) the Task Team on Aid Effectiveness, coordinating UNDG participation in the 2011 Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration and preparations for the 4th High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to be held in Busan, Republic of Korea (29 November - 1 December 2011).

#### *Coordination and Programming at the Country level*

*[Paragraphs 43, 44, 46 and 48 of GA resolution 59/250, and paragraphs 87, 88, 95, 99 and 101 of GA resolution 62/208]*

#### **(a) UN Country Programming**

20. FAO contributed to the 2010 update of the UNDAF Guidance Package, towards a "new generation" of more strategic and results-based UNDAFs, with the option of being complemented by an UNDAF Action Plan and a Common Budgetary Framework. The guidelines re-emphasize the key role of the UNCT in supporting national capacity building to pursue poverty reduction, sustained

<sup>11</sup> The MDG Task Force also advises the Millennium Campaign in support of enhanced advocacy and communication at the country level and coherent UN messages on the MDGs.

economic growth, and other key policy objectives. Within the UNDAF Programming Network, FAO is leading, in close collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), the development of the UNDG "Guidance Note on Integrating Food and Nutrition Security into Country Analysis and UNDAF".

#### **(b) FAO Country Programming**

21. The Strategic Evaluation of FAO Country Programming has helped reshape the whole process. The Country Programming Framework (CPF) is to replace the National Medium-Term Priority Framework (NMTPF), specifying strategic orientations and main areas where FAO, jointly with the concerned government and appropriate partners, should focus country work with a horizon of four to five years, in line with FAO's overall Strategic Framework and MTP. The CPF is expected to integrate other programming approaches at the country level (e.g. Emergency Plan of Action), will be fully aligned to national development cycles, define outcomes that contribute to UNDAF results, and foster opportunities for joint initiatives, including joint programming. The related guidelines will be presented to FAO's Governing Bodies in October 2011.

22. A country work plan will cover the totality of FAO's planned activities over the two-year period of the PWB. In 2010, new guidelines on Country Office Work Plans have been developed for piloting in six countries (Armenia, Cape Verde, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Lebanon and Paraguay). The integrated approach to resources planning inherent in country office work plans will ensure that project/programme related work funded by voluntary contributions makes a clear and measurable contribution to Organizational Results. Roll-out to all country offices will be based on the feedback from the pilots, and is expected to unfold throughout 2012-13.

23. Guidelines on FAO's engagement in the UNDAF programming cycle are also being developed to specify how the different phases of the CPF contribute to UNDAF mandatory steps.

#### **(c) Up to date Project Cycle Handbook**

24. This handbook will reflect in particular the seminal changes to FAO's decentralization policy linked to current reforms, support a focussed and strategic approach to FAO activities at country level, and streamline monitoring of, and reporting on projects.

25. National execution (NEX) guidelines for the provision of technical support are also being developed in response to the Paris Declaration principles and the Accra Agenda for Action of promoting national ownership and leadership.

#### **(d) Guide to Resource Mobilization**

26. The current quick guide for resource mobilization will be made available on line, together with reference material on existing or new funding mechanisms. Links to other support tools at country level and the Resource Mobilization Web site (under construction) will be included.

27. In 2010, work also began to pull together a country programming toolkit as a single FAO corporate reference point for planning, programming and monitoring of all FAO's activities at the country level. The toolkit will provide guidelines, support tools and systems-based functionality in the four main areas described above: (a) UN country programming; (b) FAO's own country programming; (c) project cycle and related business models; and (d) resource mobilization. It should improve capacity of FAO staff and partners to plan and manage for results at country level, also providing support in mainstreaming the five UNDAF key programming principles<sup>12</sup> into country-level work.

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<sup>12</sup> Three normative programming principles (human rights-based approach - HRBA; gender equality; environmental sustainability) supported by two enabling principles (results-based management and capacity development).

### *Resident Coordinator System (RCS)*

*[Paragraphs 45, 53, 55, 58, 59 and 61 of GA resolution 59/250, and paragraphs 89, 90, 92, 94 and 105 of GA resolution 62/208]*

28. In pursuing its commitment to the TCPR call for creation of a participatory, collegial and accountable RCS owned by all components of the UN development system, FAO has:

- participated at the global level in relevant UNDG working groups and substantive task forces related to country-level activities for development, as well as in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which addresses the role of the RC as Humanitarian Coordinator in emergency and post-crisis settings;
- taken part in regional UNDG teams on a pilot basis, as well as relevant regional consultative mechanisms chaired by the UN Regional Commissions;
- ensured that FAO country Representatives and staff fully participate in UNCTs, including leading thematic groups and similar mechanisms where UN system partners and national governments expect leadership from FAO;
- joined other Europe-based Agencies in providing briefing sessions to newly appointed Resident Coordinators (RC), to familiarize them with the objectives and functioning of these Agencies.

29. Outstanding challenges related to FAO's participation in the RCS are described in the following sections and include the implementation of the "functional firewall" and requests for financial support to the creation of an expanded RC office.

#### *Accountability of Resident Coordinators (RCs) and "Functional Firewall"*

30. The "*Management and Accountability System of the UN Development and the RC System, including the functional firewall for the RC System*" (MAS) provides basic rules for all UN development system actors, and was widely disseminated to decentralized offices (DOs). Elements of MAS have also been reflected in guidance provided to DOs such as the appointment letters for FAO Representatives. The work done in the context of UNCT and the Regional UNDG teams are also reflected in the Performance Evaluation and Management System (PEMS) agreements that has been introduced in FAO. In moving forward, the MAS needs to be flexibly adapted to the differing governing structures and mandates of UN system organizations, rather than following a "one size fits all" approach.

31. Some issues with regards to the "functional firewall" are of particular concern to FAO and other organizations, and still unresolved: (a) the demarcation of the roles of UNDP as a development organization and as manager of the RCS; (b) the separation of the overall policy guidance role of the RC and his/her responsibilities as Resident Representative of UNDP. Although MAS now envisions UNDP to nominate country directors in a number of countries, this is a partial solution in addressing the separation of operational responsibilities, but not the overall policy guidance role of the RC over the UNDP programmes in the countries, and related conflicts of interest.

#### *Financial Support to the RCS and Cost of Coordination*

32. FAO, as a proactive support of joint work at country level, provides support to all coordinated activities within its overall mandate and Governing Bodies guidance. The Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), the TCP Facility (TCPf) and any resources arising from technical support or Project Support Cost reimbursements in the FAO country offices can be used to support the formulation/design phase of programmatic activities. Where efficiency savings can be obtained, FAO representations can also join in common service initiatives at the country level and re-allocate related funds. FAO country offices also have a small amount at their disposal to support joint activities of the UNCTs and in general, support has still mainly been in terms of staff time. However, there is a growing demand for financial contributions from RC Offices, often reaching USD 10 000 or more for individual agencies. These demands represent an issue for Specialized Agencies whose prime business model is the provision of knowledge and technical expertise.

### *Regional Dimensions*

*[Paragraph 78 of GA resolution 59/250, and paragraphs 107, 109 and 110 of GA resolution 62/208]*

33. Since 2009, FAO has participated in regional UNDG teams on a pilot basis. As important operational, programmatic and budgetary responsibilities have been transferred to Regional Offices, this facilitates their involvement in the core work of these teams. It is worth recalling that the IPA stipulates that the Regional Offices contribute regional perspectives to Organization-wide decision-making and are responsible for planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting of FAO's responses to identified priorities of the membership. They mobilize resources, including from partners, in support of regional priorities and capacity building in the region.

34. The Regional and Subregional Offices support country level activities in the context of the UN coherence agenda at several levels, e.g.:

- they collaborate in substantive areas of regional/subregional priority, within the Regional Coordination Mechanisms (RCM) chaired by the UN Regional Commissions;
- they lead or co-chair regional/subregional food security thematic groups.

35. Furthermore, the Multidisciplinary Teams may assist FAORs in preparation of UNDAF components and, subject to availability of resources, can advise the UNCT/RC, through FAO representations, on technical issues.

36. While FAO's contributions are mostly through staff time and limited non-staff resources, consideration could be given by those members of regional UNDG teams whose prime business model is to handle financial resources to co-finance inputs from Specialized Agencies, as providers of technical expertise. It may be noted that participation has also been hampered by different geographical locations of UN system agencies' regional offices, and the difficult learning process within regional UNDG teams.

#### *Country-level Capacity of FAO and the UN Country Team*

*[Paragraph 62 and 65 of GA resolution 59/250, and paragraphs 123, 124 and 127 of GA resolution 62/208]*

37. Over the recent past, particularly in the context of the IPA, considerable efforts have been made to improve capacities in FAO's decentralized offices, so that they can more closely match expressed needs of Members, and the UN system coherence agenda. Such efforts include inter alia: (a) higher level of delegated authority for country offices; and (b) decentralization of decision-making in a number of areas.

#### *Transaction Costs and Efficiency at the Country Level*

*[Paragraphs 23, 112 through 121 of GA resolution 62/208]*

#### **(a) Project Support Cost Recovery**

38. In 2009, FAO's Finance Committee reviewed the findings of the interagency study undertaken by the HLCM Finance and Budget Network (FBN) Working Group on Support Costs, which identified a number of cost categories which were not covered by the Organization's established Support Cost Policy, but would qualify for recovery. The Committee endorsed in principle the enlargement of the policy to include additional costs categories. Pending interagency consultations on the matter, an internal review was undertaken to identify specific measures for further review that could reduce the cost recovery gap of variable indirect costs within the current scope of the policy. One aspect of particular relevance is to improve cost recovery at country office level. The review also identified measures that could improve the recovery of costs that have been previously excluded in FAO, but is done by other UN Organizations.

#### **(b) New Operational Modalities (HACT and NEX)**

39. The TCP/R supports the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) and the UN system is encouraged to strengthen national execution (NEX). Based on the work of an interdepartmental



working group established in May 2008, FAO has adopted HACT on a pilot basis in the eight DaO countries and in the countries participating in the UN Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD) in December 2010. The working group is also developing interim guidelines for the application of HACT and related tools, including Letters of Understanding. The guidelines will be revised based on the results of the pilot phase.

#### **(c) International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS)**

40. FAO's IPSAS project continued to move ahead, in accordance with the plan to deliver IPSAS compliant systems in 2012 and IPSAS compliant financial statements by 2013. The goal is to automate, streamline and support financial decision-making through new or updated business processes, integrated systems, financial controls and comprehensive reporting. This includes a new financial system for decentralized offices to deal with the enormous increase in field-driven business resulting from decentralization and delegation to the field. Disbursements made through decentralized offices amounted to USD 581 million in 2010, up 190 percent since 2004. Since 2010, a new reporting functionality gives decentralized offices easy access to financial data in corporate systems.

#### **(d) Harmonization in Procurement Processes**

41. FAO completely revised its manual on procurement of goods and services, which became effective 1 January 2010. It authorizes significant increased delegation of procurement authority to FAO's decentralized offices and provides a framework to implement the procurement function more effectively at the local level. This has been accompanied by a vast training programme, involving over 600 staff in 16 countries. Increasing the level of delegated authority has improved timeliness and effectiveness of the procurement process. The revised manual includes flexibility to cooperate with other UN entities, through various initiatives such as joint tenders, use of other agency tender results, adherence to other agency agreements and procurement from other UN entities.

#### **(e) Harmonization of Reporting of Operational Activities**

42. Currently, several reports on UN system-wide funding and expenditures for operational activities for development are prepared on a regular basis by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the CEB and the Secretariat of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC). A project under the leadership of CEB and with participation from FAO, is seeking to simplify and harmonize data collection processes for the three reports and improve analysis for the benefit of all stakeholders. Particular attention is given to clarifying and updating definitions.

#### *“Delivering as One” (DaO) Pilots*

*[Paragraph 139 of GA resolution 62/208]*

43. Since the beginning of the DaO initiative, FAO has periodically monitored developments related to the “4 Ones” (“One Programme”, “One Budgetary Framework”, “One Leader”, “One Set of Common Business Practices”) in the eight pilot countries. A survey on the benefits of the pilot initiative has been carried out, requesting the concerned FAORs (and the Subregional Office in the case of Albania) to provide details on the situation before and after the DaO. The following aspects have emerged:

- capacity to perform at country level in a programmed manner: positive impact is reported, with a more inclusive approach and improved resource allocation prospects through the “One UN Fund” mechanism. DaO also allowed to clarify respective mandates and division of labour within the UNCT;
- ability to interact with the UNCT, other partners and national stakeholders: this improved substantially, with Agencies exchanging knowledge, and sharing experiences on a regular basis. Relations with national stakeholders and donors, not traditionally working with FAO, also improved;

- additional resources from local fundraising by the RC: in most pilot countries, DaO was an opportunity for FAO to access additional funding through the “One Fund”, for UNJPs envisaging FAO participation;
- cost savings: no visible cost savings have been reported by the FAORs. On the contrary, increased workload, particularly for an increased coordination effort, is reported.

44. In relation to the last point, several RCS/UNCTs signalled that, while reform is progressing well, there are still constraints arising from the lack of common business practices. This is a complex issue that needs to be addressed through global interagency mechanisms, in particular the HLCCM.

#### *Replication of DaO Best Practices in other Countries*

45. An independent evaluation of DaO will start in 2011 and the lessons from the pilots are expected to inform the policy directives in the new QCPR 2012. The initial identified best practices have already been mainstreamed within the 2010 UNDAF Guidance Package and other UNDG guidance. In the interim, a number of governments<sup>13</sup> have already indicated their interest in becoming voluntary adopters of the DaO approach. It will be a challenge for FAO to find ways to respond to the support needs of countries participating.

### **D. Other Areas of the Implementation of the TCPR of Relevance to FAO**

#### *2010 MDG Summit and Integration of MDGs into Work Planning of FAO*

*[Preamble paragraphs 8, 9, 11 and 12 and operative paragraphs 9, 13, 32, 35, 45, 106 and 107 of GA resolution 62/208]*

46. FAO participated in preparations for the High Level Plenary Meeting (HLPM) of the 65th session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals (MDG Summit), which was held in New York in September 2010. FAO also took part in Summit proceedings (round tables and side events). It contributed through public awareness activities by highlighting the importance of eradication of hunger and actions needed to achieve the MDGs. At the Summit, the international community reaffirmed the commitment to achieve the MDGs by 2015 in the Outcome Document entitled: “Keeping the Promise: United to Achieve the MDGs”. This document includes specific text on food security, agriculture and rural development, in consonance with FAO’s Strategic Framework. It also affirms that the eradication of hunger and poverty is central to the achievement of all other MDGs.

47. The Organization is taking steps to implement the recommendations in the Outcome Document, including an internal analysis to highlight those areas where FAO can play a key or supportive role. Strategic/Functional Objective Team Leaders will seek to ensure that the conclusions of this analysis are reflected in work plans for 2012-13.

48. At its October 2010 meeting, the UNDG endorsed nine recommendations on follow-up to the MDG Summit, in order to respond coherently to needs, in particular in countries most lagging behind in achieving the MDGs. The recommendations also guide the UNDG Strategic Priorities and Work Plan for 2010-2011 in MDG related areas.

#### *Role of FAO in UN System’s Contribution to National Capacity Development*

*[Paragraphs 36 through 40, 42 through 47 of GA resolution 62/208]*

49. The new approach to Capacity Development, one of FAO’s eight core functions, has been enshrined in the Corporate Strategy endorsed by the Programme Committee in March 2011.

50. An implementation plan has been developed, particularly for work over the next two years, while full implementation of the Strategy is clearly a long-term process. Sustainability is a central theme of the Strategy, with basic principles to enhance likelihood of sustainable impact of FAO’s efforts. These basic principles are being mainstreamed into programming mechanisms and guidelines,

<sup>13</sup> To date 19.

including CPFs, biennial planning processes and the new project formulation guidelines. Improving FAO competencies and know-how in headquarters units and decentralized offices figures prominently in the plan, including through a four-part staff learning programme, tools, guidelines and good practices which are being made accessible on the FAO Capacity Development Portal and the Intranet.

### *Evaluation Function in FAO*

*[Paragraphs 129-130, 132 through 139 of GA resolution 62/208]*

51. In the period 2007-2010, eight evaluations of FAO's activities in, and cooperation with countries were completed, as well as a Strategic Evaluation of FAO Country Programming (see above). All focused on performance at country level and formulated recommendations aimed at improving the effectiveness and impact of work.

52. In January 2010, in compliance with the IPA, the Office of Evaluation was established, headed by a director who reports directly to the Director-General and to the Council through the Programme Committee. An Evaluation Charter was approved by the Council in May 2010 and was included in the Basic Texts of the Organization.

53. The Internal Evaluation Committee has given due attention to management responses and follow-up reports to major evaluations, as well as to the implementation of recommendations. Following a specific request by the Programme Committee in May 2010, follow-up reports now include 'the programme and policy impact stemming from the implementation of the recommendations of evaluation'.

54. Collaboration with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) continued at a steady pace and the Office of Evaluation co-chairs and participates in several task forces.

### *South-South Cooperation (SSC)*

*[Para. 48, 50 through 53, and 55 of GA resolution 62/208]*

55. Over the past two years, SSC programmes witnessed increased interest on the part of cooperating and recipient countries and expanded significantly (e.g. Morocco is a 'new adopter'). So far, 45 Tripartite Agreements have been signed, and over 1 500 experts and technicians have been fielded. FAO's SSC programmes emerge in the global UN arena as being pragmatic and effective in transferring knowledge from one country to another. FAO will be participating in a side event on SSC at the upcoming Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) session in Geneva, in July 2011.

### *Implementation of the Gender and Development Plan of Action 2008-2013*

*[Paragraphs 56, 59 through 62, 64 through 66 of GA resolution 62/208]*

56. In 2009, the Gender and Development Plan of Action was integrated into the corporate Strategic Framework. Strategic Objective K embodies a renewed commitment to gender issues and is to achieve: "Gender equity in access to resources, goods, services and decision-making in the rural areas". Milestones in terms of gender mainstreaming and achieving progress in gender equality, may be mentioned as follows:

- for the first time in 27 years, a SOFA edition focused on women in agriculture, presenting empirical estimates of the potential gains that could be achieved by closing the gender gap in agriculture and rural employment;
- guidelines on "UN Joint Programmes - Integrating gender issues in food security, agriculture and rural development" and "Integrating Gender Issues into the Country Programming Framework" were issued and distributed to all decentralized offices;
- following a gender audit carried out in 2009-10, a work plan for implementation of the recommendations was formulated, aiming at mainstreaming gender sensitive approaches within Strategic Objectives. The FAO network of gender focal points will be strengthened.

57. With regards to achieving gender balance in FAO workforce, targets were included in the MTP. As at 10 May 2011, good progress had been made at the corporate level to improve gender

balance both at the D-level (which reached 20 percent, up from 15 percent as at 31 December 2008) and at the professional level (which reached 36 percent, up from 33 percent). Progress also occurred in decentralized offices during the same period, with an increase in the proportion of female staff members from 16 to 18 percent at the D-level, and from 20 to 25 percent in the professional category. Measures will continue to be pursued in accordance with the HR Strategic Action Plan on Gender Representation, to be finalized in the first half of 2011.

58. Finally, the “*Evaluation of FAO’s role and work related to Gender and Development*” commenced in late 2010. The results and related actions will be highlighted in the next report.

#### *Transition from Relief to Development*

*[Paragraphs 67 through 72, 74 through 79, 81, 83 through 85 of GA resolution 62/208]*

59. Under FAO’s Strategic Objective I, support to disaster risk management strategies and related capacity development is the focus of Organizational Result I03: ‘Countries and partners have improved transition and linkages between emergency, rehabilitation and transition’. Transition from relief to development has been identified as an area of emphasis in the PWB 2012-13. FAO is in a unique position to ensure a relief-development continuum, as much of emergency related work is in recovery and rehabilitation, where building synergies with long-term development objectives can be relatively easily achieved. Several countries already have agriculture and livelihoods transition strategies and programmes in place, including Bangladesh, Indonesia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Zimbabwe. More countries should be covered by end 2012. Bearing in mind the need for adequate capacity to coordinate a robust interdisciplinary engagement within FAO (including support, advice and field visits from technical department to the field), case studies and policy papers are being developed to facilitate a coherent approach and sharing of information.

60. FAO is also contributing to improving the transition from relief to development through its engagement with the UNDG Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) Working Group on Transition and the IASC Financing Transition Task Team, at both policy and operational level.