

C 2019/8 Web Annex 7: *Regional Dimensions Results*

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1. FAO's work at regional level is structured around Regional Initiatives (RIs), which provide an integrated approach to addressing priority issues and guide the implementation of country programmes. The RIs serve as a multidisciplinary mechanism to enhance delivery and ensure impact on the key priorities of each region, whilst contributing to the Strategic Objectives. The paragraphs that follow provide a summary of achievements in each of the RIs. Additional details can be found in the documents submitted to the five Regional Conferences.¹

Africa

2. Challenges of hunger and malnutrition, poverty, low level of productivity, weak value-chains, and high degree of vulnerability to different kinds of shocks (e.g. climate-induced, and conflicts) all characterize the food and agriculture landscapes in Africa. The Strategic Programmes (SPs) have been instrumental in enabling FAO to effectively respond to those challenges and priorities in the African region, in a coherent, consistent and synergetic manner.

A. Africa's Commitment to End Hunger by 2025

3. Facilitated by FAO's Strategic Programme on Hunger Eradication, Food Security and Nutrition (SP1) and in collaboration with SP2, SP3, SP4 and SP5, the Regional Initiative on Africa's Commitment to End Hunger by 2025 supports an holistic and integrated approach to country, subregional and regional efforts towards the achievement of regional and global commitments (Malabo goals and SDG2 respectively) .

4. FAO continues to strengthen its collaboration with the African Union (AU) and the Regional Economic Commissions. Engagement has focused on supporting development and implementation of policies, strategies, investment plans and monitoring systems to improve food security and nutrition, gender equality, social protection, private sector investment, and strengthening institutional capacities for improved implementation and stakeholder coordination and accountability. FAO has also facilitated policy dialogues for rallying political engagement towards implementing global and regional commitments (notably SDGs, Malabo, ICN2) and fostering mutual accountability mechanisms, as well as building implementation capacities.

5. A Regional Symposium on Nutrition organized by FAO and WHO in 2017, fostered a better articulation of the regional dimensions and specificities of food systems for healthy diet and improved nutrition, and FAO's collaboration with the African Development Bank led to development of a multi-departmental nutrition strategy of the Bank.

6. At the country level, FAO has been supporting member countries in the review and implementation of their food security and nutrition policies and strategies. In addition, FAO has been providing policy support, working directly with key government counterparts in 13 African countries and in ECOWAS, which has contributed to improved policy and institutional environment for multi-sectoral coordination and policy dialogue, and enhanced capacities for policy analysis and reform and programme development and implementation.

7. In addition, the capacity of National Statistics Offices and Ministries of Agriculture focal points in 24 African countries were strengthened and existing food security monitoring initiatives at national and regional levels have been identified together with the key institutions involved. Prevalence of Undernourishment (PoU) and Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) were introduced as important tools for SDG monitoring. Two Regional Panorama, which highlight the food security and nutrition situation in Africa as well as the supporting policies and programmes, were produced and widely disseminated in 2016 and 2017. Finally, FAO has facilitated experience sharing, through South-South Cooperation, contributing to enhancement of policy, planning and implementation of food security and nutrition interventions and supported evidence-based analysis of gender inequalities and women empowerment through comprehensive Country Gender Assessment of the Agricultural

¹ ARC/18/7 (http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/ARC_30/MV725_7/MV725_ARC_18_7_en.pdf), APRC/18/7 (<http://www.fao.org/3/mw286en/mw286en.pdf>), ERC/18/5 (http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/ERC_31/MW161_5/MW161_ERC_18_5_en.pdf), LARC/18/5 (http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/LARC_35/MV886_5/MV886_LARC_18_5_en.pdf), NERC/18/2 (http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/NERC_34/MV587_2/MV587_NERC_18_2_en.pdf)

and Rural Sectors in member countries. This will help design inclusive policies towards the achievement of the African commitment to ending hunger and malnutrition.

B. Sustainable Production Intensification and Value Chain Development

8. Facilitated by FAO's Strategic Programmes on Sustainable Agriculture (SP2) and Food Systems (SP4) and in collaboration with SP3, this Regional Initiative has been supporting regional, subregional and country efforts in promoting sustainable food and agriculture (SFA) and inclusive value chain development, through a more integrated and holistic approach to food systems. Areas supported by FAO include a vast range of sectors.

9. The Organization supported the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure, including development of Monitoring and Evaluation for Land Governance and the customization of Solutions for Open Land Administration. FAO also provided support for forestry management, including leading the forest and food security component of the Forest Strategic Framework in Central Africa in collaboration with ECCAS and the Central African Forest Commission, supporting the assessment of institutional and technical needs in Forest Monitoring and Forest Reference Emission Levels, and accessing funds related to the African Forest landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100) through the Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism. In addition, the FAO has supported over 20 countries in the development of projects aimed at addressing climate change, and 11 countries in improving the methods and applications on rice breeding and agribusiness in rice value chains.

10. FAO's support in inclusive and integrated approaches has also helped smallholder farmers to improve their livelihoods. Examples include, the institutional innovations in mobilising village level savings to improve liquidity constraints in Ghana; large conservation agriculture (CA) projects in Zambia and Kenya; and promotion of the landscape restoration model to restore over 3 000 hectares of agrosilvopastoral systems in Burkina Faso and the Niger.

11. In the areas of value chain development, FAO has been providing support to countries in creating an enabling environment for sustainable small-scale enterprise development. Capacities have been strengthened in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon and Ghana on Inclusive Business Model (IBM) approaches, and food system approaches have been applied to fish culture and processing in several countries. Support to regional fisheries bodies (Committee on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture, Fishery Committee for the Eastern and Central Africa) improved coordination and harmonization of activities.

C. Building Resilience in Africa's Drylands

12. Facilitated by FAO's Strategic Programme on Resilience (SP5) and in collaboration with SP1, SP2 and SP3, this Regional Initiative has been supporting countries and RECs to develop resilience strategies such as the strengthening of capacity for resilience in Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) through the institutionalization of the Food Security and Nutrition Working Group (FNSWG) and review of the main resilience strategic framework – the IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience Sustainability Initiative (IDDRSI). Furthermore, support was provided for finalizing resilience building strategies in Ethiopia, Madagascar and Zimbabwe and in combatting emerging and or re-emerging high impact infectious diseases such as Emerging Pandemic Threats (EPT-2).

13. Policy synthesis reports prepared by FAO provided the basis for a policy dialogue on the contribution of livestock in IGAD member countries. FAO provided capacity building support in the formulation of appropriate livestock feed management strategies in the drylands to 11 countries, and in resilience programming in cash-based interventions to Central and Southern African countries. Countries in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa were provided with the opportunity to share experiences on pastoralism, the interface between gender and resilience, as well as institutional governance for resilience.

14. FAO's support to about 30 member countries in the control and management of a major outbreak of Fall Armyworm (FAW) threatening maize production in Africa has been consequential. A programme framework for the management of FAW prepared under the leadership of FAO has been endorsed by AU policy organs, and FAO has been invited to coordinate efforts in support the

management and control of FAW in Africa. Similarly, FAO worked with partners to control a major outbreak of Avian influenza threatening the poultry industry in West African countries.

15. FAO has been assisting member countries in West and Central Africa (in collaboration with CILSS, ECOWAS and the West African Economic and Monetary Union [UEMOA]) in eliminating existing obsolete pesticides, including Persistent Organic Pollutants and associated wastes, remediate contaminated sites and to strengthen the capacity for sound pesticides management at regional and national levels.

D. Partnerships

16. Partnerships with the regional (notably AU), subregional (RECs) and country partners have facilitated development of policies and strategies, programme implementation and tracking progress. Collaboration with UN Agencies, notably the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), International Financial Institutions (e.g. African Development Bank [AfDB], the World Bank [WB]), resource partners and South-South partners have contributed significantly to the achievement of results at country level.

17. Together with the RBAs, FAO has engaged in high-level policy dialogues with governments and other stakeholders; the most notable include working together in building resilience and emergency preparedness and response to El Niño and La Niña, in the context of the 2030 Agenda. Through the RBA joint conceptual framework, “Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition”, RBAs collaborate in resilience building for vulnerable populations through harmonized strategies and actions in several countries. FAO and WFP also support the Resilience Analysis Unit (RAU) led by the IGAD to conduct analyses of resilience contexts and to develop a joint communication strategy and e-learning tools. RBAs have also collaborated on a number of country-level initiatives, including joint high-level visits, joint projects on food losses and waste, holistic innovative animal health interventions for the management of control of vector-borne diseases, improvement of livestock health and production and impact evaluations.

18. During 2016 and 2017, FAO provided substantial technical assistance to governments in the design of a number of investment operations in partnership with IFIs, mainly the World Bank and IFAD. Through South-South Cooperation, FAO has facilitated a number of exchange visits and experience sharing programmes related to policy and innovations, poverty reduction, food security, agricultural development, decentralization, agricultural statistics etc., among African countries as well as between Africa and countries in the global south.

Asia and the Pacific

19. As supported by the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC), in 2016-17, FAO actions on priorities of the region were framed around the four RIs: Asia and the Pacific’s Zero Hunger Challenge (RI-ZHC); the Regional Rice Initiative (RRI); Sustainable Intensification of Aquaculture for Blue Growth (RI-BG); and Developing Local Value Chains for Food Security and Nutrition in Pacific Island Countries (RIVC).

A. Regional Initiative on Zero Hunger Challenge

20. At the country level, RI-ZHC has further strengthened and expanded the national political commitment to achieve zero hunger (SP1). While all countries in the region have committed to SDG2, several countries including Cambodia, Fiji, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam have officially declared their determination to eradicate hunger and malnutrition by launching the National Zero Hunger Challenge, the National ZHC Strategy, and the National Action Plan on Food Security and Nutrition. RI-ZHC also provided support to the formulation of the National Agriculture Development Strategy and the National Mechanization Strategy for Timor-Leste, and paved the way for the agriculture research and development strategy for zero hunger for Afghanistan.

21. The Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability, and Transformation programme, in partnership with the European Union, was launched in ten countries in the region to provide direct and customized policy assistance support to governments for improving food security and nutrition situation.

22. At the regional/subregional level, RI-ZHC launched the Future Smart Food (FSF) Initiative to promote agricultural diversification and sustainable intensification to address hunger and malnutrition (SP2). More than 30 national and international partners have actively joined the FSF Initiative, which is being translated into concrete national government strategies and policies on food security and nutrition. RI-ZHC has also actively collaborated with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) on a food security and nutrition strategy.

B. Regional Rice Initiative

23. The RRI successfully demonstrated that Sustainable Intensification of Rice Systems (SIRP) not only provides multiple benefits, including increased production and higher profits for farmers, but also has climate benefits through practices such as alternate wetting and drying and integrated rice-fish production systems. SIRP case studies show that after Farmer Field School training, the adoption of Save and Grow practices by participating farmers produces cost-saving benefits by reducing seed inputs, increasing rice yields, and consequently raising profits for farmers.

24. Installing and upgrading agricultural mechanization is an important goal. In some countries, the cost of manual farm labour has increased dramatically, particularly during planting and harvesting. FAO demonstrated a 20 percent reduction in labour inputs as compared to manual transplanting and time per hectare, an approximate 20 percent reduction in production costs, and a more than 70 percent decrease in the use of seeds when a drum seeder is used for direct seeding instead of manual transplanting .

25. Post-harvest rice loss at producer and village levels was reduced by up to 60 percent in Myanmar after FAO training sessions on paddy techniques to improve harvesting, drying and storage. A total of 4 000 farmers were trained in reducing rice losses in Myanmar and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

C. Regional Initiative on Blue Growth

26. RI-BG has supported member countries to improve fisheries management and protect aquatic ecosystems. Technical support was provided on the implementation of National Plans of Action– Illegal Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, and the accession to international agreements (such as the Port State Measures Agreement and United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement) through legal and policy advice and capacity-building. FAO supported countries in capacity development for the promotion of the Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries. In collaboration with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), FAO helped strengthen regional cooperation on large marine ecosystem management on the Bay of Bengal and Indonesian Seas.

27. RI-BG also supported the identification of innovative agro-aquaculture farming practices in member countries for improved production efficiency and sustainability of the aquaculture sector. Jointly with national agencies, FAO demonstrated innovative rice-fish and rice-shrimp farming in several countries. The Organization also developed regional technical guidelines for good rice-fish farming practices and piloted four aquaculture planning and management tools.

28. RI-BG has supported countries in strengthening inclusive and gender-sensitive fisheries and aquaculture value chains. This includes ground-level work in support of the implementation of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries, the organization of a joint FAO-SEAFDEC experts workshop on a regional approach to the subject, and the enhancement of country-level aquaculture feed and seed production.

29. FAO supported countries in building the resilience of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, implementing National Plans of Action, piloting climate-resilient aquaculture farming practices and adopting integrated approaches that incorporate climate change and disaster risk management.

D. Regional Initiative on Developing Local Value Chains for Food Security and Nutrition in the Pacific Island Countries

30. In order to support national and regional evidence-based policy development and data systems and to enhance capacity in the collection and analysis of agricultural statistics, a new ten-year Pacific

Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Fisheries Statistics, endorsed by governments, was developed by FAO in collaboration with the Pacific Community (SPC). Under the umbrella of this Regional Initiative, FAO improved the regional enabling environment with an in-depth aquaculture risk assessment and business investment planning study and the Pacific Islands' capacities related to Codex Alimentarius, food safety and sustainable aquaculture were strengthened, with the draft Imported Food Control Guidelines for Pacific Island Countries presented during the 14th session of the FAO/World Health Organization (WHO) Coordinating Committee for North America and South West Pacific.

31. Country-level support included assistance to government institutions in the development of national policies and strategies for agriculture, statistics, crops and plant protection, food safety and quality, animal health and fisheries, among others. It also included support for improving data for evidence-based decision making, such as the impact of taxes, market reviews, and reports on dietary patterns. FAO also worked closely with producers, strengthening farmers' capacity to supply domestic markets, through trainings and manuals on food technology processing, contract farming operations, post-harvest management and food safety.

E. Achievements in other programmes and priority areas

Food Safety and One Health

32. A regional standard on phytosanitary measures for hot water treatment of mango fruit for fruit fly was developed to reduce risk of fruit fly infestation, contributing to better trade and increased biosecurity of various fruit crops (SP4). Import control protocols have been developed and capacity to deal with transboundary food safety risks has been strengthened.

33. Under the Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) and the Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs), emerging risks of infectious disease and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the region have been highlighted and local solutions supported. National AMR Action Plans have been developed as well as related policies, and laboratory and surveillance capacities.

Making Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries More Productive and Sustainable in the Context of Climate Change

34. Considering the special role of the dairy sector in supporting rural livelihoods, empowerment of women and child nutrition, and the complexity of challenges faced by the region in ensuring that future dairy sector development is socially equitable and ecologically responsible, FAO has facilitated the creation of the Dairy Asia Sustainability Framework, fully aligned to the SDGs, as a guiding framework for sustainable dairy sector development. Other initiatives include the FAO's publications on forest change, forest tenure, agroforestry, and restoration, a useful tool for knowledge-sharing across countries, and the Regional Meeting on Agricultural Biotechnologies in Sustainable Food Systems and Nutrition, which engaged a broad range of stakeholders in the dialogue on the role and application of agricultural biotechnologies to improve food security and nutrition and make food systems more sustainable in the region.

Sustainable Development Goals Monitoring and Agricultural Statistics

35. Events were organized in Asia and the Pacific to disseminate methodology for the SDG indicators, and FAO continues to prioritize technical assistance to countries to build their statistical capacity, particularly for monitoring SDG2 and SDG12 relating to Zero Hunger and Food Loss respectively. The Regional Action Programme for Global Strategy finalized in-depth assessments of country capacities to produce agricultural statistics in 15 countries and the Pacific, as well as drafts of their Strategic Plans for Agricultural Statistics. Additionally, FAO is assisting five countries in planning and implementing their agricultural census.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

36. FAO's ongoing collaboration with UN agencies through the regional UN Thematic Working Group on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment contributed to publications such as the Asia Pacific Gender Equality and SDGs Report, and the UN study on Women's Transformative Leadership

in the 2030 Agenda in Asia Pacific. FAO also published the Regional Gender Strategy and Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific and country gender action plans. Country Gender Assessments have been completed in two countries and initiated in 12 more. FAO focused additional support on the Pacific by providing training on Gender Integrated Planning to FAO offices in the Pacific Islands, leading to a multi-country gender assessment in five Pacific Island states in collaboration with the SPC.

Migration

37. The 2017 *State of Food and Agriculture* articulates the need to address the root causes of migration, including rural poverty, food insecurity and climate change, and magnify the positive outcomes of related interventions. FAO collaborated with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) on migration, e.g. through case studies on the nexus between access to natural resources and migration.

F. Partnerships

38. FAO works in collaboration and partnership with subregional, regional and international entities, such as ASEAN, SAARC, SPC, the Asian Development Bank, and the World Bank. with specialized national research institutions such as the CGIAR Centres.

39. FAO also stepped up regional collaboration with the Rome-based agencies. Joint WFP-FAO missions and programming for the emergency situation in Bangladesh and Myanmar were completed. IFAD and FAO collaborated to enhance the capacity of the Pacific Inlands to plan and formulate informed and appropriate policies to promote sustainable rural development and food and nutritional security in the Pacific countries. A regular communication and coordination mechanism among the regional heads of the Rome-based agencies was set up. FAO and WFP agreed to align country-level activities.

40. Successful regional examples of increasing inter-UN agency cooperation include the Asia Pacific Symposium on Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy Diets and Improved Nutrition organized by FAO in collaboration with WHO, WFP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank, and the establishment of a Nutrition Working Group composed of FAO, WFP, WHO and UNICEF under the regional UN Country Team (UNCT) framework.

Europe and Central Asia

41. The Thirtieth Session of the ERC in 2016 supported adjustments to the two ongoing Regional Initiatives as well as other areas of work in order to bring greater focus to FAO's work in the region, as follows: Regional Initiatives:

- Empowering smallholders and family farms for improved rural livelihood and poverty reduction;
- Improving agrifood trade and market integration.

42. Other areas of work:

- Sustainable natural resource management, including climate change mitigation and adaptation; and
- Strengthening food security and increasing resilience of livelihoods to threats and crisis.

43. The work programme in the region integrated follow-up actions on global developments, including the SDGs and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

A. Regional Initiative on empowering smallholders and family farms for improved rural livelihood and poverty reduction (RI-1)

44. In order to address the challenges faced by smallholders and family farmers, RI-1 has two components. The first is to increase capacities of farmers on sustainable agricultural production by enhancing their access to services. The second aims to ensure inclusive growth through improved rural livelihoods, with emphasis on gender equality and economic empowerment. The RI supported

multisectoral rural development policies, the development of community and short value chains, statistics, and the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT), including addressing land fragmentation through land consolidation instruments (SO3.1).

45. In the context of the SDGs, RI-1 addressed particularly SDG 12 by supporting the implementation of the VGGT and the promotion of national land consolidation programmes. It addressed SDG 23 through support for the adoption of best practices to improve the competitiveness of smallholder farms.

46. Key achievements include promoting the adoption of innovative practices such as Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) for greenhouse vegetable production or organizing a Regional Symposium on Agroecology ; strengthening governance frameworks for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and Integrated Pest Management (IPM); promoting policies and programmes to improve access to natural resources, such as the implementation of VGGT; and providing cross-sectoral policy advice for the development of gender-equitable and sustainable rural development, including strengthening institutional capacity for rural development policies, such as rural tourism and modernization of agricultural infrastructure, promoting the Area Based Development approach and holding a multisectoral regional dialogue on social protection for food security, nutrition and rural development.

47. The RI addressed cross-cutting issues through the production of gender assessments, methodological tools and studies, the enhancement of governance through participatory approaches to policy dialogues and community development, and assistance to national statistics offices in processing agricultural census results.

B. Regional Initiative on improving agrifood trade and market integration (RI-2)

48. The purpose of the initiative is to support member countries in enhancing the agrifood trade policy environment for small- and medium-sized enterprises through (i) the building of capacity to implement trade agreements and increase access to new markets; (ii) the building of capacity to implement global food safety and quality standards; and (iii) the provision of supportive policy environments for export diversification. The main SDGs addressed by RI-2 included SDG 24 and SDG 175 by strengthening national capacities at regional workshops and e-learning courses, and supporting the collaboration of Members through the Agricultural Trade Expert Network in Europe and Central Asia (ATEN).⁶

49. Key achievements include enhancing capacity and promoting dialogue on trade-related agreements through regional workshops; supporting public- and private-sector institutions in plant and animal health, food safety and quality domains, including strengthening phytosanitary control services, improving legislation for preparedness on transboundary animal diseases and promoting the “One Health” approach on antimicrobial resistance risk reduction, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE); supporting the development of agribusinesses and agrifood chains as well as financial and investment instruments through analyses of value chain gaps, collection of baseline data on agro-industry, value chains, post-harvest management and food waste and loss and sharing experiences shared with geographical indication schemes.

50. Gender issues were addressed throughout the activities – in trainings and workshops, particularly – to raise the understanding of the importance of achieving the SDGs. Examples include income-diversification activities that help rural women in remote areas increase their market linkages, and sharing good practices for gender-sensitive interventions.

² End poverty in all its forms everywhere

³ End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

⁴ End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

⁵ Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

⁶ www.fao.org/europe/regional-perspectives/iatmi/ten/about/en/

C. Sustainable natural resource management, including climate change mitigation and adaptation

51. Efforts focused on the nexus between climate change adaptation and mitigation, disaster risk management, and energy under the Climate Smart Agriculture approach, addressing the interrelated challenges of food security, development and climate change in an integrated manner. FAO supported the implementation and adaptation of international and regional instruments, particularly the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Paris Agreement commitments of Members, and the Sendai Framework (SO2.2, SO2.3). Evidence-based decision-making was supported by producing various assessments and statistical and analytical products.

52. This area of work focused on SDG 2,⁷ ensuring sustainable and resilient production systems that increase production, maintain the ecosystem, and strengthen climate change adaptation by supporting good practices and access to climate financing instruments. Other SDGs that are key for sustainable natural resources and climate change, in particular SDG 13 and SDG 15,⁹ were also involved.

53. Key results include support to innovative practices and integrated multisectoral approaches on climate change adaptation and mitigation and accessing climate financing; promotion of international and regional mechanisms on the management of sustainable natural resources through sessions of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish)¹⁰ and the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC)¹¹; and promotion of evidence-based decisions in agriculture sectors and natural resources supporting the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CISSTAT) supported in the methodology and organization of structural surveys in agriculture within the framework of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics.

54. Cross-cutting issues addressed include climate change, statistics through support to national agricultural censuses and the nationalization and monitoring of SDG indicators, and gender, which is central in different climate-financing instruments and programming architectures, such as the GCF.

D. Strengthening food security and increasing resilience of livelihoods to threats and crisis

55. FAO addressed the challenges posed by stagnant levels of food insecurity and malnutrition by supporting advocacy and awareness-raising, the development of appropriate policies and programmes, and coordination mechanisms. The Organization has also produced evidence to support decision-makers, including monitoring of countries' status in relation to SDG 2 (Targets 2.1, 2.2). Efforts focused mainly on SDG 2,¹² which calls for ending all forms of malnutrition. In this context, FAO supported following up the implementation of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition adopted at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2); FAO also promoted multi-sectoral cooperation to address malnutrition.

56. Work on increasing the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crisis focused on supporting policy development, providing information and early warning against potential emerging threats, reducing risks and vulnerabilities at the household level, and preparing and managing effective responses to disasters and crises. It also included support to recover livelihoods and income-generation in the conflict-affected areas of Eastern Ukraine and support to address the Syrian refugee crisis in Turkey.

57. Key achievements include the operationalization of the Framework for Action under ICN2 at country-level, the organization of a regional symposium on Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy

⁷ End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

⁸ Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

⁹ Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

¹⁰ ERC/18/9

¹¹ ERC/18/10

¹² End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Diets in Europe and Central Asia,¹³ strengthening school food and nutrition programmes, and providing technical inputs to review and monitor the executive performance of the Food Security and Nutrition Programme. The Organization also supported inclusive coordination mechanisms related to food security and nutrition by strengthening the capacity of the Economic Cooperation Organization - Regional Coordination Centre (ECO-RCC) and of national authorities and stakeholders on prevention measures for crises and threads and emergency preparedness.

58. Among cross-cutting issues, nutrition played a central role in the follow-up to ICN-2, such as through the support to school food and nutrition programmes. Support to statistics and capacity development was key towards enhancing countries' capacities in monitoring policies and programmes related to SDGs 1 and 2. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in Europe and Central Asia report monitors progress against SDG 2 food security and nutrition targets, for which FAO acts as custodian (as it also does for other related SDG targets).

E. Partnerships

59. FAO worked closely with regional and global technical organizations. Examples include the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in Southeast Europe on rural policy and with the European Commission on programmes on policy support, land consolidation and food security issues, ICARDA and members of GACSA on supporting climate-smart agriculture, and IUCN on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Other partners include the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, the World Bank, the Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies and the Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy.

60. Among the UN agencies, FAO cooperation has been strong with UNEP on GCF, UNITAR on e-learning platforms, OIE on the One Health approach, WFP, UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank on food security and nutrition and UNECE on land consolidation. The Organization also worked with UN Women and Rome-based agencies under the UN Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment.

61. At country level, FAO has partnered with civil society organizations, bilateral development agencies such as JICA and GIZ, and the private sector, including through chambers of commerce. Other key resource partners include Austria, Hungary, Norway and Turkey through the South-South Cooperation programme.

Latin America and the Caribbean

62. In response to the programmatic recommendations made by the Regional Conference at its thirty-fourth session, on the need to maintain the Organization's strategic direction and support the strategic planning process, FAO articulated all of its work in Latin America and the Caribbean within the programming framework developed around the five SPs. Each of the 372 outcomes committed to at the country, subregional or regional level was framed by this scheme. At the country level, all expected results stemmed from the agreements registered in the respective Country Programming Framework. The RIs were consolidated as the mechanism for implementing FAO's work, based on the priorities defined by Member States.

A. Hunger-free Latin America and the Caribbean (RI 1)

63. RI 1 drew together SPs 1, 2, 3 and 4 to promote national school meal programmes linked to nutritional education and public procurement from family farming in 11 countries.¹⁴ It also articulated SPs 1 and 4 to support and consolidate the Regional Network of Public Food Supply and Marketing Systems, in which 12 countries¹⁵ of the region actively participate in exchanging experiences on food supply and marketing.

¹³ The meeting was jointly organized by FAO, WHO, UNICEF and WFP. More details in ERC/18/INF/10

¹⁴ Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Grenada, Honduras, Jamaica, Paraguay, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

¹⁵ The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

B. Family farming and inclusive food systems for sustainable rural development (RI 2)

64. The capacities and resources of SPs 2, 3 and 4 were coordinated through RI 2 to promote synergies between social protection, agricultural sustainability and economic inclusion programmes for populations living in rural poverty in eight of the region's countries,¹⁶ in addition to supporting the current process of constructing a subregional agenda on social protection and productive inclusion for the eight member countries of the Central American Integration System (SICA), within the framework of its Social Integration Secretariat. Moreover, SPs 3 and 5 have been coordinated to establish projects and financing initiatives to strengthen socioenvironmental development with a focus on rural poverty. With the support of SP 2, the Regional Agroecology Agenda has been consolidated among organizations and social movements, governments and academia across 18 countries in the region.

C. Sustainable use of natural resources, climate change adaptation and disaster risk management (RI 3)

65. The capacities and resources of SPs 2 and 5 were coordinated to generate the voluntary guidelines for agroecological policies for Latin America and the Caribbean which attracted active participation by agricultural and environmental institutions from nine countries.¹⁷ Similarly, at the request of the Pro Tempore Presidency of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the capacities and resources of SPs 1, 2, 3 and 5 were combined to formulate the Regional Strategy for Disaster-risk Management in the Agriculture Sector and for Food and Nutritional Security in Latin America and the Caribbean. FAO also provided technical assistance to the CELAC Pro Tempore Presidencies (Ecuador in 2015, Dominican Republic in 2016 and El Salvador in 2017).

66. Events held and outcomes achieved with FAO support include the following: (a) the Meeting on Climate Change, Food Security and Family farming; (b) approval of the Gender Strategy of the CELAC FNS Plan, under the auspices of the Working Group on the Advancement of Women; (c) approval and implementation of the 2017 Action Plan of the CELAC Working Group on Family Farming and Rural Development; (d) approval of the 2018 Action Plan of the CELAC Working Group on Family Farming and Rural Development; and (e) approval of the Regional Strategy for disaster risk management in the agriculture sector, at the same meeting in December 2017. The Organization additionally launched the "100 Hunger-free Territories" proposal and trained national public policy officials on Pillar 3 of the CELAC FNS Plan on nutritional well-being.

67. At country level, significant results were achieved in terms of regulating public supply systems and food loss and waste, and facilitating policy dialogue for family farming. Through the Parliamentary Fronts against Hunger, progress was made in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and in Haiti in legislation underpinning the Right to Food. Guatemala passed the Law on School Meals and Public Procurement from Family Farming; the Dominican Republic passed similar legislation and a Law on Food Security and Sovereignty; and Honduras passed a Law on School Meals. In addition, the Regional Network of Public Food Supply and Marketing Systems (SPAA) was consolidated, with participation by governments from 12 Latin American and Caribbean countries.¹⁸

68. On the issue of Food Loss and Waste (FLW), FAO and its allies have supported the following: (a) the formulation of 24 draft laws on FLW; (b) preparation of FLW baselines in 12 countries;¹⁹ and (c) the formulation of an International Code of Conduct for the Prevention and Reduction of FLW.

69. FAO continued to develop specific actions in response to the exceptional challenges faced by Haiti. Among several actions communal, departmental and national Food and Nutrition Security Plans were developed, an analysis was done of the institutional capacities in food and nutrition security of the decentralized offices of the Ministry of Agriculture, technical support and training was provided to the National Food Security Coordination, and the Ministry of National Education was supported in the

¹⁶ Colombia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay and the Plurinational State of Bolivia

¹⁷ Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, El Salvador, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Paraguay.

¹⁸ The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, the Plurinational State of Bolivia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

¹⁹ Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

development of a school feeding policy document. The Parliamentary Front against Hunger of Haiti was officially launched. In addition, FAO supported the Government to adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change and strengthen the resilience of coastal and agricultural systems of the Greater South, by restoring ecosystem services and creating/rehabilitating green infrastructure following a “ridge to reef” approach.

D. Partnerships

70. FAO has strengthened its work in partnership with other multilateral, government, civil society and, more recently, private sector organizations. During the 2016-2017 biennium, five alliances were formed that embrace some 150 of the leading specialists in the region. This is an innovative way of mobilizing capacities existing in the region, in support of Member States' demands and priorities.

71. A process of rapprochement has been launched with the private sector, on issues linked to each of the three RIs. The first objective is to establish permanent dialogue mechanisms, to make it possible to identify shared interests and cooperation areas. In some countries, this process has progressed faster; in Argentina, for example, FAO, the Government of Argentina, Unilever and Carrefour have launched the #NoTiresComida [Don't throw food away] campaign, as part of the National Programme for the Reduction of Food Loss and Waste.

72. In terms of partnerships with the United Nations System, FAO increased its collaboration with ECLAC by submitting joint reports with that organization at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development held in New York in July 2017, thus addressing the Conference's recommendation to work closely with other UN agencies on monitoring SDGs. FAO and ECLAC also jointly addressed the challenges posed by migration in the countries of Central America's Northern Triangle and Mexico, which is identifying rural territories with the highest net migration rates, along with policies and programmes to assist returnee populations reintegrate.

73. In 2016 and 2017, the report Panorama of food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean was prepared with collaboration from PAHO/WHO.

74. FAO has signed regional memoranda of understanding with IFAD and WFP. The initial aim is to start collective actions in three priority countries: Haiti, Guatemala and Colombia and the respective representatives at the country level have begun to discuss a way forward. FAO and IFAD, in coordination with REAF, SICA and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), supported the establishment of the Rural Youth Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Near East and North Africa

75. The 2016 Regional Conference considered FAO's achievements in the region and identified priority areas to be considered for the three Regional Initiatives in 2016–2017: Water Scarcity (WSI), Small-scale Family Farming (SSFF) and Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition (FSN). The WSI, which additional countries are interested in joining, places emphasis on water use efficiency and water productivity, climate change, drought management, strategic planning of water resources and sustainable water resources management. The SSFF strengthens producers' capacity for sustainable productivity and value chains, through farmer field schools and others means, as well as developing capacity of producer organizations and rural institutions, supporting market access for small-scale farmers. The FSN supports development of policy and institutional frameworks in countries across the region, as well as improving access to food and nutrition security information for decision support, promoting efficient and inclusive food systems and developing household resilience.

76. The main achievements in the region during the 2016–2017 biennium include:

- improved resilience to food security and nutrition threats due to intervention to combat plant, animal and fish pests and diseases, including transboundary cases, and the implementation of food security information early warning systems;
- sustainable conservation of animal and plant genetic resources;
- reduction of food losses and waste; and

- development of social protection systems to increase resilience of smallscale family farmers.

77. Countries have been supported, as well, towards the improvement of sustainable water resources management, climate change adaptation and drought management.

A. Water Scarcity Initiative (WSI)

78. In the context of the WSI, through a multidisciplinary team and with the support of SP 2, SP4 and SP5, FAO is supporting several countries of the region in addressing sustainable water resources management with associated implications for food security. Methods and standards have been developed with governmental staff and training organized for the application of remote sensing to monitor and evaluate 'water accounting', 'water productivity' and 'drought'. To improve the sustainable management of groundwater, an integrated hydrogeological-gender diagnostic assessment on groundwater governance has been completed on aquifers in Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

79. In partnership with the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), and in synergy with SSFF, small-farm sustainable land-and-water productivity has been scaled up in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia under irrigated and rainfed conditions through the introduction of affordable technologies and good management practices. Over six hundred hectares, about four hundred farmers have directly benefited from this work with a yield increase of more than 20 percent, including a reduction in water use of about 25 percent (and also of seeds and fertilizers) and an increase in water productivity of about 60 percent compared with the traditional farming practices. The increase in the income of farmers has been estimated to be to the order of 20 percent for the 2016–2017 wheat cycle in Egypt.

80. Sustained by the Regional Collaborative Platform of the WSI, a regional work plan for an integrated agriculture-aquaculture (IAA), to produce high quality protein and fresh vegetable using brackish water in inhospitable deserts and arid lands, has been initiated to be implemented in Algeria, Egypt and Oman.

81. With the endorsement of the League of Arab States (LAS), and in partnership with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD), climate change scenario analyses for two time-horizons (baseline: 1986–2005; time-horizon I: 2016–2035; time-horizon II: 2046–2065) for Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon, and for "hot-spots" at regional level, have been developed. Based on these projections, climate-change adaptation solutions for the Green Sectors of selected zones in the region have been derived.

82. In partnership with the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA), and in synergy with FSN (SP5), the most appropriate drought-monitoring indexes for different agricultural systems have been selected for Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. This represents the first phase for the establishment of a Regional Drought Management System (RDMS).

B. Small-scale Family Farming (SSFF)

83. In the context of the Regional Initiative on SSFF, FAO conducted a series of assessments addressing trends characterizing and impacting small-scale family farmers in six countries and at regional level, including an assessment on the status of sex-disaggregated data and indicators for the eight countries. Together, these assessments provided a first-of-their-kind baseline to understand the regional dynamics.

84. The ministries of eight countries received capacity support on The Regional Initiative played an important role in social protection for small-scale family farmers. This included the establishment of a 'Registry' of farmers for inclusion in Lebanon's National Social Security Fund, which provides support to vulnerable farmers and agricultural workers through the National Poverty Targeted Programme (SP2 and SP3).

85. FAO also supported interventions to promote youth employment diversification (on-farm and off-farm) and coordinated the first study for the Arab countries on the role of child labour in agriculture, commissioned by the LAS. The Organization is also contributing to the 2017 Situation Report on International Migration in the Arab States.

86. Producer Organizations were supported in Lebanon, Oman and the Sudan to make their governance more effective for delivering better services to their members and in sharing experience and best practices. Examples include assessing capacity development needs, with a specific emphasis on gender roles, a job creation project facilitating the establishment of 50 youth enterprises, and the enhancement of milk production.

87. Another important area of work was value chain, through the enhancement of value chains and market access of small-scale family farmers in Yemen and of dairy products in Sudan, and through the analysis of value chains for small-scale fishers along the Nile River, and on dairy products in Lebanon.

88. A Regional Gender Strategy has been developed to help mainstream gender analysis particularly on resilience to conflicts, youth, value chain development, sex-disaggregated statistics, and water governance.

C. Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition (FSN)

89. FAO contributed to improved governance capacity and policy environment for the impacts of threats and crisis to food security and nutrition in the region. Through the support of FAO, facilitated by SP1 and SP5, countries in the NENA region developed national strategies and investment plans that have strengthened their capacity for preparing, preventing and managing food security and nutrition needs in a region currently beset with protracted crises and climate change.

90. FAO has assisted NENA countries in building well-functioning Food Security Information Systems that informed evidence-based risk reduction strategies and investments. Preventive and early response actions have been made possible by early warning information. Comprehensive assessments of agriculture subsectors enhanced Humanitarian Response Plans in areas affected by crisis. Vulnerability and resilience analyses informed resilience-based programmes.

91. To ensure that countries are resilient to transboundary pests and diseases in plants and animals, FAO sustained its efforts to strengthen surveillance, prevention and response capacity through updated policies, institutional capacity building, improved laboratory and diagnostic facilities and sustained extension services. Together with partner government agencies, FAO has progressed in addressing rabies, avian influenza, the Rift Valley Fever (RVF), foot-and-mouth disease and the goat plague (peste des petits ruminants [PPR]). FAO continues to be a key player in the control and eradication of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in the region. With FAO's support, in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), the Sudan and Tunisia prepared national action plans on antimicrobial resistance (NAP-AMR).

92. FAO has supported countries in the management, control and eradication of plant pests and diseases, which threaten major crops in the region. Among these is the red palm weevil. Extension services and local-level capacities have been improved through integrated pest management, ensuring that communities have the ability to take protective measures for their crops. FAO provided support for the implementation of international commitment to protect human health and the environment from the hazardous effects of chemicals and pesticides (Rotterdam Convention). FAO has also facilitated the disposal of obsolete pesticides, including Persistent Organic Pollutants.

93. FAO has contributed to improved production through sustainable means and conservation of genetic resources in the region. At national level, project conservation and sustainable use of sheep genetic resources were developed in Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon using a community-based breeding programme approach.

94. FAO has facilitated dialogue and cooperation among countries in the region to promote collective responsibility and action on major environmental and agriculture-related issues. Among these, efforts to address the effects of climate change and pollution on the marine ecosystems of the region have been accelerated through a Memorandum of Understanding between FAO (on behalf of the Regional Commission for Fisheries [RECOFI]) and the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME) which was formulated and enforced at the Ninth Session of RECOFI in May 2017.

95. FAO succeeded in highlighting the issue of food losses and waste and supported countries to implement the recommendations resulting from the policy round tables on "Food Losses and Waste in the Context of Sustainable Food Systems" following the endorsed "Regional Strategic Framework for Food Losses and Waste Reduction".

96. FAO has supported assessing and improving sanitary and phytosanitary standards in the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and in the Sudan to meet the requirements of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) importers, in an effort to enhance collaboration on intra- and interregional livestock trade and benefit from the opportunities of technology and best practices.

D. Partnerships

97. In the context of the WSI, strategic partnerships were established with LAS, its Arab Ministerial Water Council (AMWC) and its specialized institutes, such as the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) and ACSAD. These partnerships are particularly valuable in addressing strategic planning of water resources management and water security in the region, as well as water use efficiency. Moreover, a partnership has been established with ICARDA to address on-farm water productivity. Another important partnership has been established with ESCWA within the domain of climate change impacts and vulnerability assessments which is complemented through cooperation with ICBA in the domain of drought management.

98. Within the context of the SSFF, a regional partnership was established with the World Food Programme (WFP) on "School Meals and Social Protection in Middle East and North Africa", to enhance the effectiveness and broaden the coverage and impact of school meal programmes as a key social protection instrument. In addition, FAO and WFP have signed a "Regional Partnership Agreement" to support the Members in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular to achieve SDG2 (End Hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture). FAO is conducting a study jointly with the International Labour Organization (ILO) on the main characteristics of Child Labour in the Arab region in the agriculture sector, including the effects of armed conflicts and displacement on child labour. The study, commissioned by LAS, is being conducted in collaboration with the Arab Council for Childhood and Development (ACCD). FAO is also working with AOAD on enhancing the date palm value chain in Arab countries.

99. In the context of the Regional Initiative on FSN, FAO is working in partnership with AOAD on reducing food losses and collaborating with WFP, within the Food Security Cluster/Sector, in countries affected by crisis. Work on plant pests and diseases is being carried out with the International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM) in Bari and the Near East Plant Protection Organization (NEPPO).