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Food and
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Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная
организация
Объединенных
Наций

Organización
de las
Naciones Unidas
para la
Alimentación y la
Agricultura

COUNCIL

Hundred and Forty-fourth Session

Rome, 11-15 June 2012

**Report of the 27th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa
(Brazzaville, Congo, 23-27 April 2012)**

REPORT

Brazzaville
Congo
23-27 April 2012

Twenty-seventh FAO Regional Conference for Africa



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FAO Member Nations in the Africa Region

Algeria	Eritrea	Namibia
Angola	Ethiopia	Niger
Benin	Gabon	Nigeria
Botswana	Gambia	Rwanda
Burkina Faso	Ghana	Sao Tome and Principe
Burundi	Guinea	Senegal
Cameroon	Guinea-Bissau	Seychelles
Cape Verde	Kenya	Sierra Leone
Central African Republic	Lesotho	Somalia
Chad	Liberia	South Africa
Comoros	Libya	Sudan
Congo	Madagascar	Swaziland
Côte d'Ivoire	Malawi	Togo
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Mali	Tunisia
Djibouti	Mauritania	Uganda
Egypt	Mauritius	United Republic of Tanzania
Equatorial Guinea	Morocco	Zambia
	Mozambique	Zimbabwe

Date and place of FAO Regional Conferences for Africa

First	- Lagos, Nigeria, 3 – 12 November 1960
Second	- Tunis, Tunisia, 1 – 10 November 1962
Third	- Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 3 – 15 September 1964
Fourth	- Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 9 – 19 November 1966
Fifth	- Kampala, Uganda, 18 – 29 November 1968
Sixth	- Algiers, Algeria, 17 September – 3 October 1970
Seventh	- Libreville, Gabon, 14 – 30 September 1972
Eighth	- Rose Hill, Mauritius, 1 – 17 August 1974
Ninth	- Freetown, Sierra Leone, 2 – 12 November 1976
Tenth	- Arusha, Tanzania, 18 – 28 September 1978
Eleventh	- Lomé, Togo, 16 – 27 June 1980
Twelfth	- Algiers, Algeria, 22 September – 2 October 1982
Thirteenth	- Harare, Zimbabwe, 16 – 25 July 1984
Fourteenth	- Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, 2 – 11 September 1986
Fifteenth	- Moka, Mauritius, 26 April – 4 May 1988
Sixteenth	- Marrakech, Morocco, 11 – 15 June 1990
Seventeenth	- Accra, Ghana, 20 – 24 July 1992
Eighteenth	- Gaborone, Botswana, 24 – 28 October 1994
Nineteenth	- Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, 16 – 20 April 1996
Twentieth	- Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 16 – 20 February 1998
Twenty-first	- Yaoundé, Cameroon, 21 – 25 February 2000
Twenty-second	- Cairo, Egypt, 4-8 February 2002
Twenty-third	- Johannesburg, South Africa, 1- 5 March 2004
Twenty-fourth	- Bamako, Mali, 30 January – 3 February 2006
Twenty-fifth	- Nairobi, Kenya, 16 – 20 June 2008
Twenty-sixth	- Luanda, Angola, 6 – 7 May 2010
Twenty-seventh	- Brazzaville, Congo, 23 – 27 April 2012

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SUMMARY OF MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

MATTERS REQUIRING THE ATTENTION OF THE COUNCIL

The 27th FAO Regional Conference for Africa:

III. Programme and Budget Matters

A. Report on FAO activities in Africa in the Biennium 2010-2011

36. Endorsed RAF Results-based management focus and urged allocation of human and financial resources to establish a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit in the Regional Office for Africa (RAF) in order to better monitor, evaluate and measure results.

38. Requested FAO to ensure regular broad stakeholder consultation and coordination for priority planning, programming and monitoring.

43. Requested FAO to accord greater attention to gender-sensitive programme planning and implementation.

C. Programme of Work and Budget 2012-2013 and Areas of Priority Actions for Africa in the Following Biennium 2014-15

48. Endorsed the Strategic Thinking Process launched by the Director-General of FAO and confirmed that the main challenges are consistent with the conditions in the Region.

49. Endorsed RAF 2012-13 and 2014-15 priority areas, expanding the agricultural productivity scope to forestry, fisheries, livestock and aquaculture, and focusing attention on the value chain approach, water management, soft infrastructure and climate change.

50. Strongly recommended that the FAO Council allocate increased budgetary and human resources needed to address the priority challenges in the Africa region.

56. Endorsed the Results-Based-Management (RBM) Pilot Projects to develop the cassava and maize value chains in a multi-disciplinary, multi-stakeholder approach that will test new ways of working and partnering in order to achieve tangible results.

D. Decentralization issues

59. Recommended strengthening the liaison function in the region with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the African Union (AU), with a corresponding increase in budget allocation to enable this role to be carried out effectively.

61a. Endorsed FAO's decentralization proposal based on more flexible and innovative technical hubs, needs-oriented typologies of country office models, and to consider additional factors beyond per capita income in applying models.

63. Endorsed integration of emergency and development programmes and recommended transfer of authority, human and financial resources to the Regional Office for Africa, the Sub-Regional Offices and FAO Country Representations.

IV. Other matters

A. Multi-year Programme of Work 2012-2015 for the FAO Regional Conference for Africa

68. Requested FAO to develop follow-up mechanisms to systematically monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Regional Conference and to facilitate regular contacts between the Chairperson of the Regional Conference, the FAO Management, the African Ministers and the African Group of Representatives to FAO.

B. Concluding Items

70. Agreed to hold the 28th session of the Regional Conference in Tunisia in 2014.

74. Recommended to nominate an African candidate for the post of Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council.

MATTERS REQUIRING THE ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE

The 27th FAO Regional Conference for Africa:

II. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Issues

A. The CAADP Implementation Challenge, 2012-13:

13. Encouraged FAO to collaborate with regional and continental partners in a comprehensive assessment of the CAADP process as well as facilitation of cross country, peer learning with a view to identify key success factors.

14. Urged FAO to continue supporting countries, regional economic communities and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) in the formulation and implementation of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP). The Conference further requested FAO support for policy and budget reviews, institutional strengthening and building innovative financing partnerships.

17. Advocated that countries increase budgetary allocations to catalytic public investments and accelerate policy and regulatory reform needed to attract private sector investment.

19. Recommended countries to enhance the capacity and integration of producer and civil society organizations and the private sector into the CAADP formulation and implementation process, particularly small producers, women and youth.

B. Public-private partnership for initiating agricultural programmes to sustain livelihoods and create wealth

27a. Requested FAO to advise governments on how to create the necessary financial and regulatory enabling environments for public-private partnerships and on how to mainstream PPPs into national strategy, planning and investment policies, including CAADP investment frameworks;

27d. Requested FAO to provide more detailed, analytical and disaggregated information on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in order to better understand what works in Africa, who participates and what are the benefits and the impacts of PPPs on small-scale producers, especially women and youth.

27g. Advised governments to pay special attention to actions required to protect the interests of small producers and processors, especially women and youth.

C. Multi-stakeholder dialogue on the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition

30. Endorsed the recommendation of the 37th session of CFS to develop a Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF) through a multi-stakeholder preparation process.

31. Recommended that regional perspectives and frameworks are fully reflected in future drafts of the GSF and urged regional organizations and stakeholders to provide inputs toward this aim while also giving a voice at national and local level.

34. Requested FAO to work with appropriate stakeholders to facilitate the development and capacity of food security and nutrition mapping systems.

IV. Other matters

B. Concluding Items

75. The Conference endorsed by acclamation the proposal of the candidature of His Excellency Wilfred Ngirwa, former Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to FAO and also Chairperson of the African Permanent Representatives to FAO in 2011, for the post of Independent Chairperson of the Council in 2013.

I. Introductory Items

Organization of the Conference

1. The 27th FAO Regional Conference for Africa (ARC) was held in Brazzaville (Congo), from 23 to 27 April 2012. The ARC was organized in two parts: the Senior Officers' Meeting from 23 to 25 April 2012, and the Ministerial Meeting from 26 to 27 April 2012.
2. Representatives from 49 member countries attended the Conference. Two observers, 5 United Nations specialized agencies, 12 intergovernmental organizations, 5 international non-governmental organisations, 5 regional non-governmental organizations were in attendance. A full list of Conference participants is given in Appendix A.

Inaugural Ceremonies

3. The Senior Officers' Meeting opened on 23 April 2012 with addresses by Mr Jean-Paul Ngaloua, Secretary General of the Commune of Brazzaville, representing the Deputy Mayor of Brazzaville city, and by Ms Maria Helena Semedo, FAO Assistant Director-General/Regional Representative for Africa. Mr Ngaloua, welcomed the Conference participants and delegates. Ms Semedo, welcomed the participants and presented condolences to the people of Congo after the painful events in Brazzaville in March 2012. Then she thanked the Republic of Congo for the support in organizing and hosting the meeting. Ms Semedo described the main challenges facing the region and efforts to reduce food insecurity and poverty. The final statement was by His Excellency, Rigobert Maboundou, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock of the Republic of Congo who welcomed delegates and participants to Brazzaville. His Excellency emphasized the importance of agricultural commercialization and sustainable forest management, saying that the Congo was one of the African countries suffering from food shortages. The measures taken to date had failed to overcome production weaknesses or prevent the spread of animal diseases. He also stressed that Africans should eat food produced in Africa. The Minister wished the Conference participants every success and declared the Senior Officers' Meeting officially open.
4. The Ministerial Meeting started on 26 April and was opened by His Excellency Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of Congo who delivered the inaugural address. His Excellency underscored the food security challenges in sub-Saharan Africa and highlighted the importance of public investment for creating favourable conditions for a dynamic agricultural economy. His Excellency also stressed the importance of collaboration and partnership to enhance food security throughout the region. During his statement, the President made an appeal of solidarity in favour of countries of the Saharo-Sahelian region. The Director-General of FAO, Mr. Jose Graziano da Silva provided a welcome address. His Excellency, the Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Mr. Rigobert Maboundou conveyed his government's support to FAO and their commitment for promoting agricultural development. The Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council, Mr. Luc Guyau, in his address, underlined the importance of the regional Conferences in promoting effective support to the Member countries. The CFS Chairperson, Mr. Yaya Olaniran made a statement summarizing the outcome of the 37th Session of the Committee of World Food Security and also provided an update of the CFS reform. In addition, Ms Sheila Sisulu, Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Programme explained WFP's strategy in moving from food aid to food assistance. In buying 50% of WFP food aid from African countries, WFP is faced with logistic and regulatory challenges in moving food within and across borders.

Election of Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Rapporteurs

5. Delegates elected Congo as chairperson of the Senior Officers meeting. His Excellency, Mr Hellot Mampouya Matson, Minister for Fisheries, chaired the sessions.
6. His Excellency, Mr Rigobert Maboundou, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock was elected Chairperson of the Ministerial meeting.
7. Delegates elected Tunisia and Uganda as Vice-Chairpersons and Côte d'Ivoire and Angola as Rapporteurs.

Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable

8. The Conference adopted the agenda which is given in Appendix A. Documents submitted to the Conference are listed in Appendix B.

Statement by the Chairperson of the 26th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa

9. His Excellency, Afonso Pedro Canga, Chairperson of the Twenty-sixth session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa, reminded the Conference of the recommendations of the previous session, and briefed delegates on the activities undertaken over the last two years in his capacity. His Excellency expressed his commitment to support the new Presidency as appropriate and congratulated the new Director-General.

Statement by the Director-General

10. Mr Jose Graziano da Silva, Director-General of FAO addressed the Regional Conference and thanked the President of the Republic of Congo. He reiterated FAO's commitment to partner with Member States in addressing the challenges of African agriculture. In speaking of the global food security challenges, he underscored FAO support in helping Africa feed itself, thereby becoming the food basket of the world. In addressing the Regional Conference, Mr Graziano da Silva highlighted also the Strategic Thinking Process that will inform adjustments to FAO's current Programme of Work and Budget, contribute to the review of the Strategic Framework and help create a new Medium-Term Plan. He made also reference to the Global challenges, many of them being also African challenges and reaffirmed his - and FAO's - commitment to a hunger-free Africa. Finally he indicated that decentralization is necessary to provide a better balance between FAO's functions and its global and national presence, to empower FAO Representatives, especially at the regional and sub-regional levels.

Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council

11. His Excellency, Luc Guyau, Independent Chairperson of the Council, underlined the need to ensure synergy between the various regional Conferences. As part of the FAO reform, the regional Conferences had acquired a new role that helped to bring FAO closer to its members and to the public. He also stressed the importance of ensuring consistency between the Regional Conferences, as their common mission was to spearhead the fight against hunger.

Statement by the CFS Chairperson on the outcomes of the 37th Session of the Committee on World Food Security and update of the CFS reform

12. Mr Yaya Olaniran, Chair of the CFS , denounced poverty and hunger as the common enemy. He made a plea for responsible agriculture that was more productive and profitable, saying that this was a collective and inclusive task that involved everyone, most of all civil society. He stressed the importance of African countries producing and consuming food from Africa in order to achieve food security and food sovereignty in the region.

II. Regional and Global Policy and Regulatory Issues

A. The CAADP Implementation Challenge, 2012–2013: strengthening capacity for linking compacts and investment plans to policy and budget processes and innovative financing mechanisms

13. The Conference commended FAO for its support in implementation of CAADP since its launch. It appreciated that a companion document had been prepared to integrate fisheries, livestock and forestry in the CAADP and recommended that these areas be better integrated in the process of CAADP implementation. The Conference requested FAO to provide an analysis of the challenges faced and success stories in the formulation and implementation of CAADP compacts and investment plans. In this context, the Conference encouraged FAO to collaborate with regional and continental partners in a comprehensive assessment of the CAADP process as well as facilitation of cross country, peer learning with a view to identify key success factors
14. The Conference urged FAO to continue supporting countries, regional economic communities and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) in the formulation and implementation of the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP). The Conference further requested FAO support for policy and budget reviews, institutional strengthening and building innovative financing partnerships.
15. The Conference expressed particular interest in the efforts of some countries for accelerated policy and regulatory innovation to attract private sector investment including from smallholders and small and medium-scale business. In this context, FAO was requested to continue supporting member countries in resource mobilization including through the establishment of partnerships with the private sector, South-South cooperation and other sources of financing available regionally and globally.
16. The Conference recognized that public resources are an important starting point for increased investment and urged FAO to continue advocacy with governments to comply with the 2003 Maputo Declaration which urges Heads of State to a) adopt the CAADP process to formulate national investment programmes; b) allocate 10% of government budget to agriculture; and c) promote 6% annual agricultural growth rate. The Conference requested information on the performance of the agricultural sector in those countries where governments have allocated the agreed 10% of the national budget to the agricultural sector.
17. Therefore, the Conference advocated that countries increase budgetary allocations to catalytic public investments and accelerate policy and regulatory reform needed to attract private sector investment.
18. The Conference emphasized the need to monitor and evaluate the performance of the recently launched ECOWAS Regional Fund for Agriculture and Food with a view to replicating it to other regions.
19. The Conference recommended countries to enhance the capacity and integration of producer and civil society organizations and the private sector into the CAADP formulation and implementation process, particularly small producers, women and youth.
20. In this regard, the Conference expressed satisfaction with the active and innovative participation of civil society organizations throughout the meeting. By contrast with the CSO, Conference recognized the weak representation of the private sector and urged for their stronger participation in the future.
21. The Conference further emphasized that particular attention should be paid to the commercialization of smallholders through a value chain approach and their integration into

dynamic agri-food systems in a context of growing global interest focused on the continent's natural resources and markets.

22. The Conference requested FAO to strengthen the links and coherence between CAADP and all regional and sub-regional food security and nutrition frameworks on the planning of policies and to better exploit the emerging global initiatives such as trade and climate change as a funding source.
23. A Ministerial Roundtable on CAADP Implementation was organized on 27th April to share experiences on the CAADP process and identify strategies for enhancing implementation. A summary of the findings is at Appendix B.

B. Public-private partnership for initiating agricultural programmes to sustain livelihoods and create wealth

24. Following a presentation by the secretariat on PPPs, the Conference recognized that innovative partnerships that bring together business, government and civil society actors are increasingly being used to improve productivity, food security and investment in the food and agriculture sectors. The Conference also recognized that properly implemented public-private partnerships (PPPs) have a positive impact on the people and communities concerned, as countries like Central African Republic, DR Congo, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda have shown.
25. The Conference agreed that PPPs can be particularly important for promoting responsible business practices, integrating small-scale producers more fully into supply chains, helping small-scale producers to comply with private food standards and enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium agro-processing enterprises.
26. However, the Conference noted that there still remained a lack of detailed, analytical and disaggregated information on PPPs in order to better understand what works in Africa, who participates, the role, the benefits and the impacts of such PPPs on small-scale producers, especially women. In addition, whereas the obligations and responsibilities of governments were clearly stated in the documents, those of the private sector were unclear. The Conference also noted that trade distortions arising from subsidies in developed countries affected African agriculture negatively.
27. The Conference requested FAO to:
 - a. Advise governments on how to create the necessary financial and regulatory enabling environments for public-private partnerships and on how to mainstream PPPs into national strategy, planning and investment policies, including CAADP investment frameworks;
 - b. Provide guidance to governments on institutional reforms to strengthen mechanisms for partnerships with the private sector, producer and civil society organizations;
 - c. Build the capacity of government officials to negotiate, formulate and provide oversight for PPPs;
 - d. Provide more detailed, analytical and disaggregated information on Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in order to better understand what works in Africa, who participates and what are the benefits and the impacts of PPPs on small-scale producers, especially women and youth.
 - e. Develop different models and best practices of PPP by means of peer learning, experience-sharing among countries and new studies;
 - f. Support dialogue and develop partnerships with key regional organizations, countries and initiatives involved in PPPs and draw up a joint action plan for engaging the private sector, producer and civil society organizations in programmes to enhance rural livelihoods and create wealth;
 - g. Advise governments to pay special attention to actions required to protect the interests of small producers and processors, especially women and youth;

- h. Assist governments in extending and scaling up PPPs beyond the primary production sector into downstream activities such as food processing as well as in the forestry, fisheries and livestock sectors;
- i. Prioritize PPPs in the 2014-2015 FAO planning period; and
- j. Distribute a final comprehensive report on PPPs before the next FAO Africa Regional Conference.

C. Multi-stakeholder dialogue on the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition

28. The Conference reviewed recent developments and deliberations of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and considered appropriate follow-up actions in Africa. A side event was organized on 25 April for country-level mapping of food security and nutrition actions. A summary of the event is at Appendix B.
29. The Conference welcomed the successful conclusion of the consultations on the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of global food security and urged their endorsement in a forthcoming special session of the CFS. The Conference urged the initiation of a process of multi-stakeholder consultations on Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investments that Enhance Food Security and Nutrition.
30. The Conference endorsed the recommendation of the 37th session of CFS to develop a Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF) through a multi-stakeholder preparation process. It recognized its potential for policy coherence and guiding synchronized action in support of global, regional and country-led actions to prevent future food crises, eliminate hunger and ensure food security and nutrition for all. The Conference noted the need to strengthen multi-sectoral coordination mechanisms for food security and nutrition actions at regional and sub-regional levels, including through support from the specialised agencies. The Conference also recommended enhanced coordination between the CFS, the President of the FAO Africa Regional Conference and the African Union in managing the GSF.
31. The Conference recommended that regional perspectives and frameworks are fully reflected in future drafts of the GSF and urged regional organizations and stakeholders to provide inputs toward this aim while also giving a voice at national and local level.
32. The Conference took note of the presentations on Mapping of Food Security and Nutrition Actions at country level and noted the contribution of such tools in more effective targeting of resources. It noted that in those countries with successful food security and nutrition actions, mapping had involved the highest level of government in its implementation.
33. The Conference encouraged coordination of mapping food security and nutrition actions at regional level and between governments and development partners at national level using existing mechanisms and institutions, in order to enhance alignment of policies and programmes.
34. The Conference requested FAO to work with appropriate stakeholders to facilitate the development and capacity of food security and nutrition mapping systems.

III. Programme and Budget Matters

A. Report on FAO activities in Africa in the Biennium 2010–2011

35. The Conference expressed appreciation for the report and provided some valuable comments and recommendations. The Conference expressed concern however that the reported achievements had not been validated through systematic monitoring and evaluation. Consequently the Conference recommended that in the future RAF reporting is based on quantitative indicators allowing the Conference to have a better view of FAO's performance and impact of the activities undertaken in the region. FAO should also clearly indicate the challenges it faced in implementing the priority activities on the continent. In this regard, the Conference was informed that the FAO Africa Regional Office had only initiated Results-Based Management in 2010, providing a limited basis for reporting on results in 2010-11; this situation will change for the current and future biennia. The Conference acknowledged the importance of effective monitoring and evaluation to Results-Based Management and improved impact in the Africa region and recognized the present low FAO capacity in this area.
36. Therefore, the Conference endorsed RAF Results-based management focus and urged allocation of human and financial resources to establish a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit in the Regional Office for Africa (RAF) in order to better monitor, evaluate and measure results.
37. The Conference regretted that the report did not include any mention of how the various activities of the Regional Office were affected by the budget. This oversight made it difficult for member states to assess the challenges and needs of the Regional Office. Hence, the Conference requested that future reports on the activities include a section on the budget's impact on its activities.
38. The Conference requested FAO to ensure regular broad stakeholder consultation and coordination for priority planning, programming and monitoring. These consultations should include the continental and regional organizations, the Rome-based missions, other agencies represented in the region, non-government and civil society organizations and the member countries. This collaboration would also help set the agenda for the Regional Conference and provide feedback on the implementation of ARC outcomes.
39. The Conference urged FAO to clearly define how its Strategic Objectives are linked to regional and sub-regional priorities as well as member countries' agricultural policy frameworks. Furthermore, regional priorities of the AU should feed into and inform those of FAO, with AU ministerial meetings and decisions providing a strong reference framework to the ARC. This functional linkage also requires continuous and close liaison by the Regional Office with the AU in Addis Ababa.
40. The Conference agreed that it could provide better guidance to FAO by identifying a limited number of concrete and well thought out priorities where FAO has a comparative advantage. FAO could then focus the allocation of its limited resources to these targeted areas for better results.
41. The Conference stressed the need for more autonomy and authority for the Regional Office and to reduce bureaucracy when it comes to accessing FAO resources. Administrative procedures are rigid and slow even for small projects, which can hinder their effective and timely implementation and impact. Furthermore, FAO and the Regional Office for Africa need to focus on addressing the structural constraints that reduce resilience and increase vulnerability to agro-climatic and socio-economic shocks, bearing in mind that FAO has strong comparative advantage in the agriculture development area.
42. The Conference acknowledged FAO's efforts to promote South-South cooperation for the development of the agriculture sector but regretted the dearth of information provided in this report on how this was achieved. The Regional Office should clearly indicate issues such as where experts come from in the South, how they were sourced, whether they are a

continuation of previously established and ongoing South-South activities, or representing new initiatives. The Regional Office was also asked to make full use of locally-based experts in its areas of operations.

43. The Conference requested FAO to accord greater attention to gender-sensitive programme planning and implementation. The Conference suggested strengthening collaboration with other regional bodies for more effectively coordinated actions relating to gender and indicating challenges of implementing gender related activities in order to jointly find solutions to these challenges.
44. Finally, the Conference requested FAO to report on its activities in response to the crises in the Horn of Africa at the next Regional Conference and use this experience gained and lessons learnt when helping to address the emerging challenges in the Sahel. A Ministerial Roundtable on the Commitment and Response to Address the Challenges of Food and Nutrition Security in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel was organized on 25th April. A summary of the event is at Appendix B.

B. Summary report of recommendations of FAO regional bodies

45. The Conference recommended that member countries participate in the FAO Regional Bodies in greater number.
46. The Conference was informed on recommendations of the last meeting of the Committee for Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture of Africa (CIFAA). With reference to the functioning of the fisheries continental committee, CIFAA recommended that the members participate actively.

C. Programme of Work and Budget 2012-2013 and Areas of Priority Actions for Africa in the Following Biennium 2014-15

47. The Conference considered areas of priority action for FAO in the Africa Region for the current and future biennia in the context of global trends and future challenges for the work of the Organization.
48. The Conference endorsed the Strategic Thinking Process launched by the Director-General of FAO and confirmed that the main challenges are consistent with the conditions in the Region. The Conference emphasized the importance of focusing the work of FAO on key challenges faced by countries so as to achieve measurable progress through the effective and efficient use of available resources on a limited number of activities, aligned with FAO's comparative advantage.
49. The Conference endorsed RAF 2012-13 and 2014-15 priority areas, expanding the agricultural productivity scope to forestry, fisheries, livestock and aquaculture, and focusing attention on the value chain approach, water management, soft infrastructure and climate change.
50. The Conference strongly recommended that the FAO Council allocate increased budgetary and human resources needed to address the priority challenges in the Africa region.
51. The Conference emphasized that the modalities of implementation should be based on country level prioritization through the Country Programme Framework. It will also be important to harmonize the policy dialogue with a view to leverage additional resources, to work in partnership and to promote knowledge exchange and capacity development for sustainable implementation.

In reviewing the challenges and priorities for the Region, the Conference emphasized the following areas:

52. The importance of linking agricultural production to commercialization and promotion of inter-regional trade and inter-sectoral linkages in the agriculture sector. To this end, FAO was requested to increase its support to countries in the revision and / or development of national

and sub-regional agricultural commercialization policies and development and implementation of regulatory frameworks governing trade.

53. The importance of developing market oriented soft infrastructure, which should be clearly articulated within the priority area related to support to market access and sanitary measures for better trade. The Conference was informed that FAO's comparative advantage relates to the formulation of infrastructure investment projects and advising on the design and management of agricultural infrastructure such as irrigation systems, intermediary markets, storage facilities and agro-processing. The case study of Agribusiness Centres (ABCs) in Sierra Leone was highlighted as an effective mechanism for improving the efficiency of food supply systems in rural areas and assisting farmers to boost productivity and add value to their produce. This model has the potential to be replicated and upscaled.
54. The Conference urged FAO to further focus its work based on its comparative advantage, particularly in several key areas that require prioritization in 2012-13. These include: a) reduction of post-harvest losses, value addition and agro-processing; b) building capacity of national food control systems; c) improved water utilization and irrigation; d) development of aquaculture and e) collection and collation of agricultural statistics.
55. The Conference encouraged FAO to facilitate increased collaboration at regional and sub-regional level, including through cooperation and partnerships with public and private organizations.
56. In this regard, the Conference endorsed the Results-Based-Management (RBM) Pilot Projects to develop the cassava and maize value chains in a multi-disciplinary, multi-stakeholder approach that will test new ways of working and partnering in order to achieve tangible results. The need to harmonize the pilots with other related initiatives was also highlighted.

D. Decentralization issues

57. The Conference appreciated the actions taken to improve FAO's effectiveness and efficiency and welcomed its commitment to the decentralization process, making further needed efforts directed toward its effective implementation, especially at country level. It stressed the need to allocate and optimize the utilization of human and financial resources to achieve results responding to priorities at regional, sub-regional and country levels. The Conference underlined the need to prioritize immediate implementation of the decentralization-related reforms, while studying the option to proceed in stages.
58. The Conference warmly welcomed the proposals on decentralization, which were consistent with the idea of a decentralized network of more flexible and more innovative technical hubs located, if possible, in the countries where Regional Economic Communities (RECs) have their headquarters.
59. The Conference recommended strengthening the liaison function in the region with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the African Union (AU), with a corresponding increase in budget allocation to enable this role to be carried out effectively. In particular, it recommended strengthening the liaison function with the African Union in Ethiopia, with SADC in Botswana, ECOWAS in Nigeria, NPCA in South Africa and IGAD in Djibouti.
60. The Conference endorsed the general proposals for establishing a more flexible decentralized office network with strong country office leadership, and for delegating additional responsibilities to FAO regional and country representatives. It stressed that decentralization should not be detrimental to the capacity of FAO's technical programmes and the provision of global public goods.

61. The Conference made the following proposals aimed specifically at the Africa region:
- a. Endorsed FAO's decentralization proposal based on more flexible and innovative technical hubs, needs-oriented typologies of country office models, and consideration of additional factors beyond per capita income in applying models.
 - b. Requested FAO to clarify the content, number and mode of operation of the technical hubs, which must respect the number of sub-regional offices, and to specifying their locations, if possible in the countries where regional economic communities have their headquarters;
 - c. Requested that the criteria for the different models of country support should take into consideration additional factors beyond per capita income, in order to ensure a continued high level of support from FAO and not marginalize smallholder producers in low, middle and high income countries as well as Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
 - d. Strengthen the mobilization and allocation of resources to field support from external partners and in association with the private sector, producer organizations and civil society;
 - e. Give due attention to training, capacity-building and the use of local skills with emphasis on gender equality to support the technical hubs;
 - f. Establish a fully fledged representation for Somalia.
62. The Conference requested discussions between RAF and ARC to continue throughout the decentralization process and the provision of additional information on the following points:
- a. the fate of sub-regional offices;
 - b. the cost of the decentralization process and the opportunity cost of not implementing decentralization;
 - c. the oversight, accountability and responsibility framework to be introduced;
 - d. the mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the decentralization process.
63. The Conference endorsed integration of emergency and development programmes and recommended transfer of authority, human and financial resources to the Regional Office for Africa, the Sub-Regional Offices and FAO Country Representations. The Conference agreed:
- a. to the phased transfer of authority to FAO Representatives for emergency operations at country level;
 - b. that by mid 2013, emergency and rehabilitation operations responsibility would be transferred to the FAO Representative in all other countries, and the current TCE Africa Desk would be transferred and integrated with the Regional Office;
 - c. that the increased delegation of authority to the decentralized offices would be accompanied by appropriate training and oversight mechanisms;
 - d. to setting standards for the operation, evaluation and monitoring of decentralized structures.

E. Sub-regional Consultations - Prioritization of needs of countries and sub-regions

64. FAO sub-regional groups for West, Central, East and Southern Africa held consultations and presented the outcomes. These discussions were focused primarily on FAO decentralization, agricultural productivity and institutional strengthening and capacity development amongst others. Summary reports are provided in Appendix B.
65. The CSO Representative read the Final Declaration by Civil Society Organizations provided in Appendix B. The CSO representatives presented their expectations in the region; specifically, they recommended placing a CSO focal point in each country office as well as in the Regional office and building the capacity of producer organizations in the area of negotiation techniques and management of innovative partnerships.

IV. Other matters

A. Multi-year Programme of Work 2012–2015 for the FAO Regional Conference for Africa

66. The Conference reviewed the proposed Work Programme for 2012-2015 Multi-Year FAO Regional Conference for Africa and acknowledged the efforts to manage the activities of the Regional Conference.
67. The Conference acknowledged the value of this instrument in strengthening the role of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa as a governing entity of the FAO. The Conference suggested that the FAO Regional Bodies consider the recommendations of the Regional Conference. Further, the relationship between the Regional Conference, partners and other governing bodies of FAO should be analyzed.
68. The Conference requested FAO to develop follow-up mechanisms to systematically monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Regional Conference and to facilitate regular contacts between the Chairperson of the Regional Conference, the FAO Management, the African Ministers and the African Group of Representatives to FAO. In this regard, the Conference recommended increased guidance and support to the Chairperson by both the FAO Regional Office and the Office of Support to Decentralization (OSD).
69. The 2012-2015 Multi-Year Work Programme of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa was fully supported and adopted.

B. Concluding Items

Date and place of the 28th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa

70. The Conference agreed to hold the 28th session of the Regional Conference in Tunisia in 2014. The dates would be agreed by the host country and the Secretariat of the Regional Conference. His Excellency the Ambassador of Tunisia reaffirmed Tunisia's offer to host the 28th session of FAO Regional Conference in 2014.
71. The Conference proposed the following theme for the next Conference "African Youth In Agriculture And Rural Development".

The following topics were also proposed:

- a. aquaculture;
 - b. agricultural potential, value added and productivity;
 - c. livestock development;
 - d. social protection;
 - e. indigenous diets;
 - f. food and nutrition security indicators;
 - g. land tenure issues - international investment and smallholder livelihoods.
72. Apart from these topics, updates were requested on the following items:
 - a. The status of food insecurity in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel;
 - b. Public-private partnerships;
 - c. FAO decentralization;
 - d. CAADP process and implementation.
 73. The Chairperson of the candidature committee congratulated the Independent Chairperson of Council, whose term of office will come to an end in June 2013.

74. The Conference recommended the nomination of an African candidate for the post of Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council.
75. The Conference endorsed by acclamation the proposal of the candidature of His Excellency Wilfred Ngirwa, former Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to FAO and also Chairperson of the African Permanent Representatives to FAO in 2011, for the post of Independent Chairperson of the Council in 2013.

Africa Food Security Trust Fund

76. The Conference was informed that FAO proposed the creation of a Trust Fund for enhancing food security in Africa, financed by contributions from interested member countries, especially oil producing countries. The fund would allow FAO to better utilize its experience and comparative advantage in the fight against hunger while allowing countries to better manage their development programmes and mitigation of risks that threaten food security, economic growth and sustainable development.

Adoption of the report

77. The Conference unanimously adopted the report as presented by the Rapporteur. The Statement of Solidarity and Action and the Declaration of Brazzaville were also unanimously adopted (Appendix B).

Closure of the Conference

78. On behalf of the participants, His Excellency, Ambassador Crisantos Ondo Obama, Chairman of the Group of African Representatives to FAO, expressed their utmost appreciation to the President, the Government, and the people of the Republic of Congo for their hospitality and arrangements in hosting the Regional Conference and to FAO for the successful preparation and organization of the Conference.
79. The Chairman of the Finance Committee, Mr Medi Lasconi MOUNGUI, appealed to Member countries to continue to fulfil their financial commitments to FAO in order to enhance FAO's performance and ability.
80. In his closing statement, the Director-General of the FAO congratulated the participants for the high level of participation and constructive debates, thanking them for reaffirming their commitment to end hunger in Africa and to guarantee food security.
81. On behalf of His Excellency, the President, the Government and the people of the Republic of Congo, His Excellency Rigobert Maboundou, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, and Chairman of the 27th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa, thanked the participants for the exceptional attendance and the work achieved. In closing the Conference, he called on Member states to contribute to implementing the Conference recommendations.

APPENDICES

Agenda

I. Introductory Items

1. Opening of Senior Officers Meeting
2. Election of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairpersons and Appointment of the Rapporteurs
3. Adoption of Agenda and Timetable

II. Regional and Global Policy, and Regulatory Issues

4. CAADP Implementation Challenge : Strengthening capacity to effectively link compacts and investment plans to policy and budget processes, innovative financing mechanisms and assistance
5. Public/Private Partnership in initiating agricultural programmes to sustain livelihoods and create wealth
6. Multi-stakeholder dialogue on Global Strategy Framework for Food Security and Nutrition

III. Programme and Budget Issues

7. FAO activities in the Region in 2010-11
8. Programme of Work and Budget 2012-13, and Areas of Priority Action for the following biennium (2014-15), including summary report of recommendations of FAO regional bodies
9. Decentralization Issues. FAO Renewal - Transition to a More Dynamic Approach in 2012

IV. Other Matters

10. Multi-year Programme of Work 2012-15 for the Africa Regional Conference
11. Proposed List of Topics for ARC-28
12. Date and Place of the 28th Regional Conference for Africa
13. Any Other Matters

SIDE EVENTS AND SUB-REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS

14. Side event 1. CFS: Mapping Food Security and Nutrition Actions at Country Level
15. Side event 2. Ministerial Roundtable on commitment and response to the food and nutrition insecurity in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel

16. Subregional consultations - Prioritization of needs of countries and subregions (used for the Plenary Session)
17. Review and adoption of the draft Report of the Regional Conference to be submitted to the Plenary session
18. Closure of the Senior Officers meeting

PLENARY SESSION

V. Opening Ceremony

19. Inaugural Ceremony

VI. Statements and Debates

20. Statement by the Director-General
21. Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council
22. Statement by the out-going Chairperson of the 26th Africa Regional Conference
23. Statement by the Chairperson of the CFS
24. Prioritization of country and regional needs

VII. Items for Discussion

25. Review of the Report of the Conference
26. Side event 3. Round table on CAADP Implementation
27. Adoption of the Report of the Conference
28. Closure of the Conference

List of Documents

ARC/12/1	Provisional Annotated Agenda
ARC/12/2	The CAADP Implementation Challenge: Strengthening capacity to effectively link compacts and investment plans to policy and budget processes, innovative financing mechanisms and assistance
ARC/12/3	Public/Private Partnership in initiating agricultural programmes to sustain livelihood and create wealth
ARC/12/4	Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition - First Draft
ARC/12/5	FAO Activities in the Region in 2010-2011
ARC/12/6	Programme of Work and Budget in 2012-2013 and Areas of Priority Actions for Africa for 2014-2015
ARC/12/7	Decentralization issues
ARC/12/8	Multi-year Programme of Work 2012-2015 for the Regional Conference for Africa

INF SERIES

ARC/12/INF/1	Information Note
ARC/12/INF/2	Provisional Timetable
ARC/12/INF/3	Provisional List of Documents
ARC/12/INF/4	Statement by the Director-General
ARC/12/INF/5	Summary report of recommendations of FAO Regional Bodies
ARC/12/INF/6	Update on the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
ARC/12/INF/7	Statement by the Chairperson of the 26 th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa
ARC/12/INF/8	Update on the Africa Agribusiness and Agro-Industries Development Initiative
ARC/12/INF/9	Implementing the 'Save and Grow' Model of Sustainable Crop Production Intensification in Africa
ARC/12/INF/10	FAO-Africa Results Task Force: Managing for Results and the Pilot Initiative in RAF
ARC/12/INF/11	RAF Climate Change Framework
ARC/12/INF/12	Status of the implementation of the Africa Action Plan to improve statistics food security, sustainable agriculture and rural development
ARC/12/INF/13	Global Trends and Future Challenges for the Work of the Organization

ARC/12/INF/14	FAO Renewal - Transition to a More Dynamic Approach in 2012Global
ARC/12/INF/15	Committee on World Food Security: CFS in the 2012 FAO Regional Conferences - Guidelines
ARC/12/INF/16	Side events and sub-regional consultations
ARC/12/INF/17	Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the FAO Council

CFS DOCUMENTS

CFS: 2011/7	Mapping Food Security and Nutrition Actions at Country Level
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OD SERIES

ARC/12/OD1	Order of the Day
ARC/12/OD2	Order of the Day
ARC/12/OD3	Order of the Day
ARC/12/OD4	Order of the Day
ARC/12/OD5	Order of the Day

WEB DOCUMENTS

List of Participants and Observers
 Inaugural Statement by His Excellency Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of Congo
 Statement by the Director-General
 Statement by the Independent Chairperson of the Council
 Statement by the Chairperson of the Twenty-sixth Session of the Regional Conference for Africa
 Statement by the CFS Chairperson on the outcomes of the 37th Session of the Committee on World Food Security and update of the CFS reform
 Round table on Commitment and Response to address the Challenges of Food and Nutrition Security in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel
 Round table on CAADP Implementation
 Summary reports of the Sub-regional Consultations - Prioritization of Needs of Countries and Sub-regions
 Summary report on the side event on Country-level mapping of food security and nutrition actions
 Final Declaration of CSO to the 27th Regional Conference for Africa
 Statement of Solidarity and Action
 Declaration of Brazzaville