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## FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Hundred and Fifty-first Session**

**Rome, 11 - 15 November 2013**

**Annual Report on the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation  
Activities**

Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:

**Mr Dominique Burgeon**

**Director, Emergency and Rehabilitation Division**

**Tel: +3906 5705 3803**

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The SFERA enables FAO to take rapid and effective action in response to food and agricultural threats and emergencies. The Fund has three components: (i) a working capital component to advance funds, once a donor's commitment is secured, towards the immediate procurement of inputs to protect livelihoods, restart agricultural activities or contribute to the immediate response to a crisis; (ii) a revolving fund component to immediately support coordination and operations in the field, such as needs assessment, programme formulation, early establishment or reinforcement of emergency country team capacities and Level 3 emergency preparedness and response activities; and (iii) a programme component, which pools resources in support of a programme framework for large-scale emergencies.
- Since inception and up to 30 June 2013, SFERA received USD 136.9 million. Of this total, USD 11.4 million was used to set up or reinforce ERCUs and implement needs assessment and programme formulation missions and USD 3.2 million were allocated to the establishment of Level 3 Emergencies preparedness and response window. Since inception, USD 224.7 million has been advanced to fund immediate emergency needs, of which USD 16.5 million was advanced over the reporting period. The advances, which were still outstanding as at 30 June 2013 total USD 5.5 million. The cash balance of SFERA at 30 June 2013 was USD 32.5 million.

### GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

- The Finance Committee is invited to take note of the information provided in the document.

#### Draft Advice

- **The Finance Committee noted the performance of the SFERA over the period 1 July 2012 - 30 June 2013, and appreciated the key role of the Fund in enabling FAO to respond rapidly in the critical early stages of an emergency, ensuring the protection and restoration of livelihoods. The Committee acknowledged the key role the SFERA will play in the successful delivery of the Strategic Objective "Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises", most specifically in building and strengthening capacities of the most vulnerable household to withstand and adapt to shocks.**

## I. Background

1. The Finance Committee supported the creation of the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA) at its Hundred and Second Session in May 2003, with the purpose to "...enable the Organization to rapidly initiate emergency operations by participating in interagency needs assessment and coordination activities, establishing an emergency coordination unit (ECU), preparing a programme framework and projects, and providing advance funding for procurement of inputs when a donor's commitment has been obtained."<sup>1</sup> During its Hundred and Tenth Session in September 2005, the Finance Committee reviewed the use of SFERA and requested regular reports on each year's activity.

2. This annual report contains financial data both for the twelve-month period, ending 30 June 2013 and for the nine years since the Fund became operational. This report further includes detailed financial data on the activities implemented through SFERA, as well as a brief description of the major operations initiated with SFERA funds over the reporting period.

## II. SFERA Set-up

3. SFERA has three components: (i) a working capital component to advance funds to initiate project activities rapidly before donor funds on agreed projects are received, with the funds then being transferred back to SFERA upon receipt; (ii) a revolving fund component to support FAO's involvement in needs assessment, programme development, early establishment and reinforcement of emergency country team capacities, and Level 3 emergency<sup>2</sup> preparedness and response activities; and (iii) a programme component to support work on specific large-scale emergency programmes.

SFERA components and windows		
<b>Working capital component</b>	<b>Revolving fund component</b>	<b>Programme component</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Emergency coordination window</i></li> <li>• <i>Needs assessment and programme development window</i></li> <li>• <i>Level 3 Emergency preparedness and response window</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Large-scale programme window (e.g. tsunami, HPAI, Locust, HoA)</i></li> <li>• <i>Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity window</i></li> </ul>

4. **The working capital component** allows response activities to start rapidly and before donor funds are received. It enables the Organization to initiate purchase orders for most critical assets quickly, avoiding unaffordable delays in the response. SFERA allows the reaction time to emergencies to speed up and fosters earlier recovery.

5. **The revolving fund component** supports FAO's emergency country teams capacities in identifying the most critical needs of affected populations, securing sufficient capacity to respond and ensuring coordinated and technically sound action. SFERA funding enables FAO to lead coordination efforts for harmonized and effective response in the agriculture sector, and contribute to the formulation of response programmes that address the priority needs of affected populations. Through its Level 3 Emergency preparedness and response window, FAO is enabled to prepare for and activate Level 3 response to address the extraordinary challenges of a Level 3 emergency.

6. **The programme component** facilitates faster and more programmatic assistance that can be tailored to evolving needs on the ground. The SFERA's pooled funding approach provides the necessary flexibility to adjust activities to channel support to the geographical and thematic areas of

<sup>1</sup> FC 102/14

<sup>2</sup> Sudden-onset, large-scale disasters and crises that require a corporate response

greatest need. The programme approach provides the necessary flexibility to adapt operations to evolving situations and streamline procedures so as to ensure that the most appropriate assistance reaches affected populations sooner. The programme component of SFERA also includes the Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity (AIRC) window, which channels pooled funds towards the immediate procurement and delivery of time-critical inputs.

### III. SFERA Resources

7. **Receipts** – SFERA has been operational since April 2004. Since then, the Fund has received USD 136.9 million. Of this amount, USD 90.6 million were provided by the member countries listed in the table below. Of these, USD 6.1 million was from donors<sup>3</sup> who decided to devolve balances of closed emergency projects to the SFERA. During the 12 months up to 30 June 2013, deposits to the SFERA amounted to USD 7.8 million.

MEMBER COUNTRIES	12 months to 30 June 2013 (USD 000)	Since inception (USD 000)
Sweden		23 662
Belgium	7 073	18 653
Norway	- 122	14 701
United Kingdom	47	9 340
France	553	7 096
Finland	13	5 334
Switzerland	2	3 699
Italy		1 460
Saudi Arabia		1 375
Germany		1 304
Austria		1 125
Canada		814
Spain	116	508
China		500
Ireland		317
Greece		227
South Africa		195
Australia	48	107
Jordan		60
Principauté de Monaco	59	59

<sup>3</sup> Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Laos, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Peru, Principauté de Monaco, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, the World Bank and the private sector donor CONAD (Food retailer) have authorized transfers of unspent balances from their completed projects.

Laos		14
New Zealand	13	13
Luxembourg		8
Netherlands	14	22
Other members		9
<b>Total members</b>	<b>7 815</b>	<b>90 602</b>
World Bank	2	20
OPEC fund		481
Others including from emergency project support costs reimbursements		45 843
<b>Total received</b>	<b>7 817</b>	<b>136 946</b>

As at 30 June 2013. Source: compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

8. Under the working capital component, USD 224.7 million were advanced to various projects after donors confirmed commitment to a project, but before receiving the cash contributions. Of this amount, USD 5.5 million remain outstanding, pending receipt of donor funds. Of the total USD 136.9 million contributed, USD 14.6 million, of which USD 8.2 million for the reporting period, were approved under the revolving fund component. Under the programme component, a total of USD 84.2 million, of which USD 8.9 million for the reporting period, were allocated. The details of funds applied are outlined in the following table.

<b>ADVANCES</b>	<b>12 months to 30 June 2013 (USD 000)</b>
Total advances made during the period	16 528
Refunds on advances paid during the period	18 547
<b>Total advances outstanding</b>	<b>5 522<sup>4</sup></b>
<b>APPLICATIONS</b>	
For emergency coordination unit setup and reinforcement	5 000
For L3 Emergency preparedness and response	3 200
<b>Subtotal revolving fund component</b>	<b>8 200</b>
Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity (AIRC)	5 711
Locust Programmes	3 148
<b>Subtotal programme component</b>	<b>8 859</b>
<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>17 059</b>

As at 30 June 2013. Source: compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

<sup>4</sup> Since inception, USD224,746 were advanced and USD219,224 were refunded.

9. The cash balance of SFERA at 30 June 2013 was USD 32.5 million<sup>5</sup>. The cash balance is calculated as: cumulative receipts of USD 136.9 million, less applications of USD 98.9 million, less outstanding advances of USD 5.5 million.

#### IV. Use of the SFERA

##### A. Working capital component

10. **Advances** – over the reporting period, SFERA advances mainly benefited contributions from seven resource partners, which represent approximately 88 percent of advances between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2013.

<b>DONORS BENEFITING FROM SFERA WORKING CAPITAL COMPONENT (ADVANCES/REFUNDS) (USD 000)</b>		
<i>12 months to 30 June 2013</i>		
<b>DONORS</b>	<b>ADVANCES</b>	<b>REFUND</b>
Japan	5 000	5 800
European community	2 613	1 947
United States of America	2 265	1 050
Common Humanitarian Fund	1 500	
UN - OCHA	1 200	1 580
United Kingdom	1 076	3 426
African Development Bank	960	960
World Food Programme	550	200
Finland	300	300
Italy	300	300
Germany	215	
Multidonor	200	1 700
UNDP Administered Donor Joint Trust Fund (UNJ)	150	150
Brazil	135	
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	64	64
Belgium		500
Sweden		500
Switzerland		70
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>16 528</b>	<b>18 547</b>

<sup>5</sup> Including USD2.1 million recorded in a separate account, established to facilitate control and reporting under the AIRC window.

11. On the **beneficiary side**, advances mainly supported major programmes in Afghanistan, South Sudan and the Sahel countries, representing 82 percent of advances between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2013.

<b>COUNTRIES BENEFITING FROM SFERA WORKING CAPITAL COMPONENT (ADVANCES/REFUNDS)</b>		
<b>(USD 000)</b>		
<i>12 months to 30 June 2013</i>		
<b>COUNTRIES</b>	<b>ADVANCES</b>	<b>REFUND</b>
Afghanistan	6 400	6 800
Regional Africa	2 965	2 315
South Sudan	1 500	500
Niger	1 195	700
Gambia	500	880
Senegal	460	460
Global	415	
Pakistan	400	2 750
Chad	340	200
Somalia	300	1 800
Ivory Coast	258	
Haiti	252	
Regional Latina America	250	250
Djibouti	227	227
Colombia	200	200
Interregional	200	200
Zimbabwe	200	200
Madagascar	195	195
Mauritania	180	
Dominican Republic	91	
Burkina Faso		70
Sudan		800
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>16 528</b>	<b>18 547</b>

12. Support provided through SFERA's working capital component was critical to ensure a smooth and quick implementation of the operations in the field.

13. SFERA advances in **Afghanistan** helped improve the food security of vulnerable households whose crop production was hampered by low productivity, natural disasters and conflict in 2012. Quality inputs and training were fast-tracked to farmers so they could resume farming, while efforts were made to increase their access to improved wheat seed through farmer-to-farmer seed exchanges and sales. The Food Security and Agriculture Cluster was also supported to strengthen future emergency responses.
14. SFERA advances provided emergency livelihood assistance to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable households in the Sahel affected by the 2011/12 food and nutrition crisis. For instance, voucher fairs provided rice-producing households in **Mali** with better access to quality seed and diesel for motor pumps. Farmers sold approximately 30 percent of their produce, helping to increase the availability of grain in local markets. In **the Niger**, SFERA advances allowed seeds to be rushed to vulnerable populations in time for the rainy season, and farmer field schools to be set up so that communities could learn new techniques to improve production. During the off-season, women's associations received vegetable seed for market gardening, enabling households to cover food needs for up to two months. Animal feed banks established under the advances meant better access to fodder. SFERA advances in **the Gambia** contributed to mitigating the impact of food shortages as well as reducing malnutrition levels of agropastoral households most affected by near drought conditions. The distribution of fodder, vaccines, seeds, fertilizer and small irrigation equipment helped restore crop production and prevent families from resorting to negative coping mechanisms.
15. In **the Sahel**, SFERA advances were also critical to timely activate national contingency plans, mobilize field teams for survey and control operations and increase public awareness so that farmers in at-risk countries were able to protect pastures and summer crops from the Desert Locust outbreak. National capacity and regional coordination were strengthened to maintain preventative control strategies in locust-affected areas and prevent swarms from migrating into neighbouring countries. To achieve this, missions were carried out to advise on the management of large-scale control campaigns and mechanisms were established to regularly collect data on field conditions and locust infestations.
16. Increased agricultural production and protection of livelihood assets helped improve the food and nutrition security of vulnerable populations in **South Sudan**. To ensure timely planting, farmers received assorted crop seeds through direct distribution or input trade fairs. The provision of fishing gear, along with fish preservation and processing equipment, increased fisher folks' access to fresh fish. The establishment of fisher groups helped resolve disputes over marketing and trading of fish and fishery products. Vaccination campaigns implemented across priority states and increased access to improved animal health services enabled an immediate response to outbreaks of common animal diseases. Destocking activities, which eased the pressure of maintaining perishable livestock, provided a direct source of food to refugees.
17. In **Pakistan**, support to agriculture-based microenterprises helped diversify livelihoods, improve local economies and enhance social cohesion among conflict-affected refugees and host families. Farming communities also benefited from Rabi and Khari production packages and silos for seed storage to boost production. Efforts focusing on livestock production included deworming and vaccination treatments, as well as the setting up of a rotational grazing system and conservation measures to improve rangeland and watershed management. Timely and accurate information on food security and livelihood conditions enhanced the capacity of the Food Security Cluster.
18. Across Southern Africa, SFERA advances contributed to improving support to farming households in natural disaster-prone areas through technical assistance on disaster risk management and the development of DRM tool kits and multimedia documentation for national and regional stakeholders and decision-makers. Under the **Malawi** component, the project established demonstration sites to build the capacity of farmers and extension services on locally adapted good practices, like climate-smart agriculture. Under the **Comoros** component, agriculture/livelihood risk mapping and vulnerability analysis contributed to the development of a national contingency plan, while seeds, tree samplings, tools and irrigation equipment were distributed to targeted households.

## B. Revolving fund component

19. **Emergency coordination** - this window of SFERA's revolving fund component permits the rapid deployment of emergency coordinators, the reinforcement of the existing teams to face a sudden increase in activities or to fill funding gaps over a short period of time. During the past year, allotments were approved to support i) the rapid deployment of key emergency staff and reinforcement of capacities in Decentralized Offices; ii) the set-up of office space and logistics ; and iii) the provision of basic communication, computer and other office equipment. The following table briefly presents the allotments made.

### *Rapid deployment of key emergency staff and reinforcement of capacities in Decentralized Offices*

Country / Region	Allotment - USD (000)
AFGHANISTAN	33
BURUNDI	48
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	100
CHAD	30
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO	126
DJIBOUTI	48
EGYPT	26
GUINEA BISSAU	120
HAITI	30
INDONESIA	80
MADAGASCAR	108
MOZAMBIQUE	46
MYANMAR	55
PAKISTAN	56
SOUTH SUDAN	382
SUDAN	56
SYRIA	160
YEMEN	370
ZAMBIA	48
AFRICA REGIONAL	438
EASTERN AFRICA	76
SOUTHERN AFRICA	90
WEST AFRICA	100
ASIA REGIONAL	251
LATIN AMERICA REGIONAL	160
NEAR EAST REGIONAL	95
NORTH AFRICA	60
<b>TOTAL ALLOTMENT</b>	<b>3 192</b>

*Set-up of office space and logistics*

Country / Region	Allotment USD (000)
AFGHANISTAN	70
SOUTH SUDAN	800
<b>TOTAL ALLOTMENT</b>	<b>870</b>

*Rapid deployment of key emergency staff combined with office logistics and equipment*

Country / Region	Allotment USD (000)
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO	48
MADAGASCAR	74
MALI	86
SYRIA	200
ZAMBIA	69
<b>TOTAL ALLOTMENT</b>	<b>477</b>

20. **Needs assessment and programme development** – this window of the revolving fund component finances needs assessment missions at the onset of a crisis to ensure that the Organization and its partners obtain appropriate information essential to formulate their response programme. Over the reporting period, needs assessment and programme formulation missions were deployed to Central African Republic, China, Haiti, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, the Philippines, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Central America. The following table briefly presents the allotments made.

*Needs Assessment*

Country / Region	Allotment USD (000)
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	50
HAITI	50
MADAGASCAR	197
MALI	29
MYANMAR	25
NIGERIA	36
PHILIPPINES	15
SUDAN	7
SYRIA	100
<b>TOTAL ALLOTMENT</b>	<b>509</b>

*Programme development*

Country / Region	Allotment USD (000)
CHINA	20
LIBERIA	15
SOMALIA	5

SUDAN	23
SYRIA	32
AFRICA REGIONAL	65
CENTRAL AMERICA	5
<b>TOTAL ALLOTMENT</b>	<b>165</b>

21. **Level 3 Emergency preparedness and response window** - As per the endorsement of the Finance Committee at its hundred and forty-seventh session<sup>6</sup>, a new window has been established under the Revolving component of the fund. This window is articulated around six areas: (i) development and maintenance of appropriate L3 emergency procedures; (ii) capacity building for L3 emergency preparedness; (iii) organizational preparedness; (iv) participation to L3 interagency processes; (v) L3 simulations; and (vi) L3 emergency response. The following table briefly presents the allotments made.

<b>Areas - L3 Emergency preparedness and response window</b>	<b>Allotment USD (000)</b>
Development and maintenance of appropriate L3 emergency procedures	330
Capacity building for L3 emergency preparedness	350
Organization preparedness	420
Participation in L3 interagency processes	400
L3 simulations	200
L3 emergency response	1 500
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 200</b>

22. **Preparedness** - funds under the area "**development and maintenance of appropriate L3 emergency procedures**", are allocated to develop a comprehensive set of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for Level 3 emergency response, the "FAO Handbook for Emergency Preparedness and Response", and appropriate tools and guidance to facilitate Level 3 emergency response. Resources under the area "**Capacity building for L3 emergency preparedness**" are earmarked for developing and conducting capacity building activities at various levels across the Organization for preparedness and response to Level 3 emergencies. Allotment under the area "**Organizational preparedness**" are planned for ensuring the Organization has the adequate tools and supplies in place to be prepared to response to Level 3 emergencies, primarily through a Global Emergency Response Roster and prepositioning of supplies for emergency response personnel. Under the area "**Participation in L3 interagency processes**", allocation ensures that FAO acts as a full member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and Co-lead Agency (CLA) of the Food Security Cluster, and participates in all relevant interagency processes. The area "**L3 simulations**" provides FAO with the means to participate in annual emergency simulations conducted in each of the five regional offices, in order to test preparedness and readiness of decentralized offices to respond to emergencies.

23. **Response** - funds allocated under the area "**L3 emergency response**" support FAO's immediate response actions on a 'no-regrets' basis. 'No-regrets' is defined as the commitment of

<sup>6</sup> FC147/8.

resources in the absence of precise details on exact needs and response plans, leaving open the option for response managers to decide at a later date to demobilize surplus resources, as relevant and without negative repercussions for decision makers. All costs related to the immediate deployment of personnel are covered, for instance the deployment of an emergency management team, communication and IT equipment and logistical arrangements. Under this area, the Organization is prepared for three Level 3 emergencies per year.

### C. Programme component

24. Under the **SFERA programme component**, USD 8.9 million were allocated, USD 5.7 million under the AIRC window and USD 3.1 million under the Locust Programme.

#### *Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity (AIRC) window*

25. Under the **AIRC window**, USD 5.7 million were allocated to 13 interventions in order to support the provision of time-critical agricultural support in emergency contexts, while fostering a more programmatic response to crises.

Country	Type of Intervention	AIRC allotment USD(000)
Niger	Assistance d'urgence aux ménages vulnérables par l'amélioration de la production vivrière au Niger	450
Burkina Faso	Appui aux moyens d'existence des ménages vulnérables affectés par la crise alimentaire et nutritionnelle au Burkina Faso, à travers le renforcement de leurs capacités productives.	300
Chad	Assistance d'urgence aux ménages maraîchers affectés par la sécheresse dans la région du Bahr El Gazal au Tchad	350
Senegal	Assistance d'urgence aux ménages maraîchers affectés par la sécheresse dans la région du Bahr El Gazal au Tchad	300
Gambia	Support to the livelihoods of households affected by the 2012 food and nutrition crisis in the Gambia through enhanced vegetables crop production capacities and support to livestock	300
Haiti	Emergency food security and rural livelihood recovery for the most vulnerable farmers affected by Tropical Depression Sandy in the Departements Ouest and Nippes	650
Peru	Emergency support to the communities most affected by the floods in Loreto region	528
Democratic Republic of Congo	Renforcement de la capacité de production agricole de 3500 ménages vulnérables (déplacés et retournés) dans le Nord-Kivu à travers la gestion rapide des stocks stratégiques	663
Mali	Appui aux moyens d'existence des paysans de la Région de Tombouctou, affectés par le conflit à travers des actions de renforcement pour la campagne de contre-saison	501
West Bank and Gaza Strip	Emergency backyard food production activities in vulnerable and marginalized areas of the West Bank and Gaza Strip	649
Tanzania	Emergency assistance for the control of the Red Locust	320

	outbreak	
Yemen	Improving vulnerable households food and nutrition insecurity status in Hajjah Governorate through women-led backyard food production	400
Jamaica	Emergency food security and rural livelihood recovery for the most vulnerable farmers affected by Hurricane Sandy in Jamaica	300
<b>Total</b>		<b>5 711</b>

26. In **the Niger**, drought and locust swarms caused a cereal deficit; thousands of farming households had insufficient seed reserves for the 2012 wet season. With AIRC support, FAO quickly responded by providing cowpea seed and technical assistance to farmers in order to boost production. The support increased food availability and seed access, enabling farming families to meet household food needs and replenish seed stocks for the next agricultural season.

27. Two AIRC projects helped households affected by the 2012 food and nutrition crisis in **Burkina Faso** and **Chad** rebuild their livelihoods, have greater access to nutritious food and generate additional income from the sale of surplus produce in local markets. The projects provided seeds, fertilizer, small irrigation equipment, pesticides and training on improved farming practices to strengthen vegetable production capacities. Demonstration plots were also set up so that farmers could have a better understanding of the different stages of production.

28. Erratic rainfall greatly disrupted the planting and growth of food and cash crops in **Senegal**, resulting in low agricultural production and high food prices. By providing women's groups with vegetable and fruit production kits and training for market gardening, AIRC assistance improved household nutrition, enhanced incomes and diversified diets.

29. In **the Gambia**, AIRC funding contributed to improving the food and nutrition security of agropastoralists affected by drought conditions. Quality inputs were rushed to female vegetable producers who participated in communal garden schemes to enhance off-season production. Wells in the communal gardens were rehabilitated to increase water access. Day-old chicks, feed and Newcastle disease vaccines were distributed to introduce a new source of protein to household diets.

30. In **Haiti**, AIRC support provided immediate emergency food security and rural livelihood recovery to rural communities affected by Tropical Depression Sandy. To kick-start production, FAO carried out cash-for-work schemes, while rehabilitating land and irrigation channels. This provided farmers with extra income, enabling them to invest in quality agriculture inputs of their choice. Through training, farmers learned about community-based savings and loan schemes as a way to develop contingency funds and strengthen resilience to future disasters.

31. In flood-affected provinces of **Peru**, FAO helped families re-establish production capacities and strengthen community resilience to climatic shocks. The quick distribution of seeds, tools and training for corn, bean, rice and vegetable production enabled farmers to begin the cropping season on time. Increased yields are expected to cover household food needs for up to 12 months. The development of vulnerability maps and facilitation of participatory planning workshops aimed to promote the adoption of disaster risk management practices and policies at the local, national and regional levels.

32. AIRC assistance reinforced the production capacities of IDPs and returnees, and improved emergency response to food insecurity in **the Democratic Republic of the Congo**. Strategically positioned seed stocks enabled households to reduce their dependence on food assistance by increasing access to inputs and enhancing production. Special attention was given to help women quickly meet household food needs by establishing short-cycle vegetable gardens. Demonstration plots raised community awareness on market gardening so that farmers, whose livestock had been looted, had a good source of protein. To ensure proper analysis of food needs, Food Security Cluster and

Strategic Stock Committee meetings were held, and reports indicating gaps were shared among key stakeholders.

33. In northern **Mali**, conflict-affected populations received paddy rice and fertilizer in 2012. Thanks to enhanced agricultural production, farming households had greater food availability. A contingency plan for the 2012/13 agricultural season was also developed, enabling farmers to build their resilience to and minimize the consequences of crises.

34. Years of blockade and military operations in the **Gaza Strip** has led to high unemployment and rising food prices, as well as restricted access to land, water, goods and services and destruction of infrastructure. With scarce resources, vulnerable families have turned to negative coping mechanisms, such as reducing their number of daily meals. In 2012, an AIRC project improved domestic food quality and production by equipping urban families with rooftop gardens and rabbit production units, coupled with training on urban food production systems. With the means and knowledge to grow their own food, food-insecure households had increased access to fresh meat and vegetables, diversified diets and generated revenue from sales, thereby improving nutritional intake, and reducing vulnerability and dependency on food and cash handouts.

35. Emergency assistance was provided to control a Red Locust outbreak in an environmentally friendly way across western **Tanzania**. A successful aerial survey and control operation decreased the locust population to a low level prior to the 2013 breeding season, safeguarding the crops and pastures of rural communities in affected areas. Furthermore, the capacity of Government officials to continue efficient management of the Red Locust was strengthened through training.

36. By establishing women-led backyard gardens, FAO is improving the food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable households in **Yemen**. Farmer families are benefiting from the provision of poultry production and beekeeping kits to diversify food production. To improve household food consumption, the development of educational packages is helping families learn improved feeding practices. Efforts focused on the coordination of quality programming will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster humanitarian response.

37. In eastern **Jamaica**, subsistence farmers affected by Hurricane Sandy were provided with emergency food security and livelihood assistance. The development of community work programmes allowed farmers to prepare their lands for planting and receive vouchers to buy quality agricultural inputs. Training on contingency measures – e.g. seedling production to be stored in safe places during hurricanes – was integrated into the work programmes to strengthen the medium- to long-term resilience of farmers.

#### *Locust window*

38. Under the **Locust window**, USD 3.1 million were allocated by Belgium and France to the response programme in the Sahel in order to closely monitor the situation in Chad, Mali and the Niger.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Allotment (USD 000)</b>
Sahel	Locust	3 148
<b>Total</b>		<b>3 148</b>

39. Between June and October 2012, two generations of Desert Locust developed in the Sahel, owing to above-average rains. The mobilization of survey and control teams to carry out the necessary operations exceeded the financial capacities of the affected countries, but was made possible thanks to the timely response of donors to the appeal launched in June 2012. In November 2012, the Desert Locust threat was significantly reduced in the Sahel as a result of joint efforts made by the affected countries, FAO, the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Western Region and by the donors.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

40. SFERA continues to prove to be an essential tool to enable FAO to improve its performance in the humanitarian response. It will be one of the key tools of the Organization to successfully deliver its new Strategic Objective "Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crisis", which aims at building and strengthening capacities of the most vulnerable to withstand and adapt to the shocks. In particular, SFERA will play a critical role in implementing collaborative response in a longer and more detailed cycle that focuses on people's livelihood and resilience strategies and on their institutions' capacity to prevent, protect and restore.