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Food and Agriculture  
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Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная организация  
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las  
Naciones Unidas para la  
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة  
الغذية والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

# COUNCIL

## Hundred and Fifty-ninth Session

Rome, 4-8 June 2018

### Report of the 124<sup>th</sup> Session of the Programme Committee (Rome, 21–25 May 2018)

#### Executive Summary

The Programme Committee examined a number of matters relating to programme planning and evaluation, in particular with regards to:

- a) Preparation for the Reviewed Medium Term Plan 2018-21 – Regional Priorities (paragraph 3)
- b) Evaluation of FAO's contribution to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition (SO1) (paragraph 4)
- c) Synthesis of lessons learnt in application of the Country Programming Framework (paragraph 5)
- d) Follow-up report to the Evaluation of FAO's contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture (paragraph 6)

The Committee brings its findings and recommendations on these matters to the attention of the Council.

#### Suggested action by the Council

The Council is requested to endorse the findings of the Programme Committee, as well as its recommendations on matters within its mandate.

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## REPORT OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Rome, 21-25 May 2018

### Introduction

1. The Committee submitted to the Council the following report of its Hundred and Twenty-fourth session.
2. In addition to the Chairperson, His Excellency Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen (Netherlands), the following representatives of Members were present:

Mr Guillermo Valentín Rodolico (Argentina) <sup>1</sup>	Mr Fiesal Rasheed Salamh Al Argan (Jordan)
Ms Jennifer Fellows (Canada)	Mr Muhammad Rudy Khairudin Mohd Nor (Malaysia)
Mr Marc Mankoussou (Congo)	Mr Matthew B. Hooper (New Zealand)
Mr Kanga Kouamé (Côte d'Ivoire)	Ms Claudia Elizabeth Guevara de la Jara (Peru)
H.E. Mohammad Hossein Emadi (Islamic Republic of Iran)	H.E. François Pythoud (Switzerland)
Mr Toru Hisazome (Japan)	H.E. Marie-Therese Sarch (United Kingdom)

### Preparation for the Reviewed Medium Term Plan 2018-21 – Regional Priorities<sup>2</sup>

3. The Committee:
  - a) appreciated the alignment of FAO's results framework in the MTP 2018-21 to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);
  - b) welcomed the updated results framework indicators and targets for the Strategic Objectives as presented in the document and *Web Annexes* and welcomed Management assurance that the methodology and baselines for monitoring FAO's Outputs under Objective 6.2 are available to Members;
  - c) welcomed the inclusion of the SDG indicators in the results framework, and encouraged Management to ensure that support is given to Members to develop the capacity to monitor and track the SDG indicators for which FAO is the custodian;
  - d) stressed the need for further consideration on the links between meeting the SO Output targets and achieving the SDGs;
  - e) welcomed the support expressed by the Regional Conferences for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization;
  - f) supported the regional priorities and initiatives expressed by the Regional Conferences that took place until mid-April (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean), as summarized in the document and its annexes;
  - g) stressed the importance of FAO's work on guidance on emerging issues and regional initiatives and priorities such as food safety, especially work on Codex on standard setting in safe food and enabling trade, International Plant Protection Convention on standard setting for plant health and plant protection, Blue Growth, SIDS, countries in dry and arid zones and LDCs, AMR, agroecology, biotechnology and other innovative approaches;

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<sup>1</sup> Mr Guillermo Valentín Rodolico had been designated to replace Her Excellency Maria Cristina Boldorini as representative of Argentina for the 124<sup>th</sup> session of the Programme Committee

<sup>2</sup> PC 124/2

- h) stressed the importance of reinforcing collaboration with non-state actors, through partnerships and other arrangements, including with the private sector and emphasized the importance of South-South and Triangular Cooperation;
- i) highlighted the need for close collaboration with other UN organizations, especially the Rome-based agencies, as well as with relevant regional organizations;
- j) supported FAO's action within the context of climate change, especially in supporting countries to access climate financing such as the Green Climate Fund and Global Environmental Facility. In this respect, it urged FAO's Management to provide more transparency and clear criteria for which countries will receive FAO's support. Priority support for climate change should be given to SIDS and LDCs, as well as other countries vulnerable to climate change;
- k) welcomed focused attention on family farmers, particularly women and youth, within the context of the decade of family farming;
- l) recognized the need for continued review of the coverage of FAO's decentralized offices in order to enhance the Organization's support to member countries so as to achieve greater flexibility, efficiency and impact in the implementation of its programmes, and underlined the importance of taking into account the future outcome of ongoing discussion in relation to the United Nations development system; and
- m) looked forward to reviewing the full report on priorities from the Regional Conferences, including the remaining Regional Conferences (Europe, Near East), and input from the Informal Regional Conference for North America at its next session, together with input from the Technical Committees.

#### **Evaluation of FAO's contribution to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition (SO1)<sup>3</sup>**

4. The Committee welcomed the evaluation and the Management Response, and:
  - a) noted the positive findings of the evaluation in terms of the design, and implementation of SO1, and noted the contrast with the increasing number of global hungry during 2016-17 and its causes as reflected in the SOFI report "*Building resilience for peace and food security*";
  - b) stressed the need to address hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in the context of migration caused by conflicts, as critical issues, as well as a cross-cutting issue;
  - c) welcomed Management's recognition for the need to adjust FAO's programming to reflect increasing conflicts as drivers of food insecurity and hunger;
  - d) underlined the core role of SO1 to the mandate of the Organization;
  - e) agreed with the four recommendations of the evaluation and appreciated the proposed actions and timeframes contained in the Management Response to address them;
  - f) appreciated the cross-cutting nature of SO1 and the enhanced need for FAO to develop cross-SP initiatives;
  - g) highlighted that hunger is as much a governance issue as a technical challenge and stressed the importance of FAO engaging in national policy analysis and design, also noting that FAO needs to strengthen capacities to support policy implementation;
  - h) encouraged a greater role of FAO in the dissemination of data on food insecurity at country level in order to enhance its context analysis, monitoring and evaluation of its work, and its advocacy as part of the support for policy implementation;

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<sup>3</sup> PC 124/2; PC 124/2 Sup.1

- i) recognized the increased attention to nutrition from FAO and the need to consider the potential role of diverse healthy diets that include traditional, locally-based and other products as a way to address the triple burden of malnutrition;
- j) stressed the need for FAO to reinforcing collaboration with non-state actors, through partnerships and other arrangements with a greater inclusion of “non-traditional actors” in the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, such as the private sector, parliamentary alliances, consumer associations, chefs;
- k) stressed the importance of furthering collaboration with RBAs in the area of eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition;
- l) looked forward to reviewing the evaluation of the nutrition strategy which should include impact aspects at its next session; and
- m) stressed the strong link between the findings and conclusions of SO1 and the lessons learnt in the implementation of the Programme Implementation Report 2016-17, as well as in the CPFs as discussed in the Programme Committee under the *Synthesis of lessons learnt in application of the Country Programming Framework*.

#### **Synthesis of lessons learnt in application of the Country Programming Framework<sup>4</sup>**

5. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to discuss the synthesis report and the Management Response, and:

- a) noted the comprehensive scope of the synthesis report provided solid evidence related to best practices, lessons learnt and challenges of the effectiveness of the CPFs as a management tool for country-level programming;
- b) underlined the need to further strengthen the CPFs and their guidelines with regard to:
  - i. reflecting the priority of national governments and its alignment with international priorities, especially Agenda 2030 and its SDGs
  - ii. the CPFs use as a tool to guide FAO’s work in the agricultural, fisheries and forests sectors at the country-level
  - iii. conceptualization and preparation, implementation, monitoring and oversight of CPFs
  - iv. the need for CPFs to provide in-depth context analysis and theories of change
  - v. the potential of CPFs as an instrument for resource mobilization
  - vi. the use of results-based management, through greater use of monitoring indicators for better understanding the results of FAO’s actions, and welcomed the idea of scoring to monitor the achievement of results within the CPFs
- c) encouraged a greater role of FAO in the dissemination of data on food insecurity at country level in order to enhance its context analysis, monitoring and evaluation of the CPF, and its advocacy work;
- d) endorsed the three recommendations of the synthesis report and encouraged Management to accept and implement all three recommendations in full;
- e) stressed the need to further strengthen the coherence of the UN at country level and welcomed Management’s support for the ongoing UN development reform process;
- f) highlighted FAO’s role in support to formulation, evaluation and scaling-up of pro-poor multi-sectoral policies and strategies, including decent employment, with a focus on youth, social protection and gender mainstreaming;

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<sup>4</sup> PC 124/4; PC 124/4 Sup.1

- g) noted the pivotal role of FAO Representatives in the design, resource mobilization and follow-up of the implementation of CPFs;
- h) stressed the need for having an oversight mechanism as a structural and mandatory component of CPFs;
- i) highlighted the important role of steering committees in the preparation of CPFs and, in this respect, stressed the need of broad stakeholders' involvement and engagement, including with a wider range of government institutions, and the private sector;
- j) highlighted the need for strengthening the relationship between CPFs and regional development programmes and regional priorities, emphasizing the major role of FAO's regional offices;
- k) welcomed Management's agreement to pilot the development of joint CFPs with WFP and IFAD, and to set ambitious goals in this respect; and
- l) highlighted the strong links of findings and conclusions of the evaluation of SO1 with the CPF as tools for national programming.

### **Follow-up report to the evaluation of FAO's contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture<sup>5</sup>**

6. The Committee took note of this follow-up report, welcoming its conclusions and recommendations, and:
- a) highlighted the role of *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources within the context of climate change;
  - b) welcomed genetic resources as a central element in FAO's programmes on biodiversity;
  - c) noted with concern that progress in implementation of recommendation 2 on the development of the capacity of decentralized offices in support of work on genetic resources was slow and stressed the need to accelerate work on this recommendation;
  - d) noted the need for additional resources to the work of the Organization in the area of genetic resources;
  - e) welcomed the strengthened involvement of the private sector;
  - f) encouraged reinforcing collaboration with non-state actors, through partnerships and other arrangements, including with the private sector, civil society and research and development organizations; and
  - g) looked forward to further reviewing progress on the implementation of the recommendations to be submitted to the Programme Committee in 2019 as part of its overall corporate reporting.

### **Date and place of the next session**

7. The Committee was informed that its 125<sup>th</sup> session would take place at FAO headquarters from 12 to 16 November 2018.

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<sup>5</sup> PC 124/5

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### **Any other business**

8. The Committee reviewed arrangements for its 125<sup>th</sup> session, and agreed the following Agenda items:

- a) Preparation for the Reviewed Medium Term Plan 2018-21 – priorities arising from the Technical Committees
- b) Evaluation of FAO's contribution to integrated natural resource management for sustainable agriculture (SO2)
- c) Evaluation of the Nutrition Strategy
- d) Follow-up report to the Evaluation of FAO's evaluation function
- e) Follow-up report to the Evaluation of FAO's Contribution to Strategic Objective 5 – Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises
- f) Indicative rolling work plan of evaluations 2019-2021
- g) Report on the outcome of the pledging conference on the eradication of peste des petits ruminants (PPR)
- h) Progress report on FAO's Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR)

9. The Committee agreed to have as a standing item on its Agenda a discussion on possible items for the subsequent session.

10. The Committee also welcomed the proposal to hold an informal meeting prior to the formal session, both to facilitate discussion on some formal Agenda items, and to consider *inter alia*, the proposal for a One UN Evaluation function, the possibilities of joint SDG-based evaluations at the country level, the evaluation of the project "Voices of the Hungry", and work on cross-cutting issues including on climate change in mountainous and arid zones.