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**Evaluation of FAO's Contribution to Strategic Objective 5 –
Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY¹

1. The present report outlines the main findings and conclusions from an evaluation of Strategic Objective 5 (SO5) *Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises*, one of the five Strategic Objectives approved at the 38th session of the FAO Conference in June 2013 as part of the reviewed Strategic Framework.

2. The Strategic Objectives were complemented with Strategic Programmes providing a four-year results framework and resources for delivering results against each Strategic Objective in the Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and biennial Programmes of Work and Budget approved by the FAO Conference. The SO5 Programme (also called “Strategic Programme 5”) is articulated through four Outcomes and nine Outputs, which build upon the components of the Hyogo Framework for Action. In this report, the terms ‘Strategic Objective’ and ‘Strategic Programme’ are used almost interchangeably.

3. The four Outcomes of Strategic Programme 5 are:

Outcome 5.1 Countries and regions adopt and implement legal, policy and institutional systems and regulatory frameworks for risk reduction and crisis management

Outcome 5.2 Countries and regions provide regular information and early warning against potential, known and emerging threats

Outcome 5.3 Countries reduce risks and vulnerability at household and community level

Outcome 5.4 Countries and regions affected by disasters and crises prepare for, and manage effective responses

4. At its 116th session in November 2014, the Programme Committee endorsed the *Indicative rolling work plan of strategic and programme evaluations 2015-17* which proposed to present, at each Programme Committee session, one thematic evaluation related to the Organization’s Strategic Objectives. This is the first such strategic evaluation conducted.

5. The evaluation was focused on four overarching evaluation questions:

- i. Strength of the conceptual and planning framework: clarity of FAO’s strategy under SO5, its relevance to countries’ needs, and degree to which it is likely to be effective.
- ii. Capacity to translate the framework into action: is FAO equipped to deliver against the Strategic Framework?
- iii. Progress achieved: has the reviewed Strategic Framework and Objective already resulted in “intermediary results”, such as improved programming, more cohesive FAO support and better knowledge management?
- iv. Strategic positioning: has FAO’s global positioning and comparative advantage at the confluence of the emergency and development agendas been strengthened by SO5?

6. The evaluation does not review the principles underlying the reviewed Strategic Framework nor its design or related corporate guidance, as these issues are beyond the scope of SO5. It however provides feedback on how corporate guidance was applied within SO5 and with what results, with a view to providing recommendations for the future.

7. Sources of data included administrative data analysis; a synthesis of evidence from past evaluations; interviews and survey of FAO staff and partners involved in resilience work; and five country case studies selected (Cambodia, Lebanon, Mali, Uganda and Pakistan) based on a review of their SO5-related portfolio and feedback from the Strategic Programme 5 core team. While conducting the country case studies, the evaluation team also visited the Regional Offices for the Near East, Asia

¹ In line with the recommendations of the 112th session of the Programme Committee (CL 145/6 para. 24.b) concerning modalities for saving costs, while ensuring adequate access to information contained in Evaluation reports, document PC 120/8 is presented as a comprehensive executive summary translated in FAO languages, while the Evaluation report in its entirety is published on the FAO [Evaluation Web site](#) in the original language.

and the Pacific and Africa, as well as the Subregional Resilience Teams in Nairobi and Dakar. The Latin America and the Caribbean Regional and Subregional Offices, those of Europe and Central Asia, and the Pacific Subregional Office were interviewed by telephone. FAO partners and other stakeholders working on resilience were also interviewed, as well as a key donors and counterparts from relevant ministries in the countries visited.

8. An evaluation of the FAO Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) is undertaken separately, because the technical breadth and complexity of EMPRES are beyond the capacity of the present SO5 evaluation. Moreover, the evaluation of EMPRES will benefit from greater consultation, and possibly cooperation, with a number of partners such as the World Health Organization, the World Organisation for Animal Health, and the International Plant Protection Convention, and thus requires a different process.

A. Findings

9. This section extracts from the main body of the report a set of evaluation findings responding to the four evaluation questions. These findings form the basis for the conclusions and recommendations presented in subsequent sections.

Strength of the conceptual and planning framework

10. The concept of resilience speaks to a world in crisis. It starts from people's strengths, and stresses the importance of addressing the root causes of disaster and crises rather than just their symptoms. The federative aspect of the concept can be a strength but also presents a risk: that of a "catch-all", unwieldy concept hard to operationalize in practice.

11. The concept of resilience has programmatic consequences. It suggests that it is useful to respond to short-term crises, but inappropriate to repeat short-term emergency interventions year after year in a context of protracted crisis, where community-based and market-oriented approaches are more suitable than free input distribution, which may undermine the resilience of the rural societies concerned.

12. FAO works through governmental and non-governmental service providers to help them provide a series of 'resilience-boosting services' to communities and households affected by disasters and crises.

13. The theory of change for Strategic Programme 5 is logical and complete. However, there is a potential overlap between Output 1.1 (Improving capacities to formulate and promote risk reduction and crisis management policies, strategies and plans) and Output 4.1 Improving capacities of national authorities and stakeholders for emergency preparedness to reduce the impact of crisis, which could usefully be combined.

14. The current Strategic Framework's scope and implementation span the entire Organization, from headquarters to decentralized offices, and provides them with a clear and common results framework. However, country office progress in implementing the reviewed Strategic Framework remains extremely varied, pointing to an uneven rollout of the Strategic Framework at country level.

Capacity to translate the Framework into action

15. While disaster risk reduction and management has historically been underfunded, resource partners are increasingly funding resilience programmes through specific, long-term financing mechanisms.

16. FAO could strengthen its strategic position by deepening of its involvement in resilience. The Organization should not limit itself to a declining emergency crisis response portfolio, which in many cases (e.g. in protracted crises) relies on ill-adapted, short-term humanitarian funding.

17. The Strategic Programme 5 team is widely assessed in FAO and beyond as dynamic, flexible and supportive of country offices. It has also effectively "broken down silos", notably through its weekly teleconferences and its country support process. These processes and supportive attitude make Strategic Programme 5 one of the most present and visible Strategic Programmes at country level.

18. While silos were broken within Strategic Programme 5, there is potential for more collaboration between Strategic Programmes at headquarters. Collaboration with Strategic Programme 2 has focused on climate change, with Strategic Programme 3 on social protection and with Strategic Programme 4 on food chain safety. Some Regional Initiatives have generated collaboration between Strategic Programmes. At country level, the Strategic Programmes are seamlessly brought together under the country programming frameworks.

19. Among the range of approaches used by the regional offices in delineating and implementing the Regional Initiatives, the approach taken by the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean likely offers the best chance of success, with Regional Initiative branded as ambitious flagship programmes, vehicles for knowledge sharing and awareness raising, funded from external resources, and implemented in collaboration with regional and national partners.

20. Countries under “active observation and coordinated support” derive significant benefits in terms of coordinated technical backstopping from all Strategic Programmes. So far, there is less value in the “focus countries” system, perhaps because “focus countries” represent two-thirds of all FAO programme countries.

21. The ‘Level 3’ protocols and the introduction of new partnership tools such as the Operational Partners Implementation Modality (OPIM) are a sign that long-standing operational difficulties are being taken seriously and progressively addressed.

22. Among the technical areas seen as key for resilience programming, FAO retains strong capacities in livestock health, Farmer Field Schools, locust control, water management, and to some degree in climate change adaptation. Capacities appear less robust in disaster risk reduction and management, insurance and cash-based approaches, and almost nil in conflict and political analysis.

Progress achieved

23. The various technical units engaged in resilience building policies have not yet articulated their offer of services as a collective contribution, in spite of the opportunity offered by the Strategic Programme 5 ‘space’ to do so. Similarly, FAO still lacks an integrated One Health Strategic Action Plan taking into consideration all three EMPRES pillars.

24. Outcome 2 has contributed to the institutionalization of early warning and information systems such as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and the Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA), and through the welcome development of the Early Warning/ Early Action system integrating data from different FAO systems. There is potential for deeper integration and further synergies through exchanges of data sets, integration of geographic information systems, and the sharing of data collection tools such as tablets and satellite data link services.

25. There is a large body of FAO community-based work on disaster risk reduction and management done through many small pilot projects. The review of past evaluations indicates that despite their quality, these small pilot projects often fail to influence national policy. However, encouraging examples exist of comprehensive and potentially useful policy support by FAO in disaster risk reduction and management.

26. FAO has made major improvements in its surge capacity and mechanisms, through the application of ‘Level 3’ Standard Operating Procedures that support a well-coordinated and well-functioning chain of support.

27. Developing a menu of “signature resilience services” could help FAO build a stronger, more diversified resilience programme at scale, by standardizing approaches and reducing programme design and roll-out time, while adapting the services to local particularities as required.

28. In terms of processes, the cohesiveness of FAO’s support has been improved and collaboration with national and local governments is now the rule in all projects; however, slow progress is reported against indicators relative to programme design and knowledge management.

Strategic positioning

29. FAO appears ideally positioned to contribute to the resilience agenda, due to the following external and internal advantages: a growing need for resilience support; a current reassessment of the humanitarian-development divide; FAO's extensive experience in livelihood support, early warning and disaster risk reduction and mitigation; and the coherence of the resilience agenda with the FAO mandate.

30. In spite of the significant comparative advantages listed above, FAO has yet to make its presence felt in the "resilience space", due to long-standing operational weaknesses and a lack of flexibility and speed in setting up new systems to address new needs.

31. FAO lacks an intermediate programmatic tool that could connect the country programming framework and the project document levels, in the form of thematic, sectorial or geographic programmes that would regroup several projects and facilitate flexible funding from multiple sources. A number of country offices have drafted resilience strategies as a way to address this gap.

32. Partnerships have been strengthened at the global and regional levels. At the country level, FAO has broadened its collaboration with ministries and departments beyond the 'traditional' FAO governmental counterparts, e.g. with Ministries of Environment, and FAO often assumes a coordinating role in its areas of expertise.

33. Joint programmes and initiatives have been signed with other United Nations organizations, globally and in a large number of countries, but actual collaboration in the field remains uncommon. Agencies frequently implement their component of a joint project separately.

34. FAO's capacity to perform as an opinion leader in the field of resilience is improving, notably at the global level and in regions endowed with a Regional Initiative on resilience. At national level, the degree of engagement in Strategic Programme 5 still depends much on the profile, skill-set and preferences of individual FAO Representatives rather than on the relevance of Strategic Programme 5 to the country context and government priorities.

35. FAO is committed to integrating gender in resilience, as well as to protection from sexual abuse and exploitation and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP). Guidance on these issues has been produced and disseminated, and programme design has afforded greater consideration to gender integration and AAP.

B. Conclusions

36. **Conclusion 1. The renewed interest in resilience represents a historic opportunity for FAO, which is well positioned to contribute to the resilience agenda. Nevertheless, FAO has yet to make its presence fully felt and recognised in the "resilience space" especially at country level.**

- a) FAO is well positioned to contribute to the resilience agenda within its mandated areas of agricultural production, rural development and natural resource management, and to meet the growing demand from member countries to support the resilience of agricultural livelihoods to shocks and crisis. The current reassessment of the humanitarian-development divide fits well with FAO's mandate and its long engagement in both development and emergency contexts to support agricultural livelihoods. Specifically, the Organization's experience in early warning and information systems, disaster risk management, locust control, transboundary animal diseases, and the length of its relationship with national and regional authorities put FAO in a good position to take advantage of the increasing support provided by key resource partners in resilience.
- b) SO5 and its four Outcomes, as formulated, sit squarely within FAO's mandate. Policy development, early warning and disaster risk reduction are eminently development-oriented. In Outcome 4 that deals with preparedness and response to crises, is phrased as supportive of national authorities, and the response to Typhoon Haiyan and other similar successful emergency responses have proven the relevance and effectiveness of FAO's emergency operations in response to sudden-onset crises. The concept of resilience also challenges development interventions to incorporate risk reduction measures and promote preparedness, recovery, resilient

livelihoods and peaceful societies while at the same time generating growth. This corresponds to the cross-cutting nature of resilience, which should in theory apply to all development processes, and calls for greater collaboration between Strategic Programmes.

- c) FAO has yet to make its presence fully felt in the “resilience space”. Seizing the opportunity presented by the current interest in resilience requires continued and strengthened operational and technical capacity together with increased investment in resilience programming.
- d) FAO has a comparative advantage in terms of livelihoods analysis and relevant technical capacity. However, its technical capacity would need to be expanded to respond to the increasing demand from member countries. FAO retains strong capacities in livestock health, Farmer Field Schools, locust control, water management, and to some degree in climate change adaptation. Based on feedback from country offices, capacities appear less robust in disaster risk reduction and management, insurance and cash-based approaches, and almost nil in conflict and political analysis. Efforts are being made to fill vacant positions and hire new staff in key technical units, but this may not be enough. More investment in FAO’s resilience programming and resource mobilization capacity appears necessary.
- e) Operational capacity remains a limiting factor, including for resource mobilization, as noted in a number of past evaluations. The situation has improved, but not fast and systematically enough. While many decision-making processes remain centralized and lengthier than they should be, the ‘Level 3’ protocols and the introduction of new partnership tools such as the Operational Partners Implementation Modality (OPIM) are a sign that operational difficulties are being taken seriously and progressively addressed.
- f) SO5 is funded overwhelmingly by voluntary contributions because FAO’s involvement in this area grew out of the opportunity it was given over the years to expand its portfolio in emergency and rehabilitation using humanitarian resource channels that are relatively easier to access than development funding. The Organization has never invested much of its core, regular resources in this area. This funding model continued to some extent with Strategic Programme 5 as well, in that the Strategic Programme has benefited from limited Regular Programme resources. As a result, the implementation of the SO5 vision and philosophy as described in the FAO Strategic Framework relies largely on external, short-term funding over which FAO has little control.
- g) The lack of predictable resources in Strategic Programme 5 deprives FAO from the ability to invest over the long term in promising resilience services and in its own personnel. Most of the personnel working on Strategic Programme 5 (national and international) are hired under consultancy contracts with extremely short contractual periods. This creates an unnecessary administrative burden, affects staff morale, efficiency and retention, and disrupts the durability of FAO’s support in resilience.
- h) By pooling together the resource of agreeable donors into trust funds such as the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA), the Strategic Programme 5 team has been able to partially “cushion” the unpredictability of project funding and invest in key strategic capacities and processes. Other United Nations agencies relying on voluntary contributions have created similar financial mechanisms to provide predictability and continuity to their donor-funded activities, partnerships, and staff.
- i) Likewise, many agencies, FAO included, have found it possible and useful to build a development-oriented pipeline with a combination of successive short-term projects implemented with the same local partners in the same domain or geographic area. In Strategic Programme 5, the need to pursue long-term goals through short-term funding has led some FAO country offices to draft ‘resilience strategies’ or use other forms of programmatic documents (e.g. umbrella programmes) to document the programme resulting from the combination of several projects, and discuss it with partners. FAO lacks a formal programme level connecting the projects and the country programming frameworks, hence the recourse to country resilience strategies.
- j) In spite of sporadic initiatives, programmatic collaboration remains weaker with other UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) than with governments. The relationship

with the World Food Programme (WFP) is characterized by good collaboration on the food security cluster, but limited cooperation in the field.

37. Conclusion 2: There is a gradual evolution in the reviewed portfolio towards more genuine resilience programming, with closer coordination and collaboration with programme country governments and regional institutions, and away from unsustainable and disjointed interventions.

- a) The review of past and recent evaluation reports highlights an uneven FAO track record in responding to crises in a development-oriented manner. In this context, Strategic Programme 5 is rightly seen by FAO Management as an effort to strengthen the development orientation of FAO's work in preparation and response to crises.
- b) Delimitating the domain of relevance of Strategic Programme 5 relative to that of other Strategic Programmes is relatively straightforward: Strategic Programme 5 should take the lead in countries affected by severe crises, while other Strategic Programmes should be more prominent in institutionally stable contexts with manageable levels of hazards and risks. Evidently, Strategic Programme 5 may also provide valuable inputs in the latter type of countries (e.g. on disaster risk reduction and mitigation policies).
- c) The domain of relevance of emergency response versus that of resilience programming *stricto sensu* should be based on the duration of the crisis concerned and of the response required. Crisis-oriented intervention extending over more than two years should be designed and implemented with due considerations paid to the sustainability of achieved results. When a long-term intervention is required, community-based and market-oriented approaches are more suitable than free input distribution.
- d) There is a gradual evolution in the reviewed portfolio towards more genuine resilience programming. Resilience programming, as defined in this report, responds to crises by starting from people's strengths; it requires a solid analysis of the context in all its dimensions, and especially a good understanding of people's livelihoods, taking into account the specific needs and priorities of men and women from different socio-economic and age groups; it provides support over the medium or long-term; and it calls for attention to capacity development sustainability and collaboration with governments and other partners.
- e) In the portfolio analysis, the evolution towards closer coordination and collaboration with programme country governments and regional institutions is clear. The resilience portfolio includes more policy work, technical advice, investment support and capacity building than in the past, with some excellent work done at regional level in Africa with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and at national level in Asia and the Middle East for the control and prevention of highly pathogenic avian influenza.
- f) The major individual components of the FAO information and early warning systems (IEWS) are well established and have made significant progress on achieving results and adoption at country level. Much progress has been made towards institutionalizing the IPC in Africa and Asia. The Early Warning / Early Action system was developed by Strategic Programme 5 to consolidate available forecasting information and has started providing comprehensive risk analyses.
- g) The promotion of participatory and gender responsive approaches, put to excellent use during the response to Typhoon Haiyan may require further support; a synthesis of past evaluations showed a lack of progress in the majority of evaluations reviewed.
- h) Some of the country offices visited as part of this evaluation's field work were successful in raising resources for resilience-oriented activities by building a strongly contextualized, tailored collaboration with the government rather than in isolation.
- i) In other cases, FAO has struggled to develop a technically sound programmatic offer in resilience, with response projects still implemented over short time frames without prospects for cumulative

progress. While this may be adequate for one-off responses to sudden onset disasters, it has proven problematic when implemented recurrently, as is often the case in protracted crises.

38. Conclusion 3. The Strategic Programme 5 team has provided dynamic, flexible and supportive leadership and helped to “break down silos” in a useful and credible manner. However, there are still significant opportunities to merge or coordinate or articulate similar work implemented by different FAO units under Strategic Programme 5.

- a) The positive contribution of the Strategic Programme 5 team is recognised within FAO, as well as by external partners and stakeholders. The new tools and ways of working described in this report (some of which like the country support process have been piloted by Strategic Programme 5 and later expanded to other Strategic Programmes), are credited with changing the conversation between headquarters and country offices towards a more demand-oriented one, and with strengthening the systemic link between the FAO technical units in resilience.
- b) The Strategic Programme 5 Leader is also the Director of the Emergency and Rehabilitation Division), a specificity which allows him to mobilize significant human and financial resources behind Strategic Programme 5 implementation and country support.
- c) However, there are still significant opportunities to merge or coordinate similar work implemented by different FAO units under Strategic Programme 5. Many technical units engage in resilience-related policies in a scattered manner. The different tools and systems developed by FAO for early warning and food security information are still managed in a disperse manner without much integration and synergies between them. Similarly, FAO lacks an integrated One Health Strategic Action Plan that would consider all three EMPRES pillars.
- d) There is also potential for more collaboration between Strategic Programmes. Collaboration with Strategic Programme 2 has increased on climate change (e.g. on El Niño) with Strategic Programme 3 on social protection and with Strategic Programme 4 on food safety. Some Regional Initiatives address issues involving several Strategic Programmes, and have generated collaboration among them. This is even truer at country level, where the Strategic Programme concerns are seamlessly brought together under the country programming frameworks, whenever there is scope for covering cross-cutting or complementary areas of work.

39. Conclusion 4: The Regional Offices have employed a variety of approaches to implement the Regional Initiatives. At country level, the country programming framework is filling a real need, as it helps to articulate FAO’s programmatic offer in a concise and coherent manner.

- a) A range of approaches has been used to delineate and implement the reviewed Strategic Framework at the regional level. Arguably, the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean has implemented the Regional Initiative concept in the most promising way: as large flagship programmes and vehicles for knowledge sharing and awareness raising, funded from external resources and implemented in collaboration with regional and national partners. This framing of the Regional Initiatives as regional flagship programmes requires a strong political commitment at regional level. In the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, the Regional Initiatives were initially framed around narrow technical issues and are currently being revised to become regional flagship programmes around similar lines as the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean model. In Africa and the Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa, the Regional Initiatives are only funded by FAO resources and therefore rather small, and used to fund catalytic country-level initiatives.
- b) Flexible support has been provided to country offices by the Strategic Programme 5 team and the resilience teams in regional offices, including with SFERA. The system of “closer observation and support countries” is delivering increased and reasonably cohesive support from regional offices and headquarters to the few countries concerned. The system of “focus countries” has been less useful so far, primarily because too many focus countries have been selected.
- c) The country programming frameworks (CPFs) are filling a real need at country level. They helped clarify the mutually agreed areas of work between government and FAO, attract the attention of donors and identify possible areas of collaboration. In the staff survey, the CPF was rated as the

single most useful FAO mechanism. In contrast, the new project cycle was poorly rated, due to its excessive complexity.

40. **Conclusion 5: Resilience programming is not fundamentally new to FAO. The evolution towards development-oriented crisis surveillance, preparedness and response started before SO5. A number of so-called “signature resilience services”, anchored in decade-long FAO experience, were identified as having potential for upscaling.**

- a) Resilience programmes are not new to FAO. The evolution towards long-term, development-oriented crisis surveillance and response (highlighted in conclusion 2) started before SO5, under the previous Strategic Objective I² and in some cases even earlier. Resilience is what good agricultural emergency responses – but also disaster risk reduction and management, early warning and sustainable development – have always been about.
- b) A number of good practices were identified as having potential for upscaling in resilience programming, including EMPRES, early warning, livelihoods-based information systems, community-based disaster risk reduction and management and climate change adaptation, community animal health workers, Farmer Field Schools, input trade fairs, networks of input shops and *warrantage*. These services and approaches are all anchored in significant FAO experience, adapted to both development and resilience they all and require an investment over the long term, while being easily scalable and descalable temporarily.
- c) FAO could further promote and ‘brand’ some of these services as typical of FAO’s resilience programmes by treating them as “signature resilience services”. So far, many of these services such as the community animal health workers or even Farmer Field Schools have not been aggressively promoted by FAO. The counterexample of the IPC, steadfastly promoted by FAO since its inception and institutionalized in a growing number of countries and regions, shows that FAO can bring good local experiences up to scale by constantly improving and promoting its good practices, and “champions” them systematically.

41. **Conclusion 6: Insufficient attention has been paid to knowledge management so far. A reform of the type undertaken by FAO needs a strong knowledge sharing effort and infrastructure. This is especially important for SO5, which encapsulates a programmatic shift towards resilience.**

- a) A reform of the type undertaken by FAO requires a set of changes in objectives, organigrams, procedures and funding flows, as well as a change in mindset, a new conceptual framework, almost a new value system, demonstrated in new ways of working. This is especially true of SO5, which encapsulates a programmatic shift towards resilience. Such a transition can certainly be assisted by a strong knowledge sharing effort, and may even falter without it. However, there has been no systematic staff training in resilience programming, and only modest efforts towards the development of knowledge sharing networks.

² Strategic Objective I – Improved preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agricultural threats and emergencies (was the predecessor of Strategic Objective 5)

C. Recommendations

42. **Recommendation 1: While no major changes are required to the Strategic Framework, FAO should make a few adjustments to the Strategic Programme 5 result framework, clarify the concept of the Regional Initiatives, and promote greater integration of products and services across FAO units involved in Strategic Programme 5.**

- a) The corporate definition of resilience should be edited to include: i) a reference to ‘households, communities and nations’ to be more explicit on whose resilience; ii) the ability of a society to transform as a result of a disaster or crisis; and iii) the principle that resilience starts from people’s strengths, assets and strategies.
- b) The SO5 Output and Outcome structure could be simplified by combining Output 1.1 (Improving capacities to formulate and promote risk reduction and crisis management policies, strategies and plans) with Output 4.1 (Improving capacities of national authorities and stakeholders for emergency preparedness to reduce the impact of crisis), as the two seem highly connected but seen from different standpoints.
- c) More generally, there is potential for further integration of FAO services related to resilience, by promoting greater collaboration and coherence among concerned FAO units involved in policy advice (Outcome 1) and early warning (Outcome 2).
- d) Output 3.2 (Improving access of most vulnerable groups to services which reduce the impact of disasters and crises) deserves greater attention from the Strategic Programme 5 team, with promising resilience-building pathways through basic services in agriculture (extension and veterinary services) and agricultural insurance schemes.
- e) There is potential for enhanced collaboration between Strategic Programmes, and for clarifying interfaces. Strategic Programme 5 shares significant common concerns with Strategic Programme 2 on climate change adaptation and with Strategic Programme 3 on social protection and migration. There is also potential for more work with Strategic Programme 4 on value chains, given that food chain crises significantly affect value chains. Overlaps are not necessarily a problem, as long as they are used to foster effective collaboration.
- f) The concept of the Regional Initiatives under SO5 should be clarified and their purpose reframed to that of regional flagship programmes co-funded from external resources, and implemented in collaboration with regional and national partners. Regional Initiatives can also serve as useful vehicles for knowledge sharing and awareness raising (within and beyond FAO).
- g) This framing of the Regional Initiatives as regional flagship programmes requires a strong political commitment behind them at regional level. From this standpoint, the Regional Initiative 3 on African Drylands should be more formally anchored in the Malabo Declaration. The establishment of expanded Regional Initiatives on One Health and Resilience to Climate Change in the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific should be supported.
- h) When introducing new systems for planning and reporting, FAO should try to keep the related transaction costs as low as possible, as such costs reduce FAO’s capacity to attain its Members’ goals. This consideration applies to the new project cycle and to the two distinct channels for country reporting (annual FAO Representative reports and reporting against the Outcomes and Outputs of the Strategic Framework in corporate databases) which should be merged into one reporting channel so that country offices are not required to report twice.

43. **Recommendation 2: Resilience presents FAO with a momentous opportunity to redesign its programmes in crisis monitoring, response and prevention with strong political and financial support from member countries. To seize this opportunity, FAO needs to further promote an integrated financial model combining assessed and voluntary contributions, and invest predictable resources in a limited number of areas that are key to establishing FAO's presence in resilience, including staff. The return on investment in this area of work is likely to be significant.**

- a) The lack of predictable resources in Strategic Programme 5 affects FAO's capacity to position itself strategically in resilience. The Organization has committed politically to this area of work by adopting SO5 as one of its Strategic Objectives, and by advocating in global, regional and national fora for resilience development. To fulfil these commitments, FAO needs to invest more predictable resources in a few Strategic Programme 5 areas that are key to establishing FAO's presence in resilience: i) programming capacity, ii) high quality "signature services", iii) knowledge systems, iv) resource mobilization, and v) regional and national teams. A scan of current and future funding trends in the area of resilience indicates that if FAO invests in resilience funding (in addition to, and beyond the humanitarian funding stream), this is likely to generate a significant return that will enable the Organization to further strengthen its work.
- b) In particular, FAO and Strategic Programme 5 should find ways to offer better recognition and greater predictability in contractual arrangements to its technical and operational staff in the resilience area, in order to establish sustained FAO presence and capacity in this area. Short-term personnel may be adequate for short-term emergency responses, but not for long-term resilience building.
- c) The creation of new regular budgeted posts appears unlikely in the face of overall resource constraints. However, FAO could expand on its use of trust funds to partially mitigate the unpredictability of project funding, allow longer-term contracts for its core resilience personnel, and invest in strategic tools and processes. In keeping with the 'integrated budget' policy of the Organization, the new cost recovery policy represents an opportunity to further promote an integrated financial model combining assessed and voluntary contributions into a coherent whole.³

44. **Recommendation 3: To strengthen resilience programme development and resource mobilization, FAO should strengthen and diversify its offer of high-quality resilience-enhancing services and better tailor its programmes to the type and duration of crises it tries to respond to.**

- a) A retooling of FAO's resilience programming and resource mobilization capacity appears necessary. FAO should define a workable strategy to approach donors interested in resilience. This strategy should include SFERA, which FAO has used strategically to establish its presence and assess needs at the start of a response.
- b) Resilience strategies at national level provide a simple and tested way to acquire a body of knowledge about livelihoods, strengths and vulnerabilities, and programmatic entry points for resilience in country. Country offices with significant opportunities in resilience programming may consider developing a resilience strategy as part of their country programming frameworks or separately, to guide their involvement in this area.
- c) The prioritization of FAO Strategic Objectives in country should be determined not by the interest of individual managers, but by the relevance of resilience programming to the country context and government priorities. Strategic Programme 5 should have a leading role in countries affected by severe crises, while other Strategic Programmes should be more prominent in institutionally stable contexts with manageable levels of hazards and risks. Evidently, Strategic Programme 5 may still provide valued inputs in the latter type of countries (e.g. on disaster risk reduction policies).
- d) Any crisis-oriented intervention of FAO that extends over more than two years should be designed and implemented with due considerations paid to the sustainability of achieved results. Generally,

³ FC 157/10: FAO Cost Recovery Policy; FC 161/6: Report on the Implementation of the FAO Cost Recovery Policy

when a long-term intervention is required, community-based and market-oriented approaches are more suitable than free input distributions.

- e) In order to upscale good practices, FAO should focus on a few good practices, keep improving and enhancing them, “champion” them systematically and couple them with solid capacity building in country. This could take the shape of a semi-standard menu of “signature services” – e.g. disaster risk reduction and management; climate change adaptation and mitigation policies; early warning and IPC; EMPRES-type surveillance and protection programmes; community animal health workers; Farmer Field Schools and their various versions, including the *caisses de résilience*; different forms of input support (input distributions, input fairs, input shops, *warrantage*); cash-for-assets and small-scale irrigation. This list includes approaches anchored in significant FAO experience and visibility, with proven impact and adapted to both development and resilience. Moreover, these approaches focus on local capacities, economic sustainability and market linkages require an investment over the long term and can be scaled up or down as needed. Developing such a menu of signature resilience services could help FAO develop a stronger, more diversified resilience programme at scale, by standardizing approaches and reducing programme design and roll-out time, while adapting the services to local context as required.
- f) Strategic Programme 5 continue to integrate gender into its context analyses and monitor the implementation of gender-responsive programmes in order to ensure that such programming translates into real benefits.
- g) FAO delivers resilience-enhancing services to communities through a number of partnerships at different levels, e.g. with national and local governments and/or with NGOs. To maximise its impact, FAO should keep programming with and strengthening the capacity of a wide array of partners, including local, national and regional authorities, other UN agencies such as WFP and UNICEF, international financing institutions, national and international NGOs, farmer organizations, the private sector (e.g. insurance providers), and academia.
- h) FAO should initiate the development of an overarching information and early warning systems (IEWS) strategy, requiring the different systems to converge into a more homogeneous and strategic framework while maintaining the technical and institutional specificities of their area of action. The strategy should also address the partnership dimension and define a more corporate approach on how to support member countries across the relevant IEWS areas.

45. Recommendation 4: Further strengthen FAO’s technical, operational and resilience capacity based on country offices demand and needs, so that the post profiles in FAO’s technical and administrative units progressively evolve to better serve the Strategic Programmes.

- a) As evidenced by the skills mix assessment, and in a context of high vacancies rates, Strategic Programme 5 needs access to additional technical capacity in disaster risk reduction and management, insurances and cash-based approaches, as well as in conflict and political analysis in order to address the are demand for resilience programmes. Increased capacities are also necessary in resilience programming and resource mobilization. This implies that FAO should continue its present drive to fill vacant positions and create new ones in key technical units, aiming to fill capacity gaps identified through the skills mix assessment and similar exercises so that the post profiles in technical divisions and administrative units will progressively evolve to better serve the Strategic Programmes.
- b) Continuous improvements of operational capacity are needed. In particular, FAO should develop of standard operating procedures for Level 1 and Level 2 emergencies, and simplify the project cycle to reduce redundant steps.
- c) The tagging of projects to specific Strategic Objectives should be standardized and quality-assured, as the data is currently unreliable. This issue is particularly important to Strategic Programme 5 and its funding model which is based almost entirely on voluntary contributions.
- d) More could be made of inter-country offices knowledge exchange. Some FAO country offices are staffed with a stable cadre of national technical staff who can do technical work and contribute policy advice and could provide assistance to country offices other than their own.

- e) FAO should expand upon its current alliances with NGOs and other partners as a source of expertise and capacity. Stand-by partnership agreements with organizations such as the Norwegian Refugee Council, RedR Australia and the Danish Refugee Council provide capacity in critical, under-staffed areas of work (resilience advisors, gender or cluster coordination) and should continue.
- f) The UN system offers significant capacity in areas where FAO needs to improve. Among others, FAO already leverages WFP's logistics, collaborates with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) in joint needs assessments, and liaises with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) on disaster reduction. It could also approach the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA), which offers excellent political and conflict analysis in countries where the United Nations facilitate elections or other political processes, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on qualitative resilience assessment. FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and WFP should operationalize their joint Conceptual Framework for Collaboration and Partnership on Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition, through more frequent collaborations in the field based on a strong complementary engagement and building on each other's comparative advantages.
- g) In Africa, FAO has successfully allied with inter-governmental regional platforms such as the CILSS, IGAD and SADC, which suggests that FAO could usefully approach similar regional groups in other regions.

46. Recommendation 5: In order to accelerate the pace of innovation, FAO should create a strong learning environment and accelerate the development of tools and channels for knowledge management.

- a) In a reform such as the one FAO is now enacting, knowledge management is critical. The transition to resilience programming requires a change in mindset. There is a need to accelerate the pace of innovation, dissemination and adoption of good practices. Better knowledge management would also help communication, advocacy, strategy development and fundraising.
- b) FAO should develop training modules on resilience, resilience programming and resilience measurement and deploy them throughout the Organization, accelerate the development of knowledge sharing networks, and create knowledge management spaces in the Regional Initiatives, which are playing a valid knowledge management role that should be further developed.
- c) There is a need to continue strengthening monitoring systems, post-distribution surveys and qualitative and quantitative impact assessments, and to learn from the information collected. FAO needs to learn more about how to promote resilience to threats and crises, and to do that it needs to experiment and monitor the results.
- d) At all levels of FAO, there are reserves of technical talent that are currently applied to other tasks, such as planning and reporting, which could be more systematically mapped and utilized through the creation of virtual knowledge exchange networks.
- e) Non-governmental organizations are often used as mere 'implementing partners', but the best of them form knowledge-rich environments with which FAO could interact more. In addition to NGOs, FAO should partner more with Producer Organizations, which are valid knowledge and implementing partners, endowed with complementary capacities to those of FAO, particularly relating to outreach community mobilization capacity, extension and advocacy.