

**GCP/RAS/170/JPN
ASIA FIVIMS PROJECT**

“Development of a Vulnerability Information Base, Mapping and Dissemination System for Asia in Support of the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS)”

Evaluation Report

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Rome, May 2003**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- i. The project (GCP/RAS/170/JPN), so called “Asia FIVIMS Project”, represented one of the first responses of FAO to the call of the World Food Summit on the governments and international community to “develop and periodically update, where necessary, a national Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS), indicating areas and populations, including at local level, affected by or at risk of hunger and malnutrition, and elements contribution to food insecurity, making maximum use of existing data and other information systems in order to avoid duplication of efforts”. The project, formulated in 1997 with funding of US 2.1 million from Japan, formed a key element of FAO’s initiative to develop the FIVIMS concept into an operational system with other partners through the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG). It has a particular aim of developing an operational FIVIMS data dissemination and management system (“Asia FIVIMS”) for use by countries of Asia.
- ii. The five-year project (January 1998-December 2002, later extended to May 2003) has been operated by ESCG (Global Information and Early Warning Service) of FAO HQ. While the donor had agreed to fund the second phase of the project, it asked for an evaluation in order to ascertain the project’s achievements, draw lessons and to provide recommendations for the second phase. The mission was fielded during 24 March and 17 April 2003, including visits to three of the five countries (Cambodia, The Philippines and Thailand) assisted by the project.
- iii. The project concept and objectives have remained very relevant and valid, with a generally coherent design. However, the original design did not included an objective to extend the operational FIVIMS system upon completion to the Asian countries, i.e. no strategy for any role of the project in such assistance. The absence of such a strategy compelled the project to follow a pragmatic but rather short-term approach when it decided early in 2001, having completed development work ahead of the schedule, to initiate support to selected countries in developing their national systems.
- iv. The implementation has been marked with good organization and energy and timely outputs of high technical quality, despite the pre-mature termination of key support from ESCG (in project management and technical backstopping). Thus, within the first three years (April 1998- March 2001), the development work for an Asia FIVIMS model was substantially completed, well ahead of the original schedule. The key outputs during this period included (a) an approach paper “Technical Compendium FIVIMS for Asia Methodologies, Concepts and Procedures”, (b) a set of critical indicators and required information and data for Asia FIVIMS, (c) support to the development of Key Indicators Mapping System (KIMS), and (d) development of Asia Key Indicators Data System (Asia KIDS). The Asia KIDS was particularly significant in developing an integrated, Internet-linked information management and dissemination system for vulnerability analysis and mapping as a model for national FIVIMS for Asian countries.
- v. Since April 2001, the major focus has been on assisting selected countries in adopting the Asia FIVIMS model. Pilot demonstration and baseline vulnerability assessments were successfully conducted using the existing national data, first for Thailand during 2001 and the Philippines in 2002, with the methodologies for vulnerability assessments and results at provincial level demonstrated to the national

FIVIMS teams. More intensive support has been given, since 2002, to five countries selected for their commitment to developing national FIVIMS, including Bangladesh, Cambodia and Sri Lanka, besides the Philippines and Thailand. With the exception of Bangladesh where the project assisted in the formulation of a separate project funded under the FNPP, the support has focused on facilitating the national teams (the focal agencies and the FIVIMS technical committees) in the preparatory work for developing their systems through Letters of Agreement (signed during September -October 2002, each with US\$23,000), buttressed by the national consultant support provided by the project.

vi. In the four countries, good progress has generally been made within relatively short time but with varying rates of advance, covering following areas:

- (a) the establishment of national institutional arrangements around the focal agency and other key ministries and agencies responsible for national FIVIMS work - comprising (i) National Steering Committee, (ii) Technical Sub-Committee and (iii) FIVIMS Core Group/FIVIMS Analysts (small group of experts to work with the focal agency secretariat);
- (b) the formation of the secretariat – this has been formed in Cambodia and the Philippines and being formed in other two countries;
- (c) the identification and selection of core indicators – different degrees of progress being made on this critical work, with most advance made in the Philippines;
- (d) the establishment of an inventory and arrangements for sharing the existing information and databases from various ministries and agencies – good progress has been made in all countries, especially in the Philippines and Thailand;
- (e) preparation of draft Manual of Operations – drafts are being finalized covering proposals on the national FIVIMS system for approval by the respective National Steering Committee;
- (f) in terms of overall progress made, the Philippines is most advanced with strong leadership by the focal agency (the National Nutrition Council of the Department of Agriculture). The Cambodian focal agency (Dept. of Planning, Statistics and International Cooperation of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries) has shown strong commitment with steady progress in preparatory work. In Thailand, progress has been slow, partly due to frequent changes in the leadership of the focal agency (Office of Agricultural Economics of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives) and unsteady institutional commitment. For Sri Lanka satisfactory progress seems to be maintained under the leadership of the focal agency (HARTI, under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Samurhdi).

vii. It is concluded that the project has been both efficient and effective in achieving its main objectives. It developed, ahead of the original schedule, the Asia FIVIMS model for use in Asian countries, the feasibility and utility of which have been demonstrated by using national data for the Philippines and Thailand. In particular, the Asia KIDS core system components have been adopted by a number of FAO and non-FAO websites. Similarly, the project has provided cost-effective support to the four countries in initiating the establishment of a national FIVIMS, with impressive progress being made in a short time. Some of the positive factors contributing to the good progress achieved include (a) competence of the project team in producing the major output (AsiaFIVIMS model), (b) relevance of the model to the needs of the target countries, (c) success in involving country senior professionals, and (d) effective networking with partners within and outside FAO.

viii. Nevertheless, work for establishing a national FIVIMS system (not included in the original project objectives) is still at an early stage in all five countries. As the project moves from Phase I to Phase II, several issues can be identified. These concern the need for: (a) timely completion and approval of the Manual of Operations to provide the legal and institutional basis of establishing a national system, together with a medium-term plan of action with resource requirements; (b) institutional capacity building of the focal agencies (particularly their secretariats) as well as of the Core Groups in statistical analysis techniques, vulnerability assessment techniques and presentation skills of reports and outputs for senior decision-makers; (c) ensuring strong interface with the key users of the FIVIMS information; (d) harmonization of the system development with other information systems, including updating information in the Asia KIDS; (e) clear priority setting and choosing cost-effective means for providing future country support in view of the limited budget foreseen for the second phases; (f) seeking cooperation with other interested donors for joint support, particularly to overcome the resources constraint; and (g) consideration of a possible exit strategy to ensure self-sustainability without project support.

ix. Recommendations for follow-up actions in the immediate future include:

- (a) the project should assist in the timely and sound completion of the draft Manual of Operations, including the need for a medium-term plan of action with resource needs;
- (b) efforts should be made to ensure compatibility and harmonization of the national FIVIMS with other similar national systems;
- (c) the project should identify quickly a package of priority assistance for the countries, individually and collectively, to be funded by its own resources;
- (d) regarding Thailand, in view of the recent change of the head of the focal agency as well as of the progress made recently under the Letter of Agreement, the project should seek an early opportunity to brief its senior officials, including demonstration of the usefulness and comparative advantage of the Asia FIVIMS approach.

x. Recommendations for the second phase include:

- (a) the project needs to prepare a master implementation plan, taking in account the progress made and assistance needs identified in each country. Particular attention should be given to ensuring harmonization of the FIVIMS with existing national systems and to upgrading the analytical skills of the Core Group in vulnerability assessments and communicating the results;
- (b) given the likely resource constraint, the project should continue with its limited focus on the four countries. For Bangladesh, the project may continue to provide backstopping to the FNPP funded project. It would also be useful for the project to promote inter-country cooperation among the five countries and to provide some limited advisory assistance to other countries in the region;
- (c) FAO may approach Japan and other donors, including the IAWG-FIVIMS members, for additional resources to buttress the project's support to countries in the region;
- (d) within the RAP where the project will be located, strong technical backstopping capacity should be ensured, including a multi-disciplinary team (covering statistics, policy analysis/planning, nutrition and food security) to provide support in the use and application of the national FIVIMS systems. Additionally, support at policy

- level by senior RAP officers would be helpful, especially in negotiating or interacting with senior government officials on policy related issues;
- (e) finally, the project should be subjected to a mid-term evaluation so as to benefit from an external advice regarding its future status, including the question of its exist strategy.
- xi. The emerging key lessons include: (a) the critical importance of partnerships among actors within and outside FAO; (b) projects supporting the institutionalization of innovations at the country level should be based on a longer-term approach with time frame and resources needed to help establish such national capacity; and (c) for ensuring support from the senior users of an information system as well as its sustainability, adequate emphasis should be given to the effective use of the system by them.

Chapter I. Introduction and Background

1. The World Food Summit (WFS), hosted by FAO in November 1996, adopted the Rome declaration aimed at reducing by half the number of undernourished people by 2015. Pursuant to this goal, it also adopted the WFS Plan of Action, which inter-alia called on the governments to “develop and periodically update, where necessary, a national Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS), indicating areas and populations, including at local level, affected by or at risk of hunger and malnutrition, and elements contribution to food insecurity, making maximum use of existing data and other information systems in order to avoid duplication of efforts”. The UN system and other members of the international community were requested to assist the governments in this effort, and in particular FAO was asked to play a catalytic role for further elaboration and development of the System, including the preparation of guidelines and determination of suitable indicators for assessing food insecurity and vulnerability at national and sub-national levels. International assistance was envisaged in improving the capacity of countries in collecting, analysing and reporting on food insecurity and vulnerability at national and sub-national levels.

2. FIVIMS is intended, ultimately, to assist in formulating and implementing better targeted policies and programmes for reducing peoples suffering from food insecurity and vulnerability in many developing countries. At the same time, FIVIMS is also expected to serve the donors and international aid agencies in identifying and directing better their assistance in support of improved food security, including expanded food supply through domestic production and international trade. FIVIMS has particular significance for countries in Asia where despite successful economic development during the recent decades, the problem of food insecurity persist in many parts – in fact the region continues to carry the largest number of malnourished people among all the developing regions. Even among the countries that have experienced rapid economic growth, there are important pockets of populations suffering from food insecurity – similarly, as these countries rely increasing on trade for food supply, they also must face new issues of risks and vulnerability in securing adequate food supply.

3. Following the WFS, a concerted effort was initiated by FAO to develop the FIVIMS concept into an operational system through the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) in collaboration with the UN agencies and other international partners. Japan was one of the first donors to support the FAO initiative, especially with a view to helping extend the FIVIMS for use among the countries in Asia. Thus, the present project (GCP/RAS/170/JPN), entitled “Development of a Vulnerability Information Base, Mapping and Dissemination System for Asia in Support of the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS)” – also called “Asia FIVIMS Project” was formulated during 1997. The main objective is to develop such an information system for assessing food insecurity and vulnerability in Asia as a part of the development of overall FIVIMS. The project has a total budget of US\$2,107,450 for a duration of five years (January 1998 – December 2002): the terminal date has been postponed to 31 May 2003, within the original budget. It has been operated by the Global Information and Early Warning Service (ESCG) located in Rome with a small project team comprising two full time staff.

4. During the last year of the project period, the donor indicated its readiness to support a second of the project and FAO initiated prepared a draft project document for the second phase. However, the donor and FAO decided to conduct an evaluation of the present project in order to ascertain its achievements to date in an objective fashion and to draw lessons for the

execution of the next phase. The terms of reference for the evaluation called for in-depth assessment of the technical quality of approaches and methodologies developed by the project, including their relevance and applicability through the pilot experience in the five selected countries, as well as drawing issues and lessons and providing suggestions for the second phase (see the terms of reference in Annex 1).

5. The evaluation mission (comprising Messrs. Masa Kato from FAO Evaluation Service – team leader and Chua Piak Chwee, consultant specialist on food security information systems from Malaysia) was fielded during 24 March-17 April 2003. The mission briefed at FAO Headquarters (24-28 March) and the Regional Office at Bangkok (31 March and 1 April), and visited three of the five countries where the project initiated support in developing national FIVIMS system in its final year (Cambodia, the Philippines and Thailand, 2-11 March): this facilitated discussions with the national focal agencies and key officials working with the project in each country. The mission was accompanied by the project staff during the field visit as resource person(s). It initiated report preparation (14-16 April), and the team leader debriefed at the Regional Office on 17 April. The mission's itinerary and a list of persons met are given in Annex 2.

6. The Mission would like to thank the national officials concerned for their very forthcoming cooperation during its stay in their respective country. Likewise, it would like to record its appreciation of assistance and support given by the FAO staff at the Regional Office and FAO Representatives and their staff. Finally, it thanks the project staff for excellent support given to the mission.

Chapter II. Assessment of Project Objectives and Design

A. Project Concept and Objectives

7. The project is a response to the call of the WFS and its Plan of Action to develop the FIVIMS concept into a practical operational tool for use by the countries and international community in securing systematic and reliable information regarding the food-insecure and vulnerable groups of people at the national and sub-national levels. Clearly, information about the nature of the problems, identity of the people affected, their size and location as well as reasons for the insecurity and vulnerability is essential to formulating and implementing well targeted intervention programmes, which may require short-term measures of humanitarian nature or longer-term actions as part of broader development policies and efforts addressing key issues across several sectors. The FIVIMS is to serve as an integrated information system, providing analytical information in terms of maps and vulnerability assessments. As an international initiative, it also provide a common conceptual framework as well as guiding principles on methodologies and standards for evolving national systems, and particular stress is given to cooperation and partnership in sharing the methods, indicators and data, at international and national levels.

8. As one of the first activities linked to the development of the global FIVIMS initiatives, the project has the twin objectives of: (a) contributing to this process by focussing on food insecurity and vulnerability issues and related needs in the context of Asian countries; and (b) developing a suitable regional/national FIVIMS model for these countries, including suggestions on possible approaches, methods and indicators using a web-based information

platform (to be developed by the project) for information sharing and dissemination.¹ In short, the project is intended to ensure the development of a tool for the Asian countries consistent with the evolving progress of the global work.

9. Thus, the project concept is well justified and relevant in terms of priority needs of the countries and international community. The objectives are also relevant and sound. Needs for, and interest in, developing a suitable national FIVIMS have been repeatedly expressed by the national representatives at meetings of the Asia-Pacific Network for Food and Nutrition. This has also been confirmed generally in the discussions the Mission had with the national officials concerned, although some differences were evident in the degree of priority attached among them. Those features that have been commonly stressed in support of the national FIVIMS concept included: (a) its comprehensive and holistic approach to capturing food insecurity and vulnerability issues; (b) integrated use of the existing data available across the government agencies and technical disciplines conducive to enhanced cooperation among the agencies, and (c) its stress on national ownership.

B. Project Design

10. The project design is broadly clear and logical – the key outputs and activities in support of the objectives are generally well identified. These included an in-depth review of the food insecurity and vulnerability issues experienced by the Asian countries as well as existing approaches and methods used, together with collection and analysis of data at national and sub-national levels. The prospects for developing the major tools for integrated data analysis, mapping and vulnerability assessment were supported by technical capacity and experience gained by the ESCG's work in developing GIEWS workstation and mapping techniques. In this sense, it was appropriate that the project was placed in ESCG as the operating unit.

11. However, the design lacks coherence in one important respect. While the stated development objective clearly entails active application and use of the proto-type FIVIMS information system by the Asian countries, the immediate objectives stop at its development as part of the global FIVIMS development and there is no indication as to how the achievement of the immediate objective is to lead to the longer-term objective of national use, including any possible role of further FAO/external assistance for this process. Similarly, the project document is not clear as to how the appropriateness and feasibility of the system to be produced by the project would be verified and tested. In retrospect, it seems that when the project was formulated, the issue of possible application of an Asian system model could not have been meaningfully addressed because it was unclear at the time as to what kind of an operational system the global FIVIMS (and a related Asia model) would be like. While this may be a reasonable explanation for the absence of an approach to an application phase, such a strategy built-in the overall project concept would have been helpful to the project in making a transition into active support to country level application.

¹ The immediate objectives were: "1. to review and assess existing methodologies used in identifying vulnerable populations and/or areas, to determine critical indicators, and collect the required data for assessing vulnerability and food insecurity in Asia; 2. to develop, or adopt, suitable indicators of current, structural, and medium to long-term vulnerability in Asia, and to produce food insecurity and vulnerability maps (initially at the country level) for Asian countries; 3. to develop and integrate information management, analysis and mapping system for vulnerability analysis and mapping for Asia, linked to an Internet-based dissemination system providing access to the information and maps produced by the project, building on the previous work conducted by GIEWS and WAICENT; and 4. to assess the usefulness of the system for both national and sub-national level vulnerability analysis, and its application to other regions in support of the overall FIVIMS activity."

12. The gaps in the original design have been filled by an important change introduced by the project team at the beginning of 2001: i.e. as the project made good progress in developing the Asia FIVIMS proto-type system (combining the vulnerability assessment approach and a web-based dissemination and mapping technique – Asia KIDS), even ahead of a similar development for the global FIVIMS, the decision was taken to shift the focus during the last two years to demonstrating the system with actual country data (Thailand and the Philippines) and to providing active support to selected countries in adapting the model. This shift has been a timely initiative and is also a logical extension of the original design. At the same time, given the short duration and limited resources left in the present project, it has raised a new issue of how to continue this initiative and how far to go in this effort. Fortunately, the donor has not only endorsed the change made but also expressed agreement for a second phase in support of this effort.

13. As a lesson, it is worth highlighting that the formulation of project objectives needs to be improved. First, the immediate objectives were stated as actions rather than objectives, and as noted above, it would have been useful if an intermediate objective had been given, providing the actions needed for successful adoption by the countries. However, this shortcoming does not detract the basic soundness of the project design.

Chapter III. Assessment of Project Implementation

A. Overall Implementation Status

14. The project became operational in April 1998 when the two project staff members were recruited, comprising the Vulnerability Analysis Coordinator and Technical officer-GIS. The project has been housed in Global Information and Early Warning Service (ESCG) at FAO HQ, largely because at the time of project formulation, the unit was considered to have the unique technical experience and proven capacity in food insecurity and vulnerability assessment, working with a complex, integrated information system with digital mapping facilities. The original arrangements envisaged that the project team would be supervised by a project manager (a senior ESCG staff) and also backstopped technically by an ESCG officer (Global Information and Early Warning System Workstation Coordinator). This arrangement, however, did not work out: the Project Manager ceased to exist as the original officer retired in mid-1999 and technical backstopping officer transferred to another unit late in 2001, without replacement. The project team members also changed: with the original coordinator's departure in March 2001, this post was succeeded as of April 2001 by the original technical officer-GIS, whose post was taken up by a new staff. Thus, during the five year period, the current vulnerability analysis coordinator (originally the GIS technical officer) has been the only person left from the original team. The current coordinator has gone through considerable pressure of work, especially in the absence of the project manager and the technical backstopping officer.

15. The project has been implemented in two distinct phases; (a) first three years (April 1998 – March 2001) with focus on developing approaches and methodologies, in collaboration with the global FIVIMS work, for eventual application by Asian countries, and (b) the last two years (since April 2001) primarily for supporting the selected countries in developing their national FIVIMS. The major areas of work in the first period included: (i) reviewing existing methodologies and techniques for assessing vulnerable groups and areas; (ii) review of relevant indicators and related data for assessing and monitoring at the national and sub-national levels

as well as conducting cross-country studies of food insecurity and vulnerability; (iii) identification of core indicators and development of methodologies for addressing the overall status of food insecurity and vulnerability approaches; (iv) the development of an Internet based integrated information system for vulnerability analysis and mapping; and (v) providing inputs and support to the global FIVIMS work through participation both in FAO's development work and in the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG).

16. In the second period, the focus has shifted to assisting the five selected countries in establishing their own national FIVIMS (Bangladesh, Cambodia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand), based on the approaches and methodologies identified by the project. This involved, first, a pilot testing/demonstration (during 2001 and 2002) of a national system for the Philippines and Thailand (selected for their good data availability and level of commitment to FIVIMS), and secondly, providing technical assistance to the five countries in initiating their national systems. With the exception of Bangladesh, the assistance has been provided through Letters of Agreement, each with a modest sum (US\$23,000), but targeted on playing a catalytic role in supporting the initiation of a national system. At the same time, the project has developed close collaboration with the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP), especially the regional senior officer concerned with food and nutrition. The senior officer facilitated the inclusion of FIVIMS as a subject in the Asia-Pacific Network for Food and Nutrition (ANFN), participated in several project's field missions and provided guidance to the project's consultant (based in RAP) who assisted with the execution of country support work.

17. It is worth highlighting that the shift in project focus to assisting the selected countries had been clearly defined in the original project document. As noted above, the document was not clear as to how the project's results may be used by the Asian countries or what role the project might play in the process. The decision was made very much by the new project team formed in April 2001 with endorsement of the donor: they recognized that the project had developed adequate operational approaches for applying the global FIVIMS principles for national application and that it was timely to initiate such preparatory assistance to the selected countries. The Evaluation Mission endorses the validity of this decision.

18. At the time of the evaluation, the project's budget resources have been all committed. Although official budget data are not available to the Mission, it has been possible to form an indicative picture for the entire period. The estimates of final allocations of the project budget are given in Table 1. It should be noted that a total saving of some US\$180,000 had been achieved from the original budget: about \$100,000 under the international staff (largely due to an over-estimation of cost of the project staff) and \$80,000 under the allocation for advisory technical services – payment for this was suspended as such services were stopped or reduced (as the project manager and GIEWS Workstation Coordinator left). Some \$130,000 of the savings has been used for technical support to the four countries (US\$ 92,000 for Letters of Agreement and \$38,000 for the provision of national consultants to support the work under the Letters of Agreement): the remainder (some \$45,000) has been spent for accelerated development of the Asia Key Indicator Data System (Asia KIDS). Again, the Mission finds these changes to be a good initiative of the project team.

Table 1: Summary Status of Project Budget
(Estimates in US\$ as of 30 March 2003)

Budget Items	5 years
<u>1000 Personnel</u>	<u>1,083,783</u>
1100 International Experts	1,052,000
Vulnerability Analyst, P-4 (60 w/m)	
GIS Expert, P-3 (60 w/m)	
1151 Advisory Technical Services	31,783
<u>2000 Duty Travel</u>	<u>311,589</u>
Staff/Consultant/ATS	311,589
<u>3000 Contracts</u>	<u>475,811</u>
Data Collection/Development	135,000
Software Development	97,811
Technical Advisor (Evaluation Mission)	20,000
Consultancy for capacity-building (4 countries)	33,000
Methodology/Indicator Development	98,050
Letters of Agreement (4 countries)	92,000
<u>4000 General Operational Expenses</u>	<u>3,000</u>
Communications	2,000
Reporting Costs	1,000
<u>5000 Expendable Equipment</u>	<u>3,000</u>
Miscellaneous	3,000
<u>6000 Non-Expendable Equipment</u>	<u>58,000</u>
Computer Equipment/Software	58,000
<u>SUB-TOTAL</u>	<u>1,935,183</u>
<u>9100 Support Costs (6%)</u>	<u>116,111</u>
<u>GRAND TOTAL</u>	<u>2,051,294²</u>

² Due to changes in exchange rates between US Dollars and Japanese Yen, the donor contribution declined from original US\$2,107,450 to US\$2,051,294. The budget lines used here follow those used in the original budget (FINSYS format) with best estimates by the mission and the figures do not necessarily correspond to the current Oracle financial system .

B. Adequacy of Overall Project Management and Support by Partners

19. The project implementation has been managed energetically with a good sense of direction and efficiency. This is a reflection of hard work by the project team and its clear vision for the project – to help make the FIVIMS principles into an operational system suitable for use at country level by developing the necessary methodological approaches and tools. While working closely with the IAWG-FIVIMS and its secretariat at FAO during the first three years, its focus was maintained in areas directly relevant to making it useable for the Asian countries by reviewing and assessing the possible core indicators and related data available at the country level (within the IAWG's common international database parameters), developing conceptual basis of vulnerability assessment as well as searching and developing a suitable computer-based platform for mapping and data analysis (to become as the Asia KIDS).

20. In this way, the main preparatory work for developing a proto-type FIVIMS model for application in Asia was virtually completed by early in 2001, permitting an early initiation of assistance to the selected countries, ahead of what was expected in the original project document. This phase of work has been also characterized by good planning, both in methodological development and in forming partnership, for the country assistance, with the Regional Office, the FIVIMS secretariat and the Food Security and Agricultural Projects Analysis Service (ESAF): the latter was particularly significant for (a) developing close contact with the countries of the region on the project initiatives and (b) forming a joint technical support arrangement for the project's work at the country level. However, the short experience of working with the five selected countries raises some important questions as to how assistance with the limited resources available under the project could contribute most effectively to the substantial needs for national capacity-building.

21. The project has been effective in forming partnership with many FAO units involved in food security and vulnerability work as well as with international agencies and institutions. Among the FAO units concerned, the project has established itself as a major actor, spearheading the innovative effort to assist member countries with appropriate approaches and tools. It is also providing technical support to several assistance executed by other FAO units in Asian countries; for example, in Bangladesh it is supporting the FAO FIVIMS secretariat in establishing a national system. Among the IAWG partners, close cooperation has been established with WHO and WFP.

22. FAO's Backstopping to the Project. The project implementation has experienced, particularly at the initial stage, some difficulties due to the absence of project manager to guide the project within ESCG (since mid-1999). These included day-to day project operational matters (ESCG is operationally responsible) and its ability to represent itself at FAO fora due to the absence of a spokes-person at sufficiently senior level. The suspension of the technical backstopping by the ESCG officer, due to his transfer to another office, also added to some difficulties. During the last year when the project has begun assistance at the country level, it has also been exposed to complications arising from the decentralization of operational functions: being a project operated from the HQ, it had to negotiate with the FAO country offices for their support. At the same time, it has benefited from the close cooperation with many units at HQ, including units in ESDG (FIVIMS secretariat), ESAF, ESS, ESN as well as AFIS. As noted above, the cooperation with the RAP officers has been very useful for planning the country level work.

23. Support of the donor and participating countries. Besides being the source of first major financial provider to FAO's FIVIMS initiative through this project, the donor has been supportive of the project during the implementation stage by providing the funds in time and appointing a technical adviser to assist it in technical monitoring of the project work: it endorsed readily the project's proposals to shift to country level assistance in 2001, including the selection of the five countries. In the five countries, the level of support to project assisted work has varied so far, although they all express importance to the aim of establishing their own national FIVIMS system. While all the five countries have an officially designated national focal agency, some show signs of much stronger commitment (e.g. Cambodia and the Philippines) than others. In all cases, however, strengthening the technical capacity of the national focal agency on this work would require additional resources of varying degree, and coming up to these requirements for achieving a sustainable result would be the first real evidence of strong policy support.

Chapter IV. Assessment of Key Outputs

24. The project has a very productive record covering many activities and outputs, and this section provides a summary review of the main outputs, separately for the first period (April 1998-March 2001) and second period (since April 2001). A list of reports and documents produced are given in Annex 3.

25. The main outputs achieved during the first period with focus on research and development include:

- (a) An approach paper "Technical Compendium FIVIMS for Asia Methodologies, Concepts and Procedures" was produced in mid-1999 as a cumulative output of the comprehensive review of available methodologies and techniques in vulnerability analysis (this covers planned outputs for "objectives 1 and 2"). It contains, inter-alia, (i) detailed technical guidance on the main variables and indicators to be examined, (ii) a draft system design and architecture for developing a web-based FIVIMS for Asia, and (iii) an analytical framework covering 14 major components or vulnerability factors contributing to risks. The compendium provided the methodological basis for the project's work in assessing food insecurity and vulnerability situations in Asia and in identification of countries and areas;
- (b) A set of critical indicators and required information and data for Asia FIVIMS (covering the outputs planned for "objectives 1 and 2). These were identified through a comprehensive review of sources within and outside FAO, including UN agencies and national institutions (see Annex 3). A total of 25 baseline indicators were identified, covering health status (4 indicators) and nutrition status (4) as "outcome indicators for vulnerability factors" as well as demographic conditions (3), economic conditions (3), socio-economic conditions (4), risk/hazards/shocks (1), food access (5), stability of supplies and access (2) and health and sanitation (1). These have been included in a FIVIMS publication, "Tools and Tips: Selected Indicators for National FIVIMS";
- (c) Support to the development of Key Indicators Mapping System (KIMS) (addressing the objective 3). While this effort was led by AFIS, the project, in collaboration with ESCG, made valuable contribution to its development. Its particular contributions included the documentation of pseudo codes for the development of digital map import routines and provision of digital map and tabular data at the sub-national level for all the countries in the world (derived from the GIEWS Workstation). The project also funded the development of the KIMS User's Manual version 1 packaged with the first distribution

- version of KIMS. KIMS served as one of the bases on which the Asia KIDS was developed (its Version 1.1 can be accessed at the FIVIMS website www.fivims.net); and
- (d) Development of Asia Key Indicators Data System (Asia KIDS) (also addressing the objective 3). This has been a major technical output of the project, building on the KIMS. Its development began in 1999 in cooperation with AFIS, continued throughout the project period: its early version was presented at the fourth IAWG-FIVIMS meeting in Indonesia in February 2000. It was completed in November 2002 when it was installed on a web-server at the FAO Regional Office in Bangkok (www.asiafivims.net). Its attractive features include (i) accessibility as an “inter-active, multi-functional Internet-based database system” allowing sharing of data from different agencies, (ii) multi-functionality facilitating food insecurity and vulnerability analysis through the broad category of indicators, displaying results of statistical analysis in many forms such as maps, tables, charts and metadata as well as provision of summary profile with an overview of food security information for selected country, and (iii) information ownership by allowing regular updating by the authorized users (e.g. national agencies).

26. Thus, by early in 2001, the project had substantively achieved most of its objectives and planned related outputs, the central aim being the development of an integrated, Internet-linked information management and dissemination system for vulnerability analysis and mapping as a model for national FIVIMS for Asian countries. The fourth objective (“a determination of the usefulness of the system for both national and sub-national level vulnerability analysis, and assess its applicability...”) was not clearly specified in the project document as to how to be achieved. The decision taken, as noted above, was to assist a group of selected countries in establishing a national system based on the approach developed for Asia FIVIMS. Another demonstration of the utility of the system has been the successful transfer of the Asia KIDS technologies to information systems developers and users in FAO headquarters dealing with global, national and sub-national level applications (e.g. GLiPHA) and to those in the IAWG-FIVIMS community (e.g. WHO Global Database on Body Mass Index).

27. Since April 2001, the project’s focus has been on assisting the five countries in establishing their national system; Bangladesh, Cambodia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. These countries were selected by certain criteria, including declared interest of the government in establishing a national system with existing institutional arrangements as well as countries’ development status. The presence of a national focal agency for establishing national FIVIMS, together with some institutional arrangements, such as national steering committee, was particularly important criterion in order to facilitate orderly cooperation with the selected country. At the same time, it was realized that (a) establishing national system in these countries would take a medium-term effort by the countries and (b) the project, given the time and resource constraints (less than two years left and no budgetary provisions available for such assistance), could provide only limited support, primarily aimed at assisting in laying the national policy and institutional structure, coupled with initial capacity building. While the project’s strategy was to initiate the process with demonstration of the Asia FIVIMS approach for Thailand and the Philippines (both countries with good data basis), measures were taken for strengthening its support capacity in the region (establishing collaborative arrangements with the selected officers in the Regional Office and a recruitment of a part-time consultant operating from Bangkok) as well as exploration with the Government of Japan for a possible second phase support and with other FAO units for partnership. Thus, to concentrate the limited project resources as much as possible, initial planned support to Bangladesh was scaled down to that of technical support when additional resources became available on a larger scale through the FAO/Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP).

28. Pilot demonstrations and baseline vulnerability assessments in Thailand and the Philippines during 2001-02. These were carried out by the project (with consultant inputs) as an important step in showing the outputs and functionality of the Asia FIVIMS approach and its technical feasibility, using the existing data in these countries:

- (a) Thailand – the demonstration entailed, in the second half of 2001, an in-depth vulnerability assessment using a set of critical indicators (14 core and 20 additional variables as co-factors) and composite indices to identify and map vulnerable areas at provincial level. This also enabled to classify the 76 provinces into 13 homogeneous clusters of different level and types of food insecurity and vulnerability. The results were published in a technical report “Recommendations on Vulnerability Assessment Methodologies and Indicators for Food Insecurity and Mapping System for Thailand”. The vulnerability assessment methods and techniques as well as the demonstration results were presented to the FIVIMS Sub-committee members at the completion of the study in October 2001 and on several occasions during 2002. However, the Sub-committee members have had different levels of understanding and appreciation of FIVIMS as well as the utility of the baseline study. In particular, follow-up action by the focal agency was sporadic until it signed the Letter of Agreement with the project in October 2002 (see (c) below);
- (b) The Philippines – the case study was conducted during 2002 in similar manner as for the Thai case, providing a baseline vulnerability assessment with multi-factorial analysis techniques involving 16 indicators and classifying provinces into clusters of different types of vulnerability. The results were issued as a technical report (“Baseline Vulnerability Assessment for the Philippine Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System”) and presented at a workshop of the (national) FIVIMS Technical Task Force in December 2002. This was very well received by the members of the Technical Task Force and helped build a strong momentum for the preparatory work to be carried out with the project assistance through the Letter of Agreement;
- (c) One of key reasons for the different reaction between Thailand and the Philippines appears to have been the degree of appreciation and commitment to national FIVIMS that had been achieved among the key officials and agencies involved, and above all at the institutional level at the focal agencies. In the Philippines, the focal agency’s management, together with other members from the core FIVIMS agencies, quickly welcomed and accepted the results of the baseline study, including its methodologies, facilitating a rapid institutional follow-up with the Letter of Agreement. In contrast, despite its intensive efforts for a longer period, the project had much more difficulties in securing a consistent and coherent institutional response from the Thai focal agency. Important factors seem to have included (i) rapid turn-over in the top manager of the agency since 2001 (three different heads of the agency between June 2001 and April 2003), (ii) the relative importance attached to hunger and malnutrition issues at the institutional level (despite the importance and support given to FIVIMS by the first two managers of the agency, these issues often tended to be seen as less urgent than other macro-economic policy issues, such as those relating to WTO), and (iii) a rather heterogeneous understanding and appreciation of FIVIMS among the key agency officers assigned to this task. Given the project team’s high expectations and their substantial efforts devoted, the Thai case has been a frustrating case.

29. Assistance through the Letter of Agreement (LoA). With the exception of Bangladesh, a Letter of Agreement with the project financial contribution of US\$ 23,000 was signed in

September-October 2002 with the existing national focal agencies of Thailand, the Philippines, Cambodia and Sri Lanka³. Through the LoA, the focal agency was (a) to organize a series of meetings, workshops and trainings in order to enhance institutional capacity of the National FIVIMS Focal Agency and the Technical Sub-Committee for the establishment of a FIVIMS, and (b) to produce a Manual of Operations – country specific FIVIMS guidelines – to institutionalize and operationalize FIVIMS in the context of overall national development and poverty alleviation strategies.

30. In the four countries with the LoA, the preparatory work culminating into the preparation and approval of the Manual of Operations is to be completed by May 2003. The main achievements are summarized as follows:

- (a) establishment of National Steering Committee and Technical Sub-Committee. All four countries have established these committees consisting of representatives from various ministries and agencies. However, their membership and terms of reference are being reviewed and adjusted as necessary and these changes are being incorporated into the draft Manual of Operations for official approval by the National Steering Committee and in some countries, by the Cabinet (e.g. Sri Lanka and Thailand);
- (b) establishment of FIVIMS Core Group/FIVIMS Analysts. These have been formed and working in the Philippines, Cambodia and Sri Lanka, pending official approval, while in Thailand such a group is to be yet formed among the members of the Technical Sub-committee;
- (c) formation of a national FIVIMS Secretariat. These have been formed and working in Cambodia (MAFF) and the Philippines (NNC), again pending official approval. These are being formed for Sri Lanka and Thailand;
- (d) appointment of National Consultant. The consultant is employed by the project to support the national focal agency and the working structure in carrying out the tasks covered by the LoA. All four countries had appointed their respective National Consultants;
- (e) Inventory of Existing Information. All countries have established an inventory of existing information and databases from various ministries/agencies and to some extent collected them for the assessment of indicators;
- (f) identification and selection of Core Indicators. This has been one of the most technically complex tasks, which proved a serious constraint for earlier initiatives by all four countries. The project assistance on multi-factorial analysis and similar statistical methods, supported by the national consultant and with participation of national statistical experts among the Technical Sub-committee or the Core Group, has been instrumental in making progress in this task, especially in the Philippines. In other countries such as Cambodia, the selection process is largely through brain-storming exercises among the technical experts involved. On the whole, the Philippine team seems to have made the most advance with the selection of 12 core indicators. The Thai team have been working to reduce the number of the core indicators, so far to 44 and is in the process of making further reduction. Cambodia had identified a set of 18 indicators, while Sri Lanka is in the process of examining the potential indicators;

³ They are: for Thailand, the Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives; for the Philippines, the National Nutrition Council (NNC) under the Department of Agriculture; for Cambodia, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (Dept. of Planning, Statistics and International Cooperation); and for Sri Lanka, Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute (HARTI) under Ministry of Agriculture.

- (g) preparation of draft Manual of Operations. The Philippines and Cambodia are in the process of revising their draft Manual of Operations, while a draft version is under preparation in Thailand and Sri Lanka. In all the countries the plan is to have the draft Manual officially approved by the respective national steering committee by the end of May 2003. It has been indicated that in Sri Lanka and Thailand, the draft document is likely to be submitted for Cabinet approval in view of the inter-ministerial nature of the FIVIMS. At the time of the evaluation mission, the Philippines seemed to have advanced furthest in this effort. It appeared, however, the completion of satisfactory document would need to proceed step by step in accordance with the situation of the country, and in some countries the process may take considerably longer time beyond the current deadline of May 2003. Similarly, the mission felt that in all cases, it was essential to develop, with a clear link with the draft Manual, a medium-term plan for the development of a national FIVIMS;
- (h) conducting Meetings and Workshops for sensitization on FIVIMS and preparation of the Draft Manual of Operations. These have been held in all four countries;
- (i) conducting Training Courses. In Cambodia, two in-country training courses on data management/analysis had been conducted aimed at capacity building of the FIVIMS Analysts and members of the Technical Sub-committee;
- (j) purchase of Computer Hardware and Software (some US\$5,000 provided for each country). Cambodia had purchased 2 computers, 2 printers, 1 scanner and 1 photo-copying machine and software. The Philippines was in the procurement process for the purchase of these items in April: 1 unit of desk top computer, 1 unit of laptop computer, 2 units of scanner-printer and ArcView software. Thailand and Sri Lanka were also in a similar process of procuring the equipment.

31. Support to Bangladesh. Since 2001, the project has collaborated with the Regional Office staff in identifying a suitable way to assist in the establishment of a national system, including one project formulation mission and support to awareness raising among the key stakeholders and assessing the existing information. However, the Bangladesh authorities considered what the project could provide through the LoA not adequate to meet its needs, preferring a separate technical assistance project with substantially larger budget. In 2002, resources under the FNPP programme managed by the FIVIMS Secretariat (in FAO HQ) became available for such a purpose, and the project assisted in the formulation of a national FIVIMS project by incorporating the concept of capacity building originally proposed under the LoA. This project became operational in March 2003.

32. Regional Training Support. The strengthening of technical capacity of the key members of the Technical Sub-Committee, especially the Core Group, particularly in the field of statistical analysis underpinning the indicator selection and vulnerability assessment is a key concern. For this purpose, the project is conducting "The Regional Training Course on Multivariate Analysis and ADDATI in Support of Capacity Building of National FIVIMS Analysts in Asia" from 29 April to 2 May 2003 at the FAO Regional Office for three members of the Core Group from the Philippines and Sri Lanka, four from Cambodia (one funded by the UNDP Poverty Reduction Cluster), and five from Thailand.

Chapter V. Project Results and Effectiveness

A. Overall Results

33. The original central aim of the project has been to develop an integrated information management system for assessing food insecurity and vulnerability for use by Asian countries. It can be concluded this has been achieved satisfactorily: the project has developed (a) sound methods for food insecurity and vulnerability assessment that are consistent with the concepts and principles of the global FIVIMS (identification of core indicators as well as information and data sharing) and that are capable of analyzing vulnerability at national and sub-national levels (both for to short-tem shocks and to structural factors), and (b) a user-friendly, Internet based Asia KIDS for displaying dissemination the data and analytical results in multiple forms (again permitting information sharing and partnership among different agencies concerned. The technical feasibility of the approach has been demonstrated through the baseline applications with the national data for Thailand and the Philippines, including mapping and assessment of food insecurity and vulnerability at provincial level. Its potential utility has been recognized within FAO and many of the IAWG partners as well as most of the national counterparts to the projects in the five selected countries – its true usefulness to the Asian countries is now being tested in the five countries.

34. The main strengths of the Asia FIVIMS include:

- integration of interdisciplinary key indicators (and related data sets) for analysis of relationship between food insecurity related outcomes and selected contributing factors, including assessment of degrees of vulnerability to food insecurity;
- capacity to respond to key questions about food insecurity – who are affected, how many, where are they located and why?- with ability to display the analysis and assessment in maps, charts, graphs and tables;
- the vulnerability assessment methods which facilitate more in-depth analysis of causal relationships with and among a range of factors related to development policies/programme formulation (socio-economic, agricultural production and marketing, trade, health, education, land-tenure and infrastructure, natural disasters, etc), including categorization of vulnerable areas/communities into homogenous clusters with indication of key causal factors for each clusters;
- its principles of (i) sharing and using information/data held by separate ministries and agencies, especially through the Internet based platform, (ii) making the best use of the existing information and data, including interface with existing information systems, and (iii) relatively minor investment needed, involving more of networking rather than establishing a new large system.;
- in particular, the Asia KIDS core system components have been adopted by a number of FAO and non-FAO websites, including Global Livestock Production and Health (GLiPHA) Atlas, WHO Global Database on Body Mass Index, Terrestrial Ecosystem Monitoring Sites and Millennium Development Goals (design stages).

35. Further, two additional points are worth noting (i) the project achieved this in four years, rather than five years as originally envisaged and (ii) the project achievement represents the first case of developing a concrete application of the FIVIMS principles into a working information system. Thus, in terms of this aim, the project has been highly efficient and productive.

36. In terms of the project's initiative of extending the use of the Asia FIVIMS approach in the five countries, the mission's conclusion is that overall, the project has provided cost-effective support to the countries, especially in Cambodia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. All the four countries have made good start, with varying degree of progress, in laying the ground for the establishment of a national FIVIMS system, including the necessary inter-ministerial institutional setups for establishing and operating the system, identification of the core indicators and pooling in the related data, and developing a first national plan of operations. Similarly, good start has been made in strengthening technical capacity of the key staff involved. These achievements are impressive, especially given that this effort commenced only about one year ago (intensively only since October 2002). Clearly, the effectiveness of achieving a sustainable results would depend on the commitment and capacity of the countries in establishing and operating the national system, particularly in the use of the information for advocacy and making decisions on policies and programmes aimed at reducing food insecurity and vulnerability.

37. Thus, it is too early to form judgement on the likely effectiveness in this respect. In all four countries, the proposals prepared during the last six months or so need to be officially approved and must be acted on, and both the speed and strength of actual establishment of the system is likely to vary from country to country. Similarly, in all cases, continued support from the project would be essential.

38. In order to provide some insights into the status of individual countries, an overall assessment of the results being achieved so far in the five countries is summarized below:

(a) **Cambodia** – the national focal agency (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and fisheries) has shown a strong interest and leadership in establishing a national system: it stresses on the importance of truly nationally owned system in this respect. It is also worth noting:

- A reasonably good progress is being made in (i) setting up the institutional arrangements for the system and (ii) starting some basic training of staff from the key partners. Work on the indicators and database is still at an early stage.
- The basic constraints are, as recognized by the national authorities concerned, weaknesses in the institutional, financial and human resources aspects. Thus, it is likely to take a relatively long time (a few years) to create a cadre of technically qualified staff at the focal agency and other partner institutions. Additional constraints would be lack of quality data and reliance on external assistance for setting up an adequate secretariat in the focal agency.
- At the same time, there are some opportunities for good use of a national FIVIMS in the context of various development planning initiatives assisted by donors, such as MDG, PRSP and disaster management. If the system can begin functioning within this year, the FIVIMS may be able to play an important role.
- There are also threats with the presence of several initiatives to establish similar systems under way (e.g. poverty monitoring at Ministry of Planning, and VAM by WFP). The FIVIMS runs the risk of being overshadowed by such initiatives unless it is functional soon, delivering useful outputs. The coordination among these competing information systems remains an important issue.

(b) **The Philippines** – the national focal agency (NNC) has also shown a strong commitment and leadership, backed up with a considerable experience in

addressing the establishment of national FIVIMS, including national institutional setup earlier established. Good progress has been made through an inter-agency core group in selecting core indicators, organizing the supporting data, and making operational arrangements for data sharing and management. FAO and the project are playing a catalytic role in making the technical group work together for the implementation of a national system. An advanced version of the Manual has been drafted for approval by the national committee, and following the training of the key persons at the regional training by the project, it may be feasible, as some hope, to launch the system officially in October this year:

- Some important issues remain, including the need to strengthen further statistical and analytical capacity of the Core Group, especially that of the focal agency, including the secretariat in the focal agency, adequate staffing for which would depend on the resources availability;
- There are opportunities for the system to prove its worth and establish itself in the context of national development strategy for reducing poverty and food insecurity, including external donor interest in supporting national initiatives for MDGs and PRSP. Again, timing of having an operational system with credible capacity seems very important.

- (c) **Thailand** – despite its potential capacity to develop and use a national system and the interest in so doing declared in 1998, the focal agency (Office of Agricultural Economics) has not been able to make clear progress. Although it accepted the Letter of Agreement to initiate some concrete progress, to date it has largely depended on the national consultant funded by the project, Mahidol University, in initial preparatory work, with continuing uncertainty of its commitment. It is not yet clear as to what kind of proposals may emerge in the form of the Manual or what timeframe may be proposed for its implementation. It seems that the senior managers of the focal agency has not paid sufficient attention to this subject, either because it is seen as a matter of low priority or simply because they have not been convinced of the utility of the Asia FIVIMS approach. In any case, given the recent change of the secretary-general of the OAE, it would be urgent to have an opportunity with the OAE senior managers to confirm their commitment to FIVIMS and to reach agreement on implementing the proposed actions for this purpose. This would likely entail a need to make a convincing demonstration of the potential utility of the system suggested by the project.
- (d) **Bangladesh** – the mission did not visit the country, and while this project is not directly supporting the establishment of a national FIVIMS, it has played a positive role in assisting the formulation of a separate project funded by the FNPP programme. It is likely that the project will play a technical backstopping role, without assuming a major role. However, as the future of funding from the FNPP is uncertain beyond this year, the project may need to rethink its role in the country.
- (e) **Sri Lanka** – the mission did not visit the country. The work under the LoA seems to be progressing satisfactorily. However, there is an issue inasmuch as the focal agency (HARTI) is outside the government structure – it is an autonomous institute with link with the Ministry of Agriculture, and the effectiveness of this arrangement raises a concern from the sustainability viewpoint. There is also a need to establish a small secretariat within the focal agency, for which external resources may be needed. Assuming that the final outcome of the proposals is satisfactory, the country could continue as one of the countries under the next phase.

B. Main Factors and Emerging Issues

B.1. Main Factors affecting the Project Progress

39. Among the positive factors that have contributed to the good progress made are the following:

- competence and energy of the project team, producing the major output (AsiaFIVIMS model) of high technical quality in a timely manner;
- relevance of the model to the needs of target countries, especially in their efforts to address food insecurity and vulnerability issues in the context of the WFS, MDGs and PRSP approaches;
- success in involving some committed champions/actors at senior professional levels in country exercises;
- effective networking by the project with partners within FAO (HQ units, RAP) and outside (WFP, WHO, UNDP and others).

40. The project implementation has also faced some factors that have constrained the project progress (so far, they have not had very serious effects):

- developing a national FIVIMS system entails necessarily the need to strengthen the capacity of the institutions, which is a complex and time-consuming challenge, beyond the remaining time and resources available under the project;
- some important uncertainties in the original project document in terms of strategy for working with the selected countries (this part of project more or less evolved in the context of the overall progress). This may have contributed to certain degree of optimism on, and inadequate attention to, the process of establishing national systems, especially regarding issues relating to longer-term efforts for institutional development (separately from shorter-term “technical capacity” building);
- the absence of the project manager at the senior level as well as technical backstopping within ESCG (causing some difficulties in liaising with other FAO units and at IAWG earlier and also depriving experienced sources of advice for working with the selected countries).

B.2 Some Issues for Consideration

41. There are several issues for attention in the final stage of this phase and into the second phase (the donor has agreed to funding a second phase with a draft proposal – see paragraph 45 below). These include:

- (a) completion of the draft Manuals of Operations and their formal approval by the necessary authorities. This would provide the legal and institutional basis for establishing a national system, thus constituting a first concrete evidence of commitment at the government level. In this respect, two specific issues require attention. One is the need to ensure that the national system abased on the Asia FIVIMS does not duplicate existing systems of similar nature, and that rather it complements them and provides additional value to the national needs. The issue concerns both the factual situation as well as stakeholders’ perception. Where such doubt exists, efforts would be required to demonstrate the unique value of the system. Another relates to the lack of a medium-term plan of action linked with the development of the Manual. Such a medium-term plan should include a budget for effective functioning of the FIVIMS system, and would also serve as a coherent basis for identifying future support form the project;

- (b) in all four countries, institutional capacity building of the focal agency (including the FIVIMS secretariat) and key partners is seen as critical for successful launching of the system and its effective functioning. Particular needs exist for: (i) strengthening staff capacity in such areas as statistical analysis techniques (e.g. multivariate and factor analysis), vulnerability assessment techniques, and analysis/interpretation and writing skills for presentation of reports and other outputs for senior decision makers; and (ii) institutional strengthening of the focal agency's secretariat unit (with a staff and budgetary provisions, often requiring additional resources);
- (c) ensuring strong interface with the key users of the FIVIMS information. So far, attention has been on establishing the FIVIMS information system, but as the system is established, the issue of how to prove its utility by providing useful outputs to the key users, especially at policy and programme decision-making level needs to be addressed. This would require strengthening the capacity of the national secretariat and the Core Group by (i) including key users in the membership of these mechanisms, (ii) training in common skills, especially for analysis of multi-disciplinary, substantive issues, and (iii) reinforcing their capacity for effective team work. This would also have implications on how the project could best support this effort, including technical backstopping arrangements for the project within FAO;
- (d) improving and updating the information in the Asia KIDS. In order to provide timely and up-to-date information reflecting dynamic changes relating food insecurity and vulnerability, arrangements must be agreed among the FIVIMS partners regarding this needs. It would also be important that the system adapts its capacity to meet the needs for vulnerability assessments at local levels below provinces;
- (e) while the needs for further project support to the countries remain substantial, the level of resources likely available under the proposed second phase would probably be insufficient to cover even the priority needs of the four countries. In fact, the proposed budget of the second phase (US\$1.6 million) is some 25% less than for the first phase, and only some US\$100,000 may be available for direct country support (sum of allocations for "national consultants" and contracts for "capacity building"⁴). Thus, a question arises as to how many and which countries should be supported in the next phase and in what ways? This may require revising some of the assumptions underlying the existing proposal for the second phase, and it would also be essential to establish a set of criteria for allocating the limited funds for priority needs of each country to be supported in the context of its national FIVIMS plan of action;
- (f) given the strong likelihood of resource constraint under the second phase, it may be both necessary and wise to explore possibilities for cooperation with other interested donors for joint support to some of the countries where larger resources are required. An example in case is Bangladesh where the project has cooperated with the FAO FIVIMS secretariat for mobilizing additional resources;
- (g) another issue that arises for the second phase relates to the need for a possible exit strategy. While this relates to somewhat distant question, it would be important to have a longer-term view on this as a basis for guiding the project's approach – what the project would leave behind and how to ensure that the results achieved may become self-sustaining without project support. For example, as a regional project, how could the project strengthen inter-country cooperation among the five countries, and should it involve some kind of a regional institutional framework? Similarly, how the project develop cooperation with other projects supported by FAO or by another member of the IAWG ?

⁴ See Draft Project Document, section H. Project Budget.

C. Key Lessons

42. Some important lessons emerge from the project experience to date, which are not so unique to this project but which are relevant to a broader activities of this kind:
- (a) One is to affirm the conventional wisdom that a successful project requires a project implementation team that is well motivated and hard-working as well as is technically competent and innovative;
 - (b) Two, the project experience also shows the critical importance of partnership among the FAO units concerned but also with non-FAO actors;
 - (c) Three, projects in support of institutionalizing an innovation at the country level need to be approached with a longer-term perspective with time-frame and resources needed to help establish such a national capacity: from this viewpoint, one weakness of the present project is the absence of a clear strategy for this;
 - (d) Lastly, for projects working with an information system, adequate emphasis should be given as to how to ensure effective use of such an information system, including enlisting the support of the senior level users. This would be essential for the sustainability of the system. This would require that the project has not only good technical competence but also contacts with senior level users to win their support and commitment.

Chapter VI. Recommendations

43. Two types of recommendations are offered below, mostly relating to the issues discussed in paragraph 41: one relating to follow-up actions on the on-going activities in the immediate future; and the other regarding the proposed second phase project.

A. For Follow-up Actions on On-going Activities

44. Following recommendations are made for immediate attention and action:
- (a) Completion of the draft Manuals of Operations. As these are being put into a final draft form in all four countries, the project should provide as soon as possible any suggestions for improvements considered necessary. This would be especially urgent for countries where the document is planned to be submitted for approval at the Cabinet level (e.g. Sri Lanka and Thailand). In this regard, two points should be stress: (i) in order to provide a formal basis for inter-ministerial actions needed for a national FIVIMS, approval by the senior inter-ministerial body at the highest possible level could be encouraged, whenever appropriate; (ii) in all cases, it is suggested that national Manual of Operations comprises two sections, one providing a policy and institutional framework, and another covering more technical aspects for the operation of the system. The Manuals should also place emphasis on the usage of the FIVIMS information for advocacy and policy/programme development purposes. As noted above, a medium-term plan of action should be formulated for the implementation and future development of the system;
 - (b) As part of this process, efforts should be made to ensure that the national FIVIMS does not duplicate the existing system(s), and at least to minimize such risks. This should be ascertained at an early stage as possible, and further efforts may be needed to this end during initial stages of implementation. In fact, this issue of compatibility and harmonization among the existing similar systems should be addressed at the time when the National Steering Committee meets to consider the approval of the Manual. This

issue seems to require particular attention in Cambodia, and possibly in Thailand as well, and to a lesser degree the Philippines;

- (c) Identification of priority needs for capacity-building and plans for project response under the second phase. On the basis of needs identified in the national Manuals, it would be important to identify priority assistance the project may provide both at individual country level and collectively for the countries together. This could take into account the mission's perception of such priority needs as indicated in paragraph 40 (b) and (d);
- (d) In particular, strengthening the national FIVIMS secretariat would require additional resources for more staff and facilities, and such resources should be included and justified as part of regular budget of the focal agency in the medium-term plan of action. Similarly, every efforts should be made to ensure the Core Group's effectiveness by encouraging its close working link with representatives from key users as well as data providers;
- (e) The mission would like to make a special suggestion regarding Thailand. As noted in paragraphs 28 and 38, for various reasons, the project has experienced difficulties in securing clear and consistent, institutional commitment from the Office of Agricultural Economics for working together on the development of a national FIVIMS system. Despite numerous efforts made by the project, there is some doubt as to whether the senior staff concerned understand and appreciate the potential utility of the Asia FIVIMS model, especially its unique approaches to vulnerability assessment. The recent arrival of the new Secretary-General provides another and very timely opportunity for establishing a basis for collaboration. It is suggested therefore that an opportunity should be sought for briefing with the senior OAE officials concerned to demonstrate the useful features of the Asia FIVIMS in meeting their priority needs on the subject. It is further suggested that such an approach be made with support and participation of senior officer(s) of the Regional Office. The demonstration should be carefully prepared with a view to highlighting advantages of the model in comparison with the key existing similar national systems.

B. For the Second Phase

45. The mission reviewed the proposed project document for the second phase, and finds that it provides a clear direction and approach for the next five-year phase. In particular, it endorses broadly the planned immediate objectives – (i) functional national systems established with appropriate institutional structure and capacity, (ii) the national systems able to serve as an effective tool for policy/programme decisions, advocacy and monitoring by providing reliable outputs, and (iii) the Asia KIDS enhanced with improved technical capacity, including the facilitation of linking among the national systems and other systems at regional and global levels. However, following issues also arise:

- (a) with the accelerated progress made during the last several months, the work towards the first objective in the four countries is already under way, with many activities planned for this purpose being overtaken by events. What seems critical now is to establish more operational plans to guide transition from the initial efforts to date to full establishment and development of the national system in the four counties, taking into account the policy intent and assistance needs identified in their respective Manual of Operations. Assuming that the substance of the national proposals proves satisfactory, it is likely that the project would be faced with considerable needs identified for assistance, and probably beyond the resources planned for the second phase;
- (b) as noted above, the major challenge in the planned second phase would be to prove that national FIVIMS functions effectively as intended, and that would depend critically on

the integration of the system into the appropriate decision making process as well as the quality (relevance and utility) of its outputs. This aspect would deserve a greater attention in each country, entailing not only upgrading the technical competence of the FIVIMS secretariat and Core Group but also ensuring dynamic link with the users, including appropriate identification of their priority needs that can be addressed by the FIVIMS system;

- (c) the proposed project leaves room for assisting additional countries beyond the present five, and this raises uncertainty as to how many countries should be targeted in the face of resource constraint. Should the project's priority be to achieve a sustainable system in the five selected countries, as intended, or should it also assist additional countries? This also begs the question of an exit strategy for the project – how and in what way should the project end while ensuring its sustainable outcome among these countries?

46. General Recommendations for the second phase. The mission does not have any specific suggestions regarding possible modifications in the substance of the project objectives nor its design, which it broadly endorses. Its recommendations are of tactical nature regarding how to proceed in a concrete manner. The following are recommended, to be considered in conjunction with recommendations for follow-up to the ongoing activities given above:

- (a) preparation of a master implementation plan for the second phase. This should be prepared as a basis for commencing the second phase, taking into account progress made in each country (preparing the national policy and institutional framework, including that of the Manual of Operations and a medium-term plan) and assistance needs identified. Given the limited resources available, a set of criteria should be established to target project support to priority needs in a transparent manner. It may entail in-depth discussions/negotiations with the national authorities concerned in ascertaining their commitment and priority requirements for assistance from the project;
- (b) the implementation process at country level should pay particular attention to three aspects. One area concerns the need to ensure harmonization and minimization of risk of duplication with similar national system – while this is a clear FIVIMS principle, given the normal trend for institutional competition among agencies, this would require persistent efforts over time by establishing partnership with the persons concerned through the FIVIMS structure. The second relates to the importance of ensuring link with potential key users. This would entail, apart from including and linking such users with the FIVIMS process, upgrading analytical skills of the Core Group in vulnerability assessment and communicating the results as a multi-disciplinary team. Project support could also include workshops at national and regional levels for this purpose, where the project may also benefit with a multi-disciplinary input by FAO staff. Thirdly, the system's capacity for identifying food insecurity and vulnerability assessment at lower local levels should be strengthened to enhance its utility;
- (c) given the likely insufficiency of the project budget, FAO may approach the donor for possible increase in this regard: although it is understood that the donor is unlikely to agree to any such increase, special case may be made in view of both the project's importance and its very satisfactory implementation record. In any case, it is suggested that the project continue its strategy of seeking partnership with other donors, programmes and projects, within and outside FAO, for collaboration in assisting these countries, especially for additional resources for national capacity building. Such collaboration should be especially important with other IAWG-FIVIMS members as well as bilateral donors, including Japan (the Japan International Cooperation Agency, for example);

- (d) as noted above, it is suggested that the project develops an exist strategy over the medium-term with a vision of how and in what form the project's results may be sustained. This would be particularly important given this is a regional project with many advantages for contributing to inter-country cooperation in this subject, such as through an association or network of interested counties (e.g. the Asian and Pacific Network on Food and Nutrition – ANFN).
47. Recommendations regarding target countries. Two broad suggestions are made:
- (a) given the emerging needs for capacity building at substantial levels and the likely resources constraint, it would be most sensible to continue with the limited focus on the four countries (Cambodia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand) as the core countries. The project could also promote cooperation among them in capacity building and establishing a networking arrangement. For some of these countries, for example, Cambodia, the project may have to help in mobilizing additional resources. For Bangladesh, the project could concentrate on providing supplementary backstopping to the FNPP funded project. However, given the uncertainty of whether the FNPP funding may continue beyond 2003, the project role there would need to be reviewed;
 - (b) there seems to be considerable opportunities for the project providing some limited advisory assistance to countries in the region besides the five countries it has covered so far – for example, Indonesia government has requested for advice in enhancing its national information system. It would be useful for the project to play such a role, to the extent possible without diluting its efforts to assist the four core countries. As a general principle, it is suggested in this regard that the project maintains two types of countries for its assistance: the core four counties and additional, limited number of countries, including Bangladesh for now, where it limits its assistance to technical advisory role rather than concerted capacity building. Should any of the four core countries drop out for any reason, there would be more flexibility for additional assistance to other countries.
48. Recommendations on Project Administration. Two suggestions are offered:
- (a) as the project moves to the Regional Office in Bangkok, new backstopping arrangements are envisaged, with ESAF being the new unit for technical backstopping. While this is appropriate, it is also suggested that technical backstopping be also strengthened in the Regional Office itself – with the emphasis of project shifting to capacity development from the operation of the system to its use, especially for policy analysis and programme formulation, a regional support team should be established, comprising multi-disciplinary expertise covering statistics, policy analysis/planning as well as nutrition and food security. In addition, the project should be supported at policy level by senior RAP officers, especially when it needs to negotiate or interact with senior government officials on policy related issues;
 - (b) in view of several uncertainties involved in the project implementation in the next few years, it is suggested that the project should be subjected to mid-term evaluation, perhaps in the second or third year of its implementation, so as to benefit from an external advice regarding its future status, including the question of its exist strategy.

**Terms of Reference
for the Evaluation Mission for the Asia FIVIMS Trust Fund Project
GCP/RAS/170/JPN**

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

The assessment and monitoring of food insecurity is of paramount importance for development planning and for directing efforts and resources to combat undernourishment, hunger and poverty in Asia. In November 1996, the World Food Summit (WFS), hosted by FAO in Rome, recognized the need for an assessment of the extent of hunger and undernourishment, including at subnational level, in order for member states and international organizations to adequately plan and direct their efforts and resources to meet the WFS challenge of halving the number of undernourished by 2015.

In order to achieve the objective, the WFS requested through its Plan of Action each government to develop and periodically update, where necessary, a national *Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS)*, indicating areas and populations affected by or at risk of hunger and undernutrition, and factors contributing to food insecurity, making maximum use of existing data and other information systems. The WFS also called upon FAO to play a catalytic role, within the UN family, for the further elaboration and definition of the System and for its development in a co-ordinated manner, starting with the development of guidelines for the establishment of national FIVIMSs, and for the determination of suitable indicators for the assessment of food insecurity and vulnerability at national and sub-national levels.

In response to the call, the Japan-funded Trust Fund project entitled “*Development of a Vulnerability Information Base, Mapping and Dissemination System for Asia in Support of the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS): GCP/RAS/170/JPN*,” known as “*The Asia FIVIMS Project*,” has been implemented by the FAO Global Information and Early Warning Service (ESCG) since January 1998⁵ as a primary input and technical support to the overall FIVIMS initiative, as well as to provide an assessment of food insecurity and vulnerability in Asia. For this end, the Government of Japan has provided to FAO a total of US\$ 2,107,450 for a period of 5 years and 5 months. (The expected NTE is 31 May 2003.)⁶

1.2. Project's Objectives

The overall development objective of the project is to improve information on food insecurity and vulnerability in Asia so that countries in the region can implement necessary actions and

⁵ The project employed two long-term internationally recruited experts: a Vulnerability Analysis Coordinator and a Technical Officer – Geographic Information Systems (GIS). In addition, ESCG had designated a P5 senior economist (one person month/year) as Project Manager, who assumed the overall responsibility for the project and the project funded staff at FAO, while the GIEWS Workstation Technical Coordinator (P3 - one person month/year) had provided technical assistance and input to the project to ensure linkages between the project and other GIEWS technical activities.

⁶ The project has been extended for 5 months from the original NET 31/12/02 to 31/05/03.

programmes for the improvement of the food security and nutritional status of the affected populations. In order to achieve the goal, the project set the four immediate objectives:

1. To review and assess existing methodologies used in identifying vulnerable populations and/or areas, to determine critical indicators, and collect the required data for assessing vulnerability and food insecurity in Asia.
2. To develop, or adopt, suitable indicators of current, structural, and medium to long-term vulnerability in Asia, and to produce food insecurity and vulnerability maps (initially at the country-level) for Asian countries.
3. To develop an integrated information management, analysis and mapping system for vulnerability analysis and mapping for Asia, linked to an Internet-based dissemination system providing access to the information and maps produced by the project, building on the previous work conducted by GIEWS and WAICENT.
4. To assess the usefulness of the system for both national and sub-national level vulnerability analysis, and its applicability to other regions in support of the overall FIVIMS activity.

1.3. *Major Activities and Outputs to Date*

Below is a list of major activities conducted and outputs produced to date by the project in line with the project's activities and outputs defined in the project document. They are also described in detail in Annex 1.

1.3.1 National FIVIMS Support (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand)

- Establishment of a National FIVIMS Inter-ministerial Steering Committee and a Technical Subcommittee/Task Force⁷
- A series of FIVIMS workshops and consultations conducted as defined in the Letters of Agreement in order to build institutional capacity of the National FIVIMS Focal Agency and the Technical Subcommittee as well as to define and determine suitable indicators, vulnerability assessment methods, and collaboration and data sharing modalities.⁸
- Inventories of existing information systems/databases relevant to FIVIMS.
- Identification of available digital maps/information products for use in FIVIMS.
- Assessment of the state of government structures and information systems dealing with food insecurity and vulnerability.
- FIVIMS sensitization and awareness building among the policy makers and implementers through stakeholders' brainstorming sessions as well as workshops on FIVIMS approaches.
- A FIVIMS *Manual of Operations* to institutionalize and operationalize FIVIMS (under preparation: drafts available for Cambodia and Philippines).
- Identification, selection and development of core indicators required to assess food insecurity (Philippines and Thailand).
- Definition and development of a food insecurity and vulnerability assessment method suitable method (Philippines and Thailand).

⁷ Activities for Bangladesh to achieve this objective have just started (March 2003) in collaboration with the FNPP project implemented by the FIVIMS Secretariat (ESDG).

⁸ Same as above.

- Measurement of relative levels of vulnerability and food insecurity at the subnational level (Philippines and Thailand).
- Development of digital vulnerability maps at the subnational level (Philippines and Thailand).
- Formulation of a national FIVIMS start-up project “Support for the Development and Implementation of National FIVIMS in Bangladesh” jointly with the ESDG-implemented FNPP project (Bangladesh).

1.3.2 Support to Regional and International Level FIVIMS

- Selection of relevant indicators at the regional level.
- Collection of required data, and development of methodologies to address the overall status of food insecurity and vulnerability in Asia.
- Methodologies to address causal relations between various vulnerability factors leading to food insecurity in Asia.
- Development of a database on and digital maps of mass natural disasters, their frequency and magnitude for Asia for 1975-2000 in support of vulnerability assessments in disaster-prone countries in Asia.
- Contribution to various FIVIMS related conferences, meetings and workshops including IAWG⁹-FIVIMS meetings, ANFN¹⁰-FIVIMS consultations, and the FAO Early Warning and Disaster Conference for Asia and the Pacific.¹¹

1.3.3 System Development

- Development of digital map import routines for use by *Key Indicators Mapping System* (KIMS) through provision of pseudo codes for its map important function.
- KIMS User’s Manual version 1.
- Development of *Online FIVIMS Data Mapper/Viewer*, or *Asia Key Indicators Data System (Asia KIDS)*, a web-based dynamic FIVIMS information dissemination, sharing and mapping system (www.asiafivims.net).
- National KIDS (*alpha* version) for Thai and Philippine FIVIMS applications.
- Adaptation of the core Asia KIDS components to other FAO and non-FAO dynamic web sites for country, regional and global applications (e.g. GLiPHA,¹² TEMS,¹³ WHO Global Database on Body Mass Index).

By the end of December 2002, the project had fulfilled most of the requirements originally envisaged to achieve its objectives, i.e., (i) definition/development of methodologies and indicators first at the regional level and (ii) then for selected countries, (iii) development of an information system, and (iv) testing the applicability of the system to country FIVIMSs and other regions. However, in order to further achieve FIVIMS objectives and mandates, it is considered essential to strengthen the existing national FIVIMSs and to help initiate development of similar national systems in other countries. With this in view, FAO has been reviewing the possibility of providing further assistance, and has prepared a proposal for the project’s second phase (for five years with possible funding from Japan). It is anticipated that Agricultural Projects Analysis Service (ESAF) will be the new Lead Technical Unit (LTU) of

⁹ Inter-Agency Working Group

¹⁰ Regional Expert Consultation of the Asia-Pacific Network for Food and Nutrition

¹¹ Asia-Pacific Conference on Early Warning, Prevention, Preparedness and Management of Disasters in Food and Agriculture held in Chiang Mai, Thailand in 2001

¹² Global Livestock Production and Health Atlas

¹³ Terrestrial Ecosystem Monitoring

the second phase, to be implemented by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP).

In this context, the donor, participating governments and FAO have decided to conduct a terminal evaluation to take an in-depth assessment of the project's achievement and to provide suggestions for future follow-up actions by the parties concerned.

2. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The main objective of the evaluation is to assess the overall performance of the project, including the extent to which the project has met its immediate development goals as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of the project implementation and management in support of developing FIVIMSs. The evaluation will identify strengths and weaknesses of the project by thoroughly assessing its technical, institutional, managerial and financial elements.

The evaluation is also expected to review the draft project document for Phase II and to provide recommendations on further steps to be taken during Phase II towards the strengthening of the ongoing national FIVIMS efforts, and on future action required in order to establish national FIVIMSs in countries where such systems have yet to be developed.

3. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation mission will carefully assess:

- a) Relevance of the project to development priorities and needs of the target countries in relation to the mandate of FIVIMS as well as to the WFS goals relevant to FIVIMS;
- b) Clarity and realism of the project's development and immediate objectives, including specification of targets and identification of beneficiaries and prospects for sustainability.
- c) Quality, clarity and adequacy of project design including:
 - clarity and logical consistency between, inputs, activities, outputs and progress towards achievement of objectives (quality, quantity and time-frame);
 - realism and clarity in the specification of prior obligations and prerequisites (assumptions and risks);
 - realism and clarity of external institutional relationships, and in the managerial and institutional framework for implementation and the work plan;
 - likely cost-effectiveness of the project design.
- d) Efficiency and adequacy of project implementation including: availability of funds as compared with budget for the donor component; the quality and timeliness of input delivery by FAO; managerial and work efficiency; implementation difficulties; adequacy of monitoring and reporting; the extent of national support and commitment, and the quality and quantity of

administrative and technical support by FAO, including coordination with the overall/international FIVIMS initiative.

- e) Project results, including a full and systematic assessment of outputs produced to date (quantity and quality as compared with work plan) and progress made towards achieving the immediate objectives. The mission will especially review the status and quality of work related to:
- the development of the web-based dynamic FIVIMS information dissemination, sharing and mapping system, *Online FIVIMS Data Mapper/Viewer*, or *Asia KIDS*, as a direct contribution to the overall FIVIMS.
 - the adaptation of the System for country and other regional applications.
 - the development and use of national FIVIMSs in the participating countries, including technical and institutional strengthening as well as cooperation among the national units.
 - the methodologies defined and adopted, including indicators selected, to address complex dimensions of food security and vulnerability in Asia as well as in selected countries in the region.
- f) The prospects for sustaining the project's results by the beneficiaries and the national FIVIMS counterparts after the termination of the current phase of the project. The mission should examine in particular:
- the usefulness of the methodologies defined/developed and the usage of indicators selected for national FIVIMS applications.
 - the level and extent that *Online FIVIMS Data Mapper/Viewer* has been adopted by developers and system users in general (at the international level), and applied to FIVIMS activities at the national level.
 - the level and extent of institutionalization of FIVIMS in the national FIVIMS processes of the respective project supported countries, including their institutional, policy and financial support to the efforts.
 - coordination and/or collaboration with similar information systems being developed or in operation in the region with or without external assistance.
- g) The cost-effectiveness of the project, both in system design and in operation.
- h) Merits and strengths that have helped achieve the project's development goals and that would lead to strengthening of the ongoing FIVIMS initiative as well as to establishing FIVIMSs in countries where no FIVIMS exists.
- i) Constraints and weaknesses that have limited project's accomplishments, including an assessment of (i) institutional, methodological, technical and resource constraints, (ii) the adequacy and level of technical advisory support provided by the Lead Technical Unit (LTU) and Asia FIVIMS partners, and (iii) the managerial capacity of the project's operating unit.

Based on the above analyses, the evaluation mission will draw specific conclusions and make proposals for any necessary further action by FAO and the donor to ensure sustainable development of FIVIMSs in Asia and/or to enhance the FIVIMS capacity of Asian countries, including any need for additional assistance and activities of the project for Phase II that is under formulation. In this connection, the mission should also ascertain the intention of the donor to support FIVIMS in Asia through a possible Phase II project.

The mission will draw attention to any lessons of general interest.

4. COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION

The mission will comprise:

- i) Team Leader with previous experience in evaluation of agriculture and/or food security related projects and programmes and with strong leadership to conduct a multi-country mission. He or she has a good understanding of food insecurity and vulnerability analysis in general, and the ability to make an objective and credible assessment on the overall performance of the project as against its development objectives. (Team Leader will be seconded from the FAO Evaluation Service (PBEE)).
- ii) International Expert with strong background of development and management of food security information systems in Asia and/or information and data dissemination technologies related to the fields concerned with Asia FIVIMS, e.g., vulnerability analysis, food and nutrition assessments, statistical modelling. He/she will be recruited preferably from the region.

Mission members should be independent and thus have no previous direct involvement with the project either with regard to its formulation, implementation or backstopping. They should preferably have experience of evaluation.

The evaluation mission will be supported by Resource Persons from the project team:

- Vulnerability Analysis Coordinator of the Asia FIVIMS project is required to accompany the mission team as a resource person to assist the mission with discussion and consultation with key informants at FAO HQ as well as in the three selected countries.
- Mr. Zia Hyder, International Consultant who has facilitated the Asia FIVIMS activity in the countries, will also assist the mission team in Cambodia and Thailand.

5. TIMETABLE AND ITINERARY OF THE MISSION

The evaluation mission commencing from 24 March 2003 for about 1 month, consists of three phases outlined below. (A mission itinerary/calendar is attached as Annex 1.)

(1) FAO Headquarters, Rome (5 days)

a. Briefing from the project budget holder and the Asia FIVIMS project staff.

- b. Meetings/consultations at key project partner units at HQ including:
 - FIVIMS Coordination Unit (ESDG)
 - Technical Information Systems Group (AFIS)
 - Food Security and Agricultural Projects Analysis Service (ESAF)
 - Food and Nutrition Division (ESN/A)
 - Other technical units as appropriate
 - c. Meetings with other FAO staff members associated with the Asia FIVIMS project
 - Former project manager/backstopping officers, Asia FIVIMS partner units, etc.
 - d. Desk study on Asia FIVIMS documentation (and reports/papers on the overall FIVIMS initiative as appropriate)
- (2) Field Visits to Thailand, Philippines and Cambodia (about 2 weeks)
- a. Bangkok, Thailand (3 days = 1 day at RAP and 2 days for Thai counterparts)
 - RAP Economic and Social Development Group
 - Asia FIVIMS International Consultant
 - Office of the Agriculture Economics (OAE) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperative (FIVIMS Focal Agency)
 - Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University (FIVIMS Consulting Institution)
 - Other National FIVIMS Technical Task Force member agencies as appropriate
 - b. Manila, Philippines (3 days)
 - FAOR Office
 - National Nutrition Council (FIVIMS Focal Agency)
 - National FIVIMS Consultant
 - Other National FIVIMS Technical Task Force member agencies as appropriate
 - c. Phnom Penh, Cambodia (2 days)
 - FAOR Office
 - Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (FIVIMS Focal Agency)
 - National FIVIMS Consultant
 - Other National FIVIMS Technical Task Force member agencies as appropriate
- (3) Report Writing/Debriefing (8 days)
- a. Draft report writing (at RAP for 5 days)
 - b. Debriefing to and discussion with the concerned technical units at FAO HQ (0.5 day)
 - c. Finalization of the evaluation report by incorporating comments from the units (2.5 days)

6. CONSULTATIONS

The mission will maintain close liaison with the Representatives of the donor and FAO and the concerned national agencies, as well as with national and international project staff. Although the mission should feel free to discuss with the authorities concerned anything relevant to its assignment, it is not authorized to make any commitments on behalf of the governments concerned, the donor, or FAO.

7. REPORTING

The mission is fully responsible for its independent report which may not necessarily reflect the views of the donor or FAO. The report will be written in conformity with the headings shown in Annex 3 of "Evaluation Mission Brief," which is attached to this TOR.

The report will be completed, to the extent possible, in the country and the findings and recommendations fully discussed with all concerned parties and wherever possible consensus achieved.

The mission will also complete the FAO Project Evaluation Questionnaire.

The mission leader bears responsibility for finalization of the report, which will be submitted to FAO within two weeks of mission completion. FAO will submit the report to the donor with its comments.

Annex 2-a : Mission Itinerary

March 24, 2003 – FAO Headquarters, Rome

- 09.30 am Welcome and Introduction
- Chief, Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS)
- 10.30 am Detailed Mission briefing and overview of Asia FIVIMS Project
- Vulnerability Analysis Coordinator & Technical Officer-GIS
- 02.00 pm Retrospective view on Asia FIVIMS Project and linkage with overall FIVIMS initiative
- Former Project Manager, GIEWS
- Former Backstopping Officer, GIEWS

March 25, 2003 – FAO Headquarters, Rome

- 10.00 am Technical Systems Group, WAICENT Development Team
- Asia KIDS Demonstration
- 02.00 pm Desk Study

March 26, 2003 – FAO Headquarters, Rome

- All Day Desk Study

March 27, 2003 – FAO Headquarters, Rome

- 10.00 am FIVIMS Coordination Unit / FIVIMS Secretariat
- Overall FVIMS initiative / Global FIVIMS / Linkages between Asia FIVIMS Project and overall FIVIMS imitative / Bangladesh FIVIMS
- 02.00 pm Technical Systems Group, WAICENT Development Team
- Collaboration for KIDS development / Applications of KIDS to other FAO and non-FAO agencies / KIMS development

March 28, 2003 – FAO Headquarters, Rome

- 10.00 am Food Security and Agricultural Projects Analysis Service
- Collaborative support for National FIVIMS in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Sri Lanka / Prospects for Asia FIVIMS Project Phase II
- 02.00 pm Food and Nutrition Division
- Linkages between Asia FIVIMS project and the Nutrition Division activities / Thailand FIVIMS

March 29, 2003 – Mission Team depart Rome for Bangkok

March 30, 2003 – Mission Team arrival in Bangkok
March 31, 2003 – FAO RAP Office, Bangkok

All Day FAO RAP Office – briefing

April 01, 2003 – FAO RAP Office, Bangkok

09.00 am FAO RAP Office – briefing
03.00 pm Mission Team depart for Manila

April 02, 2003 – Manila, Philippines

All Day National Nutrition Council (NNC), Department of Agriculture (FIVIMS Focal Agency)
- Briefing and discussion

April 03, 2003 – Manila, Philippines

09.00 am National Nutrition Council, Department of Agriculture
- meeting with FIVIMS Core Group
02.00 pm UNDP Office
- meeting on collaborative support

April 04, 2003 – Manila, Philippines

10.00 am FAO Representative Office
- debriefing (including senior NNC officials)
02.00 pm Courtesy Meeting – Embassy of Japan

April 05, 2003 – Mission Depart for Phnom Penh, Cambodia
April 06, 2003 – Phnom Penh, Cambodia (Sunday)
April 07, 2003 – Phnom Penh, Cambodia

08.30 am FAO Representative Office – briefing
11.00 am Meeting with Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF)

02.00 pm Meeting with Under Secretary of State, MAFF (National FIVIMS Focal Point)
 04.45 pm National Institute of Statistics, Ministry of Planning
 - meeting with Director General

April 08, 2003 – Phnom Penh, Cambodia

08.00 am MAFF – Meeting with FIVIMS Technical Sub-Committee
 11.00 am Meeting with Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Planning
 02.30 pm MAFF – Review Meeting on draft Manual of Operations

April 09, 2003 – Phnom Penh, Cambodia

08.30 am National Committee for Disaster Management
 - Meeting with Secretary General
 11.00 am FAOR - debriefing
 02.40 pm Mission Team depart for Bangkok

April 10, 2003 – Bangkok, Thailand

09.00 am Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University (INMU)
 - Meeting with Director, INMU – FIVIMS National Consultant
 02.00 pm Courtesy meeting with Secretary General of Ministry of Land
 03.00 pm Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE), Ministry of Agriculture and Co-
 operatives
 - Meeting with Deputy Secretary-General, OAE

April 11, 2003 – Bangkok, Thailand

09.00 am FAO-RAP Office
 02.00 pm Ministry of Health
 - Meeting with Director of Nutrition Division

April 12 - 16, 2003 – Bangkok, Thailand - Report Writing

April 17, 2003 – FAO-RAP debriefing (only Kato)

April 17, 2003 – Mission team depart for respective home (Kuala Lumpur and Rome)

Annex 2-b : List of People Met

THE PHILIPPINES

National Nutrition Council (NNC)

Ms. Elsa M. Bayani, Executive Director
Ms. Maria Bernardita T. Flores, Deputy Executive Director
Ms. Arlene R. Reario, Officer-in-Charge, Nutrition Surveillance Division, NNC
Dr. Rodolfo F. Florentino, FIVIMS National Consultant

Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, Department of Agriculture

Mr. Romeo S. Recide, Director

Members of FIVIMS Core Group

Ms. Arlene R. Reario, Officer-in-Charge, Nutrition Surveillance Division, NNC
Ms. Wilma L. Molano, Supervising Science Research Specialist, Food and Nutrition Research Institute
Ms. Melisa Pascua, Statistician Coordination Officer IV, National Statistical Coordination Board, National Economic Development Authority (NEDA)
Ms. Josie B. Perez, Division Chief, National Statistics Office
Ms. Benedicta Yabut, Statistician IV, National Statistics Office
Ms. Carmelita Cristobal, Supervising Program Specialist, Dept. of Education

Embassy of Japan

Mr. Katsuyoshi Ishii, First Secretary (Agriculture)

UNDP

Ms. Jana Ricasio, Assistant Representative

FAO Representative Office

Dr. Sang Mu Lee, FOA Representative

CAMBODIA

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

He, Chan Tong Yves, Secretary of State, Chairman of National FIVIMS Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee
He, It Nody, Under Secretary, Chairman of National FIVIMS Technical Sub-Committee
Mr. Kuy Kuot, National FIVIMS Consultant

Ministry of Planning

He, Kim Saysamalen, Under Secretary of State
Mr. San Sy Than, Director General of National Institute of Statistics

National Committee for Disaster Management

He, Peou Samy, Secretary General

Members of the Technical Sub-Committee**UNDP**

Ms. Ingrid Cyimana, Team Leader, Poverty Reduction Cluster

FAO Representative Office

Mr. Jean-Claude Levasseur, FAO Representative

THAILAND

Office of Agricultural Economics

Ms. Anchalee Ooraikul, Deputy Secretary General, OAE

Mr. Montol Jeamehaveon, Acting Director of Center for Agricultural Information

Ms. Arunee Kittayanawat, Senior Officer, Policy and Planning Analysis Division

Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University

Dr. Songsak Srianujata, Director, Institute of Nutrition

Dr. Pattanee Winichagoon, Head, Community Nutrition Division

Ministry of Public Health

Dr. Sangsom Sinawat, Director of Nutrition Division

Ms. Lada Niamsuwan, Nutrition Division

Ms. Siriporn Chitplee, Nutrition Division

Ms. Kobkhaen Suwanasorn, Nutrition Division

Ministry of Land

Dr. Adisak Srisapakit, Secretary General (former Director-General of Office of Agricultural Economics)

FAO Headquarters, Rome

Mr. Henri Josserand, Chief, GIEWS

Mr. Katsuya Takahashi, Technical Officer-GIS, Asia FIVIMS Project

Mr. Raffaello Marsili, Senior Economist, GIEWS (retired)

Mr. Andrew Nadeau, former staff member of GIEWS

Mr. Ali Safarnejad, Oracle Database/Internet Application Developer, WAICENT

Ms. Jacqueline Geromo, Oracle Database/Internet Application Developer, WAICENT

Mr. Maarten D.C. Immick, FIVIMS Secretariat, ESD

Ms. Jenny Riches, FIVIMS Secretariat, ESD

Mr. Kurt Vertucci, AFIS

Mr. Karl Morteo, AFIS

Mr. Christian R. Lovendal, Food Security Officer, ESAF

Dr. Kraisid Tontisirin, Director, Food and Nutrition Division

FAO RAP, Bangkok

Mr. He Changchui, Regional Representative

Mr. H. Konuma, Deputy Regional Representative

Mr. Ti Teow Choo, Senior Food System Economist

Dr. B. K. Nandi, Senior Food and Nutrition Officer

Dr. Purushottam K. Mudbhary, Policy Officer

Dr. Frederick Dee Baker, Senior Statistician

List of Project's Main Publications and Reports

GIS File Formats for the Prototype FIVIMS Mapping System

The report was produced to support the development of the prototype FIVIMS Mapping System being prepared in collaboration with FAO WAICENT. It provided pseudo codes for programming for the prototype System to import digital maps produced by popular commercial GIS programs.

“Recommendations for Geo-referencing the EM-DAT Database”

The report summarizes the findings of a study conducted by Mr. Verelst to assist the CRED in determining the requirements for geo-referencing the EM-DAT database on mass disasters in the world recorded from 1900 to the present. It also seeks possibilities to incorporate the EM-DAT data into the FFA system. (June 1999)

“FIVIMS for Asia: Technical Compendium”

Report submitted by Mr. Watkins to the Project. It provides the Project with recommendations on the methodologies, basic concepts and analytical framework for assessing food insecurity and vulnerability in Asia with a draft design for the development of a web-based FFA data navigation system and database. (June 1999)

“Comments on Technical Compendium on the Use of Nutrition Indicators”

Consultancy report submitted to the Project by Mr. Bernardi. The report critically reviewed the FFA concepts and methodologies with focus on “dietary adequacy and anthropometry” components of the FFA system, and suggested improvements to the original methods to explore indicators and information related to undernourished (September 1999).

“FIVIMS for Asia System and User Requirements”

Consultancy report submitted to the Project. The report documents the investigations undertaken by Mr. Verelst (Oracle Database / Internet Application Developer) about system and user requirements for designing, prototyping and testing a food insecurity and vulnerability database and a web-based data navigation and presentation tool to be developed in support of the "FIVIMS for Asia" Trust Fund Project. (September 1999).

“Development of the FIVIMS for Asia Data Navigation Testbed: Phase I”

Consultancy report submitted to the Project. The report summarizes the overall work performed by Mr. Verelst, describes in detail the data models and FFA system designs/architectures developed utilizing the Oracle database technologies, and recommends future system development requirements. (December 1999).

“Key Indicator Mapping System User Manual”

Produced in collaboration with WAICENT (December 1999)

ADPC/01/9 “Asia-FIVIMS for Disaster Preparedness”

The Asia-Pacific Conference on Early Warning, Prevention, Preparedness and Management of Disasters in Food and Agriculture” held in Chiang Mai, Thailand in June 2001. (June 2001)

“Modification of the EM-DAT Database for Geo-referencing the CRED Natural Disaster Data.” (provisional title) Consultancy report (June 2001)

“Asia-FIVIMS for Disaster Preparedness.”

RAP Publication: 2001/14 APDC/01/REP: Report of the FAO Asia-Pacific Conference on Early Warning, Prevention, Preparedness and Management of Disasters in Food and Agriculture” held in Chiang Mai, Thailand in 12-15 June 2001. pp. 267-287. (December 2001)

“Recommendations on Vulnerability Assessments Methodologies and Indicators for the Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS) for Thailand”

Technical Report of the Asia FIVIMS Trust Fund Project No. 1, December 2001

“The Definition of Core FIVIMS Indicators to Monitor Food Insecurity and the Development of Methodologies to Measure Vulnerability at the Provincial Level in Thailand” - Mission Report (December 2001)

“Baseline Vulnerability Assessment for the Philippine Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS)”

A Technical Report of the Asia FIVIMS Trust Fund Project. Draft submitted to the FIVIMS Task Force in the Philippines (June 2002)

“Developing a Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS) for Bangladesh”

Project proposal in support of Bangladeshi FIVIMS (June 2002)

“Support for the Development and Implementation of National FIVIMS in Bangladesh”

(November 2002). A project proposal officially submitted to the Planning Commission, Government of Bangladesh, which was jointly formulated with the FIVIMS Coordination Unit (ESDG) based on the previous draft proposal “Developing a Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS) for Bangladesh.”

“Letters of Agreement”

(September-October) initiated in support of capacity building of National FIVIMS Focal Agencies and Technical Subcommittees/Task Forces in Cambodia, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

“National FIVIMS Mid-term Progress Report - November-December 2002”

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. (December 2002) A progress report from the National FIVIMS Focal Ministry in Cambodia on activities taken place in accordance with the Letter of Agreement.

“Report of the Workshop on Establishing the National FIVIMS in Cambodia”

A consultancy report summarising the 1st national FIVIMS workshop held in support from the Asia FIVIMS project. (December 2002).

“Report on National FIVIMS Activities in Sri Lanka” Consultancy report summarising activities performed by the National FIVIMS Agency and consultant (December 2002).

