

PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Ninety-ninth Session
Rome, 26-30 May 2008
EVALUATION OF THE FAO EMERGENCY AND REHABILITATION ASSISTANCE IN THE GREATER HORN OF AFRICA (2004 – 2007)
Summary

Table of Contents

	Pages
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
<i>Background</i>	3
<i>Overview of the evaluated programmes</i>	3
<i>Strategic Planning</i>	3
<i>FAO Organizational Structure and Operational Capacity</i>	3
<i>Partners</i>	4
<i>Relevance, Effectiveness and Impact</i>	4
<i>Gender and Equity</i>	5
II. EXTENDED SUMMARY	6
A. Background	6
<i>Introduction</i>	6
<i>The Evaluation of the FAO Emergency and Rehabilitation Assistance in the Horn of Africa</i>	6
B. Overview of the programme	7
<i>Programme Areas</i>	7
<i>Resources</i>	7
<i>Funding recovery activities</i>	9
C. Strategic Planning	9
D. FAO Organizational Structure and operational capacity	10
<i>Country Level</i>	10

<i>Regional Level</i>	11
<i>Headquarters level</i>	12
<i>Technical Capacity</i>	12
<i>Human Resources and Operational Capacity</i>	13
<i>FAO's Profile in the Region</i>	14
E. COORDINATING AND WORKING WITH PARTNERS	14
<i>One United Nations</i>	14
<i>Emergency Coordination at National Level</i>	14
<i>Regional Networks</i>	15
<i>Operational partnerships with NGOs</i>	15
<i>Partnership with Government</i>	15
F. RELEVANCE, EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT	16
<i>Needs assessments:</i>	16
<i>Early Warning and Food Security Information Systems</i>	16
<i>IPC Roll Out</i>	18
<i>Other "Knowledge Projects"</i>	18
<i>Agricultural interventions</i>	19
<i>Livestock-oriented interventions</i>	21
<i>Fisheries-oriented interventions</i>	24
<i>HIV and AIDS</i>	24
<i>Gender and Equity Considerations</i>	25
G. Conclusion	25

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY¹

Background

1. The Horn of Africa has become one of the most food insecure regions in the world. Population growth has increased pressure on scarce land and water resources, and widespread insecurity in Somalia, southern Sudan and northern Uganda over the past two decades has displaced large numbers of people. However, as security returns to key areas of the Horn, opportunities exist for resettlement.

2. The evaluation reviewed all the activities being undertaken by FAO in conjunction with member governments and partners in response to the long-standing crises in the region. It focused on the FAO emergency and rehabilitation assistance to Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, southern Sudan and northern Uganda from 2004 to 2007. The evaluation consulted a wide range of FAO staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries at different levels and included impact assessments in four of the countries.

Overview of the evaluated programmes

3. FAO has significantly built up its presence in emergency and rehabilitation programmes in the Horn of Africa and has managed to diversify its services that were formerly dominated by seeds and tools distribution. The Organization has developed a strong programme in animal health, built a visible portfolio of “knowledge projects”, and offered partners (in government, NGOs and other UN organizations) a collaborative approach to food security.

4. Emergency funding for FAO in the Horn has seen a three-fold increase from 2004 to 2007, even though current funding instruments and notably the consolidated appeals are not conducive to livelihoods rehabilitation activities.

Strategic Planning

The main vehicle for strategic planning of the FAO emergency work in the region has been the Plan of Action (POA) for the Greater Horn of Africa, developed to complement the annual consolidated appeal process by providing a better-informed strategy in support of food security, advocating for coherence and “connectedness” between emergency, rehabilitation and development assistance, and thus challenging the conventional wisdom of donors and some international agencies that resources have to be separately allocated to “emergencies,” “recovery/transition,” and “development”.

FAO Organizational Structure and Operational Capacity

5. The significant increase in the scale and diversification of projects supported by FAO in the region over the evaluated period has not been matched by strengthened administrative, logistical and operational capacity at the field level. FAO has to develop the technical and operational capability to deliver effectively at country level, where it matters most, and should recognise the significant contribution national staff could make in developing this capacity.

6. At country level, the relationship between the FAORs and the Emergency Coordination Units (ECUs) is generally effective but the different lines of reporting can lead to difficulties and tensions. Most importantly, the operational and technical capacity of FAO is spread very thin at country level, and does not reflect the increasing diversity of the portfolio. The reliance on short-term extra-budgetary support to finance ECUs has undermined any long-term approach to developing operational capacity. Staff is subject to constant breaks in employment which results in significant turnover and reflects negatively on the quality of programme interventions. National

¹ The full report in English can be found on the Evaluation website at:
<http://www.fao.org/pbe/pbee/common/ecg/363/en/HoAEvaluationReport.pdf>

staff and consultants also tend to be given insufficient responsibilities, visibility and decision-making roles.

7. Key developments at the regional level were the establishment of the Regional Emergency Office for Africa (REOA) in Nairobi and the setting-up of an FAO Sub-Regional Office for East Africa (SFE) in Addis Ababa. The respective roles of these two offices were reviewed in the evaluation, which concluded they can well complement one another. At headquarters level, it was found that more corporate coherence was needed in the areas of early warning and food security systems. Moreover, support to the Greater Horn of Africa region is provided by two TCE services (TCES for Somalia and Sudan, and TCEO for other countries in the region), a dichotomy which does not encourage sharing of information and good practices.

Partners

FAO works directly with more than 50 different international and local NGOs in the region, chiefly for input delivery but also to develop sectoral strategies. A major constraint to these partnerships is the fact that they are defined in Letters of Agreement, an instrument which does not reflect the type of partnering amongst equals expected by some donors and NGOs.

FAO has built a stronger relationship with NGOs than with governments, although there are exceptions to this, e.g. in Ethiopia or in the area of animal health in all countries. There are real opportunities for FAO to collaborate more effectively with governmental research and extension services. The same applies to the cooperation with IGAD and regional research centres.

Relevance, Effectiveness and Impact

Overall and in spite of a few important exceptions, the evaluation found that the FAO emergency programme in the region focussed too much on treating the consequences of vulnerability (e.g. through seed aid), at the expense of effort towards tackling long-term, deep-rooted causes of food insecurity and vulnerability in the region.

In terms of early warning systems, a notable achievement during the evaluated period was the development by the FSAU in Somalia of the Integrated Humanitarian and Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), a simple scale to integrate multiple facets of food and livelihood security information into a simple statement indicating levels of severity and implications for humanitarian response. FAO has introduced the IPC to other countries of the Horn and has used it as a tool for regional level analysis. However, the early warning and food security information systems that FAO supports in the region should place greater emphasis on threats to pastoralist livelihood systems.

8. Early warning does not necessarily translate into early response, in part due to the lack of contingency plans and funding. Another missing link would be a forum for coordinated response analyses, where government units, UN agencies, NGOs and donors could review and prioritize response options together.

9. Poor timeliness was identified as a key weakness in the agriculture sector, mainly due to inadequate logistical and operational capacity in the field and the dependence on consolidated appeals that are poorly synchronised with cropping season. The evaluation also highlighted the consumption of distributed cereal seed as a significant issue in Somalia and southern Sudan. Overall, seed aid seems to have resulted in higher food production and farm incomes.

10. Livestock-oriented interventions, dominated by animal health programmes, were found generally relevant and effective, although insufficient in volume and not based on consistent technical approaches. The support to networks of Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs), generally set up by NGOs, was particularly relevant to reach nomadic herders. However, such networks tended to be poorly connected with national animal health systems.

11. The work related to lifting the livestock export ban imposed on countries in the Horn of Africa by the Arabian Peninsula countries appears particularly relevant and possibly represents the most significant contribution to the economies and food security in the Horn of Africa that FAO could make.

Gender and Equity

12. ECUs identified a number of activities or opportunities to target women and female-headed households, notably in southern Sudan where women constituted the majority of recipients of seeds, tools and fishing equipment distributed by FAO. A land tenure project has also tried to promote women's right to own land in southern Sudan. However, there was no systematic attempt at mainstreaming gender throughout the project cycle, from strategy setting to project design, implementation, and monitoring.
13. Targeting of inputs is very difficult to achieve effectively in the Horn of Africa. Often FAO and its partners adopted either blanket distributions or a set of targeting criteria that resulted in almost everyone in the community being selected. The evaluation acknowledges that targeting can create tensions that communities would normally tend to avoid, and is only worthwhile when distributing costly items such as animals.
14. A number of recommendations are proposed to strengthen FAO's programmes in the region, interspaced in the following extended summary.

II. EXTENDED SUMMARY

A. BACKGROUND

Introduction

15. Despite the remarkable resilience of its agricultural and pastoral populations over many centuries, the Greater Horn of Africa² has become one of the most food insecure regions in the world. Its population, now estimated at 160 million, has more than doubled since 1974. Such population growth has increased pressure on scarce land and water resources. Furthermore, widespread insecurity in Somalia, southern Sudan and northern Uganda over the past two decades has torn societies apart, displaced large numbers of people (about 750,000 refugees and up to 5 million people internally displaced according to the UNHCR and OCHA), prevented access to land and services, and undermined customary institutions and practice.

16. As political security returns tentatively to key areas, such as southern Sudan with the signature in 2005 of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, or to parts of northern Uganda thanks to the Juba peace talks, the opportunity exists for the resettlement of refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs) on their ancestral land. However, chronic poverty still underlies the situation in the region as many people can no longer make a living from agriculture or livestock production alone.

The Evaluation of the FAO Emergency and Rehabilitation Assistance in the Horn of Africa

17. The evaluation was undertaken to review all the activities being undertaken by FAO in conjunction with member governments and partners in response to the long-standing crises in the region. The purpose of the evaluation was to:

- provide feedback and guidance to the FAO on strategic and operational achievements and constraints in order to improve relevance to beneficiaries, effectiveness and efficiency of FAO's emergency and rehabilitation assistance in the region;
- provide accountability to governments, donors and other stakeholders on the use of resources; and
- draw on the programme experience in the Horn of Africa to contribute to institutional learning within the FAO.

18. The evaluation focused on the FAO emergency and rehabilitation assistance to Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, southern Sudan and northern Uganda from 2004 to 2007. This broad area shares common issues such as conflict of various intensities, displacement, erratic climate with recurring droughts and floods, and HIV/AIDS, which justifies a regional outlook.

19. The response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami (Somalia) and the programme for surveillance, preparedness and control of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza were not included in the present evaluation because they were covered by previous evaluations.

20. The evaluation consulted a wide range of FAO staff, stakeholders and beneficiaries at different levels and included impact assessments in four of the countries. A Consultative Group, composed of representatives of affected countries, donors and staff involved in the programme advised the evaluation manager and the team throughout the Evaluation Process. The evaluation mission culminated in a regional workshop, involving FAO staff and a wide range of partners from countries concerned in Nairobi on 30 May 2007 and a debriefing at FAO headquarters on 6 June 2007.

² Throughout this report, "the Greater Horn of Africa", "the Horn of Africa" or simply "the region" refer to the following countries: Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

B. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME

Programme Areas

21. The evaluation identified a number of components in the programme:
- “Knowledge projects” consisting of (i) early warning and food security information systems in Somalia, Kenya and more recently Sudan (supported by regional initiatives and global systems³); (ii) a land and water information management system in Somalia (SWALIM); and (iii) technical assistance on land tenure in Ethiopia, Sudan and Uganda;
 - Agricultural projects, for which seeds and tools distribution (particularly important in Sudan and Uganda, with smaller interventions in Ethiopia and Somalia) accounted for about half the resources; other interventions include the propagation of mosaic-resistant cassava cuttings⁴, support to the restoration of farm power in southern Sudan and northern Uganda, integrated pest management and grain storage improvement in Somalia, Aflatoxin control in Kenya, and rehabilitation and development of water resources and irrigation schemes in Ethiopia and Somalia;
 - Livestock and fisheries projects, dominated by animal health interventions across the region, including support to veterinary services, training of Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs), prevention and control of transboundary diseases (including the hemorrhagic Rift Valley Fever, Rinderpest, and Avian Influenza); support was also provided to livestock and meat marketing in Ethiopia and Somalia, aquaculture and fisheries in Sudan and Uganda, as well as redistribution of small ruminants and destocking in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia;
 - Support to the livelihoods of HIV and AIDS affected households amongst displaced populations in Uganda⁵; and
 - FAO’s mandated role to promote coordination within the agriculture and food security sector in humanitarian emergencies.
22. The evaluation kept abreast of the current Horn of Africa Initiative being led jointly by FAO and WFP to identify and prioritise actions contributing to a durable solution to food insecurity in the region, but was not in a position to assess it because it took place during and after the evaluation mission.

Resources

23. FAO has raised \$240m for emergency and rehabilitation assistance in the region since 2004⁶. Emergency funding for FAO in the Horn has seen a three-fold increase from 2004 to 2007 (see figure 1 overleaf). This is indicative of how effective FAO has become in raising resources, and of the increasing importance donors have begun to attach to non-food aid interventions (including livelihoods restoration, early warning systems and coordination) in support of food security. The European Commission (including ECHO and EDF funding) is, significantly, the largest contributor. Somalia and southern Sudan attracted two-thirds of this funding between them (figures 2 and 3).

³ Notably EMPRES, FIVIMS and GIEWS.

⁴ Part of the regional cassava initiative covering the Great Lakes region, undertaken by FAO with ECHO funding since 2006.

⁵ Part of a regional project covering the Great Lakes region, funded by SIDA since 2003.

⁶ In the case of Somalia and southern Sudan, this figure also includes longer term development projects funded by EDF, Denmark and Norway and managed by TCES, approximately \$20m in 2005-07.

Figure 1: Estimated Annual Expenditures for FAO Development & Emergency Operations in the Horn of Africa

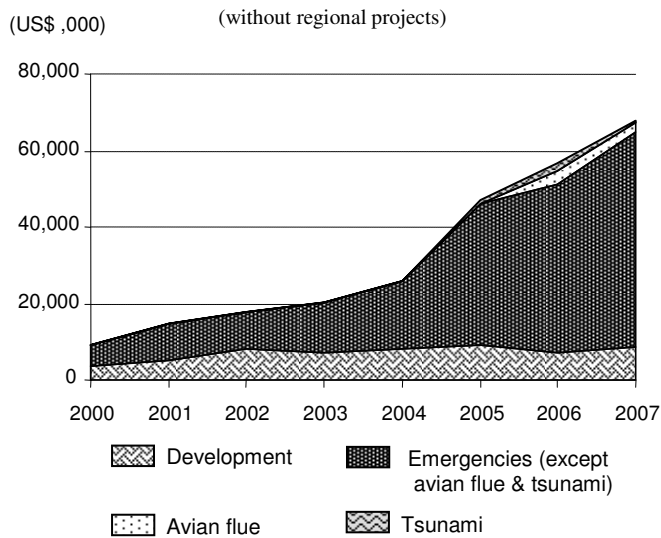


Figure 2: Donor Contributions (2004-2007)

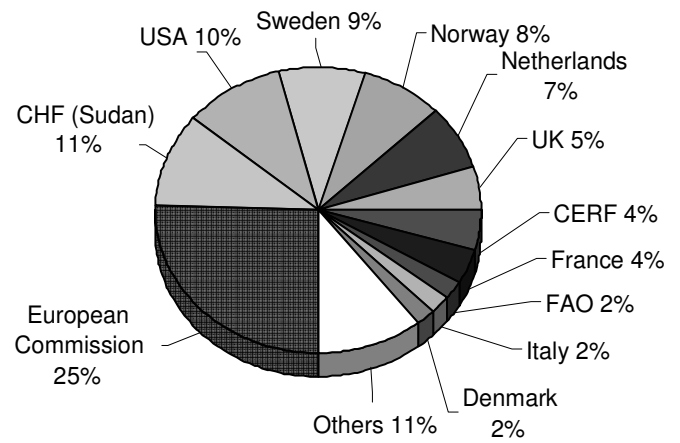
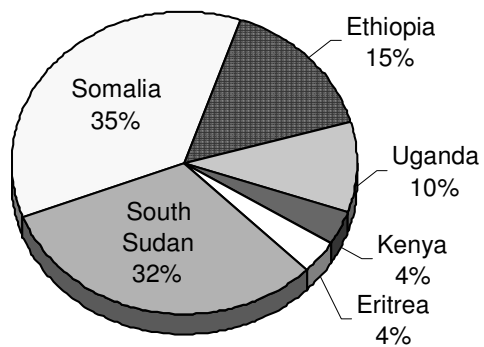
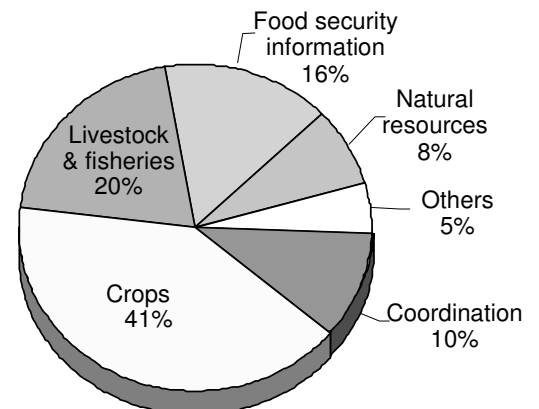


Figure 3: Resource Allocation by Country Programme (2004-2007)



Djibouti: \$95,963 = 0.07%

Figure 4: Resource Allocation by sector
(all projects managed by TCE, except tsunami and avian influenza)



24. FAO and its partners have relied significantly on the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) and on annual national appeals (Ethiopia) for funding their emergency and rehabilitation assistance. Sudan is the one exception, where resources are raised against the “Consolidated Work Plan” including activities from all UN agencies and NGOs and donors contribute to a Common Humanitarian Fund (CHF) which represents the primary source of FAO funding in southern Sudan.

25. It is difficult to ascertain to what extent donors rely on the CAP to identify responses to fund, but there is no question that CAPs significantly raise the profile and to a degree present an obligation for donors to commit funds. However, there are limitations to the CAP in funding livelihoods protection and rehabilitation programmes: (i) the CAPs are only activated after official government declaration of an emergency; (ii) the CAP period (always the calendar year, irrespective of the country or region appealed for) is poorly timed compared to the agricultural seasons in the Horn (see paragraph 86); and (iii) the CAP only addresses short-term funding, with “recovery” or “transition” activities generally left to other mechanisms such as the two year UN Transition Plan being developed in Somalia.

26. An interesting development was the Regional CAP, launched by UNOCHA in 2006 in response to the 2004-05 regional drought. The 2006 Regional CAP covered Djibouti, Eritrea, Kenya and Somalia. The FAO Regional Emergency Office for Africa (REOA) supported this initiative, through, among other things, the development of a regional map annexed to the document as evidence of the regional nature of the drought, and complemented it by developing its own regional Plan of Action (POA) for the Greater Horn of Africa. While the donor response to the regional CAP was lukewarm, the POA was well received by donors.

Funding recovery activities

27. The gap between emergency and development funding has been recognised as a critical issue in the Horn of Africa as elsewhere. FAO in all countries needs to highlight to governments and donors the importance of continued support to build back livelihood assets after the “emergency”. However, the situation in this respect varies across the region:

- The problem appears worse in Uganda and Kenya, where such resources are extremely difficult for UN agencies and NGOs to source.
- In Sudan, a multi-donor trust fund is being established by the World Bank to finance the strategy of the Government and partners in the next reconstruction phase in the southern sector of the country, and it is critical that FAO engages actively in this process.
- In Ethiopia, donors withdrew direct budgetary support to the Ethiopian Government in 2005 and view financing longer term recovery interventions through the UN system as a practical alternative, with UN agencies ensuring that such interventions are undertaken in close collaboration with the Government.
- In Somalia, there remains a substantial dependency upon the UN system and NGOs to deliver a broad range of interventions in the absence of a fully functioning and effective central government, which explains in part the high level of resources being channelled through the UN system and notably FAO. However, most of the non-emergency funding is sourced through the European Development Fund (EDF) and driven by the EC’s own priorities and strategies, which determine calls for proposals.

Recommendation 1: Based on sound analytical evidence, continue to advocate through governments, donors and the UN system for a greater proportion of humanitarian funding to focus on more appropriate and sustainable food security and livelihood interventions.

Recommendation 2: Continue to actively engage in the development of medium term strategies that determine priorities in addressing chronic food insecurity (for example the PRDP in Uganda, MDTF in Sudan, PSNP in Ethiopia).

Recommendation 3: Continue to mobilize and coordinate resources (financial as well as strategic reserves/stocks) at the regional level.

C. STRATEGIC PLANNING

28. The main vehicle for strategic planning of the FAO emergency work in the region has been the Plan of Action (POA) for the Greater Horn of Africa, covering Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Uganda and Tanzania. It was initially developed by the REOA (see section D) to complement the annual appeal process by providing a better informed strategy in support of food security, advocating for coherence and “connectedness” between emergency, rehabilitation and development assistance, and thus challenging the conventional wisdom of donors and some international agencies that resources have to be separately allocated to “emergencies,” “recovery/transition,” and “development”.

29. The POA aims to promote greater consistency between country-level and regional interventions, promote coordination between entities operating at the regional level, highlight food security issues with a regional dimension (e.g. transboundary diseases), and strengthen the livelihoods analysis underpinning food security interventions in the region. The overall objective is to reduce the vulnerability of rural communities by providing short-term humanitarian assistance while at the same time tackling the root causes of livelihood erosion. At a time when FAO’s global priorities for emergency and rehabilitation assistance are not clearly articulated, the

POA provides a much needed strategic framework for the region. Not all the donors are convinced of its merits, but it has been successful in mobilising resources at the regional level for coordination, drought response, transboundary animal health response and the regional cassava multiplication initiative.

30. The evaluation team pointed out areas where improvements could be made to strengthen the value of the regional POA as a strategic and resource mobilisation instrument, including through a clearer scope (the document pretends to provide a strategy for the entire agriculture sector rather than just for FAO, but it will probably always be perceived by partners as an FAO plan), insufficient emphasis on deep-rooted social or political issues (e.g. the marginalisation of pastoral areas in governmental budgets and infrastructure, cattle rustling or insecure land tenure) compared to technical issues and solutions, and inadequate involvement and ownership of FAORs, Emergency Coordinators and other FAO colleagues in the region.

31. The emphasis is now placed on developing national POAs. These are at different stages of development and they will probably take different shapes, including that of a chapter in the National Medium Term Priority Framework in Kenya. In southern Sudan, a very dynamic environment which requires clear strategic thinking, the process of developing a strategy had yet to start at mission time.

Recommendation 4: Continue to develop and refine intervention strategies in support of key vulnerable groups (inter alia pastoralists, rainfed and riverine farmers, IDP and returnees, female- and child-headed households, and HIV-affected households), based on a thorough analysis of their production and livelihoods systems and on in-depth diagnosis of the root causes of food insecurity for these different groups, building upon existing livelihood baselines and making links to land tenure/utilization.

D. FAO ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

Country Level

32. At country level, the relationship between the FAORs and the Emergency Coordination Units (ECUs) is generally conducive and supportive. The different lines of reporting (FAORs to OCD and ECs to TCE) can lead to difficulties and tensions, depending on the particular set up:

- In Ethiopia and Uganda, ECUs are established as distinct units within the country programme, where linkages between the emergency interventions and other FAO activities are not always clear, giving the impression of one organization within another organization.
- The ECUs in Somalia and southern Sudan assume responsibility for all operational aspects of FAO programming in their respective area, including development projects⁷.
- In Kenya, there is no ECU; the emergency response capacity is integral to the FAOR office.

33. Since FAO stresses the importance of linking short-term emergency interventions with longer term measures to build local capacities and institutions and increase the resilience of productive systems, it is the view of the evaluation team that either ECUs should bridge the gap between emergency response and development programming by effectively assuming the “operational” role of the FAO country programme (as in the case of Somalia and southern Sudan) or ECUs and other activities of FAO should be better integrated at country level.

34. An encouraging trend in this regard is that regular staff now has a better understanding of “emergencies” than in the past, thanks to training and awareness promoted across FAO in the past

⁷ Since the signing of the CPA in January 2005, TCE moved the management of southern Sudan field operations from Nairobi (which was previously covering the “Southern Sector”, i.e. SPLA-held areas) and Khartoum (which was looking after the “Northern Sector”, i.e. Government-held areas around garrison towns) to a new office in Juba, supposed to be operationally autonomous under the overall supervision of the FAOR in Sudan.

two years. This has helped the culture of the Organization adapt to its increasing activities in support of emergencies.

Recommendation 5: Emergency Coordination Units should be well integrated into the structure of the Office of the FAOR and benefit from the existing technical and administrative capacity as well as ECUs providing operational support to other programme activities where appropriate. “Stand alone” Emergency Coordination Units (such as Somalia and southern Sudan) which assume all operational responsibilities for FAO in their respective areas need to be given the resources to do so effectively, i.e. stable, predictable and if possible regular funding for core representative and administrative functions, and managerial staff of the right calibre and status to engage with other UN organizations, donors and local governments.

Regional Level

35. Key developments at the regional level were the establishment of the Regional Emergency Office for Africa (REOA) in Nairobi in early 2001 and the setting-up of an FAO Sub-Regional Office for East Africa (SFE) in Addis Ababa in 2007.

36. Initially focussed on supporting food security analysis and developing better emergency preparedness capacity in southern Sudan, the REOA later assumed the mandate to backstop all FAO emergency and rehabilitation operations in Africa. REOA played a role in establishing an ECU for Somalia in 2003⁸ and in securing funding for regional initiatives relating to HIV/AIDS and Cassava Mosaic Disease from 2003⁹. In 2005, the REOA contributed to the establishment of the Food Security & Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG) at regional level, and in 2006 supported the development of a regional CAP for the Horn of Africa and the FAO Plan of Action for the Greater Horn of Africa (see section C). In spite of these significant contributions, the REOA is not yet “institutionalised” within FAO.

37. In 2007, an FAO Sub-Regional Office for East Africa (SFE) was established in Addis Ababa as part of ongoing structural reforms. The SFE is headed by a Sub-Regional Coordinator who is also FAO’s Liaison Officer with the African Union (AU) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), as well as FAO Representative in Ethiopia. The office includes technical capacity in crop production, plant protection, animal health, livestock production, fisheries, forestry, agro-processing, agro-business and investment.

38. The respective roles of the REOA and the Sub-Regional Office for East Africa (SFE) have emerged as an important issue during the present evaluation. The fact that the SFE reports to the Office for Coordination and Decentralisation (OCD) whereas the REOA reports to TCE presents a particular challenge. It is the view of the evaluation team that the two offices should complement one another.

Recommendation 6: The role of the Sub-Regional Office for East-Africa (SFE) is primarily to liaise with regional bodies (IGAD, ECA, AU) and to offer technical backstopping to all development and emergency programmes implemented by FAO in East Africa. It should be mandated to provide technical support and clearance for field operations. Its staff composition should reflect the needs of the region (repeated and complex emergencies, displacement, pastoralism).

Recommendation 7: The Regional Emergency Office for Africa (REOA) should complement the SFE, and support ECUs in strategic planning, project cycle management, institutional learning, coordination of strategic reserves and resource mobilisation. Its role and composition should be reviewed annually by TCE, Emergency Coordinators, FAORs and Decentralised Offices. This role should be recognised and institutionalised within FAO.

⁸ Prior to that date, the FAO portfolio in Somalia was managed by the Kenya FAOR.

⁹ Since 2002, the REOA has raised funding for regional projects in excess of \$19m, of which just over \$4m has been spent on the functions and capacity of the regional office itself. The response to the 2005-2006 regional drought represented 45% of all funds raised by REOA.

Headquarters level

39. The FAO culture is too headquarters-centric and does not adequately recognise the potential contribution of decentralised offices and staff. Technical, financial and contractual (staff and consultants) clearances depend on bureaucratic procedures channelled up through the system and beyond the control of those who are held accountable for implementation at the field level. Repeatedly, the evaluation team was made aware of cases where FAO was not able to fulfil its agreed obligations in terms of provision of physical or technical inputs because of delays in processing approvals at headquarters.

40. Because of the centralised and vertical nature of the Organization¹⁰, horizontal linkages work well neither between divisions and departments at head office level, between regional functions, nor between country offices. This is further exacerbated by different parts of FAO assuming responsibilities for different components of one functional piece of work. There is no better example of this than the work on early warning and food security information systems, which involves no less than six units at headquarters. Even if staff at FAO head office know the relative focus of these units (which is not always the case), FAO staff at country level and external actors certainly do not. Instances have occurred when different sections of FAO requested information and inputs on similar subjects at the same time without coordination. The EU, FAO's largest donor to food security information systems in the region, was critical of this disjointed approach.

Recommendation 8: FAO must develop its institutional coherence with respect to food security information systems for emergencies and development (GIEWS, FIVIMS, ESAF, TCER), notably by building stronger links between food security information systems and other early warning systems operating in the region that relate to livestock and transboundary diseases.

41. Within TCE, support to the Greater Horn of Africa region is provided by two services: TCES for Somalia and Sudan, and TCEO for other countries in the region. The justification is that projects in Sudan and Somalia operate in complex, conflict environments requiring special support services. The relationship between Emergency Coordinators and Operations Officers based in TCES and those belonging to TCEO was found generally positive, but this dichotomy may prevent TCE from developing a more coherent geo-political overview and does not encourage sharing of information and practice between countries, even those with common borders and issues.

42. However, a positive aspect of the FAO institutional arrangements is the fact that the collaboration between TCE and technical departments supports the development of medium term interventions, including investments in information systems, irrigation projects, promotion of livestock marketing, etc.

Technical Capacity

43. FAO as a "knowledge organization" has developed a core technical capacity at headquarters level. This capacity has been further decentralized to a degree at sub-regional office level or through other institutional arrangements in the case of East Africa. It was still too early for the evaluation to assess the effect and impact that such decentralisation of technical services may have on the programme.

44. There is also technical capacity within the REOA relating to agriculture, livestock, food security and HIV/AIDS. This capacity is meant to function in an advisory and support role to ECUs especially in the Horn and Great Lakes region, but in practice this works more effectively in some countries than others. FAORs and Emergency Coordinators tend to have little stake in the REOA as far as determining the way resources are used and technical support provided. Consequently, there is a degree of indifference at country level about the role and value added of the REOA.

¹⁰ The Independent External Evaluation of FAO talked of a "silo culture".

45. This is unfortunate since at country level, and particularly at the point of intervention in the field (e.g. district level), the technical capacity of FAO is spread very thin and does not reflect the increasing diversity of the portfolio. The field is not accessing technical support from FAO headquarters or regional level in a planned, systematic way to develop a suitable skills base. As a result, FAO's technical competence is weakest at the point of delivery, where it matters most.

46. The extent of this problem varies across countries and sectors. Most country offices are well endowed with agronomists and veterinarians. FAO has helped build a significant technical and surveillance capacity on Avian Influenza in the region, and this could provide a model for building preparedness for outbreaks of other animal diseases. However, there is generally inadequate expertise in the more complex area of livestock production. In fisheries, the lack of a full-time fisheries expert has jeopardised aquaculture projects in northern Uganda. Moreover, links between water resources, agriculture and livestock are not adequately addressed within the region partly because of lack of technical expertise in this area; the only country developing this critical capacity is Somalia through the SWALIM and ARDOPIS projects.

47. In the area of early warning and food security information systems, FAO's capacity is currently very strong in Nairobi due to the combination of capacities from REOA, the FSAU and FAO Kenya, but it is minimal in Sudan. Although FAO leads the food security sector under the Consolidated Work Plan, it has not contributed significantly to improved food security and livelihoods understanding there. The recently started Sudan Institutional Capacity Programme on Food Security Information for Action (SIFSIA) should change this dynamic.

48. Cross-cutting issues including gender and HIV are not effectively addressed through the programme response. There was little or no evidence of nominated staff being trained and supported to act as focal points in addressing these particular issues despite their prioritization within FAO's global policies. The practice in the region is to "use" implementing partners to execute projects with a focus on HIV affected households and take account of gender implications without sufficiently promoting Organization's own technical guidance on gender.

49. Finally, ECUs lack the expertise to undertake effective monitoring (including impact assessments), although this capacity is now being developed in some countries as well as in the REOA.

Human Resources and Operational Capacity

50. The growth in funding made available to FAO in the region has translated into the recruitment of well qualified and motivated national as well as international staff and consultants. Unfortunately, this human resource base is entirely dependent upon external budgetary support which is both short-term and at times irregular. This undermines any long-term approach to developing operational capacity. Staff is subject to constant breaks in employment and renewal of contracts, which results in significant staff turnover and reflects on the quality of programme interventions. National staff and consultants also tend to be given insufficient responsibilities, visibility and decision-making roles, and thus their competencies tend to be under-utilized.

51. Furthermore, the significant increase in the scale and diversification of projects supported by FAO in the region over the past three years has not been matched by strengthened administrative, logistics and operational capacity at the field level. Often FAO technical staff at field level (national and international) is tied up undertaking administrative responsibilities and the programme is not benefiting adequately from their technical input. NGO partners have also complained that FAO expects to channel increased levels of inputs through them without any capacity-building or commensurate administrative/transport overheads.

Recommendation 9: Undertake a review of human resources required in each country in view of the priorities identified in the national POA, the portfolio of projects in country and the recommendations of this evaluation, and develop a more diversified skills and gender base within ECUs to ensure effective implementation and capacity building of governmental and non-governmental partners.

Recommendation 10: Prioritise the development of national staff through regular staff appraisals and review of training requirements to fulfil their roles and responsibilities; national staff should form part of management and play a greater role in decision making and coordination than is currently the case.

FAO's Profile in the Region

52. FAO's profile at country level tends to be rather low, with some organizations being uncertain of its role and mandate. The perception of FAO from government and NGO staff familiar with it is one of a neutral actor, well placed to facilitate coordination and broker discussions pertaining to food security and livelihoods analysis. It might be argued that this perception is partly due to FAO not having an explicit agenda and a less significant operational role in emergencies than others. FAO also has a tendency to 'sit on the fence' when it comes to critically commenting on certain practices. In northern Uganda for instance, some agencies would like FAO to take a more critical stance on food security assessments in order to identify and promote better practice. In Ethiopia and Kenya, FAO could more proactively advocate for greater government commitment to and investment in pastoralist communities, as their political marginalisation contributes to their food insecurity.

Recommendation 11: The Organization must be prepared to take a stand on complex issues, especially where the rigour and transparency of information systems and analysis is being compromised by delivery and political imperatives, or where particularly vulnerable or affected communities are not targeted.

E. COORDINATING AND WORKING WITH PARTNERS

One United Nations

53. FAO participation in collaborative planning within the UN system varies, depending upon the commitment and availability of FAO representatives and coordinators. The most active engagement is in Somalia – where FAO put together the report on Livelihoods and Solutions for the Displaced for the World Bank/UN Joint Needs Assessment (JNA) and is leading the priority area on Livelihoods and Food Security within the UN Transition Plan – and in southern Sudan – where FAO plays a key role in developing the Food Security and Livelihoods component of the annual Consolidated Work Plan, which represents the common plan for the Government of Sudan, the UN system and NGOs.

Emergency Coordination at National Level

54. Over the past three years, FAO has played a significant coordination role at national level, leading and/or supporting clusters and sectoral coordination fora relating to agriculture and food security. FAO has become recognized as the lead agency responsible for food security coordination, helped in that by the widely-shared perception that it is more neutral and perhaps also more approachable organization than others in this area.

55. Despite its prominence in cluster or sectoral coordination, FAO is not proactive enough at bringing existing food security and livelihoods information and analysis to the coordination table. Another weakness in coordination is the fact that livestock in these countries is often included (and consequently marginalised) in more general discussions pertaining to agriculture, food security and nutrition.

56. Linkages between short-term humanitarian coordination and longer term developmental coordination mechanisms are notoriously ineffective across the region. This needs to be strengthened and FAO could play a key role in bridging this gap within the food security sector.

Recommendation 12: FAO should capitalise on its lead coordination role by promoting better information exchange and sharing of good practice between countries and actors in the region, drawing more upon livelihoods analysis undertaken at country level, advocating for including pastoralist and cross-cutting issues (HIV-AIDS and gender) into the programmes of partners, as well as more effectively linking humanitarian and development agendas.

Regional Networks

57. FAO leads and plays a key facilitating role in support of the regional Food Security & Nutrition Working Group (FSNWG). The FSNWG promotes information sharing on needs assessment methodologies and best practices; develops joint food security and nutrition tools to track humanitarian emergencies and livelihood threats as they develop; and advocates for timely and appropriate response. The Group has lent much support to the IPC roll out and has been an effective multi-agency collaborative regional forum for developing regional analysis – particularly during the 2005-2006 drought in the Horn of Africa – and for promoting and utilising the IPC. Participation is reasonably wide with different UN agencies, NGOs and donors attending, although FAO often contributes close to half of the participants in any one meeting. The IPC has been a major focus of the FSNWG so far.

Operational partnerships with NGOs

58. FAO works directly with more than 50 different international and local NGOs (as well as ICRC) in the region. These partnerships are chiefly concerned with input delivery but frequently extend beyond that. FAO and NGOs have jointly engaged in the development of sectoral strategies and resource mobilisation, particularly in Kenya, Somalia, Uganda and southern Sudan. These relationships tend to evolve opportunistically, because NGOs offer operational capacity in technical or geographical areas of interest to FAO. There could be an argument for FAO to consider more carefully and strategically its relationships with NGOs to ensure that partners adhere to sound humanitarian principles, apply good practice and contribute key community facilitation skills. The case of southern Somalia provides an example of FAO being strategic through its choice of partnerships with NGOs: in the absence of functioning government services, FAO has pro-actively engaged with Somali NGOs to ensure a more sustainable and nationally-owned approach. The same opportunities exist with Pastoral Development Associations in northern Kenya, which have integral links with communities that international NGOs tend to lack.

59. A major constraint is the fact that the operational relationship between FAO and NGOs is defined in Letters of Agreement (LoA), which are basically contractual arrangements for the execution of FAO-supported project activities and do not in most cases reflect the type of partnership amongst equals expected by some donors, such as the EC in Somalia, nor the type of intellectual partnership that many NGOs can offer FAO. At the time of writing, TCE was in consultation with various departments within FAO headquarters to have a more comprehensive Partnership Agreement developed.

Finalise and introduce a more effective partnership agreement with NGO partners which accurately reflects the respective contributions and obligations of each party, and develop corporate and/or country-level criteria (e.g. registration, membership, accountability, technical capacity, commitment to coordination, etc.) for the selection of NGO partners.

Partnership with Government

60. In developing its emergency work in the region, FAO has built a stronger partnership with NGOs than with governments, even though there are notable exceptions to this: (i) in Ethiopia, FAO channels most of its support through the Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development (MOARD) or regional bureaus (BOARD); (ii) in the area of animal health, FAO works very effectively with government veterinary services in all countries of the Horn; (iii) in early warning and information systems, support is provided to the government ALRMP programme in Kenya, the SIFSIA being launched in Sudan draws in strong government involvement, and even SWALIM in Somalia has exposed and involved government authorities in Somaliland and Puntland to some degree.

61. FAO's engagement with governments with respect to livestock and fisheries production was found weak in Kenya and Uganda, with negative effects on effectiveness, local ownership and sustainability of operations. There are real opportunities for FAO to collaborate more effectively with governmental research and extension services in countries and areas where such services are dynamic and viable. The same applies to the cooperation with IGAD and regional

research centres, e.g. in support of varietal adequacy of distributed seeds, control of transboundary diseases, quarantine and food safety systems, and international market access to livestock and livestock products from the Horn of Africa .

Recommendation 14: Adopt a more strategic approach to partnerships by identifying government partners (including research centres, extension services, training institutes) that have a technical competence which FAO could strengthen and/or draw upon and link with non-governmental partners with complementary skills (poverty/livelihoods analysis, mainstreaming gender/HIV and AIDS, operational capacity) in support of a relevant programme response.

Recommendation 15: Engage more fully with existing technical capacities at regional level (e.g. IGAD, CGIAR institutions and AU-IBAR) and build upon the existing collaboration to scale up the effectiveness of emergency and rehabilitation assistance.

F. RELEVANCE, EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT

Needs assessments:

62. Much humanitarian assistance has historically been channelled to the Horn of Africa, including significant food aid. Among the many types of assessments undertaken, assessments of food security tend to take pre-eminence. The larger assessments that inform national level appeals and funding, such as the joint FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions (CFSAM), face serious criticisms and display a systematic crop bias, even where livestock and other food and income strategies are as important to local livelihoods.

63. The same methodological criticism applies to the seed needs assessments conducted by FAO in the region. Communities often base their response on what resources they expect to be triggered by the assessment, and the survey framework therefore defines the outcome. Holistic need assessments establishing priorities of needs from a wide array of proposed assistance, including food, shelter, health, education and various types of livelihood support, could potentially support more pertinent allocation of funds between sectors.

64. Other than in Somalia, where FAO drives the food security assessment process through the Food Security Analysis Unit, FAO rarely appears to challenge needs assessment methods or results, even in its own specific area of expertise. The recent completion by FAO of the Integrated Livelihood Assessment System guidelines and the needs assessment section within the Emergency Handbook are clearly steps in the right direction and reflect FAO's commitment to livelihood-based analysis. These are, however, very recent products that have not impacted on the FAO field capacity yet.

Recommendation 16: FAO should be more engaged in the development and improvement of methodologies for needs assessments and food security assessments, promote the use of livelihood information to inform its own programme response as well as those of its partners, be more proactive in challenging assumptions and the status quo of interventions within the emergency and development arena, and ensure that interventions are based on good practice gained by FAO and other agencies within the region and premised upon comprehensive needs assessments rather than mere seed needs assessments.

Early Warning and Food Security Information Systems

65. FAO's engagement in this sector has strengthened significantly in the region over the past ten years, notably through two projects: the Food Security and Food Security Analysis Unit (FSAU) in Somalia and the technical support to the Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ALRMP) in Kenya.

66. A notable achievement during the period covered by the evaluation was the development by the FSAU in Somalia of the Integrated Humanitarian and Food Security Phase Classification (IPC), a simple, standardized scale based on an array of objective indicators to integrate multiple facets of food and livelihood security information into a simple statement indicating levels of severity and implications for humanitarian response. This phase classification is mapped

indicating geographic areas of concern and projected trend. The overall objective is to strengthen linkages between information and response analysis.

67. The Organization's support to the development of early warning and food security information systems is highly relevant to the context in the Horn of Africa, where information on extremely diverse livelihood patterns, poverty levels and vulnerability to shocks remains insufficient. In doing so, FAO has demonstrated its capacity to add value to the quality and relevance of collected food security data, analyses and syntheses, and has displayed a flexibility of approach between contexts such as Kenya, where FAO is providing discrete technical support to a system firmly embedded within the Government with clear national ownership and long established funding, and contexts such as Somalia, where the state has virtually no capacity to fulfil essential information and analytical functions. In the latter case, the absence of an established government has to a degree restricted Somali ownership of the FSAU, and emphasis is now being placed on greater involvement of local authorities in analysis, dissemination and use of food security information, where and when feasible (e.g. in Somaliland and Puntland).

68. However, the early warning and food security information systems that FAO supports in the region should place greater emphasis on threats to pastoralist livelihood systems, including disease surveillance and monitoring the condition and movement of livestock, which are critical early warning indicators in predominantly pastoralist areas. A related issue is that the focus of animal disease surveillance efforts to date has been on trade-related transboundary diseases such as RVF (as well as on avian flu of late). Other disease that affect productivity and pastoralists' food security but have limited impact on international trade have not been covered. Although such a focus is pertinent in terms of protecting economic growth and consumers, it tends to limit the relevance of these systems for livestock rearing populations themselves.

69. More generally, there is potential for better use of indigenous knowledge and for generating information of greater relevance to communities and local authorities. The information management systems in place are highly extractive, with the risk that if communities perceive no suitable benefits from such systems, the quality of data and information generated from them may become compromised.

Recommendation 17: Promote a greater use of indigenous knowledge by early warning and other information systems, and assess how existing information systems could be made more relevant to local decision-making, including at the district or even community level.

70. In terms of effectiveness and impact, the cases of the 2005-2006 regional drought and of the latest RVF outbreak at the end of 2006 (see paragraph 98) demonstrated that early warnings do not necessarily translate into early funding being made available and interventions started to address problems when they are small enough to be controllable. The evaluation team concludes that early warning systems need to be linked to contingency funding and strategic reserves (of such items as animal feed, drugs or vaccines) that could be mobilised immediately after an emergency is declared. With the support of the World Bank and the EC, the Kenyan ALRMP has shown the way by developing multi-sectoral contingency plans at district level for which contingency funds can be released based on early warning alerts. It is also encouraging to note that ECHO and USAID are initiating moves to strengthen drought preparedness in pastoralist areas of the region.

71. Another missing link between early warning and relevant, early action would be a forum for coordinated response analyses, where government units, UN agencies, NGOs and donors could review and prioritize response options together.

Recommendation 18: To ensure timely and appropriate responses to livelihoods crises within the region, FAO should promote coordinated situation and response analyses, the development of emergency preparedness plans, and the establishment and trial of contingency funding mechanisms and strategic reserves (e.g. for veterinary drugs, vaccines and cold chain equipment), drawing upon existing capacities (for example the capacity developed for HPAI) and linking in to similar initiatives (ECHO drought management initiative, USAID Mandera Triangle initiative).

72. FAO should draw more upon early warning and food security information to improve its own planning and programming activities, as well as influencing that of the wider UN, governmental and NGO community. This was identified as a weakness by the evaluation: generally, the FAO emergency programme is not sufficiently drawing upon information available in the region to challenge assumptions and interventions and to advocate alternative and innovative solutions.

73. Livelihood-based information systems that are of value to emergency as well as developmental understanding and responses are providing the way forward. Justifying the cost of such systems requires that they develop a diversified user base, become more central to government and development agencies decision-making, and not remain confined to the emergency arena.

Recommendation 19: Promote information systems that are of value to emergency as well as developmental understanding and responses.

IPC Roll Out

74. Over the last two years, FAO has introduced to other countries the IPC developed by the FSAU in Somalia, and has used it as a tool for regional level analysis for instance to map out the food security situation for the entire Horn of Africa within the context of the preparation of the Regional CAP for the 2005-06 drought.

75. Rolling the IPC out of Somalia will be no simple task. The IPC is largely a function of the political, financial and technical independence that the FSAU has had over many years operating in a stateless environment. Livelihood baselines have been developed, systems for a range of data collection established, crop, food security and nutrition assessments undertaken, all under the direct control of the FSAU. The result is that the FSAU essentially has all of the capacities, data and information required to give a neutral and credible picture of the relative severity of food insecurity across the country, and thereby to guide and prioritise resource allocation and strategic responses according to need.

76. Unlike in Somalia, the EW/FSIS environment in other countries of the region is characterised by a wide variety of actors with different interests and agendas. FAO has been collaborative and sensitive to other agencies' needs and priorities in developing and rolling out the IPC. It now needs to maintain momentum and broad ownership while balancing various expectations and biases. Maintaining technical rigour and transparency as well as institutional and political buy-in are key requirements of the IPC roll-out that are not always easy to reconcile. Continued sensitisation is necessary with governments and agencies to sustain momentum.

Recommendation 20: Develop suitable institutional capacity to support the IPC rollout within the region and expand government and agency buy-in, through a sensitisation and capacity building programme with clear strategic partnerships, communication channels, technical responsibility and funding.

Other "Knowledge Projects"

77. Issues relating to water and land access and utilisation are critical throughout the region. The SWALIM project in Somalia and the land tenure programme in southern Sudan were therefore found highly relevant. As a caveat, some of the information products generated by these projects were perceived by government authorities and NGOs as overly complex and technical, a frequent drawback of FAO's information products.

78. The engagement on land tenure is long-standing in southern Sudan where it represents arguably the most strategic of all FAO interventions, given current IDP returns. FAO and its partners (NRC and UNHCR) have developed a rights based approach which recognizes existing customary rights of rural communities as a baseline. This work started during the peace negotiations under IGAD's auspices in the early 2000's and reportedly contributed to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Agricultural interventions

79. “Seed and tools” distributions constitute about half the evaluated agricultural activities, primarily in Uganda and southern Sudan where the inputs were intended to support hundreds of thousands of displaced households each year, and on a smaller scale in Somalia and Ethiopia.

80. It is difficult to answer the question of the relevance of FAO seed and tools distributions in the visited countries because of the relative scarcity and methodological limitations of input need assessments. The need for seed, tools and other implements is a real and pressing issue for returning households in Sudan and Uganda, and was probably significant in the case of floods affecting riverine farmers in Somalia at the end of 2006. However, farmers in the region face a variety of needs and problems, of which access to seed may not always be the first one. The impact assessment conducted as part of this evaluation has highlighted pests and diseases as a major issue in all surveyed countries. In Uganda and southern Sudan, the returnees lack draught power to open up to cultivation their long-fallowed land. They also lack roads, market access and saving and credit facilities. Some in Ethiopia, Uganda and southern Sudan face land tenure problems. Others in Somalia and Ethiopia suffer from inadequate water management at the basin level (see paragraph 92). In all these varied contexts, seed distributions address at best a symptom of the problem but not its root causes.

81. Mindful of this concern, FAO has been developing a more diverse portfolio of emergency operations in the region during the period covered by the evaluation, for which impact could generally not be ascertained due to their being recent interventions, but which were found relevant and promising:

- Farmer Field Schools in Uganda: the improving security situation in northern Uganda has resulted in increased access to land by IDPs, whilst others are returning to their ancestral farmland. To respond to this situation, FAO is attempting to use Farmer Field Schools (FFS) in a recovery context. The option of setting up Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS, basically an FFS adapted to the needs of teenagers) has also been considered. One potential challenge is about how to integrate a component of donated inputs in the FFS approach, without leading to the creation of artificial FFS set up only to attract inputs. However, the approach seems relevant to the situation of long-displaced farmers and in particular to the needs of the displaced youth of rural origin as their upbringing in camp and towns over more than a decade often left them with little opportunities to learn farming or cattle rearing skills.
- Improved grain storage in Somalia: farmers in Somalia and Sudan rely on underground pits to store their maize and sorghum over several years, a practice that reflects and addresses rainfall unpredictability in the Horn and the ensuing wide variability in yields from one agricultural season to the next. The quality of the grain in those pits deteriorates rapidly and the current efforts of FAO Somalia to try and improve long-term storage are very pertinent.
- Cassava is one of the most important food and cash crops in the Great Lakes region, including Uganda, and is also cultivated in southern Sudan. For many people in the region, the tuber crop is vital for both food security and income generation. It offers high yields even in drought-prone areas, grows with minimal tending, and can be harvested over a period of several months, characteristics which helped it spread at the expense of cereal crops in conflict areas such as northern Uganda and southern Sudan. New strains of the Cassava Mosaic have severely threatened the crop throughout the region and the multiplication and distribution of cuttings from new, resistant varieties is therefore quite relevant.
- Rehabilitation of irrigation schemes: The two ARDOPIS projects are attempting to rehabilitate individual irrigation systems on the Juba and Shabelle rivers in Somalia. In Ethiopia, the ECU has supported the rehabilitation of a number of damaged small-scale irrigation systems. Some of these were visited by the mission and appeared cost-effective and implemented reasonably rapidly for an emergency operation. They impacted very significantly on the surrounding communities through improved water control, increased food production and a decrease in malaria. In contrast, the attempt to reduce feed

shortages through the construction of new irrigation schemes (Afar Livestock Recovery Project) took more than a year to deliver and its relevance was questionable with respect to fulfilling an immediate fodder need. The schemes have been used by beneficiaries for the production of maize and other cash crops rather than for the intended fodder grasses.

82. Untimely provision of physical and sometimes technical assistance was identified as a significant area of weakness in the agriculture sector. In Uganda for instance, ICRC is distributing its seed in February each year, well in time for the March planting season, while FAO has often delivered from end of March to mid-April. The situation is similar in southern Sudan with distribution typically taking place at the tail-end of the planting season. A number of factors contribute to this situation:

- Poor logistical and operational capacity, lack of adequate delegation of authority for procurement and LoAs;
- The purchase of inputs from outside the distribution area in contexts where a plethora of relief agencies are renting out all the available transport capacity (southern Sudan);
- Excessive optimism among ECU staff about delivery periods (in most cases, a minimum of three months is required to secure funding, purchase goods, control their quality and arrange for their transport and distribution to beneficiaries), leading them to attempt to “catch the next crop” even when this is not a realistic prospect;
- The dependence upon CAP funding in Uganda and on similar appeal processes in Sudan and Ethiopia: these appeals are generally released between December and February whereas throughout the Horn of Africa the first cropping season usually starts in March or thereabout, less than three months after the CAP release; it is therefore almost impossible to deliver CAP-funded projects for the first planting season.

83. From the impact assessment studies conducted as part of this evaluation, it appears that the quantity of seed donated by FAO and its partners to each individual household is rather modest, especially because benefiting communities sometimes decided to spread out the assistance to the entire community rather than risk creating disputes (e.g. in Somalia). Overall, the seed donated by FAO appears to cover about a third of the recipient seed used in any given season. It is therefore difficult to assume – as often stated in project documentation – that the households supported by FAO and its partners lack access to seed. More probably, they have access to some seed and use FAO’s and other agencies’ donations to complement their indigenous seed supply.

84. There was no evidence of disorderly distributions or of mistreatment of recipients. However, the wide variability in waiting times at the distribution point is an issue for concern, especially in Sudan, where the average travel and queuing time was eleven hours, i.e. an entire day.

85. The quality and germination of the distributed seed has generally been adequate, but untimely distribution severely limited the impact by affecting seed utilisation and yields. From the evidence at hand, seed aid seems to have resulted in higher food production and farm incomes. The incremental production resulting from the FAO distributions was apparently marketed more often than used to directly supplement household consumption.

Recommendation 21: Distributions of agricultural inputs should remain an option when deemed truly necessary, e.g. to support IDP return or in case of widespread destruction of assets by natural disasters. It should be implemented more professionally, based on deeper knowledge of local seed availability and access mechanisms, planting seasons and key varieties used by targeted communities. Seed and other agricultural inputs should be supplied earlier than is currently the case, before the start of the planting season rather than during it. Guidance and norms for distribution management should be reviewed, with a view to decreasing distribution times and compiling comprehensive beneficiary lists.

86. Resale of seeds and tools appears very limited, but the evaluation highlighted a significant issue with consumption of cereal seed in Somalia – as a result of distribution delayed by floods, lack of access to food and probably lack of opportunities to plant sorghum in flooded riverine

plains – and in southern Sudan – where the issue is more probably linked with poor varietal suitability of sorghum seed brought in from Uganda and Khartoum. Seed consumption does not seem to have happened on any significant scale in Uganda, where most recipients in IDP camps were receiving substantial food assistance, and was fairly low in Ethiopia. There is also anecdotal evidence that some tools are being reworked/adapted by local blacksmiths to better fit farmers' requirements in northern Uganda and southern Sudan.

87. In northern Uganda, there is evidence that local stockists have suffered significant loss as a result of repeated seed and tools distributions. This negative impact can be minimised by procuring seed from local cooperatives or farmer organizations as done in Somalia, Ethiopia and southern Sudan, through procurement of tools from local artisans as in the southern Sudan programme, or by the use of seed fairs open to local seed sellers as done in the Ethiopia programme.

Recommendation 22: In situations where agricultural inputs are distributed regularly (northern Uganda, southern Sudan), they should be procured from networks of local, reliable producers or stockists, and are best delivered through input fairs and voucher systems, so as to support the local economy and reduce risks of late delivery and poor varietal suitability.

88. Overall and in spite of the critical importance of water resources to improve the food security of vulnerable communities in the Horn, FAO and other agencies' involvement in this area was found rather weak. One significant programmatic gap here pertains to the need for a river basin management approach. The Awash River in the Afar Region of Ethiopia is being pumped by an increasing number of commercial and community-based irrigated schemes without much regard to how the resource should be managed, shared and preserved. Similarly, large water retention and irrigation infrastructure along the Shabelle in Somalia is derelict, unable to store and use surplus water. The collapse of state-run basin management systems upstream, together with the anarchic development of small irrigation schemes damaging the river's banks downstream, translates into more frequent floods. The two ARDOPIS projects are attempting to rehabilitate individual irrigations structures downstream the Juba and Shabelle rivers, but nothing is done at the moment to address basin-level concerns.

Recommendation 23: FAO should expand its interventions on water control for agriculture, with due attention to the development and rehabilitation of discrete irrigation structures, and taking broader and more complex river basin management issues in to consideration.

Livestock-oriented interventions

89. These were found generally relevant. However, they were insufficient in volume, especially as compared with the share of resources allocated to crops versus livestock operations (Figure 4 page 7) in a region where livestock rearing contribute to the livelihoods of an estimated 40 million people, a quarter of the total population. The Ethiopia programme is one exception where livestock-oriented interventions dominate. Livestock-oriented interventions also tended to be dominated by animal health activities, possibly on account of their being better understood and technically easier to set up. There was little effort towards tackling more long-term and deep-rooted issues, such as water points for livestock, rangeland management, fodder reserves or control of *Prosopis*, an invasive plant which has grown into a serious problem by encroaching on arid range lands.

90. Livestock activities have tended to be implemented as discrete interventions with little thought put to coherence across interventions and countries, with insufficient monitoring, and sometimes with inadequate technical expertise (Uganda). As a result, there is scarce documentation of successful approaches and good practices to assist programme managers in the design and implementation of emergency livestock interventions. The ongoing efforts of FAO,

Tufts University and other partners to develop Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS)¹¹ are fundamental for better future engagement.

Recommendation 24: Base animal health, de-stocking, restocking and animal feed interventions on livestock emergency guidelines and standards to ensure good, consistent practices across the region.

91. Animal health: The support provided to train, refresh and equip Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs), originally selected and trained by NGOs in all the countries, was notable and particularly relevant to provide animal health services in remote areas and to reach nomadic or transhumant herds. In southern Sudan, FAO's substantial support to the eradication of rinderpest was successful in spite of being implemented during a period of conflict, thanks in part to NGO-operated networks of CAHWs. The insistence on CAHWs providing services on a cost recovery basis is well founded: animal owners are often not the poorest segments of society and can usually pay for keeping their animals alive and well. The aim to sustain the work of CAHWs over the long term is laudable, even if notable difficulties were encountered in all countries in the application of this policy and most CAHWs still need regular drug replenishments.

92. However, such networks tend to be poorly connected with national animal health systems (veterinarians, laboratories, drug suppliers, etc.). If the NGOs that support them were to close, few of these CAHWs would be able to continue working. This calls for a comprehensive review of the various CAHWs networks in the region and of how they could be reinforced, better integrated into national veterinary systems, and better used for disease surveillance. The work of FAO and partners in Ethiopia towards creating veterinary pharmacies linked to CAHW networks is notable in this regard and deserves to be reinforced. CAHWs also need more frequent and regular training to be able to diagnose more diseases and hence be more useful to their communities. This could be an important contribution for FAO, which has already developed a CAHW curriculum in Ethiopia.

Recommendation 25: FAO should undertake a comprehensive review of the various CAHWs networks in the Horn of Africa, their strengths and weaknesses in terms of technical and "reaching-out" capacities, drug supply sustainability and cost-recovery systems, with a view to re-enforce existing networks through regular training and to better integrate them into national animal health systems through improved drug and material supplies and policy environment.

93. Animal health interventions have been reasonably effective. Deworming campaigns have been undertaken to reduce the high parasite burden in livestock, thus improving livestock physical condition and limiting decreases in milk production, with attendant positive impact on the nutritional status of the household and notably children. In southern Sudan, a pipeline of vaccines and drugs from Kenya inherited from UNICEF was well maintained by FAO and supplied the "OLS Southern Sector" and now the entire south in a generally timely and predictable fashion. In Ethiopia, FAO's effective engagement in the purchase of drugs and vaccines on behalf of the Pastoralist Livelihoods Initiative (PLI) funded by USAID ensured that essential animal drugs and vaccines were distributed and administered through regional government at an early stage of the drought response (Jan. & Feb. 2006). In Kenya, a campaign to control Caprine Pleuro-Pneumonia unfolded in a generally timely manner and allowed the Garissa market – a critical livestock outlet in the sub-region – to remain open. However, the extensive vaccination campaigns in Ethiopia and southern Sudan are sometimes undertaken without proper disease surveillance, which means their effectiveness and utility cannot always be ascertained.

94. Lateness of governments in declaring disease outbreaks, notably where such a declaration would have significant commercial implications, often delayed the response, for instance with respect to the outbreak of Rift Valley Fever in 2006. In Ethiopia, FAO and the Government could not at first agree on the ownership of the surveillance data to be collected, which delayed

¹¹ See the LEGS Website at: <http://www.livestock-emergency.net>. The ICRC also published a review of varied livestock-related interventions in the Horn of Africa to derive good practices: S. Piers Simkin: Livestock Study in the Greater Horn of Africa, ICRC, November 2005.

surveillance and community education activities¹². In Kenya, governmental authorities declared the outbreak of RVF in December 2006 while FAO had issued an alert as early as October 2006. The FAO-procured vaccines arrived in country in March 2007 and were used in ring vaccination campaigns between March and April, when the outbreak was essentially over. Tanzania never declared the same outbreak, preventing any form of response designed to control it¹³.

95. De-stocking and restocking: De-stocking early enough in times of drought is key to the long-term sustainability and profitability of livestock systems in the Horn. However, there is a risk that agency-supported de-stocking operations could destabilise local markets and for this reason, working in partnership with private dealers to lower their transaction costs appears more relevant than direct purchase by NGOs.

96. Regarding re-stocking, the choice of animal species (usually sheep and goats) in FAO's interventions was appropriate. Similarly, the approach to procure animals from the same communities or areas¹⁴ was sound, as this prevents the creation of excessive grazing pressure just after a drought and decreases the risk of introducing infectious diseases. However, the relevance of animal re-stocking activities raises several issues, such as whether re-stocking projects are keeping in the livestock-rearing business households that should rather opt for another source of livelihoods.

97. Re-stocking interventions in Ethiopia and Uganda focused on vulnerable women and were not as effective as they should have been, mainly because the targeted households did not have access to veterinary services and had difficulties maintaining the animals. HIV/AIDS-affected households in Uganda lost a significant proportion of the livestock as the goats arrived in poor condition and had little to eat in the IDP camps where they were distributed. The de-stocking intervention in Somalia helped vulnerable households in times of crisis, but was limited in size as determined by available funding.

98. Livestock trade: The work on trying to lift the export ban for livestock imposed on countries in the Horn of Africa by the Arabian Peninsula countries – through improved animal health inspection and certification for export in Somalia, Ethiopia and Djibouti (EXCELEX project) and through the establishment of Livestock Boards with representation from both the public and private sectors in Somaliland and Puntland – is highly relevant and strengthened livestock health certification practices in Somaliland and to a lesser degree Puntland. However, the Somaliland and Puntland Livestock Boards still need to demonstrate their capacity to foster a lasting and useful dialogue between public and private stakeholders now that the projects supporting their creation are over. The boards are currently composed of livestock traders, veterinarians and government representatives. They could usefully be opened to community representatives, so as to ensure that the interests of the livestock traders are not the only one addressed in these forums.

99. The ban, instituted to control the human health risks arising from zoonotic transmission of Rift Valley Fever (RVF) following an outbreak in 2000, has reduced livestock exports from Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia by more than 70% and drastically cut associated revenues. Helping to lift the ban would probably constitute the most significant contribution to the economies and food security in the Horn of Africa that FAO could possibly make. The largest livestock

¹² Community awareness materials developed by FAO in Kenya were eventually utilised in Ethiopia to good effect.

¹³ The REOA is initiating a joint regional programme with AU-BAR and ILRI on the prevention and control of RVF. This engagement at a regional level may prove more successful than discrete national projects, as diseases and pastoralists in the Horn do not know borders, and treating a particular health issue on one side of a border but not on the other is often ineffective.

¹⁴ Except in Uganda where the goats and pigs distributed to HIV-affected households were transported from a different region.

importing country of the Gulf, Saudi Arabia, still imposes the ban but exports from the Horn to Arabian Peninsula countries through third parties have almost reached pre-ban volumes¹⁵.

Fisheries-oriented interventions

100. The support to fisheries in southern Sudan and in Uganda was considered very relevant. The potential for fishing in southern Sudan is considerable; the wetlands and permanent swamps have substantial natural fish resources able to sustain captures of 80 to 100,000 metric tons per year, offering an unexploited and sustainable alternative animal protein source. Support to aquaculture and fish farming in Uganda is an encouraging emerging activity complementary to more traditional forms of fishing in natural waters.

101. In southern Sudan, the programme has been supported by a long-term national fisheries expert and this contributed to the reasonable effectiveness of the activities (distribution of fishing gear, training on boat making, fish preserving and marketing). The impact assessment survey detected a large increase in mean catches over the period but this was comparable for both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries and hence probably related to improved security conditions rather than a direct impact of the programme.

102. In northern Uganda, FAO has supported the establishment of fish ponds by returnees through the Farmer Field Schools modality. The fish ponds were well designed and excavated by beneficiaries at their own cost. The initiative then came to a temporary halt as FAO had difficulties securing the assistance of a full-time fisheries expert capable to backstop the initiative, including the procurement of fingerlings to stock the fishponds. This key technical input was arranged on a monthly basis with wide gaps between the inputs. As a result, fingerlings could not be procured right after the end of excavation. The beneficiaries met by the evaluation mission five months after the end of excavation were still waiting for their fingerlings.

Recommendation 26: When starting a new initiative, FAO as a technical agency should first and foremost secure adequate technical expertise for years rather than months, possibly through partnerships and/or retainer consultancy contracts, and ideally through hiring the staff on a long-term basis¹⁶.

HIV and AIDS

103. In Uganda, FAO interventions to alleviate the impact of HIV and AIDS on household food insecurity have included free inputs (seeds, tools and small ruminants) donated to groups of affected populations. The objective was to enable a significant proportion of HIV and AIDS affected households to meet their nutrition needs and sell the surplus to obtain additional income for health care, school fees and to hire casual labour. According to respondents in the communities met by the evaluation team, these inputs (in particular vegetable and soya seed) have been relevant to meet household, nutrition and education expenses, but not sufficient to engage hired labour for land clearance, an essential need for such households as they now resettle areas abandoned over 15 years ago. However, the provision of small ruminants was questionable on several accounts: the animals were acquired from outside the programme area, there were deaths during transport; there was no quarantine period after transportation and no veterinary services incorporated into the project; and the animals were distributed in a camp situation with limited grazing and much plastic refuse hazardous to the health of animals. Beneficiaries incurred significant losses of the distributed goats as a result.

104. As with other seed interventions, there were delays in providing seeds to HIV/AIDS affected households in time for the intended planting season in Uganda. Nutrition training

¹⁵ Approximately 3 million heads were exported to Gulf countries in 2006, of which 2.8 million were sheep and goats. Livestock prices in the north of Somalia peaked in December 2006 in response to the high export demand during the period of the Hajj. See *FSAU Somalia Food Security and Nutrition Brief - Focus on Deyr Season, January 2007*.

¹⁶ This is not only important to backstop FAO's own programme: other partners in the country might be in need of the same technical backstopping and would logically turn to the UN mandated technical agency to provide it.

combined with the provision of soya and vegetable seed was considered very effective and respondents were enthusiastic about it.

105. There is anecdotal evidence that the efforts to target HIV-affected households in Uganda boosted HIV testing in the project area because the assistance was delivered to HIV-affected people only. This programme tends to significantly favour women who represent an overwhelming majority in beneficiary groups, possibly because they are more likely to declare their HIV infection than men.

Gender and Equity Considerations

106. Targeting of inputs is very difficult to achieve effectively in the Horn of Africa. Often FAO and its partners adopted either blanket distributions or a set of targeting criteria that resulted in almost everyone in the community being selected (as in the case of agricultural inputs and support to IDPs in Uganda). In other cases (Somalia), FAO and its partners tried to target particular vulnerable households, but communities decided to share the distributed items among all households. However, there have been efforts to target the most vulnerable households (households headed by children and women and those affected by HIV and AIDS) through livestock inputs. In this respect, the efforts to support the re-integration of displaced youth in a rural setting through Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools in Uganda and Kenya are encouraging.

107. The evaluation acknowledges that targeting can create tensions that communities would normally tend to avoid. Targeting is only worthwhile when distributing costly items such as animals (re-stocking, for which the most vulnerable households are probably not the right target), while blanket distributions appear more cost-effective for low-cost items such as seed and tools.

108. The evaluation noted the absence of a systematic gender mainstreaming process, e.g. through a gender-sensitive strategic vision, empowering rural women in problem identification and need assessment, ensuring gender-sensitive assistance and using a gender lens in monitoring results. In spite of this, ECUs identified a number of activities or opportunities to target women and female-headed households. For instance in southern Sudan, the programme has worked with specialized NGOs to reach the many female- and child-headed households left by decades of conflict. Women reportedly constitute a majority of beneficiaries of seeds, tools and fishing equipment distributed by FAO in southern Sudan. The Sudanese land tenure project has also tried to promote women's right to own land.

109. More generally, FAO is not adequately demonstrating impact on livelihoods. The evaluation and the impact assessment studies indicate there is some impact on food security, but there is little capacity in the Organization to demonstrate where, how and why. Such assessments are critical contributions to future project designs and interventions as well as justifying the considerable investments now being made in emergency and rehabilitation assistance within the region. FAO has to become much more accountable, not only to donors, but also to local authorities, communities and vulnerable groups.

Recommendation 27: FAO must apply internal guidelines, training materials and best practices to ensure that livelihoods, gender and HIV analysis contribute to the design of all programme interventions within the region, continue to develop tools and capacities to effectively monitor its interventions and assess their impact, ensuring that the results of such evaluation contribute to future project design, and promote better information exchange and sharing of good practice between countries and actors in the region, using coordination mechanisms as an entry point.

G. CONCLUSION

110. Over the period under evaluation, FAO has significantly built up its presence in emergency and rehabilitation programmes in the Horn of Africa and has managed to diversify an offer of services that tended to be unduly dominated by seeds and tools distribution. The Organization has developed a strong programme in animal health, built a visible portfolio of "knowledge projects", and offered partners in governments, NGOs and other UN organizations a neutral, informed and collaborative approach to food security, which is welcomed in the Greater

Horn of Africa where the food security agenda has been very much dominated by short-term interventions and a strong focus on food aid.

111. FAO should draw upon the wealth of experience in livelihoods analysis, food security assessments and information systems to better inform responses relating to agriculture, livestock, fisheries and the environment. To do this effectively, FAO will have to be much more pro-active and its capacity strengthened at country level, as the growth and diversification of FAO emergency and rehabilitation assistance in the region has to a degree been unplanned, opportunistic and often not supported by sufficient technical capacity in the field.

112. The programmes at country level need to be better informed and more strategic. FAO has to develop the technical and operational competence to deliver effectively where it matters most: at country level. It cannot tie up all its technical competence in Rome, Addis Ababa and Nairobi. FAO has to diversify its own skills base at field level, recognise the significant potential in national staff of both genders and build the capacity of others, in particular government services. FAO also needs to develop strategic relationships with other research, technical and specialised agencies at national and regional levels. To achieve this it cannot depend on short-term project cycle funding from external donors alone; FAO has to make long-term investments to improve the quality of its interventions.

Recommendation 28: Continue to build strategic partnerships and capacities to develop a more robust and diversified approach to address the root causes of food insecurity in the Horn of Africa and promote longer-term recovery and resilience of local production systems to climatic shocks, through interventions aiming at, inter alia, sustainable seed supply, improved natural resource management, water and soil conservation, rehabilitation of damaged irrigation infrastructure, improved grain storage, control of animal diseases, promotion of livestock trade and de-stocking, security of land tenure, dialogue on river basin management, and new employment opportunities in the agricultural, fisheries and forestry sectors.