



Members' Update

FAO renewal



Near East team embraces field-level change

To pursue a united and worldwide implementation of results-based management, all FAO regional offices are taking stock of the renewal process, to fully understand its implications for decentralized offices. Following similar events in the past month in regional offices for Asia and the Pacific and for Africa, In mid-March FAO Representatives and their assistants from the Near East and North Africa gathered in Cairo for a week of briefings and participatory planning. They joined colleagues from the Regional Office and from the Subregional Office in Tunis, as well as several headquarters-based staff closely involved in implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal.

The week-long meeting set the foundations for a consensus on areas of priority for a regional assistance strategy, and a commitment to a successful renewal of the Organization. "It was really a kick-off for FAO renewal in this region, and demonstrated how much FAO Representatives and other professional staff in the region can contribute to FAO reform," said Abdessalam Ould Ahmed, Deputy Regional Representative and FAO Representative for Egypt. We had numerous interactive discussions and intensive group work, guided by a professional facilitator."

Two full days were dedicated to brainstorming for the development of a draft regional assistance strategy. "This is a very new approach," said Ould Ahmed. "The Immediate Plan of Action has foreseen the consultative development of regional areas of priority action contributing to the Organizational Results. It is envisaged that the Regional Office will prepare a regional strategy for the kind of assistance FAO should provide, for presentation to the Regional Conference. We looked at how this approach could be achieved, while keeping within the various deadlines of the Plan of Action." The group tentatively targeted a set of Organizational Results for regional priority action, which now will be reviewed by all stakeholders.

"Judging by the declarations of most of the FAO Representatives, they went away feeling more motivated, more involved," Ould Ahmed said. All available staff were invited to an "open house" and topical sessions conducted by members of the "culture change" team. Here staff expressed their opinions about working conditions and made recommendations for an improved workplace.

IPA Trust Fund situation report

The Trust Fund for implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action received one additional contribution since the last edition of this newsletter, bringing the total amount pledged to US\$ 6,272,596 and the total of funds received to US\$ 3,150,831. The FAO Conference established the Trust Fund to receive Members' extrabudgetary contributions, which recently was revised downwards to a figure of US\$ 19.90 million. Some 18 members have promised contributions, and 13 of those have already effected payment. The table summarizes the situation as at 30 March 2009:

| Country | Pledged | Paid |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| AUSTRIA | 65,933 | 65,933 |
| BRAZIL | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| BELGIUM | 250,000 | |
| CYPRUS | 9,186 | 9,186 |
| ESTONIA | 4,000 | 4,000 |
| EC | 1,200,000 | |
| FRANCE | 900,000 | 400,000 |
| GERMANY | 906,736 | 906,736 |
| GREECE | 86,338 | 86,338 |
| ITALY | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 |
| IRELAND | 142,638 | 142,638 |
| MOZAMBIQUE | 1,765 | |
| NEW ZEALAND | 70,000 | 70,000 |
| SLOVAKIA | 44,000 | 44,000 |
| SPAIN | 600,000 | |
| SWITZERLAND | 301,434 | 301,434 |
| TANZANIA | 19,975 | 19,975 |
| UNITED KINGDOM | 570,000 | |
| Transfer IEE Trust Fund | 591 | 591 |
| TOTAL | 6,272,596 | 3,150,831 |

(all figures expressed in US dollars)

Expenditures to date amount to US\$ 235,300. Of this figure, US\$ 93,300 covered costs associated with the 125th session of the FAO Finance Committee devoted to the Immediate Plan of Action, and US\$ 142,000 committed for consultancy support to monitoring and planning of implementation of the Plan of Action. FAO Members meeting on 24 March underscored the importance of implementing the Plan of Action as an integrated package. For this reason they decided to establish a mechanism for mobilizing contributions to the Trust Fund, and to appoint an Ambassador from among the Permanent Representatives to champion this cause.

Comments? Suggestions? Write to Members-Update@fao.org.