

Chair's Aide Mémoire – Eighth Meeting of CoC-IEE WG I
Monday 31 March 2008, 09.30 – 17.30
Vic Heard, Chair

1) **FAO's Work in Institutional Support to Agricultural Development:** Members noted that this is an area of importance where the IEE found a steady decline in FAO's capacity and comparative advantage and that management agreed with this analysis and broadly supported the IEE recommendations. FAO's main role should now be as a catalyst and facilitator, also working at the global policy level. Specifically:

- a) There is a major gap in higher education and research in agriculture, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. However the Organization has little dedicated expertise and few resources to address this issue. A small ad-hoc group of Members agreed to meet with representatives of FAO secretariat to see what might be done by FAO in a facilitating role;
- b) Training, extension and overall support to farmer learning remain important areas where FAO has had significant impact in developing countries. Members supported the IEE proposal to study the strengths and weaknesses of the Farmers' Field Schools and other approaches with a view to mobilisation of partners to address policies and approaches for capacity building and knowledge transfer;
- c) FAO's limited role in research capacity building should concentrate on networking institutions, including universities;
- d) The new FAO approach to agri-business development with emphasis on small and medium agribusiness is worthy of support, particularly to promote economic and job growth in rural areas. The facilitating, regulatory and policy setting role of government was stressed. It was noted that management agreed that FAO had no comparative advantage in agro-processing technology and partnership with UNIDO for promotion of agro-industry was central. There was agreement that the results of the new approach should be evaluated after a suitable period; and
- e) Work on rural finance should continue to be pursued in collaboration with IFAD and in the context of agribusiness development. Marketing would also be pursued as part of agribusiness development.

2) **Priorities and Criteria for resource distribution in technical work of FAO:** Members repeated the priority they accorded to the livestock, fisheries and forestry sectors and to food and nutrition policy, while several also reaffirmed the importance of FAO's role in crops. There was agreement on first priority to policy support and capacity building, including policies and capacity for technology application to increase production. With regard to criteria for deciding priorities, the previous agreement to the IEE criteria was reaffirmed (while agreeing that the potential for extra-budgetary support was not a criteria per se and noting that the IEE had not proposed this as a primary criterion but as a consideration in balancing the application of Regular Programme and extra-budgetary resources (para. 1204 e) to address priorities). In arriving at priorities, Members noted:

- a) the significance of regional priorities and how they related to major global concerns;
- b) the need for top down analysis of needs and FAO comparative advantages to be informed by bottom-up proposals on strategies and the potential for those strategies to impact on priorities (in this latter context Members noted that strategies were being prepared for each of the sectors, except FAO's role in crop development and suggested that such a strategy be also developed which should seek to address the issues identified by the IEE).

3) **Strategic Objectives:** It was now necessary to develop strategic objectives to which the various strategies and the priority themes could be related in the elements of the Strategic Framework and Medium-Term Plan.

4) **Goals of Member Nations:** As requested, management presented a paper for consideration with possible refinements and updates of the Global Goals of Members (attached). The suggested amendments included revisions to the Goals and a preamble reflecting the importance of the Millennium Development Goals and issues identified by Members, such as climate change and access to food. In the ensuing discussion, it was agreed that the Goals did represent the apex of the hierarchy of objectives to which FAO was to contribute in a means end relationship and management had responded to the request of Members to adjust the Goals, taking account of their previous comments. However, although there could be further feedback from capitals, the IEE had not made proposals for changes in the wording of the Goals, and it was agreed that:

- a) the Goals as contained in the 1999 Strategic Framework remained appropriate without change. They had stood the test of time and the wording had been carefully negotiated and balanced; and
- b) there would be a contextual section in the Strategic Framework and thus there was no necessity for a preamble as such.

5) **Priority Themes:** Members resumed discussion on priority themes, focusing on their relations to the three Goals, strategic objectives and activities of the Organization. Members recalled from the previous discussion that themes should be areas of priority focus for the Organization, have a time horizon and that there should be flexibility in their renewal and identification. There was agreement that priority themes would contribute to the achievement of the strategic objectives but were not identical with them. The Themes would:

- a) Be “Flagships” providing a communication and advocacy tool on high profile work, enabling the Organization to better attract extra-budgetary resources to complement the Regular Programme resources;
- b) Facilitate less rigidly tied and pooled funding of extra-budgetary resources, in conformity with the Paris declaration, as well as facilitating Governing Body oversight of the use of those resources in line with agreed priorities;
- c) Often be on cross-cutting topics but this would not exclusively be the case, for example the topic of livelihoods is cross-cutting but the code of conduct for responsible fisheries concerns a specific area;
- d) Be limited in number in order to achieve their objective as a tool for focusing, mobilising and communicating the use of resources, though the guidance from the IEE recommendation of six Themes may be too restrictive and some extra-budgetary resources would also be mobilised for other purposes; and
- e) Be of limited duration in line with Medium-Term Plan, but could be renewed or modified and would have clear targets and indicators.

6) It was agreed that the identification of priority themes would take place in the Working Group, together with the consideration of strategic objectives for the Organization.

Annex 1: Management Presentation on Criteria for Resource Distribution

- 1) Criteria:
 - a) Support Global Goals of Members and in conformity with mandate and strategic objectives of FAO
 - b) Express priority of Members
 - c) Demonstrate comparative advantage – vis-à-vis competitors and alternative suppliers – and FAO’s track record

- 2) Information for programmed priorities:
 - a) Analysis of needs and FAO’s comparative advantage: link to Member priorities as per working group guidance)
 - b) Overall vision and major objectives: how they contribute to Global Goals; building blocks for strategic objectives; timeframes; and shifts in emphasis, where appropriate
 - c) Expected main outcomes and beneficiaries: take account of past performance and proposed shifts
 - d) Implementation issues: new ways of working, e.g. partnerships

- 3) Strategies (Slide 1):
 - Advocacy and communication
 - Assistance in development policy and strategy
 - Basic data and statistics
 - Capacity building
 - Emergencies and rehabilitation
 - Investment
 - Knowledge management
 - Partnerships
 - Environment and natural resources management
 - Fisheries
 - Forestry

- 4) Strategies (Slide 2):
 - Economic, social and food and nutrition policy
 - Gender mainstreaming and women’s empowerment
 - Institutional support to agricultural development
 - Joint work with IAEA
 - Land and soils
 - Legal services
 - Production technologies transfer and piloting
 - Production technology and IPM
 - Livestock
 - Water and Irrigation

Annex 2: Management Paper on the Global Goals

Possible refinement of the Global Goals of Members specified in the FAO Strategic Framework 2000-2015

I - Background

The FAO Strategic Framework 2000-15 defines the above Global Goals of Members as follows:

“... three interrelated global goals that the Organization is specifically dedicated to helping Members achieve:

- a) access of all people at all times to sufficient nutritionally adequate and safe food, ensuring that the number of chronically undernourished people is reduced by half by no later than 2015;*
- b) the continued contribution of sustainable agriculture and rural development, including fisheries and forestry, to economic and social progress and the well-being of all; and*
- c) the conservation, improvement and sustainable utilization of natural resources, including land, water, forest, fisheries and genetic resources for food and agriculture.”*

A brief paper on possible refinement of these Goals was considered by Working Group I at its meeting of 29 January 2008, which concluded:

“Members requested management to formulate a draft proposal for discussion at a future meeting in March (as per the schedule). It was noted that the present wording of the Goals had been carefully negotiated and care would be needed in rewording. Among the further considerations raised were:

- a) the possible role of a preamble to the Goals which could reflect on: the need for effective collective action; the significance of climate change; the importance of development; and the MDGs including the importance of gender considerations and the needs of children (although it was clear that there was a division of labour in the UN system and FAO would not address all MDGs equally);*
- b) whether the concept of access to adequate food in Goal 1 needed some expansion. Some Members also suggested in view of the close link between adequate food and nutrition and poverty that this Goal could be brought closer to MDG 1;*
- c) implications of climate change within the Goals, as well as the preamble;*
- d) better aligning the three goals with the MDG wording;*
- e) further consideration of timing and targets. In this regard it was agreed that the Goals should be forward looking, although the Strategic Framework actions would be aligned with the Medium-Term Plan of six years. In this regard the MDG time horizon of 2015 remained valid but a longer perspective could also be built in.”*

- Based on the preliminary remarks made by Working Group I and taking into account Management views, a revised formulation is provided below, which keeps to the number and essence of the present Global Goals with only limited modifications to the wording, while additional considerations are put in a preamble.

The Working Group may wish to address two questions when considering possible rephrasing of the first Goal:

- Is the timeframe of the first Goal still valid, given more recent and projected trends, which are different from those obtaining in the 1998-99 period?
- The first Goal refers to the reducing the number of people who suffer from hunger, while the MDG's refer to the proportion of people; should the original wording be maintained?

As also requested by Working Group I, a brief synthesis is presented in the Annex of the outcome of key international events, particularly since the present Global Goals were formulated.

II – Possible rephrasing of the Global Goals

Possible changes to the present text are shown in underline mode (additional text) or strikethrough (deletion of text).

Members recognize the need for overall policy coherence in taking collective and national action in areas of FAO's mandate, bearing in mind the interface of food and agriculture with other sectors. Such actions should address the Millennium Development Goals and the growing challenges such as climate change and water scarcity; reap maximum benefit for FAO constituents from scientific advances and technical innovations; and be consistent with the further social and economic transformations expected in rural areas, paying due attention to gender equity and the needs of vulnerable groups and to the promotion of rural employment.

Accordingly, Members subscribe to three interrelated global goals that the Organization is specifically dedicated to helping them achieve:

- a. *availability of, and equitable access of by all people at all times to sufficient nutritionally adequate and safe food, ensuring that the number of chronically undernourished people is reduced by half by no later than 2015 and continues to decline;*
- b. *~~the continued contribution of~~ sustainable agriculture and rural development, including livestock, fisheries and aquaculture and forestry, with primary attention to poverty alleviation, while ensuring the essential contributions from these sectors to economic and social progress and the well-being of all;*
- c. *the conservation, improvement and sustainable utilization of natural resources, including land, water, forest, fisheries and genetic resources for food and agriculture.*

Outcome of key international events – Brief synthesis

The Global Goals of Members included in the FAO Strategic Framework 2000-2015 were formulated during the 1998-99 biennium. Focusing especially on those held since that period, a summarized picture of the outcomes of key international events is presented below. Information was drawn from UN system sources, principally a document prepared by the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs aimed at conveying to broad audiences and in an as synthetic manner as possible, what UN governmental circles have now come to refer to as: “*the Goals, Commitments and Strategies agreed at the United Nations world Conferences and Summits since 1990*”.

Background

A series of conferences and summits were held since 1990 under the aegis of the UN system. Although by essence UN system fora had long sought to support international policy debates, these more recent conferences and summits were exceptional in responding to calls by leaders from many countries for defining values, setting goals, articulating strategies and adopting programmes of action in the different dimensions of development. They led to what may be considered an unprecedented shared vision of the challenges faced by the international community and needed actions. These events generally involved thorough participatory processes and important policy pronouncements were agreed through them. For instance, at the UN Millennium Summit of 2000, a number of time-bound goals and targets were adopted. Many were later collated as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which have greatly assisted in keeping momentum to meet the needs of the world’s poorest (see list of MDGs in summarized form at the end of this Annex).

The comprehensive set of goals, commitments and strategies so generated, of which the MDGs are an integral part, has come to be perceived as the “*United Nations Development Agenda*”. The latter serves as the internationally shared framework for development and action at the global, regional, and country levels. The Agenda covers inter-linked issues ranging from poverty and hunger, gender equality, social integration, health, population, employment and education to human rights, the environment, sustainable development, finance and governance. It addresses also more “systemic” issues, such as the differential impact of globalization, inequalities among and within countries, greater participation of developing countries in global economic governance, as well as questions of a more political nature like the links between development and conflict.

Two elements have permeated the content of the “Agenda” since it started to be developed. Firstly, a fundamental concern for equity and equality of all persons, as human beings and as citizens. It is, in many ways, what brought civil society to rally around the underlying UN’s participatory processes. The second essential element is partnership. The summits and conferences have all engaged key stakeholders: governments, UN system organizations, other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, civil society, and the private sector. An essential by-product is a global partnership for development together with a framework for mutual accountability, which is now recognized as critical for advancing progress towards development goals.

Selective overview of events

Convened under the auspices of FAO in 1996, the World Food Summit set a target of reducing the number of undernourished people in the world by half by 2015. At the follow-up summit of 2002,

governments unanimously adopted a declaration urging fulfillment of the earlier pledge to cut the number of hungry people to about 400 million by 2015.

The International Conference on Finance for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico in 2002 was notable for: the breadth of its agenda; the extent of collaboration for its preparation, including the Bretton Woods institutions; the participation of a wide range of business and other civil society organizations. In the resulting “Monterrey Consensus”, governments committed themselves and the multilateral system to action on domestic resource mobilization, private resource flows, Official Development Assistance (ODA), trade, debt, and governance of the global economic system.

In the same year (2002), the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg adopted an ambitious Plan of Implementation, re-emphasizing that the sustainable management of the world’s natural resources is an overarching objective of the international community.

Other events have addressed among other important topics: the varied social dimensions of development, trade issues and agreements, the special needs of groups of countries (Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States, Land-locked Countries).

The convening in New York by the UN General Assembly of the 2000 Millennium Assembly and the 2005 World Summit is worth stressing in terms of both the level of attendance and the globality of their agenda. The Declaration adopted by the former had the political authority of being endorsed by leaders from 189 countries. While the MDGs are a summary of some of the main commitments made by the Millennium Assembly, the 2005 World Summit was designed as a follow-up venue to both the Millennium Assembly and the other world conferences.

The latter Summit’s outcome document reiterates unequivocally the determination of governments to ensure the timely and full realization of the goals and objectives agreed at the major UN system conferences and summits. In other words, all the internationally agreed goals and objectives have the imprimatur of both the event at which they were first defined and of the 2005 Summit. The same outcome document emphasized: *‘the vital role played by the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields in shaping a broad development vision and in identifying commonly agreed objectives’*.

The main lines of the “Agenda”

It is impossible to capture in this concise paper the entire breath of issues addressed by all the above international events, as well as the complex thrust of agreed actions. Nevertheless, an attempt is made to convey some of the main relevant lines of the “Agenda”, as follows.

National Ownership

One of the most consistently articulated recommendations of the world summits and conferences was that countries must take full responsibility for their own development. Responsibility for national development is the necessary consequence of sovereignty. The corollary is that each country must be free to determine its own development strategy, i.e. not only to be attuned to country circumstances, but also to be prepared and implemented under the leadership of the government. It is essential that all donors and lenders accept the principle of country ownership of national development strategies.

Integrating Economic, Social and Environmental Policy

A second recurring theme was the importance of securing coherence. Although the thematic summits and conferences focused on particular issues, each also touched on other areas since there are strong inter-relationships among all areas, while the two global summits in 2000 and 2005 brought all these issues together into a consensual UN Development Agenda. However, it is also recognized that such coherence is difficult to achieve in practice. The world events addressed this problem by explicitly stressing the diversity of high priority goals, while at the same time arguing for attention to the particular focus of each venue. So, both “social” and “environmental” events acknowledged that economic development was crucial to economic security, but argued that human well-being also required recognition of the imperatives for social progress and ecological sustainability.

The Need for “Enabling” Frameworks

One dimension of the international partnership forged through the global summits and conferences was not to shy away from stating conditions that countries themselves needed to foster in order to ensure that more specific development actions – including support from the international community – bear fruit. Therefore, a wide range of economic, social, political and other conditions were identified as essential part of an “enabling” environment.

Adequate Economic Policies

When market forces and the private sector play a major role in development, economic policies assume particular significance, in part because they can make a direct contribution to the attainment of development goals, but also because they influence the actions of individuals, firms and other participants in the economy. The world summits and conferences therefore emphasized the importance of appropriate macroeconomic policies.

Ensuring Social Progress

The summits and conferences addressed extensively key components of “social progress” such as education and training, improved health including combating HIV/AIDS and other major diseases, housing and shelter, water and sanitation, social protection measures, particularly to benefit vulnerable and disadvantaged members of society, and combating drug abuse.

Ensuring Social Justice and Inclusion

The summits and conferences sought to address critical elements in relation to social justice and inclusion, i.e. equity and poverty alleviation, gender equality, protection for children, opportunities for youth development, support for older people, recognition of indigenous peoples’ rights, due attention to refugees and internally displaced persons and – most directly relevant to FAO’s mandate – improved nutrition and hunger reduction.

Environmental Sustainability

The summits and conferences identified key areas of environmental sustainability, i.e. adapted consumption and production patterns, addressing the impact of climate change, expanding renewable sources of energy, combating desertification, protecting biological diversity and essential ecosystems like forests and oceans, coupled with measures for disaster reduction and preparedness.

Enabling International Environment

The world events recognized that many obstacles to development are external to countries, especially the weakest developing countries. Accordingly, they sought to address: shortages of financial resources; the risk of international transmission of financial crises; high external indebtedness; difficulties in the international coordination of macroeconomic policies; the eventual impact of trade policies of more developed countries; the cost or inadequate transfer of technology; and rigidities in the

international movement of labour. They explored ways to enhance external private capital flows and ODA, innovative sources of finance, the positive and negative impacts of migration flows over international boundaries, enhanced international trade opportunities and the facilitation of the transfer of technology, especially information technology.

Reducing Inequality between Countries

Special efforts were made in recognizing the special needs of specific groups of countries, i.e. the Least Developed Countries, the Small Island Developing States and Landlocked Developing Countries. Priority to Africa was consistently emphasized.

The Millennium Development Goals (in summarized form)

- 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- 2: Achieve universal primary education
- 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
- 4: Reduce child mortality
- 5: Improve maternal health
- 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
- 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development