

Governance Oversight Arrangements for the Immediate Plan of Action in 2010-11

Discussion Note

Background: arrangements in 2009

1. Governance oversight arrangements for the Immediate Plan of Action in 2009 were agreed through Conference Resolution 1/2008, which established to this effect the Conference Committee on Follow-up to the Independent External Evaluation of FAO (CoC-IEE). The CoC-IEE was to continue follow-up to the IEE, completing outstanding work within the IPA.

2. In addition to analyzing the concept of “Reform with Growth” and submitting proposals in this regard to the 2009 Conference, the functions of the CoC-IEE were to recommend to the same session of the Conference:

- the new Strategic Framework, the Medium Term Plan 2010-13 and the Programme of Work and Budget 2010-11 proposed by Management on the new integrated results-based framework (with inputs provided mostly through Working Group I);
- any changes found desirable in the size and regional representation in the Membership of the Council (with inputs provided through Working Group II);
- further reforms of systems, culture change and organizational restructuring, including: follow-up to the reports of the Root and Branch Review; review of the report of the study for an Organizational Risk Assessment and Management Framework; plans for increased effectiveness of the decentralized offices; and proposals for strengthened Human Resource management (with inputs provided primarily through Working Group III);
- the necessary changes in the Basic Texts as provided for in the IPA, providing policy oversight and guidance of the process of revision of the Basic Texts (mainly through Working Group II), on the basis of the recommendations of the Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters.

3. The CoC-IEE was also tasked with overall monitoring and follow-up of the implementation of the IPA by Management, through joint meetings of the Working Groups. In terms of reporting, the CoC-IEE was mandated to: (i) finalise its report on the proposed amendments to the Basic Text in June 2009; and (ii) complete its final report by September 2009 for presentation to the Conference in November 2009.

4. Established for the duration of 2009, the CoC-IEE was to undertake its work with direct support of its Working Groups, meeting separately or jointly, and with “*advice from the Council, Programme Committee, Finance Committee and Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters as appropriate, without prejudice to the reporting of these Committees to the Council and their statutory functions*” (Resolution 1/2008).

Follow-up requirements beyond 2009

5. With the presentation of its final report to the Conference in November 2009, the CoC-IEE will end its mandate, having also produced its report on Basic Texts amendments in June as planned. As the final report is expected to cover the matters referred to in paragraph 2 above, the CoC-IEE will have, prior to the Conference, accomplished the tasks assigned to it

in 2009, thereby “completing outstanding work within the Immediate Plan of Action” (Resolution 1/2008).

6. Subsequent to the Conference, it will be necessary for the FAO Members to continue monitoring and following progress in IPA implementation by Management, as well as any related decisions taken by the 2009 Conference. Apart from this important follow-up task[, and possibly the issue of Membership of the Council], there would be no further outstanding work to be undertaken within the IPA. In view of this, suitable arrangements need to be considered for the effective exercise by the Membership of the oversight function over the implementation of the IPA.

Possible arrangements for 2010-11

7. At the 23 July joint meeting of Working Groups I, II and III, the following initial observations were made in this respect: “The need for a good oversight mechanism by the Governing Bodies on the reform process was emphasised. As the reform process would take three or more years, a more sustainable mainstreamed arrangement was called for. Various options could be considered, including a more permanent role for the Independent Chair of the Council, and through the Programme and Finance Committees now being open to observers” (Chair’s aide-mémoire).

8. For governance follow-up in the course of 2010-11, two options could be envisaged:

- Option 1: establishment of a Conference Committee, broadly modelled after the current CoC-IEE;
- Option 2: more intensive use of the existing Governing Bodies.

9. *Option 1* would entail the creation of a time-bound Committee of the Conference for the duration of 2010-11, which would be similar in nature to the 2009 CoC-IEE, but would be different in terms of mandate and structure:

- not covering separate areas or work as in 2009, the Committee’s mandate would be focused on providing overall monitoring and follow-up of the implementation of the IPA in 2010-11, in addition to guidance for any required improvement in this regard;
- accordingly, the Committee’s structure would be simpler: no distinct working groups would be required to address specific issues, and no dedicated secretariat would be needed to service the Committee on a regular basis.

10. For continuity, such Committee would be given the same name and acronym (CoC-IEE) as the current Conference Committee, and would operate pursuant to similar modalities of work:

- it would be open to full participation by all Members, conduct its work in all languages of the Organization, and take its decisions through consensus to the extent possible;
- its meetings would be scheduled taking into account related sessions of the Governing Bodies to ensure proper sequencing of complementary meetings, and would not be held in parallel with major meetings of the Rome-based UN Organizations;
- it would appoint a Bureau consisting of the Chairperson and the two Vice-Chairpersons of the Committee and one representative of Member Nations per region, which would

exclusively address administrative and organizational matters;

- it would be proactively supported by Management, which would provide secretariat services and the required documents for its meetings.

11. Besides ensuring continuity, Option 1 would allow full participation by the entire Membership of the Organization, strengthen the sense of ownership of FAO's renewal by all the Members, and also firm up the spirit of trust and partnership amongst the Membership as well as between the Members and Management.

12. **Option 2** would imply the use, with a greater intensity of work, of the existing Governing Bodies, specifically the Council, Finance Committee, Programme Committee and Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters:

- the Council would continue to monitor the overall progress in implementation of the IPA in 2010-11 and report to the Conference in 2011, receiving from Management quarterly progress reports on IPA implementation for review and guidance;
- the Programme Committee, Finance Committee and Committee on Constitutional and Legal Matters would, as appropriate, provide specific inputs to the Council in their respective areas of mandate;
- the Independent Chairperson of the Council would, within his/her strengthened function, play a proactive facilitating role in the performance of this oversight function.

13. The second option would rely entirely on the current Governing Body structures, making maximum use of their specialized competencies, and reinforcing them in their enhanced role as called for by the IPA. It would also involve greater engagement of the Independent Chairperson of the Council, in line with the new quasi permanent status of the position.

14. The two options need not be exclusive: rather, they could be complementary and could be implemented concurrently, as experienced throughout 2009, with CoC-IEE meetings and Governing Body sessions taking place in an orderly, integrated and mutually beneficial manner.

15. Detailed arrangements for Option 1 and Option 2 are set out in the draft Conference Resolution __/2009 on the IPA.

Cost implications

16. Both options would have relatively limited cost implications as compared to previous arrangements, on the assumption that a dedicated secretariat would not be required on a constant basis, with support services being provided by Management. It is also assumed that, under Option 1, all Bureau Members would be based in Rome, and thus no travel costs would be entailed. The estimated costs involved would therefore be as follows:

- a) **Option 1** would entail an approximate cost of USD 288,000, including:
- interpretation costs: USD 120,000
 - documentation costs: USD 90,000
 - secretariat services costs: USD 60,000
 - messengers etc: USD 18,000

- b) **Option 2** would entail an approximate cost of USD 180,000, including:
- incremental interpretation costs: USD 80,000
 - incremental documentation costs: USD 100,000.

Guidance sought

17. The Working Groups are invited to express their views on the options presented in this note regarding the governance oversight arrangements for the IPA in 2010-11, for subsequent decision by the CoC-IEE.