

**CoC-IEE Working Group I – FAO Vision and Programme Priorities
29 January 2008**

**Note on Considerations for Refinement of the Global Goals of Members specified in the
FAO Strategic Framework**

I - Background

Recommendation 3.1 of the IEE report puts special emphasis on the three goals of Member Nations specified in the FAO Strategic Framework 2000-2015 to the extent that they: “*should provide the ultimate goals in the logical framework hierarchy of means-to-ends analysis for the Organization.*” The three Global Goals for Members are those that only states can achieve, largely through their own efforts, and the Organization is called upon to assist them to this end. The corresponding extract from the Strategic Framework document reads 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.”*

At its first meeting, Working Group I considered IEE recommendation 3.1 and had preliminary reactions, as reflected in the aide-mémoire of the Chairperson:

“Members agreed that the three Goals remained generally valid and provided a working basis for discussion. It was noted that the Goals had been formulated in 1999. Further consideration would enable members to agree on wording, additions and deletions which would ensure their validity for the coming years, including, for example, such considerations as relation to the Millennium Development Goals; the concept of assuring adequate food for all, FAO’s contribution to poverty reduction and the inclusion of such urgent emerging issues as climate change.”

In this light, the Working Group “*requested the CoC-IEE secretariat in close consultation with FAO management to develop a text, giving considerations for refinement of the Goals deadline for March. This should preferably be available by the end of January.*”

The present note offers brief considerations in the context of possible rewording of the current Global Goals of Members in areas of FAO’s mandate.

II - Considerations for refinement of the Global Goals of Members

Preliminary reflections in the FAO secretariat were organized around a number of basic questions, taking account of the fact that the Global Goals were formulated in the 1998-99 period after protracted consultations, and as recalled above, they were conceived primarily for achievement by Members themselves collectively (and individually) in areas of FAO's mandate and not in relation to specific programmes carried out by the Organization.

Mirroring to some extent the above preliminary reactions of Working Group I, these basic questions included:

- Are the Global Goals sufficiently reflective of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as far as FAO is concerned?
- Will they still be valid beyond 2015, given more recent and projected trends which are necessarily different from those obtaining in the 1998-99 period?
- Are they sufficiently encompassing of the needs of the whole Membership, which are more differentiated?
- Should they be adjusted specifically to refer to much more heightened awareness of the challenges of climate change and the impact of bioenergy?

In relation to the MDGs, it is useful to recall that there are eight MDGs to be achieved by 2015 in response to the world's main development challenges. The MDGs were drawn from the actions and targets contained in the Millennium Declaration that was adopted by the UN Summit in September 2000. It may be noted that recent resolutions of the UN General Assembly, such as that on the TCPR¹ in 2007, place equal emphasis on the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of subsequent Summits and high-level Conferences such as the Monterrey Conference, recognizing the vital role played by these conferences and summits in shaping a broad development vision and in identifying commonly agreed objectives. It is also recognized that the MDGs do not relate in an exhaustive manner to the broad spectrum of work of the Specialized Agencies of the UN system, including FAO.

While the 8 MDGs are broken down by 18 quantifiable targets and their implementation to be measured by 48 indicators, they are schematically referred to as follows:

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

There is rather good consistency between MDG 1 and the first Global Goal in the Strategic Framework and reasonably broad consistency between MDG 7 and the third Global Goal.

¹ Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System

More generally, however, it may be inferred that the FAO Global Goals do not adequately cover the social and economic facets of development, including: the poverty alleviation policies and programmes which Members need to pursue consistently and vigorously as one of the pre-conditions for hunger alleviation and lasting food security; and, the essential role played by agriculture, forestry and fisheries in economic development. Therefore, Working Group I may wish to consider whether it is worthwhile to find sufficiently compact language leading to possible revisions to the current wording of the three Global Goals, while also recognising that division of functions within the multilateral system naturally means that all Organizations would not equally address all MDGs.

The implications of climate change and the evolution of competing demands for agricultural resources (e.g. bioenergy expansion) are major developments which may not be adequately captured under the current wording of the Global Goals. These key dimensions of food and agricultural development can be only tenuously seen to be encompassed under the first and second Global Goals, and Working Group I may wish to assess the advisability of seeking more effective reflection in the wording.

Consideration might also be given to reflect in the wording of the Global Goals the very important efforts Members are making in seeking collective action in areas of FAO's mandate (not necessarily always under the institutional umbrella provided by FAO) often leading to greater global policy coherence and international agreements which may have complex results at all levels. As they are formulated at present, the second and third Global Goals do not readily suggest that this type of collective action is absolutely necessary for their achievement. Alternatively, the need for local, national, regional and global collective actions in pursuit of the three Global Goals could be reflected in a preamble.