

Draft Strategy Note – Corporate Capacity Building

1. Analysis of needs and comparative advantages

Capacity is defined as "the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully". Capacity development/building is "the process of unleashing, strengthening and maintaining of such capacity" (OECD/DAC). Capacity Building (CB) is a principal function of FAO, and both developing and developed countries assign high importance to FAO's role in CB, including training (IEE: para 269). A corporate strategy in CB will address the needs in Member States for:

- Support in the devising and implementation of national CB strategies, including frameworks for designing, monitoring and evaluating the achievement of national development goals;
- Comprehensive approaches in CB in member states, geared towards combining technical interventions with adequate attention at the level of policy environment; and delivering CB as an integrated whole, with FAO playing the role of facilitator and provider (IEE: 16, 27);
- Strategic approaches to ensure sustainability of CB work, with sufficient involvement and dialogue with national interlocutors in the definition of CB interventions, that address the limitations of TCP for CB (IEE: 13, 342, 350, 570-575, 599);
- Reform, rationalization, and upgrading of training and higher education opportunities to overcome the major deficit of trained manpower in agriculture, maximising partnerships and networking, also considering that CB initiatives using information and communication technology need to be adapted to local needs to enhance effectiveness. (IEE: 665);
- Stronger operational capacity in FAO for CB, including the ability to target activities appropriately at national, sub-regional, and regional level (especially in LDCs), engagement in partnerships (including with private actors), and strong organizational learning internally (IEE: 502, 576-577, 662).

FAO's comparative advantages in CB are its:

- experience in policy formulation, emphasising its comparative neutrality as a convener of specialized forums in agriculture and rural development;
- broad and direct access to the range of CB actors, which places FAO in a strong position to deliver a truly *integrated* capacity building approach with impact across the individual, institutional, and policy levels.
- wide range of technical/specialized expertise in agriculture and rural development and its language coverage, which are highly valued by clients;
- function of knowledge generation, dissemination and exchange, which is a building block of FAO's capacity building activities and programmes.

2. Overall vision and major objectives

It is acknowledged that strengthened country capacity is not only a means to enhance food security and agricultural sector performance, but it is also a goal in its own right recognized in the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* (OECD/DAC).

Vision: FAO aims to become an effective agent for capacity building, to support member countries develop sustainable capacities to set and achieve their own goals in the field of agriculture and rural development, enabling them to meet all three of FAO's Global Goals. This vision is in line with the new approach of the international community for a more integrated and nationally-led approach to CB, expressed in UN General Assembly resolution 59/250, in the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Reviews (TCPR) of 2004 and 2007.

Major Objectives: FAO will seek to fulfill its vision by working with Member States to achieve the following:

- National and regional CB initiatives adopt the new approach to CB and are sustainable, strategic, coherent, methodologically sound, and integrated so that they respond to the needs in the policy environment, and the needs of institutions and individuals;
- Training and higher education institutions in agriculture are appropriately reformed, rationalized, and upgraded, facilitated by Governments, FAO and other actors;
- National CB initiatives are implemented in partnership with all relevant regional and international players using appropriate funding modalities;
- The new CB approach is fully embedded in the work of FAO across Headquarters and Decentralised Offices, in the contexts of its role as a facilitator and an implementer of CB.

3. Expected Outcomes and Beneficiaries

The main outcomes and beneficiaries include:

- Appropriate definition of CB priorities by Governments in the context of national plans and strategies and on the basis of comprehensive assessments of capacity gaps and needs in the policy environment, and of institutions and individuals;
- Improved formulation of integrated CB interventions with appropriate targeting and methodologies, based on enhanced methodologies and tools;
- Increased and enhanced partnerships for capacity building between governmental actors and relevant international and non-governmental actors;
- Improved monitoring and evaluation of CB allowing identification, and where appropriate scaling up, of successful approaches;
- Increased coherence of FAO's CB initiatives, informed by clear national priorities, and structured around a core set of corporate strategic CB functions that incorporate FAO's comparative advantages and good practices, and reduce fragmentation of CB by FAO.

4. Implementation issues

In order to be effective and robust, the CB strategy will need to be developed and implemented taking into account the following as defined by the IEE (*Recommendation 3.24*) and FAO itself:

- consultations with countries of different stages of development to conduct in-depth assessments of capacity needs and gaps;
- consultations with partner organizations to define more precisely potential partnership relations in support of CB;
- involvement of developing countries, donors and partners in formulation of the strategy to ensure wide ownership;
- development of an implementation framework defining roles and responsibilities in FAO;
- development of a communication plan concerning the implementation of the strategy.

The strategy would build on and inform external and internal processes, such as:

- national development frameworks, UN reform, "Delivering as One", and New Aid Modalities (i.e. UNDAF¹, NMTPF, Joint Assistance Strategies, Sector Wide Approaches (SWAs));
- mainstream UN discussions on CB in the context of the TCPR;
- existing and emerging principles and good practices in all aspects of CB;
- efforts to mainstream priority cross-cutting issues, such as gender equality;
- other FAO reform issues, e.g. decentralization, enhancement of staff competencies;
- other strategies developed under the new FAO Strategic Framework, in particular the Knowledge Management strategy.

¹ United Nations Development Assistance Framework