

Ensuring integration of sectoral and cross-cutting strategic objectives
(consideration of management suggestions)

A. Background and scope of the present paper

1. Working Group 1 has been examining the main elements of a new Strategic Framework and Medium-term Plan for FAO, including several iterations in the formulation of Strategic Objectives and Organizational Results.

2. Members have endorsed the main features of an enhanced results-based framework, with a hierarchy consisting of:

i) overarching Global Goals of Member Nations put at the apex (three such Global Goals have been identified by the Governing Bodies, subject to further discussion);

ii) a larger number of focussed Strategic Objectives (SOs) relating to key substantive areas derived from and contributing to the above Global Goals, with substantial impact expected to be achieved by countries themselves or the international community based on contributions of significant added value from FAO; and

iii) subsidiary Organizational Results (ORs) embodying under each Strategic Objective, the outcomes of the Organization's work (and to which resources, indicators and targets would be attached).

3. Members have also recognized that activities in the Programme of Work of FAO (to achieve the approved Organizational Results) needed to involve the application of recognized "core functions" and "functional objectives" as means to achieve results. The core functions will require well articulated strategies to ensure the application of coherent approaches across organizational boundaries, while the functional objectives are to be formulated with results related to the provision of an enabling environment for the Organization to effectively and efficiently achieve the organizational results falling under Strategic Objectives.

4. There was full agreement in Working Group 1 (at its meetings of 14-15 July) that the 12 possible Strategic Objectives presented were important and needed visibility and focus. There was some concern to ensure their integration and also about potential overlap, as several SOs were primarily of a sectoral nature and others of a more cross-cutting nature. The present paper addresses this key aspect of integration, including a number of principles to that end, as well as options for a more focussed strategic presentation, to facilitate the discussions of the Working Group.

B. Practical dimensions in the formulation and execution of Strategic Objectives

5. In the light of the results framework summarized above, SOs should:

- reflect and communicate well recognized priorities to Members and Management in succinct language;

- be amenable to a relatively straightforward description of means-ends analysis¹ (contributing to Global Goals and driving Organizational Results); and,
- benefit in their achievement by application of core functions of the Organization.

6. Furthermore, the application of a results-based framework should allow for clear assignment of responsibility and ensure accountability for achievement of the organizational results under each objective. It is the intention of Management to assign responsibility for each Strategic Objective and Functional Objective to a senior manager and hold these managers accountable for the achievement of the underlying OR's. This will require improved ways of working across traditional organizational boundaries. By the same token, senior managers will be assigned to ensure that the applicable strategies are followed for the core functions across the SO's.

C. Ensuring integration of results for sectoral and cross-cutting Strategic Objectives

7. The IEE has underlined the lack of effective use of the present Strategic Framework 2000-2015, due in part to its presentation of all-encompassing objectives and lack of prioritization (e.g. the main "sectors" covered by FAO's mandate were not well recognized). To bring more focus on FAO's mandate and provide a more effective platform for prioritization, the SO's discussed by Members to date comprise five sectoral and seven cross-cutting objectives (see Annex 1).

8. As reflected in past discussions in FAO fora (for instance in the Programme Committee and Council), and in WG1 itself, this sectoral/cross-sectoral duality presents a number of practical issues, particularly as relates to integration of results and accountability within and across the sectors, namely:

- results under sectoral objectives could be seen to contribute to the achievement of cross-cutting objectives, and vice-versa, with risk of possible overlap and duplication of resources;
- the expectation that some aspects of cross-cutting objectives should be better achieved through "mainstreaming" within sectoral objectives; and,
- in the latter case, the issue of how to allocate resources and assign accountability for the "mainstreamed" aspects.

9. The observation of several principles during SO and OR formulation and implementation could help to promote integration and improve focus of results:

- i) while the implementation of primarily sectoral SOs depends on specific and clear ORs, it is possible - and indeed necessary in order to ensure a robust formulation - to incorporate in these ORs clearly identifiable links to primarily cross-cutting areas;
- ii) the OR's under primarily cross-cutting SO's should not be expressed in generic terms, rather, they should focus on and specify the added interdisciplinary value they would bring to the implementation of all SO's (i.e. in terms of conceptual leadership and support, analytical work not otherwise carried out

¹ "Means-ends" analysis refers to the process of tracing a series of cause-and-effect relationships, through application of a log-frame methodology, in order to be able to assess the validity of a development intervention by connecting its activities and associated resources to a desired higher-level benefit or result.

under the sectoral OR's, ensuring interface with key partners and influence on international initiatives impacting on food and agriculture);

- iii) there should be no *a priori* perception that all SOs would be roughly equivalent in their resource implications. Rather, all SOs should be seen as being complementary to ensure the mission of FAO, and in terms of providing clear accountability for results in key areas of FAO's work;
- iv) the implementation of the specific ORs under cross-cutting SOs – as defined above – together with the applicable components under primarily sectoral SOs should be facilitated by interdisciplinary coordination mechanisms.

D. Options for presentation of Strategic Objectives

10. In addition to the application of the above principles to promote better integration, improved focus and synergy among the Strategic Objectives and Organizational Results in the next round of formulation, Members may also wish to consider ways to improve the presentation of the Strategic Objectives. Two options are presented for consideration.

Option 1: Aggregated presentation

11. Taking into account the intended impact of the 12 Strategic Objectives and two Functional Objectives, as reflected in their titles, a more aggregated presentation of the objectives could be discerned that conveys a clearer message, to Members and Management, of the strategic impact expected to be achieved from the work of the Organization:

- i) **Sustainable food production and management of natural resources**
 - A - Sustainable intensification of crop production.
 - B - Increased sustainable livestock production.
 - C - Sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources.
 - E - Sustainable management of forests and trees.
 - F - Sustainable management of land, water and genetic resources and improved responses to global environmental challenges affecting food and agriculture.
- ii) **Enabling environment for food security and improved livelihoods**
 - D - Improved quality and safety of foods at all stages of the food chain.
 - G - Enabling environment for markets to improve livelihoods.
 - H - Improved food security and better nutrition.
 - I - Improved preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agricultural threats and emergencies.
 - J - Improved frameworks for global and regional governance on food and agriculture.
 - K - Gender equity in access to resources, goods, services and decision-making in the rural areas.
 - L - Increased and more effective public and private investment in agriculture and rural development.
- iii) **Efficient and effective FAO governance, management and partnerships**
 - X - Effective collaboration with member states and stakeholders
 - Y - Efficient and effective administration

12. This presentation modality above, with updated titles for SO-B and SO-G based on WG1 comments 14-15 July, would still allow for clear assignment of accountability and means-end analysis at the objective and organizational result levels.

13. Another practical consideration is that the Budgetary Appropriations Resolution, approved by the Conference for the biennial Regular Budget, would need to be in line with the established programme hierarchy. In this context, it is envisaged to equate the SO's with the hitherto programme level and the OR's with the hitherto programme entity level of the current PWB. Hence, it will be necessary to define a Chapter level above the SO's for the purposes of the Budgetary Appropriations Resolution. A possible Chapter structure is provided in Annex 2, drawing on the above aggregation, and also taking into account other special purpose chapters in the PWB on TCP, contingencies, capital and security expenditure.

Option 2: Aggregated presentation with fewer Strategic Objectives

14. In considering the 12 Strategic Objectives on 14-15 July, the Working Group noted that some cross-cutting SO's had significant areas of overlap with the sectoral objectives and/or among themselves, or covered work that should be considered as core functions. In applying the above principles in paragraph 9 on integration, the Working Group may wish to consider the following options for handling three of these strategic objectives:

- Strategic Objective F, as currently formulated, relates to natural resources and environmental challenges that can be addressed by results produced by a combination of sectoral and interdisciplinary work, within the Organization and in partnership with other institutions. As part of the application of principles i) and ii) to all Strategic Objectives, the eight OR's of SO-F could be reformulated in a more focussed way, with strong collaboration among concerned units, and clear linkages with relevant external institutions.
- Strategic Objective J on frameworks for global and regional governance has results that relate directly to those in the sectoral SO's on the one hand, and to Core Function C (*Negotiating international instruments, setting norms, standards and voluntary guidelines, and supporting the development of national legal instruments*) on the other. SO-J could be recognized as a core function rather than an objective, with OR's J1-J4 integrated in support of the related results in the sectoral and cross-cutting objectives, and J5 (on increased coherence among frameworks impacting upon food and agriculture) incorporated into Core Function C.
- Strategic Objective L on investment aims to provide an enabling environment, through policies and capacities, to increase public and private investment in agriculture. Its four OR's could be integrated into Strategic Objective G, adding investment to its title.

15. Recalling that the Working Group had agreed the importance of all the Strategic Objectives, this approach preserves the visibility of frameworks for governance and of investment at the level of objectives or core functions while helping to improve integration of cross-cutting results. This would result in ten Strategic Objectives, grouped as shown below. The title of SO-G has been rephrased as "Enabling environment for investment and markets to improve livelihoods", emphasizing the priority areas addressed.

- i) Sustainable food production and management of natural resources**
 - A - Sustainable intensification of crop production.
 - B - Increased sustainable livestock production.
 - C - Sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources.
 - E - Sustainable management of forests and trees.
 - F - Sustainable management of land, water and genetic resources and improved responses to global environmental challenges affecting food and agriculture.

- ii) Enabling environment for food security and improved livelihoods**
 - D - Improved quality and safety of foods at all stages of the food chain.
 - G - Enabling environment for investment and markets to improve livelihoods.
 - H - Improved food security and better nutrition.
 - I - Improved preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agricultural threats and emergencies.
 - K - Gender equity in access to resources, goods, services and decision-making in the rural areas.

- iii) Efficient and effective FAO governance, management and partnerships**
 - X - Effective collaboration with member states and stakeholders
 - Y - Efficient and effective administration

Annex 1

Possible Objectives (as at 14 July 2008)

(Sectoral)

- A Sustainable intensification of crop production.
- B Increased livestock production.
- C Sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources.
- D Improved quality and safety of foods at all stages of the food chain.
- E Sustainable management of forests and trees.

(Cross-cutting)

- F Sustainable management of land, water and genetic resources and improved responses to global environmental challenges affecting food and agriculture.
- G Enhanced incomes and livelihoods in rural areas.
- H Improved food security and better nutrition.
- I Improved preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agricultural threats and emergencies.
- J Improved frameworks for global and regional governance on food and agriculture.
- K Gender equity in access to resources, goods, services and decision-making in the rural areas.
- L Increased and more effective public and private investment in agriculture and rural development.

Functional Objectives

- X Enhanced collaboration with member states and stakeholders at all levels.
- Y Flexible, efficient and effective internal management, administration and financial arrangements.

Annex 2

Possible Chapter Structure (for Budgetary Appropriations Resolution)

1. Sustainable food production and management of natural resources
2. Enabling environment for food security and improved livelihoods
3. Technical Cooperation Programme
4. Governance, oversight and partnerships
5. Management and administration
6. Contingencies
8. Capital Expenditure
9. Security Expenditure