

## CoC-IEE Working Group 2 – Governance Reform

### Proposed schedule of early action deliverables being undertaken by the Director-General

#### *Overall Context*

This paper responds to the request of the Committee at its first meeting on 14 December 2007:

13) Recalling that the Director-General had undertaken to implement an early series of quick wins and other actions in follow-up to the IEE and that the CoC-IEE was required by Conference Resolution 5/2007 to “provide ongoing review and feedback on the implementation of all actions, including inter alia quick wins, being undertaken by the Director-General, on those areas of the IEE follow-up lying essentially within his authority, recognizing that some actions are subject to the provision of the requisite budgetary resources”, **FAO management was requested to make available a schedule of the deliverables intended by the Secretariat in time for consideration by the working groups beginning on 14 January.** This should include expected costs and their timing from both Regular Programme and extra-budgetary resources. It would provide a basis for the CoC-IEE to provide its views on the intended actions as well as a basis for monitoring which, as proposed by the Director-General, should be facilitated by regular management reporting on progress against the schedule.

The schedule of early action deliverables being undertaken within the Director-General’s authority has been prepared based on the early actions in the Management Response “In-Principle” and additional actions identified since then by the Director-General and departments. The early actions are presented at the level of recommendation or actionable-sub-component, derived from IEE Report Annex 1, with the following information:

- summary of the deliverable (product, service or change to be produced), with key milestones and dependencies where appropriate;
- the planned start and finish date;
- whether the action is funded within the approved PWB 2008-09 and, if not funded, the estimated one-time extra-budgetary resources required for 2008;
- whether the early action was indicated in the Management Response “In-Principle” or has been subsequently identified;
- whether the action will be fully or substantially implemented in 2008, or whether it is a preparatory action pending other major deliverables or a decision by the Members.

The information presented in this document and the attached schedule is work-in-progress. The information was by necessity developed over the end-2007 holiday period with limited opportunity for consultation and analysis within the secretariat. In addition, there was no opportunity to take into account the preliminary suggestions prepared by the CoC-IEE Secretariat for a schedule of work and specification of deliverables for the CoC-IEE, which is also before the Working Group. Therefore, the views of the Working Group on the intended actions would be of value in helping Management to update and finalize the plans for early actions.

The proposed schedule of early action deliverables relating to Working Group 2 are summarized below.

1. Improving FAO's governance is viewed by the IEE Report as an essential underpinning of any further reforms in the Organization. Hence, numerous recommendations focus on governance matters. Implementation of many of them would entail actions which essentially lie within the authority of the Director-General and would depend on decisions to be taken by the Members. Thus, at this stage and as outlined below, Management contemplates a relatively limited number of early actions in respect of the governance-related recommendations, some of the related costs being partly foreseen in the maintenance budget.

### **Fiduciary role and oversight**

2. Regarding the *programme cycle*, if the decision is made to change, as from 2009, the period of the Conference regular sessions to May or June, Management stands ready to assist in reviewing the procedural and organizational arrangements that would ensue, including amendments to the Basic Texts (recommendations 7.3 and 4.7.c).

3. In the area of *audit*, the following actions are for early implementation:

- development of a comprehensive approach to risk management in FAO, including a review of existing gaps and a strategy for the transfer of this function to a line unit (recommendation 7.9.a);
- reconstitution of the Audit Committee entirely of external members (recommendation 7.9.b) – action already taken;
- revision of the Charter for the Office of the Inspector General to clearly provide for the Inspector General's direct access to the Finance Committee (recommendation 7.9.e);
- establishment of an Ethics Officer post at D-1 level (recommendation 7.9.g);
- external peer review of the internal audit function every five years in line with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing (recommendation 7.9.h).

4. In the area of *evaluation*, the rolling multi-annual evaluation plans will continue to be prepared, as is currently the practice, with review in the Evaluation Committee and the Programme Committee (recommendation 7.10). High priority will also continue to be assigned to strategic corporate level evaluation, ensuring full evaluation of extrabudgetary programmes. Regarding the proposed contribution of 1% of each extrabudgetary project for evaluation purposes, following approval by Council in 2007, donors have been consulted, but some have not yet accepted mandatory contribution (recommendation 7.11).

### **Governance architecture**

5. With regard to *Regional Conferences*, Management stands ready, if so requested, to assist in preparing proposals on the future role of Regional Conferences (recommendation 4.13.a). In addition, the responsibility for developing Regional Conference agendas would be passed on to the Regional Offices if so decided by the Membership (recommendation 4.13.b). Management would also, if so requested, provide support to the Independent Chair of Council for the preparation of executive summaries following the 2008 Regional Conferences, for presentation to the Conference in 2009 (recommendation 4.13.c).

### **Governance proceedings**

6. As part of the measures aimed at building *trust*, the Director-General will regularly hold consultations, meetings and seminars with the Permanent Representatives and their regional groups to facilitate exchange of views and discussion of issues of key interest to the Membership (recommendation 4.2.b).