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FAO'S ENGAGEMENT IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM REFORMS

- STATUS OF ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE ONE-UN PILOT INITIATIVE¹ AND IN PARTICULAR THE STATUS OF FAO AS A NON-RESIDENT AGENCY (NRA) IN MOST OF THE COUNTRIES IN THE EUROPEAN REGION
- STATUS OF ONGOING DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING THE STRENGTHENING OF COLLABORATION AMONG THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS AND IN PARTICULAR THE THREE ROME-BASED AGENCIES

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¹ The denomination One-UN has been replaced with Delivering as One and this term is used subsequently in the document.

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1. Following the launch of the report of the High-Level Panel (HLP) on UN System-wide Coherence in November 2006 and particularly the outcome of the Independent External Evaluation (IEE), the collaboration of FAO within the "One-UN" as well as further strengthening of the collaboration between the three Rome-based agencies (FAO, IFAD and WFP) is considered as important in order to enhance FAO's contribution to the UN system reform processes.

2. The first two sections of this paper provide an update of FAO's contribution to the One-UN pilot initiative with specific reference to the European and Central Asian region. The third section deals with the ongoing process of strengthening the collaboration between the Rome-based food agencies. Section four presents conclusions and recommendations for further action.

I. DELIVERING AS ONE - UNITED NATIONS PILOTS

3. The Governments of eight countries - Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam - volunteered to become Delivering as One pilots. The High-Level Panel recommended that these pilots focus their attention on the "four ones": a) One Programme; b) One Leader; c) One Budget, and d) One Office. During 2007, the focus of the "*Delivering as One*" initiative was on setting up new working modalities for the UN Country Team (UNCT), redefining the role of the UN Resident Coordinator, creating new accountability frameworks, and setting up the new operating mechanism at country level.

4. Overall, FAO considers that the experience with the "Delivering as One" process has so far been positive:

- the stocktaking revealed clear improvement in national ownership and increased involvement by pilot country governments, although the level of involvement of line ministries remains uneven;
- there has been greater involvement of specialized agencies and non-resident agencies in their role as policy and knowledge providers;
- there has been increased cooperation among UN agencies, a clearer division of labour and less duplication among agencies and a clearer understanding of funding gaps;
- there is a general acknowledgement that UN-supported development cooperation must also take into account economic sector priorities to effectively provide a strategic response of the UN system to national development priorities;
- the process has also improved mutual understanding and acceptance of different existing business models, capacities and functions within the UN system;
- the UN as an actor has become more visible in the pilot countries;
- the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), when used to its fullest potential, is a sound basis for a coherent UN response;
- there are clear advantages in applying the "Delivering as One" lessons at the beginning of a programming cycle;
- noted challenges include conflicting messages from headquarters to agencies, short-term increased transaction costs, Resident Coordinator authority and accountability, and how the firewall will operate.

5. The "*Delivering as One*" process will be evaluated by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in three stages to be completed in 2011. FAO is a co-chair and an active member of the UNEG Management Group in this initiative.

COUNTRY LEVEL REVIEW: ALBANIA

6. From the eight Pilots only Albania is part of the European and Central Asian Region of FAO and it is the only pilot country where FAO has no representation. Activities began in June 2007 with a first mission from the Sub-regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe as the closest decentralized office to the country.

7. The main outcomes of the activities so far are: (i) a review of the modalities of cooperation with the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Protection (June 2007), and (ii) preparation of a joint programme for implementation. Using the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme Facility (TCPF), the preparation of a National Medium-Term Priority Framework (NMTPF) has begun in order to identify the priority areas for technical assistance. In October 2007 a Memorandum of Understanding between the United Nations agencies and the Government of Albania was signed covering the organization and modalities of the Delivering as One.

8. The selected priority areas have been incorporated into the Annual Work Plan of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) for 2008-2010 including the submission of a project proposal to the Joint Executive Committee (established and operating under the Memorandum of Understanding). The Coherence Fund provides financial resources to an activity in the area of extension and advisory services in Albania. FAO has also contributed to a joint country Delivering as One communication programme and a study on harmonization and simplification of reporting.

9. Implementation of the agreed-upon programmes, and of the various mechanisms put in place, including those for joint resource mobilization with the Joint Executive Committee (JEC) system, will be undertaken in 2008. In addition, the effectiveness of the system will be tested, namely the capacity of the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the capacity of the participating United Nations agencies to implement this new programme more efficiently and cost effectively. The Sub-regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe will play a lead role in the finalization of the NMTPF in supporting the Delivering as One operating model in Albania.

10. The experience in Albania revealed that FAO as a Non-Resident Agency (NRA) has difficulty in maintaining a satisfactory level of collaboration with the other resident United Nations agencies and is therefore obliged to make extra efforts to voice its inputs to the programme. However, based on past experience in the country, the Delivering as One has contributed to the fact that FAO as a specialized agency, has been more involved and cooperation has increased among the United Nations agencies.

FAO AND THE TRIENNIAL COMPREHENSIVE POLICY REVIEW AND THE COHERENCE COUNTRIES IN THE REU REGION

11. The FAO Conference Resolution 13/2005 requested the FAO Director-General to take appropriate action for the full implementation of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 59/250 on the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System (TCPR 2004). In order to illustrate FAO's approach to the implementation of the TCPR, an Interim Report (C 2007/17) has been presented to the Thirty-fourth Session of the FAO Conference (17-24 November 2007). The Conference endorsed the Interim Report and requested the Secretariat to submit a further interim report on the Implementation of Conference Resolution 13/2005, taking into account the outcome of the negotiations of the 62nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the TCPR 2007.

12. In December 2007, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 62/208 which provides, along with the resolution adopted at the end of the 2004 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR), the main legislative basis for the UN system reform at country level. The new resolution 62/208 provides more guidance on the role of the Specialized Agencies, the normative role of the UN system, as well as practical guidance on how to further enhance coherence at the country level. The new TCPR 2007 notes in particular the imbalance between regular and extra-budgetary resources, the use of restrictively earmarked non-core resources and its implications on the effectiveness and fragmentation of the United Nations development system. One specific provision addresses the need to increase contributions to the regular budgets of Specialized Agencies.

13. The General Assembly also emphasized other aspects that are relevant for FAO's activities:

- the importance of building member countries' development capacity;
- the need for UN organizations to adopt a coordinated approach to gender-related issues;
- the essential role to be played in situations of transition from relief to development;
- the need to intensify collaboration with regional commissions and other regional and sub-regional entities to support country level development initiatives;
- the alignment of regional technical support structures and the regional bureaux in order to provide better support to the UN Country Teams;
- the importance of actively participating in the resident coordinator system for a better coordination of operational activities for development and an effective and efficient functioning for the United Nations system at the country level; and
- the need to make further progress in simplification and harmonization at the global, regional and country levels (the General Assembly also invites the FAO Conference to assess progress, including costs and benefits, made in this area).

FAO is committed to implementing the provisions contained in the General Assembly Resolution 62/2008.

14. Overall, and in accordance with guidance received from its governing bodies, FAO will implement those reforms that emerge from intergovernmental consideration of the High-Level Panel report and the report of the Independent External Evaluation.

COHERENCE COUNTRIES IN THE EUROPEAN AND CENTRAL ASIA REGION

15. Following the recommendations of the TCPR 2007, the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) decided to use the lessons learned and experiences gained from the Pilots in the inclusive and strategic formulation of the One-UN Programme in the preparation of the new UNDAF cycle for the UNDAF 2008 and 2009 roll-out countries. In the UNDAF 2008 roll-out countries, the review of the ongoing UNDAF and the preparation of the new UNDAF document will begin in 2008 with the objective of having a fully developed and government endorsed United Nations programme framework ready during 2009 and commence the implementation of the new UNDAF in 2010, in line with the implementation of the respective national strategic development plans.

16. The following countries in the FAO European and Central Asian Region are among the UNDAF 2008 roll-out countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Tajikistan, TFYR Macedonia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. FAO has Non-Resident Representations only in Armenia and Azerbaijan; in the other listed countries FAO is not represented.

17. FAO is cooperating with the other UN agencies in these countries to ensure that members can benefit in the most cost-effective way from its role as a specialized agency. This will shape a more dynamic role for FAO in its contribution to achieving the MDGs. As part of this process the sub-regional offices both in Ankara and Budapest will play a leading role in the preparation of NMTPFs in these countries together with the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia.

18. The formulation of the NMTPF for Tajikistan has been completed and NMTPFs are under discussion with the governments of Azerbaijan and Moldova. Using the experience gained in participation in the One-UN Programme in Albania, FAO is strongly committed to participating proactively in the Common Country Assessment (CCA) process of the United Nations System (if applicable) and in the UNDAF formulation process of the above countries.

19. FAO will use the staff and programme resources available in the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, and the two Sub-regional Offices in Ankara and Budapest to provide assistance to member countries and to strengthen and harmonize its cooperation with the UNCTs and other partners. In order to achieve this, FAO will establish regular working relations and communication with the UNCTs. FAO will make advocacy and programming efforts, based on consultative needs assessments and priority settings, with the appropriate line ministries, in order to integrate the strategic sector programmes into the joint United Nations programme framework. It will pursue its close working relations with other United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Trade Centre (ITC), and the other two Rome-based agencies, IFAD and WFP.

20. Taking into account the limited financial and human resources available to the sub-regional offices, use of the TCP Facility (TCPF) will be necessary. The governments of the member countries concerned will be invited to review the use of the TCPF in order to facilitate the formulation of the respective indicative development programmes with FAO.

II. COLLABORATION WITH THE THREE ROME-BASED AGENCIES

21. This section provides an overview of collaboration between FAO, IFAD and WFP in the past years on the basis of the global perspective as presented in the document JM 08.1/2². This part of the paper will place particular emphasis - where appropriate - on joint activities in the European and Central Asian Region of the three agencies.

22. Between 1 January 2006 and the end of 2007, FAO, IFAD and WFP undertook a joint mapping exercise to identify and report on their collaboration. The aim was to provide a foundation for analysing collaboration and produce a useful tool to guide policy on future cooperation. Areas of collaboration under the mapping exercise were grouped into the four pillar categories used in this paper: a) Agricultural Investment – Increased investments in agriculture and rural development; b) Policy formulation, capacity-building, knowledge management and advocacy; c) Emergency and rehabilitation, including disaster risk management, and d) Administrative activities.

23. The results of this mapping exercise, which was mainly quantitative, will be posted on the FAO website. The results show that 24 percent of collaboration occurred at the global level, 6 percent at the regional level and almost 70 percent at the country level. Approximately 20 percent of the collaboration reported involved all three Rome-based agencies working

² The paper is based on the Document JM 08.1/2 – Joint Meeting of the 99th Session of the Programme Committee and the 122nd Session of the Finance Committee – Collaboration on Administrative and Processing Work between FAO, WFP and IFAD – Progress Report.

together, whilst 60 percent involved FAO and WFP, 18 percent involved FAO and IFAD and approximately 5 percent involved collaboration between IFAD and WFP. Only 1 percent of the collaboration was related to the European and Central Asian Region.

24. Further details relating to the pillars agricultural investment, policy formulation and emergency and rehabilitation are presented below.

PILLAR 1: AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT- INCREASED INVESTMENTS IN AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

25. FAO, IFAD and WFP share a strong commitment to achieving the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) through increased investments in agricultural and rural development. Cooperation between the three agencies is being pursued in the context of National and Regional Programmes for Food Security based on the “twin-track” approach, recognizing the need for: (i) direct action to alleviate hunger immediately for the most vulnerable, and (ii) longer-term agricultural, food security, nutrition and rural development programmes to eliminate the root causes of hunger and improve economic access to food.

26. FAO, IFAD and WFP are working together on the provision of technical support at the country level through joint capacity-building initiatives such as the Food Security Thematic Groups (FSTGs). Such groups have been created in Armenia and in Georgia. FAO is also involved in recent joint initiatives with IFAD on capacity-building on gender issues at the country level. In April 2008, the IFAD Executive Board approved a grant for FAO for projects and activities in Regional Capacity-building and Knowledge Management for Gender Equality and invited the FAO European Commission on Agriculture (ECA) Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development to participate in these joint activities.

27. Cooperation between FAO and IFAD has strengthened through the provision of Investment Centre assistance in formulating IFAD lending operations and implementation as well as in the provision of technical support. 2007 was a record year in budget delivery terms for collaboration with the FAO Investment Centre.

28. In the REU region, collaboration in this area is still quite weak although the staff weeks provided by the Investment Centre to IFAD in the REU region has gone up from five in 2005 to 16 in 2007. It covers the countries of Albania, Armenia, Tajikistan and Turkey.

PILLAR 2: POLICY FORMULATION, CAPACITY-BUILDING, KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND ADVOCACY

29. FAO is working together with IFAD and WFP at Headquarters and in the field on many areas of joint policy development and advice, capacity-building and knowledge management, advocacy and communication to achieve food security, raise nutrition levels, enhance agricultural productivity and improve the lives of rural populations.

Policy Formulation and Advice

30. FAO worked together with IFAD on joint preparations for the Global Agroindustries Forum in April 2008. 16 countries from the REU region participated in this meeting.

Capacity-Building and Knowledge Management

31. FAO and WFP have jointly improved their methodologies for Crop and Food Supply Assessment missions and prepared common guidelines. The two institutions have also collaborated on market analysis tools for food security monitoring and assessment. Normative work on the application of weather-indexed risk management tools has also been carried out together. FAO has taken an active role in providing technical support to the European Commission (EC)-funded Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity (SENAC) project of WFP and provided technical support to WFP’s Pre-Crisis Market Assessments in Central America and Central Asia.

32. FAO and IFAD have recently formulated a joint proposal for Regional Capacity-building and Knowledge Management for Gender Equality. It will form part of a global gender programme which IFAD is currently developing which includes: (a) continued efforts to mainstream gender in IFAD's procedures, processes and mentoring instruments; (b) capacity-building and knowledge management, and (c) advocacy and policy dialogue for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Advocacy and Communication

33. FAO has embarked on a process of developing a common advocacy and communication strategy with WFP and IFAD, based on a pragmatic approach which recognizes the different mandates, messages and communications priorities of the three agencies. Areas of common policy work are being identified and linked to provide a basis for joint messages.

34. In the REU Region only the FAO/WFP participation at the week-long *Salon International de l'Agriculture* held in Paris in February 2006 can be reported. More than one million people visited the Salon in eight days.

PILLAR 3: EMERGENCY AND REHABILITATION, INCLUDING DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT

35. There has been extensive collaboration, in particular with WFP, in the field of nutrition and food safety in emergency situations, particularly analysis of the preparedness activities oriented towards reducing the negative impact of climate change and increased diversion of food for bioenergy on nutrition, food safety and food production. In addition, there continues to be strong collaboration between FAO and WFP with regard to the following:

- support for in-country consultations and joint missions to Africa and other regions to address soaring food prices, involving also IFAD;
- strengthening sectoral Disaster Risk Management (DRM) strategies and related institutional capacities;
- jointly identifying disaster/emergency "hot spot" countries and working together to strengthen government capacities to identify and analyse risks, build/strengthen early warning systems, establish simple food security and livelihood baselines, prepare contingency plans and build preparedness capacity;
- working together on livelihoods-based needs assessments, formulation of early recovery and rehabilitation strategies and plans of action, improved beneficiary selection (targeting), greater co-leadership of food security clusters, joint programming of food-for-training/food-for-work activities;
- supporting and strengthening the skills of rural orphans and vulnerable children in emergency settings and HIV/AIDS contexts in Africa through Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools;
- collaboration in the development and dissemination of materials to mainstream a gender perspective in emergency and rehabilitation programmes;
- through secondment of a senior logistics officer from WFP to FAO Headquarters for twelve months, which should lead to the identification of new opportunities and expected efficiency gains resulting from streamlining procedures and processes, in particular with regard to procurement and other logistical processes in FAO's emergency operations;
- the Forum on Food Security in Humanitarian Crises, which took place at FAO in April 2008 in collaboration with a range of civil society partners, was another opportunity for further joint activity between FAO and WFP.

36. Collaboration under this pillar in the REU is ongoing and includes elements mentioned above. Close coordination of activities is undertaken with WFP where appropriate. Recent examples are Moldova, Tajikistan and the North Caucasus. FAO has worked with WFP in the Russian Federation on Food for Work (FFW) activities on small-scale agriculture projects in the North Caucasus. In addition, FAO and WFP jointly contributed to the Agriculture and Rural Development Assessment mission in Abkhazia/Georgia organized by the United Nations Country Team for Georgia.

THE WAY FORWARD IN THE COLLABORATION WITH IFAD/WFP IN THE REU REGION

37. In relation to the REU region, the mapping exercise has broadly illustrated that there is still need for closer collaboration between the Rome based agencies in this region. The Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia should be entrusted with taking the lead in discussions concerning further collaboration possibilities related to the REU region with both IFAD and WFP in close cooperation with the the Technical Cooperation Department as focal point for collaboration with WFP and IFAD. This is quite important taking into consideration that all three agencies are mainly NRAs in the entire region.

38. Cross-cutting thematic areas for collaboration such as the potential for broadening global advocacy by including more civil society partners, strengthening comprehensive food security approaches and cooperative activities at the regional and country levels, including the Soaring Food Price Initiative, as well as inter-agency cooperation on climate change should also be encouraged in the REU region.

39. The areas identified under the recommendations of the Independent External Evaluation (IEE) for strengthening strategic and programmatic partnerships, including technical field work, capacity-building initiatives, communication and advocacy are also being reviewed for possible consideration. The three agencies are currently developing a joint strategic policy paper that will focus on areas for future collaboration. Another important initiative emerging from the IEE could be the formulation of a strategy for FAO for investment. Such a strategy would strengthen FAO's support for investment at country level, providing capacity building to assist developing countries in determining their own investment priorities, approaches and plans including within the framework of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. This work would draw upon discussions with IFAD and is expected to open up opportunities for further collaboration.

40. Given the growing recognition of the prominent role that agriculture has in the development agenda, the three agencies are continuously assessing the potential for further collaboration in support of commitments at the local, national, regional and international level.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

41. The ongoing Delivering as One United Nations reform process is fully in line with the recommendations of the Independent External Evaluation and is reinforcing the reforms already introduced by the Director-General and endorsed by the Governing Bodies of FAO.

- i FAO is encouraged to continue to participate in the Delivering as One Pilot initiative and develop the necessary programming and operational/administrative tools enabling it to provide more efficient and cost-effective assistance to its member countries.
- ii The Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, the Sub-regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and the Sub-regional Office for Central Asia are requested to:

- a) Participate in the joint work and common efforts of the United Nations Country Team in Albania to finalize the setting-up of the new delivery mechanism of the United Nations System in the country, ensuring that through the NMTPF the key strategic programme elements of sector programmes such as: regional and rural development; regional economic integration; fisheries and sustainable management of plant and animal genetic resources for conservation of biodiversity and others, are fully reflected in the joint United Nations country programme; that the necessary funding resources are mobilized and allocated, and that the programmes are efficiently implemented, taking into account FAO's status as an NRA;
- b) Ensure that the experiences gained and the lessons learned in Albania are properly assessed to be used in the coherence frameworks in other member countries of the Region;
- c) Carry out consultations with member countries in order to identify those countries where FAO should assist in the formulation of the NMTPF and in the preparation of the new UNDAF cycle beginning in 2010, and
- d) Intensify cooperation with sister United Nations agencies, especially those which are also involved in addressing crucial development issues in the region, such as UNCTAD, UNIDO, ILO and the other two Rome-based United Nations agencies, IFAD and WFP, in order to develop joint cluster approaches to the assistance needs arising in the Region.

42. FAO's collaboration with WFP and IFAD in the European Region is still quite limited. The above-mentioned strategic documents will provide a framework for further strengthening this cooperation. However, the European and Central Asian Region is significant for the NRA status of all three agencies. Based on this situation, the following steps should be undertaken:

- i The Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, together with WFP and IFAD regional units, should make efforts to identify possibilities to further strengthen the joint analysis of investment possibilities. This is particularly related to the issue of credit provisions to small-scale farmers in the Region.
- ii Establishment of a virtual working group with the regional units in all three agencies to identify areas for joint policy formulation, capacity-building, knowledge management and advocacy.