

March 2012



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Продовольственная и
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Organización
de las
Naciones Unidas
para la
Alimentación y la
Agricultura

EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE

Thirty-seventh Session

Baku, Azerbaijan, 17 and 18 April 2012

Agenda Item 3

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK AND BUDGET (PWB) 2010–2011 AND LESSONS LEARNED

Executive Summary

FAO's work in the European and Central Asian Region under the results-based Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2010–11 evolved during the biennium to take account of lessons learned, particularly the focussing of priorities based on regional consultations and more interdisciplinary work.

The document outlines the major results and achievements from FAO's work in the Region under each of the Strategic Objectives of the results-based PWB 2010–11.

Guidance Sought

Member countries are invited to comment on the content and presentation of the report.

I. Introduction

1. The Europe and Central Asia Region contains some of the richest and poorest countries in the world and covers 53 member countries and one member organization (the European Union), of which about 20 countries in the Western Balkans and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) require technical assistance. For the developed countries, the Organization's normative work has greater value, while for the less developed and transitional countries, FAO's project work is paramount.

2. Maintaining interaction between these two groups of beneficiaries of FAO's assistance in the Region is one of the fundamental tasks of the Regional and Subregional Office in Europe and Central Asia. Field work is more consistent if based on solid normative work, which, in return, benefits from operational experience. The Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) aims to tailor its response to the needs of member countries in order to perpetuate a strong sense of ownership and assure funding for its field programme.

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3. Four main policy issues determine FAO's assistance in the Europe and Central Asian Region: (i) rural poverty, (ii) European Union (EU) accession and integration policies, (iii) the socialist legacy and (iv) the lack of adequate and well informed rural public goods. FAO is the only technical organization specializing in issues related to food security and the agrifood sector, fisheries and forestry in the Region.

4. The priorities endorsed at the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) 2010 in Yerevan were incorporated into FAO's Programme of Work and Budget for the biennium 2010–2011. However, later it was recognized that these priorities were too scattered and lacked a clear focus for a results-oriented implementation. The associated work plan was also too ambitious and activity based. Furthermore, country-level consultation was challenging due to FAO's limited country presence and with Country Programme Frameworks (CPFs) not yet completed.

5. In order to better target its work, REU applied the results of the informal regional consultations held in Budapest and Almaty in 2010, and Budapest 2011 and 2012, to develop a draft strategy and priority framework for FAO's work in the Region. An internal strategy workshop was held at the Regional Office in Budapest in October 2011, to analyse the priorities defined over previous years, including those identified at the ERC 2010, and the outcomes of the consultations with member countries, in order to focus the work in the Region in areas where FAO has a comparative advantage. These areas can be divided into the following two main fields of activity:

- Provision of global and regional public goods such as data and analysis of food insecurity and agricultural, forestry and fisheries trends in the Region. Information and advice on global regulations and standards, as well as best practices in the food value chain and capacity development. This would also embody a platform for debate and information exchange.
- Technical assistance in agriculture, natural resource management and rural development policy issues. Pilot field activities in the areas of agriculture, forestry and fisheries to upscale the proposed technical solutions at policy level.

6. Increasingly in the Region there is a high demand for knowledge transfer from developed countries to developing countries and countries in transition. Such knowledge transfer could have a very positive effect on the less developed countries and should be strongly supported.

FAO Response during the 2010–2011 Biennium

7. During 2011, FAO's work in the Region concentrated on the following six priority areas (more detail can be found in document ECA 37/12/5) within the current FAO Strategic Objectives:

- 1) Food and nutrition security (both within the countries and in their role abroad) at national, regional and global level.
- 2) Capacity development and policy support to small farmers for rural poverty reduction.
- 3) Natural resource management (including adapting agriculture, forests and fisheries to climate change and contributing effectively to climate change mitigation).
- 4) Control of transboundary (foodborne, animal and plant) pests and diseases.
- 5) Policy and institutional support for the entry of Member States into regional and global trade, standard-setting and political-economic organizations.
- 6) Supporting and building global and regional public goods through applied research in the areas of food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry.

8. The main achievements during 2010–11 contributing to each of the Strategic Objectives are reported below.

Strategic Objective A – Sustainable intensification of crop production

9. In order to support member countries in achieving food and nutrition security through environmentally sound plant protection and production activities, as requested by ERC 2010, REU has included national plans for sustainability and diversification of crop production in all CPFs. Capacity development and assessment studies for the preparation of these plans have been carried out. One of the main achievements has been the strengthened cooperation and active participation of the CIS

countries in phytosanitary issues through workshops related to the activities and mandate of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC).

10. This resulted in these countries contributions being incorporated into the review of the International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPMs) and consequently the implementation of such standards becoming more effective. Two countries in the Region have ratified the IPPC and four countries have ratified the Rotterdam Convention (Albania, Montenegro, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Russian Federation). This has resulted in a more efficient use of pesticides and a stronger focus on their safe disposal.

11. National plans for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA) strategies have been prepared with the governments of Armenia and Serbia. As a result of this, it is expected that in future the countries' seed policies will become more effective. National programmes for grain seed production have been developed and are being implemented in Armenia, the Republic of Moldova and Kyrgyzstan.

Strategic Objective B – Increased sustainable livestock production

12. Several countries in the Region have received guidance on advanced and appropriate livestock production practices in order to increase livestock productivity and improve the processing and marketing of perishable animal products.

13. Technical guidance for, and capacity development of, state and private veterinary services with regard to laboratory diagnosis, surveillance, and control of major transboundary animal diseases (TADs) such as Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and African Swine Fever (ASF) resulted in a better control of these diseases within the Region. The achievements in developing private veterinary services in Tajikistan could be used as a model in Central Asia. Regional and cross-border cooperation of state veterinary services were promoted through the First Veterinary Forum for Chief Veterinary Officers of South and East Europe under the mechanism of the Global Framework for Progressive Control for Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs Europe) with the support of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the European Commission Directorate General Health and Consumers (DG SANCO). The FAO animal disease control strategy regarding Foot and Mouth Disease and Brucellosis has also received extensive recognition in the Region. Capacity development at all levels (formal education and in-service training), infrastructure development and policy support in animal health and production sectors are paramount in the Region. Further regional cooperation and exchange of good practices in animal health and production is required in order to promote investment in the sector and improve productivity, and to control TADs and zoonosis.

14. Countries also receive FAO assistance to better manage animal genetic resources. This activity is in line with the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources. More attention needs to be provided to Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan and this would include an increased engagement from the countries themselves. Such interventions would result in a greater impact of REU animal health activities in the Region.

Strategic Objective C – Sustainable management and use of fisheries and aquaculture resources

15. During the biennium, a major achievement was increased regional cooperation in the field of science and management. This in turn led to the establishment in 2010 of the Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission (CACFish).

16. Closer cooperation among Black Sea countries is being facilitated through the implementation of a Turkish financed project to support responsible fisheries. A scoping mission to Ukraine, where aquaculture potential is very significant, was launched in December 2010. Secretarial and technical assistance was provided in connection with meetings and workshops with the European Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture Advisory Commission (EIFAAC), the Nebraska Alliance for Conservation

and Environmental Education (NACEE), the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), CACFish and AdriaMed.

17. Requests for assistance from three member countries (Armenia, Georgia and Republic of Moldova) have resulted in three reviews of the potentials for fisheries and aquaculture development. The reviews for Georgia and Armenia have been published and have served as a catalyst for new projects in these two countries. The review for the Republic of Moldova is under preparation and the Government of Belarus has also requested a review. Requests from Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Albania to assist in incrementing the dwindling aquaculture production, returning it to previous levels or higher, has resulted in a number of highly sought after farmers' publications i.e. "Carp polyculture in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia", and the SEU/EUROFISH production: "A Guide to Recirculation Aquaculture" where the demand has led to translation into four other languages in addition to English.

18. Guidelines to help smallholder trout farmers have been developed. Following a request from the Government of Georgia for help on the propagation of carp species and African catfish, practical hands-on workshops have been organized. This has kick-started production in the country. In total more than 20 workshops and training activities in support of sustainable development and management of fisheries and aquaculture in the Central Asia region have been implemented in 2010 and 16 workshops and training activities in 2011. As in other regions, in Europe and Central Asia aquaculture is the agricultural sector with the highest development potential and fish could become an important source of protein. FAO is advocating strongly for member countries' attention to this issue.

19. Critical issues regarding fish introductions and movements were addressed in a workshop held in Istanbul, Turkey, in November 2010. National experts from 12 countries are now collecting information and preparing, jointly with the Subregional Office for Central Asia (SEC), a regional strategy on how to deal with introductions and movements in a responsible manner. SEC published the document "Better Management Practices for Carp Production in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia". It is foreseen that the publication "Feasibility of Stocking and Culture-based Fisheries in Central Asia" will be published in the first quarter of 2012.

Strategic Objective D – Improved quality and safety of foods at all stages of the food chain

20. Food safety has critical relevance for food security. Food safety is a fundamental right of consumers and is essential for public health and trade. The Region has widespread needs to improve food safety standards from primary production along the entire food chain up to food consumption. REU has worked intensively with high-level policymakers and national food control authorities to promote modern policies for food safety.

21. Knowledge and countries' capacities to apply food safety risk analysis frameworks in strengthening food safety control systems have been significantly upgraded through technical meetings and workshops. Application of a risk-based approach was promoted for the development of national food safety standards, programmes for food safety hazards monitoring in the food chain, food safety management systems based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) principles, risk-based control and management. Trainings and workshops on risk analysis had a beneficial impact for countries in the Region with regard to the dynamic process of reforming food safety systems.

22. There is growing recognition of FAO in the Region for its impartial and knowledgeable activities on promoting efficient food safety systems with sustainable positive implications for local and international markets and for domestic and importing countries' consumers.

23. Some transition countries of the Region recently joined FAO and the Codex Alimentarius Commission. As a result, several countries in the Region now require relevant substantial capacity development support. In cooperation with the World Health Organization and the European

Commission, REU has raised awareness concerning Codex procedures and promoted Codex standards and guidelines, offering country specific recommendations.

24. Awareness appertaining to different aspects (benefits, legislation, certification, registration and protection) of special quality food linked to geographical origin has been raised by the regional FAO REU website “Quality&Origin in Europe and Central Asia - Traditional Agricultural and Food Products” developed in close cooperation with Member States.

Strategic Objective E – Sustainable management of forests and trees

25. The fundamental role of forests for rural development, climate change mitigation and environment protection has been recently acknowledged in the Region largely as a result of FAO advocacy and technical support.

26. Over the past biennium, FAO has provided training and technical assistance to member countries in order to develop the forestry sector. The implementation of the workshop on “Climate Change - Impacts on Forest Management in Eastern Europe and Central Asia” provided an opportunity to exchange information and success stories, discuss areas of common interest and identify areas for potential collaboration. This event also served as a forum for participants to analyse the current status of research and policy frameworks addressing issues related to forest land use and climate change.

27. A Regional Information and Training Workshop on “Enhancing Forest Policy Processes” expanded the practical skills for developing forest policies of 31 participants from countries of the Region. The publication “Developing effective forest policy” in English and Russian was prepared and distributed to these participants.

28. With the aim of preparing the ground for investments in forestry and related fields and bearing in mind the interfaces between forests and other land uses, REU has organized various workshops: “Institutional Needs for a Sustainable Non-Wood Forest Product Sector in South-East Europe”, “Guide to implementation of phytosanitary standards in forestry”, “Policy Options for Wood Energy in CIS Countries” and on “Community Involvement in the Management of Wildlife and Wildlife Diseases in Central Asia and the Caucasus”.

29. Technical assistance was provided to the Balkan States (Kosovo). The meeting “Best practice examples of non-state forestry in Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC)”, and the International Seminar on “Implementation of the Guide to Good Practice in Contract Labour in Forestry” highlighted the continuous need for exchange of knowledge, expertise and information through workshops/meetings and activities of this nature in order to further strengthen the private forest sector (25 million small forestry holders only in Europe) and its contribution to sustainable development.

Strategic Objective F – Sustainable management of land, water and genetic resources and improved response to global environmental challenges affecting food and agriculture

30. In order to improve access to and share knowledge for sustainable development in the areas of agricultural research, extension and biotechnologies, 15 comprehensive studies were produced to address the national and regional gaps in capacity development and policy formulation which emerged from value chain analysis and stakeholder demands in seven countries in the Western Balkans; Armenia, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova. Resident potential donor agencies were sensitized to support countries in their efforts to streamline the food chain. Funds from the United Nations Delivering as One programme in Albania have improved institutional coherency. This has resulted in innovation projects, more focus on the market orientation of farm production and demand-driven research and extension.

31. Countries in the Region were supported to facilitate the access of small producers to current technology. FAO has provided capacity to identify the demand-driven research and extension agenda. Another important FAO activity was support to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks of some biotechnology solutions. Assistance was provided to Armenia and Georgia to finalize their biosafety legislation and to identify pertinent competent national institutions. A regional policy document on biotechnologies and biosafety was prepared with an innovative participatory approach, based on specific environmental, social and farmer requirements.

32. Tackling hunger and sustainability in agriculture necessitates expanding partnerships at all levels. Examples of such partnership initiatives in the Region during the 2010–11 biennium are: (i) Panel discussion on policy options for climate change mitigation and adaptation, Green Week Agricultural Discussion Forum, Berlin, Germany, 2010; (ii) Cooperation with regional non-governmental organizations (NGOs) was initiated, e.g. Black Sea Biotechnology Association (BSBA) (joint paper); (iii) Collaboration with the European Commission, DG Research, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the Central Asia and Caucasus Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (CACAARIs) was initiated in research, biotechnologies and agricultural innovation systems (AISs); (iv) Ventures with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and regional United Nations agencies: partnering in the Rio+20 process and the United Nations inter-agency report on the green economy; (v) Undertakings with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD): FAO success stories on biosafety presented and visibility among all stakeholder groups enhanced. These examples of work in partnership led to enhanced efficiency, knowledge-sharing and prevented duplication of efforts.

33. The technical support to the 18 web-based thematic research networks (ESCORENA), exploring the Virtual Extension, Research and Communication Network (VERCON) concept, and Technologies and Practices for Small Agricultural Producers (TECA), encouraged interaction and innovation among researchers, entrepreneurs, farmers, and NGOs. This has been achieved with minimal financial support. Support to FAO Headquarters services is regularly provided, particularly for Russian-speaking audiences.

34. A very significant area of land in the Region has shifted from state to private ownership in just 20 years. FAO activities have focused countries' attention on land and in particular on land tenure as a key factor for rural development and food security. A technical paper on "Land Banks and Funds - Instruments for Rural Development" presented an innovative approach to land tenure with examples from countries in the Region. Three land consolidation projects are being implemented in Albania, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Three land tenure related workshops to promote the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (FAO 2010) have been organized in Prague (June 2010) and Budapest (November 2010 and June 2011), respectively. FAO advocacy in the Region for responsible land tenure has been a driving force behind the recent approval by member countries of the draft of the Voluntary Guidelines for Responsible Land Tenure, Forestry and Fishery. These Guidelines will be submitted to the special session of the Committee for Food Security (CFS) in May 2012.

Strategic Objective G – Enabling environment for markets to improve livelihoods and rural development

35. Analytical work synthesized in the study on "Issues and challenges for farm and enterprise diversification and integration of small-scale farmers into value chains in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA)", which was presented during the consultation on "Enabling environment for producer-agribusinesses linkages in EECA", was an important element in the capacity development exercise for the experts and government officials from 12 countries attending the meeting. This consultation concluded by identifying areas of possible FAO assistance as well as topics that needed to be addressed in future policies in order to assist small producers improve their access to output and input markets.

36. Finalization of a publication on agribusiness and agro-industries development in Central and Eastern Europe, and a proposal for a new approach to assess the state of the enabling environment for agribusiness development in EECA, together with analytical reports, a comprehensive agro-industry database and 18 country agro-industry briefs, provide information and a framework for the identification and prioritization of support and actions aimed at creating a more conducive environment for agribusiness and agro-industry development in EECA.

37. Collaboration with the European Commission Directorate General Agri on joint studies on the diversification of rural sectors in Albania and Montenegro and projects facilitating area-based development in rural cross-border areas of the Western Balkans, together in close and successful collaboration with the Regional Rural Standing Working Group for South Eastern Europe, (the main regional EU and FAO partner for rural development activities), significantly contributed to support rural development programmes in Eastern and Central Europe.

38. In the area of direct technical assistance, implemented projects resulted in an improved capacity of business development services to support small producers in exploiting market opportunities as well as having a direct impact on improvement of the livelihoods of resource poor farmers in Montenegro and Azerbaijan. While assistance and support provided to the Ministries of Agriculture in Azerbaijan and the Republic of Moldova will contribute to improved agro-industry sector oversight and coordination and formulation of policies for improved agribusiness competitiveness. Technical assistance provided within the framework of the United Nations Joint Programme “Sustainable Tourism for Rural Development” in Serbia; support to capacity development to absorb future EU rural development funding in Bosnia and Herzegovina; and support to the reform of rural development institutions in Croatia, enabled the streamlining of rural development policies in EU accession processes.

Strategic Objective H – Improved food security and better nutrition

39. FAO has contributed to strengthen governments’ capacities to monitor and analyse agricultural markets and to formulate better policies and programmes on food security. FAO has worked with the countries on food price monitoring and in providing guidance for food security (e.g. Agro marketing webpage for CIS countries).

40. Malnutrition, particularly undernourishment, is registered in vulnerable groups living in rural areas of Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe. REU has provided technical support in institutional capacity development to reduce malnutrition in children in Albania within the United Nations Joint Programme (UNJP). In 2011, FAO initiated assistance to countries to develop nutrition country profiles and strategies as preparation for the International Conference on Nutrition (ICN)+21 which will be held in Rome in 2013.

41. FAO supported the first agricultural census in the Republic of Moldova. A number of workshops contributed to capacity development on sex-disaggregated statistics and FAOSTAT organized its regional workshop in Budapest in 2011. Specifically, a technical paper on the socio-economic status of rural women in the Region was prepared for the ERC 2012 with the objective of increasing the awareness and attention of policymakers with regard to gender. Several studies on the impact of agricultural policies on rural household food security and poverty in the Region have directed FAO support to member countries. Three policy papers on crop diversification, livestock development and the diversity of agriculture in the Region, a publication on rural transition in Azerbaijan and a publication on investment potential in Turkmenistan for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) provided information for FAO policy dialogue, shaping the frameworks for FAO cooperation with the countries of the Region.

42. FAO continued to develop the Thematic Knowledge Networks portals (AgroWeb, ESCORENA), and provide assistance to depository libraries. The Russian version of the agricultural vocabulary was finalized. The implementation of the information project in Armenia contributed to the efforts of the Government to provide services and information to the agricultural sector. The regional food security information system has provided support with crop prospects, food outlook publications

and country briefs (e.g. three research papers on food security related issues for CIS countries and five papers produced for Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Strategic Objective I – Improved preparedness for, and effective response to, food and agriculture threats and emergencies

43. Fortunately, the Region has not experienced any significant disasters during the biennium and FAO/REU focuses more on disaster prevention rather than on disaster recovery. The crop monitoring process and capacity related to assessment in the agriculture sector was enhanced through two training workshops (Kyrgyzstan and Albania). FAO/REU has actively participated in the Central Asia Risk Reduction Platform (CARRA) sessions led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and FAO recommendations have been included in the CARRA 2011 road map. FAO/REU also participated in the regular Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission (CFSAM) requested by the Government of Kyrgyzstan and in a rapid crop assessment prepared for the Republic of Moldova within a United Nations overall assessment.

Strategic Objective K – Gender equity in access to resources, goods, services and decision-making in rural areas

44. 2010 was a transitional year in terms of programming the mid-term objectives and activities of REU/SEU under K01. Focus was on better planning of activities in the mid-term rather than on achieving some of the products/services. A new “Gender Team” was created to assist in achieving the planned objectives. With regard to gender mainstreaming, staff gender training was held in REU in February 2011. Gender was mainstreamed into four projects, ranging from seed and forest policy to EU accession. A gender-focused regional Gender and Agriculture Statistics Framework (GASF) project in Central Asia has been formulated and funded. With regard to the Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development (WPW), two Board meetings were held in 2010–11 (Rome, September 2010; Budapest, July 2011). In order to revitalize the WPW, focus was allocated to the enhancement of internal coordination rather than on the Expert meeting/Session. Roles and responsibilities for the WPW Board and a nomination letter of country gender focal points were agreed. A WPW website was created, a newsletter was published and two technical papers on gender indicators and on the status of rural women/men in the Region were prepared. Additional activities were: participation/co-facilitation in a gender data workshop (Prague, November 2010); participation in Strategic Objective K Retreats (Rome, November 2010; and November 2011); launch of the State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) in REU; a sex-disaggregated data regional workshop conducted in Ankara (April 2011); technical support on gender to the United Nations joint project in Albania on Reducing Malnutrition. The tangible impact of the WPW on increasing policymakers’ attention to gender equality has been evaluated. Furthermore, data is being collected to support an ECA decision on the future of the WPW during the biennium 2012–13.

Strategic Objective L - Support to investments in agriculture

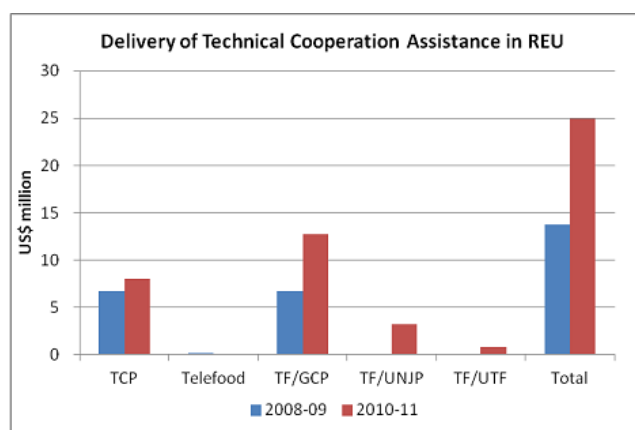
45. FAO/REU work in this area encompassed: (i) greater inclusion of food and sustainable agriculture and rural development investment strategies and policies into national and regional development plans and frameworks; (ii) improved public and private sector organizations’ capacity to plan, implement and enhance the sustainability of food and agriculture, and rural development investment operations; and (iii) quality assured public/private sector investment programmes, in line with national priorities and requirements, developed and financed.

Functional Objective X - Effective collaboration with Member States and Stakeholders

46. Activities undertaken under this functional objective significantly contributed to the implementation of the other Strategic Objectives. Policy analysis has been effected in various countries of the Region supporting prioritization both at the country and regional level. Implementation of the National Medium-Term Priority Framework (NMTPF) in Albania progressed,

while CPFs for Armenia, Azerbaijan Georgia and the Republic of Moldova were completed and signed or are about to be signed (Azerbaijan), while preparation of the CPF in Kyrgyzstan has been initiated. The field programme in the Region further expanded based on additional extra-budgetary funds. The envisaged target of an increase in delivery by USD 3 million for development projects has been met as the increase was USD 11 million for the biennium. The total delivery of the field programme in 2010/11 in the REU Region amounted to USD 24 million.

47. 2010–11 was the first biennium of decentralized Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) management. In early 2010 TCP delivery was slow but by the end of the first year TCP approval had already reached USD 5.3 million (61 percent of the total REU TCP allocation). The 2010–11 REU allocation of USD 8.7 million was fully utilized. With the decentralization of the approval process, FAO was able to shorten project approval time. Decentralization also permitted more strategic and efficient use of TCP resources.



48. The preparation of a regional resource mobilization strategy has been initiated. Partnership with United Nations agencies in Europe and Central Asia has been further strengthened and increased efforts in collaborating in joint programming in the Delivering as One countries Albania, Kyrgyzstan and Montenegro have been made. Relations with non-traditional resource partners such as the Russian Federation, Turkey, Hungary and Kazakhstan have been significantly expanded.

49. An effective consultation mechanism with informal consultation sessions during the inter-conference period has been established. Member countries appreciate having the possibility to interact more efficiently with FAO on priority-setting and governance issues (e.g. decentralization). This mechanism allows member countries, even when not represented in Rome, to become an active part of the consultation process.

50. The preparation of an REU strategy and the identification of six priorities through intensive consultation with FAO and non-FAO partners has been an excellent achievement of the past biennium. The initiation of an effective partnership with countries with a substantial influence on food security in the Region (Russian Federation, Ukraine and Kazakhstan) is another important result of the biennium 2010–11. Deeper engagement with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan will be pursued, particularly on animal and plant diseases.

Lessons learned from the implementation in 2010–11

51. The PWB 2010–11 was the first under FAO's results-based Medium Term Plan 2010–13. The work envisaged for the Europe and Central Asia Region proved to be too ambitious, and the targets and results were not sufficiently focused, since the ten priorities identified at the ERC 2010 were too scattered. During the biennium efforts have been made to reduce the number of priorities to better focus on regional needs, and to deliver FAO's work in the Region on achieving results through multi-disciplinary approaches.

52. In the absence of resident FAO Representatives and with only a few country offices, consultation with country stakeholders and formulation of programmes based on identified needs is challenging. CPFs, the main sources of information apropos national priorities, are still only in place in a few countries but the informal consultations held at regional and subregional level have helped to overcome this challenge.

53. Further efforts should be made to promote multi-disciplinary work in the Region to increase the impact of FAO's assistance at country level and build on one of the most widely recognized comparative advantages of FAO. Notable examples of multi-disciplinary activities in the Region in the biennium 2010–11 are the inclusion of gender considerations in all activities, food safety and aquaculture production, nutrition and agriculture, commodity market and water use (virtual water), and education and research programmes based on field evidence (e.g. conservation agriculture, adapted genetic resources, etc.).