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## COUNCIL

### Hundred and Forty-fifth Session

Rome, 3-7 December 2012

### Enhancement of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP)

#### Executive Summary

- This paper responds to the request of the Council at its 144<sup>th</sup> Session in June 2012 for “*proposals for overall enhancement of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), consistent with the Strategic Thinking Process and Country Programming Frameworks*”.
- The transformational change agenda provides a timely opportunity to better integrate the TCP into country programming activities through FAO’s corporate planning and monitoring instruments: the reviewed Strategic Framework and new Medium Term Plan 2014-17, and the Country Programming Frameworks (CPF).
- In order to enhance the use of TCP to improve FAO’s response to country level priorities and improve impact at the country level, CPFs will be used to identify the priorities to guide the use of TCP resources at country level, and to help direct and focus the resource mobilization efforts.
- Fifteen percent of the TCP resources will continue to be set aside for emergency operations; for the remaining TCP funds, agreed allocations across regions will not change at this juncture. From 2014 the Regional Representative will manage the TCP allocation for the region to support governments’ expressed priorities consistent with their CPFs.
- The TCP will continue as a separate Chapter in the FAO budgetary appropriation, and the relevant, applicable financial regulations would remain unchanged.
- The organizational implications are being addressed through transformational change, follow-up to the strategic evaluation of FAO country programming, and FAO’s Effective Country Programming Learning Programme.

#### Guidance sought by the Programme and Finance Committees and Council

The Programme and Finance Committees and Council are invited to comment and provide guidance on the proposed enhancements to the TCP.

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## Introduction

1. This paper responds to the request of the Council at its 144<sup>th</sup> Session in June 2012 for “proposals for overall enhancement of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), consistent with the Strategic Thinking Process and Country Programming Frameworks”.<sup>1</sup> This follows on previous requests by Members to adapt the TCP to evolving circumstances and changing contexts<sup>2</sup> in order to ensure its continuing value, importance and relevance for Members as a means for accessing FAO technical expertise in accordance with their established priorities.

2. The Council request of June 2012 is also consistent with the findings of evaluations that have recommended more strategic and integrated use of TCP resources. Specifically, recommendation 17 of the 2010 strategic Evaluation of country programming<sup>3</sup> stated that “FAO should allocate funds available from its Regular Programme budget for field activities... to support the selected priority areas of work under the national medium-term priority framework [now CPF] in each country”. In considering this Evaluation, the Council “stressed the importance of the Country Programming Frameworks in guiding all of FAO’s work at country level”.<sup>4</sup>

3. Furthermore, in April 2012, the Council endorsed the corporate Resource Mobilization and Management Strategy, aimed at promoting a programming approach to resource mobilization based on priorities identified in Country Programming Frameworks and FAO’s Strategic Framework.

4. Accordingly, this paper outlines a proposal for enhancement of the TCP from 2014 in line with the guidance of the membership for improved effectiveness and impact in responding to country priorities.

## Towards a more strategic TCP

5. Transformational change of FAO is underway, building on reforms of the past several years and accelerated by decisions and actions taken during the first semester of 2012.<sup>5</sup> Transformational change has at its core two fundamental elements: (i) the Strategic Thinking Process aimed at renewing the strategic direction of FAO and informing the review and development of its corporate planning documents; and (ii) the effective translation of FAO’s normative work into country-level impact, and of its global knowledge products into tangible change in policy and practice *inter alia* by strengthening of the structure and functioning of its decentralized office network in unison with headquarters.

6. The transformational change agenda therefore provides a timely opportunity to integrate better the TCP into country programming activities through FAO’s corporate planning and monitoring instruments:

- a) the reviewed Strategic Framework and new Medium Term Plan 2014-17, as a foundation for defining country level pathways to ensure that public global goods are translated into country-level results, providing a basis to leverage FAO knowledge-based expertise in response to the needs and priorities of member countries; and
- b) Country Programming Frameworks, prepared in close alignment with the planning approach and priorities of each government, the work of other UN agencies and partners, as well as consideration of FAO’s own comparative advantages, as the instrument for defining and agreeing the Organization’s areas of focus in achieving country priorities and as a catalyst for resource mobilization.

7. In order to enhance the use of TCP to improve FAO’s response to country level priorities and improve impact at the country level, CPFs will be used to identify the priorities to guide the use of TCP resources at country level. The CPFs will also help direct and focus the resource mobilization

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<sup>1</sup> CL 144/REP para. 39 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/025/me323e.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> CL 125/REP paragraph 27; CL 127/REP paragraphs 68-69; CL 128/REP paragraph 84; CL 129/REP paragraph 33-34

<sup>3</sup> PC 104/4 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/019/k8684e.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> PC 104/4 paragraphs 199-209

<sup>5</sup> CL 144/REP paragraph 25, CL 145/3 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/026/me906e.pdf>

efforts for the country, where a more strategic use of the TCP can leverage improved government and development partners voluntary contributions for FAO's technical assistance.

8. Therefore, from 2014 the Regional Representative will manage the TCP allocation for the region to support governments' expressed priorities consistent with their CPFs. The TCP will continue as a separate Chapter in the FAO budgetary appropriation, and the relevant, applicable financial regulations would remain unchanged. The key principles of TCP will be implicit in developing the CPF, including country eligibility, catalytic effects, sustainable impacts, and government commitment.

9. Fifteen percent of the TCP resources will continue to be set aside for emergency operations. For the remaining TCP resources, agreed allocations across regions will remain unchanged at this juncture. Regional Conferences will regularly consider regional priorities, and will review and assess the overall alignment of TCP allocations. Regional TCPs will operate within the respective regional and subregional programming frameworks and partnership agreements with Regional Organizations.

### **Resource mobilization and partnerships**

10. A key feature of the strengthened linkage between the TCP and CPF is that the TCP will serve as a catalyst when initiating discussions on priority areas of intervention to be planned with government and development partners including other UN bodies. This will enable the FAO Representative to negotiate and enter into arrangements for co-financing with potential partners, as well as leveraging and mobilizing resources.

11. Such an approach will respond to the rapidly changing global development arena as new challenges and ways of doing business emerge, including bilateral and multilateral aid and partnerships, and moves towards greater aid effectiveness. FAO will be able to initiate or participate effectively in sector-wide and multidisciplinary national programmes, where its comparative advantage is greatest, with co-financing including the TCP supported technical assistance and voluntary contributions.

### **Organizational implications**

12. FAO Representatives already have delegated authority to approve TCPs, negotiate the CPF and country work plan and mobilize voluntary contributions. Subregional offices will better focus their technical resources to support development and implementation of technically-sound CPFs, drawing on existing knowledge and best practices. Regional Offices will strengthen oversight and quality assurance of CPFs, country work plan execution, and manage the overall TCP allocation, monitoring and reporting for the region. Responsible divisions will assist regional offices, when requested, in particular to help the technical officers in decentralized offices in ensuring quality of technical interventions.

13. While an enhanced TCP can play a more important role in catalyzing the benefits of strengthened country programming and execution, the organizational implications are being addressed through transformational change. In particular, the proposed TCP enhancements requires high calibre FAO Representatives and Assistant FAORs (Programme) who understand the Organization and are able to make strategic decisions and provide advice to government. The effective use of TCP resources to respond to governments' needs and priorities identified in the CPFs will require CPFs of high quality. Good progress is being made on the related transformational changes on decentralization that were endorsed by the Council, in follow-up to the strategic evaluation of FAO country programming,<sup>6</sup> and through the Effective Country Programming Learning Programme initiated in 2012.

### **Guidance sought**

14. The Programme and Finance Committees and Council are invited to comment and provide guidance on the proposed enhancement to the TCP.

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<sup>6</sup> PC 112/5 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/026/me868e.pdf>