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FINANCE COMMITTEE

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**Report on the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities
(SFERA)**

Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:

Mr Dominique Burgeon
Director
Emergency and Rehabilitation Division
Tel: +39 06 57053803

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA) enables the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to take rapid and effective action in response to food and agricultural threats and emergencies. The Fund has three components: (i) a working capital component to advance funds once a resource partner's commitment is secured toward the immediate procurement of inputs to protect livelihoods, restart agricultural activities or contribute to an immediate response to a crisis; (ii) a revolving fund component to support FAO's involvement in needs assessment and programme development, early establishment and reinforcement of emergency country team capacities, Level 3 emergency¹ preparedness and response activities, as well as early actions triggered by corporate early warnings; and (iii) a programme component, which pools resources in support of a programme framework for large-scale emergencies or strategically complements ongoing programmes through the Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity (AIRC) window.
- From its inception through 31 December 2016, SFERA received USD 207.6 million, of which USD 102.0 million was allocated to large-scale programmes (e.g. sudden onset disasters, the Sahel, Horn of Africa, El Niño response, highly pathogenic avian influenza, locust outbreaks and protracted crises); USD 39.3 million was disbursed under the AIRC window; USD 20.0 million was used to set-up or reinforce country office emergency response capacities and support needs assessments and programme formulation; USD 8.2 million was allocated to the Level 3 emergencies preparedness and response window; and USD 3 million was contributed to the early action window. Since SFERA's inception, USD 308.5 million has been advanced to fund immediate emergency projects, of which USD 26.9 million was advanced over the reporting period. Outstanding advances as at 31 December 2016 amounted to USD 2.6 million, while SFERA's cash balance as at 31 December 2016 was USD 32.4 million.

GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

- This document is provided for information.

¹ Sudden onset, large-scale disasters and crises that require a corporate response.

I. Background

1. During its Hundred and Second Session in May 2003, the Finance Committee supported the creation of the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA), with the purpose to "...enable the Organization to rapidly initiate emergency operations by participating in interagency needs assessment and coordination activities, establishing an emergency coordination unit, preparing a programme framework and projects, and providing advance funding for procurement of inputs when a donor's commitment has been obtained"².

2. This annual report provides a brief description of the major operations initiated with SFERA funds for the 12-month period ending 31 December 2016. The report contains financial data for this period, as well as for the 13 years since the Fund became operational.

II. SFERA set-up

3. SFERA has three components: (i) a working capital component to advance funds, once a resource partner's commitment is secured, toward the immediate procurement of inputs to protect livelihoods, restart agricultural activities or contribute to an immediate response to a crisis; (ii) a revolving fund component to support the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations' (FAO) involvement in needs assessment, programme development, early establishment and reinforcement of emergency country team capacities, Level 3 emergency³ preparedness and response activities, as well as early actions triggered by corporate early warnings; and (iii) a programme component to support work on specific large-scale emergency programmes, or strategically complement ongoing programmes through the Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity (AIRC) window.

Table 1. SFERA components and windows

Working capital component	Revolving fund component	Programme component
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency coordination and response capacity window • Needs assessment and programme development window • Level 3 emergency preparedness and response window • Early action window 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large-scale programme window (e.g. sudden onset disasters, highly pathogenic avian influenza, locust outbreaks, the Sahel, Horn of Africa, El Niño and protracted crises) • AIRC window

4. The **working capital component** reduces the reaction time to emergencies by enabling FAO to initiate activities and purchase the most critical assets before funding from resource partners is received. By enabling a rapid response, this component helps to mitigate the impact of threats and emergencies, and hasten the recovery of those affected.

5. The **revolving fund component** supports the efforts of FAO's emergency country teams to identify the most critical needs of affected populations, strengthen response capacity, and develop and coordinate technically sound response programmes. Through the Level 3 emergency preparedness and response window, FAO can prepare for and respond to the extraordinary challenges facing the

² FC 102/14.

³ Sudden onset, large-scale disasters and crises that require a corporate response.

agriculture sector during a Level 3 emergency. With the early action window FAO is enabled to (i) prevent an unfolding disaster from happening; (ii) mitigate the impacts of an anticipated event; or (iii) strengthen emergency response capabilities for a specific, imminent threat through targeted preparedness investments.

6. The **programme component** facilitates faster and more programmatic assistance that can be tailored to evolving needs on the ground. SFERA's pooled funding approach provides the flexibility to adjust activities and support according to the geographical and thematic areas of greatest need. Likewise, the programme approach enables operations to adapt as the situation changes, streamlining activities to ensure the most appropriate assistance reaches affected populations sooner. The programme component also includes the AIRC window that channels pooled funds towards the immediate procurement and delivery of time-critical inputs

III. SFERA resources

7. **Receipts** – Since SFERA's inception in April 2004, the Fund has received a total of USD 207.6 million. Of this amount, USD 149.3 million was provided by the member countries listed in the following table, including USD 6.7 million provided by resource partners that transferred the balances of closed emergency projects to SFERA. During the 12 months that ended on 31 December 2016, deposits to SFERA amounted to USD 14.6 million.

Table 2. SFERA funding receipts

Contributors	Jan-Dec 2016 (USD 000)	Since inception (USD 000)
Belgium	5 874	42 468
Norway	1 840	30 665
Sweden	0	23 659
United Kingdom	0	9 339
Canada	1 915	9 140
France	330	8 742
Finland	42	7 515
Switzerland	0	4 893
Netherlands	4 440	4 461
Italy	0	1 456
Saudi Arabia	0	1 375
Germany	1	1 305
Ireland	158	1 155
Austria	0	1 125
Spain	0	520
China	0	500
South Africa	0	452
Greece	0	227
Australia	0	107
Jordan	0	60
Monaco	0	59
Kuwait	0	50
Czechia	0	36
Others ⁴	0	35
Lao People's Democratic Republic	0	14

⁴ Including USD 31 000 from online donations.

New Zealand	0	13
Luxembourg	0	8
Chile	0	5
Total members	14 600	149 386
OPEC fund	0	481
World bank	0	21
Others including emergency project support costs reimbursement	0	57 756
Total received	14 600	207 643

As of 31 December 2016 – Source: compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

IV. Use of SFERA funds

8. Under the working capital component, USD 308.5 million was advanced to projects after resource partners' commitment, but before receiving the cash contributions. Of this amount, USD 2.6 million remains outstanding, pending receipt of resource partner funds.

9. Of the USD 207.6 million contributed, USD 31.2 million was approved under the revolving fund component (USD 6.5 million during the reporting period). A total of USD 141.3 million was allocated under the programme component, of which USD 14.5 million was provided during the reporting period. The use of the funds is detailed in Table 3.

Table 3. Funding components

	Jan-Dec 2016 (USD 000)	Since inception (USD 000)
ADVANCES		
Working capital component		
Total advances made during the period	26 864	308 507
Refunds on advances paid during the period	25 159	305 923
Outstanding advances		2 584
APPLICATIONS		
Emergency coordination unit setup and reinforcement	0	11 250
Needs assessment and programme development missions	0	8 753
Level 3 emergency preparedness and response	3 500	8 247
Early action	3 000	3 000
Total revolving component	6 500	31 250
PROGRAMME COMPONENT		
AIRC	6 340	39 338
Horn of Africa (regional programme)	-	13 521
The Sahel (regional programme)	-	2 642
Avian influenza campaign	-	45 928
Tsunami campaign	-	10 002
Initiative on soaring food crisis	-	1 168
Locust campaign	-	4 982
Protracted crises	3 648	3 648
Typhoon and hurricane	-	15 598
Early Action and Response - El Nino	4 552	4 552
Total programme component	14 541	141 381
SFERA balance		32 428

As of 31 December 2016 – Source: compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.

A. Working capital component

10. **Advances** – During the reporting period, 87 percent of SFERA advances were in support of projects funded from five resource partners, as shown in Table 4. Once a resource partner's commitment is secured, funds are allocated towards the immediate procurement of inputs to protect livelihoods, restart agricultural activities or contribute to an immediate response to a crisis.

Table 4. SFERA advances from resource partners

Resource partner	Advances (USD 000)	Refunds (USD 000)
United States of America	16 289	16 685
United Kingdom	2 668	2 668
Netherlands	2 147	2 147
Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	1 500	1 500
Belgium	806	806
United Nations Development Programme	660	660
Japan	650	650
Madagascar	615	615
Canada	500	500
Norway	378	378
CARE	250	0
European Union	230	0
Ireland	100	100
Italy	70	70
France	0	-1 620 ⁵
Total	26 864	25 159

11. Advances mainly supported major programmes in Somalia, Southern Africa, Ethiopia, Syria and South Sudan, representing over 66 percent of all advances between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2016.

Table 5. SFERA advances for country programmes

Country	Advances (USD 000)	Refunds (USD 000)
Somalia	9 150	9 150
Subregional office for Southern Africa	2 952	2 668
Ethiopia	2 354	2 444
Syria	1 747	1 747
Regional Africa	1 678	1 643
South Sudan	1 600	1 600
Zimbabwe	1 555	0
Swaziland	985	985
Lesotho	800	800
Myanmar	650	800
Madagascar	615	-1 005 ⁶
Haiti	578	578
Nigeria	500	500

⁵ Includes accounting adjustments from locust operations in Madagascar.

⁶ Includes accounting adjustments from locust operations in Madagascar.

Democratic Republic of Congo	410	160
Regional Near East	380	380
Sudan	300	400
Subregional office for Eastern Africa	288	288
Yemen	171	171
Afghanistan	150	150
Global	0	1 200
Egypt	0	200
Indonesia	0	300
Total	26 864	25 159

12. SFERA advances were critical in supporting vulnerable households and communities in Somalia to increase their resilience to shocks and stresses through restored production capacity and value addition, diversified livelihood strategies and income sources, temporary employment through cash-for-work interventions and permanent employment through imparting livestock-related knowledge and skills. In addition, SFERA advances supported vulnerable households with vaccination and livestock packages, post-harvest crop equipment and post-catch fish material, and training in value-added fish drying. Productive infrastructure has been rehabilitated (e.g. water and soil conservation structures, irrigation canals, feeder roads and mangrove forests), including infrastructure that communities need in order to emerge and recover from drought conditions, by improving water availability, access and use efficiency.

13. Through SFERA advances for Lesotho, Madagascar and Malawi, FAO improved the food security situation of smallholder farmers affected by the El Niño-induced drought by increasing the availability of and access to essential agricultural inputs, protecting the livestock assets of affected households through increased access to water, feed and veterinary treatment services, and strengthening capacities of stakeholders in the food security and agriculture sector through the provision of technical support, improving coordination and food security information collection and analysis at regional, country and district levels. Supporting the affected population's coping mechanisms and developing skills has strengthened their resilience to future shocks.

14. In response to the El Niño-induced drought in Ethiopia, SFERA advances enabled FAO through the Disaster Risk Management Agricultural Task Force to rapidly strengthen the livelihoods and resilience of pastoral and agropastoral households to drought by providing quality crop and forage seeds, planting materials and emergency livestock feed, supporting irrigation-based fodder production and water management, destocking livestock, protecting core breeding stock of pregnant, lactating and dry productive livestock and enhancing community-based animal health services. Advances enabled the quick, improved management and coordination of agriculture and livelihood-related disasters in order to reduce vulnerability, morbidity and mortality of herds and build livelihood resilience. In addition, the agricultural production capacity of farming households were enhanced for the main planting seasons.

15. SFERA advances enabled FAO to increase food production in Syria by providing timely agricultural inputs to ongoing crisis-affected vulnerable households, supporting basic small-scale farming activities (homestead farming) and small-scale livestock production, and enhancing households' capacity to sustainably produce cereals, legumes and vegetables to improve soil health and fertility. Households' food security and nutrition were improved through vegetable production. SFERA advances supported vulnerable groups with limited access to land as well as landless rural populations and urban and peri-urban populations (e.g. such as internally displaced people) who benefitted from cross-border backyard food production activities.

16. In South Sudan, SFERA advances supported the livelihoods of the most vulnerable and food insecure people through the early procurement, prepositioning and distribution of emergency

livelihood kits. In particular, the distribution of crop kits (maize, sorghum, cowpea and groundnut seeds and a hoe/*maloda* tool), vegetable kits (9 various vegetable seeds, hoe/*maloda* and a water bucket) and fishing kits (a box of hooks, 2 twines and a monofilament) protected the livelihoods of vulnerable farmers, fishers and enhanced their food security.

B. Revolving fund component

17. The **emergency coordination** window of SFERA's revolving fund component facilitates the rapid deployment of emergency experts, as well as the reinforcement of existing teams to support additional activities or fill short-term funding gaps. During the past year, allotments were approved to support: (i) the rapid deployment of key emergency staff and reinforcement of capacities in decentralized offices; (ii) the setting-up of office space and logistics; and (iii) the provision of basic communications, computer and other office equipment. Table 6 shows the allocation of resources by country.

Table 6. Emergency coordination

Country	Approved allocation (USD 000)
Burundi	199
Central African Republic	55
Democratic Republic of Congo	75
Fiji	53
Iraq	60
Liberia	49
Mali	25
Niger	39
Nigeria	200
Philippines	15
Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Syria and Iraq	74
Southern Africa	177
Pacific Islands	28
Syria	186
Turkey	100
Ukraine	47
West Bank and Gaza Strip	65
Total allotment	1 447

18. The **needs assessment and programme development** window of the revolving fund finances needs assessment activities at the onset of a crisis to support FAO and its partners in obtaining the information needed to formulate rapid response programmes as well as longer term resilience strategies. During the reporting period, needs assessment and programme formulation exercises were implemented in the countries shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Needs assessment mission allocations

Country	Approved Allocation (USD 000)
Afghanistan	70
Bahamas	5
Bangladesh	2
Belize	4
Central African Republic	158

Chad	102
Democratic Republic of Congo	40
Eastern Africa	12
Ecuador	19
Eritrea	5
Fiji	48
Haiti	171
Indonesia	12
Iraq	47
Jordan	31
Jordan, Lebanon	15
Kenya	4
Kenya, Somalia	12
Lebanon	31
Madagascar	60
Mali	23
Mauritania	35
Namibia	40
Nigeria	140
Pacific Islands	9
Paraguay	18
Rwanda	25
Sahel	15
Somalia	68
South Sudan	217
Southern Africa	130
Sudan	109
Syria	120
Tanzania	55
Tonga	13
Ukraine	57
Vietnam	58
West Bank and Gaza Strip	108
Yemen	15
Zimbabwe	100
Total allotment	2 203

The **Level 3 emergency preparedness and response** window was established under the revolving fund component following the Finance Committee's endorsement at its Hundred and Forty-Seventh Session⁷. This window is focused on the following six areas: (i) development and maintenance of appropriate L3 emergency procedures; (ii) capacity building for L3 emergency preparedness; (iii) organizational preparedness; (iv) participation in L3 interagency processes; (v) L3 simulations; and (vi) L3 emergency response and corporate surge.

Preparedness

19. In 2016, USD 2 million was added to the initial budget of USD 1.7 million to reach a total of USD 3.7 million, as reflected in Table 8.

⁷ FC147/8

Table 8. Level 3 emergency preparedness funding

L3 emergency preparedness	Allotment USD (000)
Development and maintenance of appropriate procedures	580
Capacity building for Level 3 emergency preparedness	980
Organization preparedness	1 230
Participation in inter-agency processes	560
Level 3 simulations	350
Total	3 700

20. Under the “**Development and maintenance of appropriate Level 3 emergency procedures**” area, extensive consultations were initiated to review the Director-General’s Bulletin (DGB) 2013/32 and the accompanying Operational Guidelines for Level 3 emergency preparedness and response in order to integrate lessons learned from Level 3 emergency responses undertaken in 2013-16⁸. This review entails the formulation of declaration protocols and operational guidelines for Level 1 and Level 2 emergencies, along with the related definition of roles and responsibilities for emergency response preparedness. The FAO Emergency Response Preparedness Plan (FERP) and accompanying guide have been prepared to equip FAO Representatives with the means to ensure a minimum level of office emergency response preparedness. FERP has been translated into French and field tested in several countries. In terms of integration of preparedness in corporate business processes, a section on emergency response preparedness has been included in the Country Annual Report, which provides useful information on the overall status of FAO representation levels of emergency preparedness. Based on this analysis, tailored support is provided to country offices in areas of emergency response preparedness.

21. The “**Capacity building for Level 3 emergency preparedness**” area supported the creation of a short online training video entitled “Introduction to emergency preparedness”, which is posted on the FAO Programme and Community Platform. Under the “**Organizational preparedness window**”, an analytical Early Warning Early Action (EWEA) capacity was established to monitor major risks to agriculture and food security, based on FAO’s own specialized early warning services as well as external sources. The quarterly Global EWEA report on food security and agriculture is the main product of this analysis, and was issued three times in 2016. FAO was among the lead agencies to analyse the evolving impact of El Niño and La Niña phenomena on agriculture and food security, with further reports produced on these specific issues. According to needs, roster profiles have been reopened to strengthen internal capacities. Calls of Expression of Interest have been launched for the several key emergency response profiles.

22. Under the “**Participation in Level 3 interagency processes**” area, funding enabled FAO to participate in all relevant interagency processes, as well as fulfil its responsibilities as a member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and co-lead agency of the Food Security Cluster. FAO is also engaged in global preparedness initiatives, such as the Global Preparedness Partnership (GPP), which was agreed at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, Turkey in May 2016. Through the GPP, FAO is committed to work collectively to strengthen national preparedness capacities of the most vulnerable countries in an integrated and coordinated way. At inter-agency level, FAO together with OCHA initiated a consultation and subsequent development of inter-agency standard operating procedures (SOPs) on El Niño and La Niña. SOPs are an ongoing effort of over 20 Non-governmental

⁸ Since its publication on 7 May 2013, DGB has guided Level 3 declarations in response to natural and human-induced disasters and crises in the Philippines (November 2013), the Central African Republic (December 2013), South Sudan (February 2014) and Yemen (July 2015). In addition, there have been a number of countries for which an increased corporate surge support has been put in place (Ethiopia, northeast Nigeria and Southern Africa) or those which have been in need of some form of a sustained support (Haiti, Iraq and Syria).

Organization and United Nation partners to systematize how these potentially disastrous climate phenomena can be monitored and alerted on time, as well as identify which early actions can be taken by each sector. FAO was also a regular contributor to the IASC EWEA analytical process and report which was issued twice in 2016.

23. Under the "**Level 3 Simulations**" area, preparatory work has been undertaken during several field missions for the organization of regional workshops planned for the second half of 2017. These workshops will be an opportunity for awareness raising and capacity building on updated L1-L3 emergency response protocols, emergency preparedness and EWEA.

Response

24. Funds allocated under the "Corporate surge and L3 emergency response" area supported FAO's immediate response actions on a 'no-regrets' basis, which is defined as the commitment of resources in the absence of detailed needs assessments and response plans. During the reporting period, resources were approved on a 'no-regrets' basis for emergency response activities in Ethiopia, Nigeria and Southern Africa.

Table 9. Corporate surge and L3 emergency response **funding**

Corporate surge and Level 3 emergency response	Allotment USD (000)
Ethiopia	500
Nigeria	500
Southern Africa	120
Total	1 120

25. In Ethiopia, SFERA enabled FAO to rapidly scale up its operational capacity through the deployment of a surge response team aimed at strengthening FAO's response to the 2015/16 El Niño-induced drought in the country. Following the declaration of the FAO Corporate Surge Support in April 2016, several missions were deployed to reinforce the team on the ground and support the implementation of the programme. The increased capacity enabled FAO Ethiopia to quickly and effectively respond to the critical needs of the most nutritionally vulnerable districts (*woredas*) affected by the drought through selected crop and livestock interventions.

26. In Nigeria, SFERA advances enabled FAO to rapidly scale up its operational capacity in the northeastern states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa by establishing an office in Maiduguri and deploying an emergency response team to address the dramatic food security situation in the region. The allocation also covered essential security measures for the office and the staff to enable them to operate safely in a very volatile security environment. The increased capacity was critical in providing support to the agricultural production both during the main season and dry season at the end of 2016, targeting the most vulnerable displaced households, host communities and returnees.

27. In Southern Africa, SFERA played a critical role and provided important support to the Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa and its resilience team in Johannesburg in carrying out several important assessment missions to analyse the situation and needs. Following the declaration of the FAO Corporate Surge Response for Southern Africa in July 2016, SFERA funds were allocated to Lesotho, Madagascar Namibia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe to enable them to undertake country needs assessments, formulate response programmes and set up appropriate coordination mechanisms. The SFERA contribution further enabled FAO to field additional operational support to strengthen the teams on the ground as well as facilitate and accelerate FAO's programming.

Early action window

28. The early action window has been established by the Director-General in July 2016 to enable the Organization to work with national governments and civil society to initiate anticipatory early action, specifically for the agriculture-, food- and nutrition-related sectors. The objective is to protect at-risk communities, by increasing the resilience of the livelihoods of small-scale farmers, herders, fishers and forest dependent communities and of food systems. The expected outcomes include reduced emergency caseloads and costs of response and averting disaster losses. The early action window anticipates natural disasters, including climatic anomalies (e.g. droughts, floods, and temperature extremes), pest and disease outbreaks (e.g. livestock and crop disease, locusts) and complex emergencies.

29. The window supports early actions defined as activities taken once an impending threat has been identified, but before disaster losses are sustained in the agriculture sector or livelihoods compromised. The window finances early actions that (i) prevent an unfolding disaster from happening; (ii) mitigate the impacts of an anticipated event; or (iii) strengthen emergency response capabilities for a specific, imminent threat through targeted preparedness investments.

30. The window protects and mitigates impacts on livelihoods by safeguarding key livelihood assets. Some examples of eligible early actions include support to livestock (de- and restocking, disease control, water supply, nutrition, shelter and conflict mitigation to reduce livestock theft); crop production (forecast-based climate advice, adapted agronomic practices, water resource management, input supply, plant protection, crop storage); fisheries and forestry (supply of fishing gear, fire risk management); and rural income and employment (safety nets; employment generation and livelihood grants). In addition, investment in information and analysis support anticipatory policy positions on food stocks, markets and trade.

31. Support is provided for necessary preparatory activities to enable a rapid response should conditions deteriorate (including putting human resource systems in place, proposal development and liaison with donors, developing agreements with suppliers and starting tender processes, strengthening the capacity of local partners, surveillance, assessments and analysis, and coordination support). Funding is provided to initiate appropriate interventions on the basis of forecasts. The window also finances the analytical capacity to support decisions on the allocation of early action grants.

32. In 2016, at country level, an EWEA framework was developed and piloted in three countries (Paraguay, Kenya and Madagascar). The main objective of the pilot missions is to enable FAO Decentralised Offices to act early through sector-specific early action plans which are triggered by early warning indicators and funded through the SFERA early action window. In Paraguay, FAO worked with the Ministry of Agriculture to strengthen early action capacity for floods. In Kenya, an early action plan focusing on mitigating the impact of drought in livestock was developed, in close collaboration with the National Drought Management Authority. In Madagascar, a drought early action plan was developed for the southern provinces for both crops and livestock, based on seasonal vulnerabilities.

33. Following the piloting of the EWEA system in September 2016, FAO Kenya activated the Early Action Plan in November 2016 following close monitoring of early warning indicators which pointed to an onset of a potentially severe drought. As a consequence of this, USD 400 000 were allocated from the SFERA early action window towards pre-agreed activities. The allocation enabled the office to implement activities to protect core livestock breeding herds in early 2017, through feed and water distribution, veterinary support and livestock market support. The cost benefit of the interventions will be fully assessed by the end of 2017.

C. Programme component

34. Under the SFERA programme component, USD 14.5 million was allocated as follows during the reporting period:

- USD 6.3 million under the AIRC window;
- USD 3.6 million under the protracted crises window; and
- USD 4.6 million under the El Niño response window.

AIRC window

35. Under the AIRC window, USD 6.3 million was allocated to 14 countries to support time-critical, emergency agricultural assistance while developing a more programmatic response to crises.

Table 10. Funding provided under the AIRC window

Country	Type of intervention	Amount USD (000)
Burundi	Agricultural assistance to vulnerable households affected by socio-political conflict and climate hazard in the provinces of Cankuzo and Kirundo	500
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Emergency support to increase the resilience of communities victims of armed conflict in DRC	500
Ethiopia	Emergency protection of livestock-based livelihood assets of pastoralists and agropastoralists affected by El Niño impacts in Siti Zone, Somali Region of Ethiopia	500
Fiji	Emergency support to re-establish agricultural, fisheries and aquatic plant production post-tropical Cyclone Winston	300
Guatemala and El Salvador	Drought emergency response and resilience in the Dry Corridor of Central America	500
Haiti	Strengthening the resilience of rural communities affected by drought	500
	Protect and rehabilitate livestock and fishery livelihoods affected by Hurricane Matthew in Grande Anse and Sud departments to re-establish their food security	500
Jordan	Enhance food security and nutrition of vulnerable Jordanians and Syrian refugee households	300
Madagascar	Emergency assistance to vulnerable households affected by drought and the effects of El Niño	500
Myanmar	Emergency assistance for recovery of livelihoods of flood affected people in Chin state	300
Nigeria	Northeast Nigeria agricultural production support programme	500
South Sudan	Rapid response and livelihood support for crisis-affected populations in South Sudan	500
The Philippines	Emergency response in restoring agricultural livelihoods in Typhoon Koppu affected communities	440
Uganda	Emergency agricultural livelihoods support to South Sudanese refugees influx and host communities in Uganda	500
Total		6 340

36. In 2015/16, Ethiopia faced one of the worst droughts in recent history. Thanks to SFERA AIRC funds, pastoral and agropastoral households were able to resume their livelihoods, feed their families and maintain their herds in a time of crisis in one of the worst-affected areas of the country. Under the livestock feed component, more than 3 000 households received supplementary – including bagasse, molasses and urea – and survival feed. In addition, households with access to irrigation received alfalfa, leucaena and Sudan grass seeds to enhance community-based forage production. Under the slaughter destocking component, 4 400 sheep and goats were purchased from some 3 200 pastoral households for cash injected into local economies and used by beneficiaries to afford food, medicine and pay debts, among other necessary items and services.

37. The fragile and strained socio-economic and environmental system in northeast Nigeria has been exacerbated in the past few years by the Boko Haram insurgency, particularly in the three States of Adamawa, Borno and Yobe. The insurgency has negatively affected food and nutrition security, as households have lost productive assets and regular sources of livelihood. SFERA AIRC funds enabled immediate assistance to more than 4 600 households from Borno and Yobe States, with access to land with irrigation facilities. In addition, beneficiaries received crop and vegetable seeds. Vulnerable households were supported to strengthen their production capacity and protect their livelihood sources.

38. In Burundi's Cankuzo and Kirundo provinces, 10 000 small-scale farmers affected by the socio-political crisis and climatic hazards received agricultural inputs (mainly beans, maize and vegetable seeds, sweet potato cuttings and hoes). After an assessment of the availability and prices of agricultural inputs on local markets, vouchers at a value of USD 58 have been distributed to each targeted households according to a vulnerability criteria, to be spent according to their priority needs during the organized inputs fairs. The objective was to improve beneficiaries' access to inputs, support the recommencement of agricultural activity after the impact of the El Nino phenomenon on the previous agricultural season, and increase production and ensure that food needs are covered.

39. In Madagascar's southern and southeastern regions, FAO has implemented the CASH+ approach to assist vulnerable households affected by the El Niño-induced drought. SFERA AIRC funds contributed to the efforts to support 51 000 drought-affected households through cash-transfer activities. Thanks to different resource partners, the same households were further supported with seeds and other inputs through input trade fairs to face their needs for the next agricultural seasons.

40. Category 4 Hurricane Matthew cut a path of destruction across Haiti, carrying devastating winds, heavy rainfall and widespread damage in seven departments, at a time were the agricultural production was still in deficit. An estimated 2.1 million Haitians were affected and 1.4 million in need of assistance. With much of the country relying on subsistence production to meet their food needs, restoring agriculture- and fishery-based livelihoods was critical to avoid dependency on food aid in the coming months. Through SFERA AIRC funds, 2 500 herder families in Grand'Anse and Sud departments are being provided with the means to restart their production thanks to the fodder emergency distribution and the mobile clinics set up to provide veterinary treatment to animals. In addition, 1 500 fishing families are restoring their fishing activities as a result of the distribution of fishing material and the strengthening of organizational capacities.

41. The Dry Corridor of Central America is experiencing the worst drought in decades, which has affected food insecurity for a second consecutive year. Over 3.5 million people – the majority of whom are subsistence farmers and laborers – were in need of humanitarian assistance after suffering major crop losses due to prolonged drought conditions. Through the SFERA AIRC contributions, FAO responded to the food security emergency in the Dry Corridor by supporting an estimated 4 000 vulnerable rural households with inputs to rehabilitate and diversify their agricultural production.

42. Funding under the AIRC window also provided essential support to the following activities:
- Uganda hosts the second largest refugee population in Africa – the majority of whom are South Sudanese – due to political instability in neighbouring countries. SFERA AIRC funds provided emergency agricultural assistance to 4 000 refugees and 1 000 host families in the form of planting materials and seeds (early maturing varieties adapted to local conditions and preferred by refugee households) as well as quick impact livestock interventions – especially poultry and expansion of small-scale irrigation in refugee settlements. The project’s interventions improved food security and nutrition of refugees and host communities.
 - Typhoon Koppu made landfall in the Philippines and affected lives, livelihood and infrastructure in the country’s major rice granary – Central Luzon. In less than two months after Typhoon Koppu, Typhoon Melor (locally known as Nona) hit the country. Most of the affected households by both typhoons were comprised of farmers in the rice and corn farming sector. SFERA AIRC supported over 12 000 Typhoons Koppu and Melor-affected households received certified rice seeds, fertilizer and assorted vegetable packets. The emergency response led to an increase in crop productivity, gradual resumption of agricultural livelihood base and an increase in food security among beneficiaries.
 - Since the start of the crisis in Syria, Jordanian households and Syrian refugees are experiencing the effects of the ongoing conflict. Increased demand for goods and services has affected the cost of food, housing and utilities in Jordan. Through SFERA AIRC funds, nutrient-rich food was produced through homestead food production.. In addition, households received training on the construction of soilless and hydroponic systems, as well as soilless homestead production to enhance knowledge and adaptation of optimal agriculture and nutrition practices.
 - Monsoonal flooding and landslides – exacerbated by Cyclone Komen – have resulted in the displacement of 1.6 million people, destroyed thousands of homes and severely damaged roads, bridges and railways in Myanmar. Flood-affected households benefited from the restocking of livestock, animal feed and basic veterinary drugs to improve their food security and nutritional status through increased food availability – especially for the protein component of their diet – as well as capacity building and information sharing to enhance their technical capacity to raise livestock and make optimum use of food stuffs available.
 - The ongoing crisis in South Sudan is aggravating an already fragile socio-economic context, in which many households are at risk of food insecurity and malnutrition both in rural and urban areas. In support of the 2016 emergency response campaign, SFERA AIRC funds protected the livelihoods and food security of 5 000 most vulnerable population groups (farmers, fishers and pastoralists). The project contributed to the procurement and distribution of emergency livelihood crop kits, vegetable kits and fishing kits to increase the resilience of livelihoods and enhance livelihood-based productive sectors, while reducing vulnerability to shocks and stressors.
 - Massive damage was recorded to the agriculture sector (crop, livestock and fishery) following Tropical Cyclone Winston in Fiji. SFERA AIRC funding supported the recovery of the agriculture and fisheries sector, particularly in the 12 cyclone-affected areas, and increased the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises by addressing biosecurity risks and livestock issues, forest landscape rehabilitation and utilization of felled trees.
 - In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, SFERA AIRC contributed to increase the resilience and food security of communities affected by conflicts through rehabilitating their agricultural livelihoods. In particular displaced, returnees and host families received emergency kits (seeds and tools) adapted to their access to land.
 - In Artibonite, Haiti, SFERA AIRC funds enabled FAO to increase vulnerable rural households’ resilience by providing seeds and cuttings, and training them on production and commercialization of certified seeds to cope with adverse effects of three consecutive years of drought.

Protracted crises window

43. Protracted crises are driven by a combination of recurring causes – human-made factors and natural hazards (often occurring simultaneously), underlying fragility, prolonged food crises, breakdown of livelihoods and food systems and insufficient capacity to deal with resulting crises. SFERA protracted crises window enabled FAO to perform more efficiently in such contexts. With the support of Norway and Canada, a combined USD 3.6 million has been contributed. This contribution has enabled FAO to respond to needs in Syria and South Sudan to improve food security and livelihoods.

Table 11. Funding provided under the protracted crises window

Country	Resource partner	Amount (USD 000)
Syria	Norway	1 840
South Sudan	Canada	1 809
Total		3 649

44. The ongoing conflict in Syria has resulted in a range of interrelated and adverse impacts on farmers, including a reduced cash base, damage to agricultural machinery and infrastructure (irrigation, storage facilities, etc.), disruptions in electricity and water supplies, reduced access to agricultural land and increased market prices. Thanks to Norway's contribution of USD 1.8 million to SFERA, FAO is increasing the capacity of vulnerable households to sustainably produce cereals, legumes and vegetables, while conserving and enhancing soil and water resources, and improve the availability of data and information to guide the planning and formulation of strategies and interventions in support of enhanced food production and productivity.

45. In South Sudan, insecurity has resulted in limited access to some areas worst affected by the conflict. In addition to dealing with rapid onset and recurrent complex emergencies caused by both natural and human-induced disasters, the country's civil servants have limited skills exacerbated by government agencies' fiscal crisis. Food security and nutrition are priority themes for policy action as hunger remains a chronic threat to South Sudanese children, women and men. In response, Canada's contribution of USD 1.8 million to SFERA has enabled FAO to enhance evidence-based policy and institutional capacity, hazards preparedness, prevention and management and humanitarian response.

El Niño response window

46. The Netherlands and Ireland's contributions to the SFERA El Niño early response window has enabled FAO to intervene early and respond swiftly in Ethiopia, Mozambique, Swaziland and Lesotho, and contribute to improving their livelihoods.

Country	Resource partner	Amount (USD 000)
Ethiopia	Netherlands	2 220
Mozambique	Netherlands	1 110
Swaziland	Netherlands	555
Lesotho	Netherlands	555
Total Netherlands		4 440
Ethiopia	Ireland	113
Total Ireland		113
Grand total		4 552

47. Thanks to the Netherlands' contribution to the SFERA El Niño early response window, FAO was able to immediately respond to needs generated by El Niño-induced drought by

- Improving food security and nutrition of drought-affected smallholder farmers and agropastoral communities in Ethiopia through emergency seed interventions and enhancing improved crop and animal feed production;
- Reducing the risk of cattle mortality and resumption of agricultural production in the lowlands of Mozambique;
- Safeguarding livelihoods and enhancing the food security and nutrition of El-Niño induced drought-affected households in Swaziland, as well as protect livestock-based livelihoods by providing sustainable food to vulnerable households in a climate resilient manner in four regions; and
- Decreasing food insecurity by supporting and diversifying agricultural production of drought-affected families in Lesotho through the provision of packages with a variety of vegetable seeds while simultaneously promoting climate smart agricultural practices.

48. Thanks to Ireland's contribution to the SFERA El Niño early response window, FAO enhanced the agricultural production capacity of El Niño-affected farming households in Amahara, Tigray and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regions in Ethiopia.

V. CONCLUSIONS

49. As highlighted by the Evaluation of FAO Strategic Objective 5⁹, "by pooling together the resource of agreeable donors into trust funds such as SFERA, the Strategic Programme 5 team has been able to partially "cushion" the unpredictability of project funding and invest in key strategic capacities and processes". SFERA provides FAO with a tool increasing predictability and continuity in its response at country level.

50. As per its Grand Bargain commitment¹⁰, FAO aims to "promote flexible and un-earmarked funding mechanisms to better strengthen coherence of interventions and adjust to the evolution of needs". Contributing to SFERA renders FAO with the means to provide rapid, high-impact emergency assistance to the most vulnerable populations affected by disaster. It enables FAO to be quicker and more flexible in its response and puts the Organization in a position to quickly upscale its operational capacities at times when needs increase rapidly and exponentially after a disaster.

51. SFERA plays a critical role in strengthening country offices' operational capacities, as well as country offices' preparedness. The Fund enables the Organization to respond to L3 emergencies as well as rapidly scale-up response efforts in case of smaller scale emergencies. SFERA also plays a critical role in coordinating a collaborative, longer-term response focusing on livelihoods and resilience strategies, as well as improving the capacity of their local institutions to prevent, protect and restore.

⁹ PC 120/4 <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mr740e.pdf>, full report available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bq613e.pdf>

¹⁰ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5655e.pdf>