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Integrating to innovate: resource mobilization and partnership building for sustainable development

Summary

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has highlighted the need to revitalize and strengthen national, regional and global partnerships to meet its ambitious goals. To achieve these goals, the Latin America and Caribbean region has a vast body of skills and experience that can and should be mobilized, and that enable FAO to innovate in the design of strategic partnerships for technical assistance to Member Nations. South-South cooperation is key to strengthening and scaling up public policies, which have led to important advances in recent years. Partnerships with civil society, academia and the private sector are also essential for generating cross-sector political commitment that leads to progress without leaving anyone behind. Finally, the renewal of partnerships within the United Nations system and with resource partners is crucial to ensure the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the support provided to countries.

I. Partnerships for sustainable development

1. FAO has put forward three global goals: (a) the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; (b) the elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all; and (c) the sustainable management and utilization of natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

2. Latin America and the Caribbean has a vast body of skills and experience that can and should be mobilized to achieve these goals in the region. These assets allow FAO to innovate in the design of technical assistance to Member Nations. Unlike in previous decades, FAO is now able to place greater emphasis on matching demand for specialist expertise with existing skills and experience from inside and outside the region. This is a technical cooperation model that FAO should prioritize in the region.

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3. FAO uses four instruments to match the demand and supply of experience, skills and expertise: South-South and triangular cooperation; thematic partnerships; sectoral partnerships; and inter-agency partnerships.

A. South-South and triangular cooperation

4. In the last biennium, FAO strengthened its work on South-South and triangular cooperation with ministries of foreign affairs and international cooperation agencies in a number of countries. Over the period, technical cooperation was mobilized from 14 countries and 62 institutions. Mexico was the biggest contributor (with 18 participating institutions); Brazil (16); Chile (7); Argentina, Costa Rica and Cuba (3 each); and Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Panama and Peru (2 each). Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Paraguay also took part in South-South cooperation initiatives.

5. Costa Rica, Cuba and Panama each signed a memorandum of understanding with FAO to formalize their relationship for the mobilization of South-South cooperation. Furthermore, during the period, six countries updated their Country Programming Framework (CPF) to include South-South cooperation as one of their priorities for work with FAO, which is certain to result in concrete initiatives over the next biennium. Five countries have registered their public entities in the FAO South-South Cooperation Gateway: Argentina (2 institutions), Chile (9), Costa Rica (2), Peru (9) and Uruguay (3). The range of institutions that have contributed to capacity-building in third countries includes ministries of agriculture and specialized institutions in the areas of fisheries, agricultural and forest health, forest monitoring and research and extension, as well as public universities. South-South cooperation arrangements have included internships, exchanges, policy dialogue and short-term technical assistance missions involving mainly civil servants from national and local institutions, together with members of parliament, civil society experts, producers and other actors.

6. Most notably, South-South cooperation has also been facilitated by regional projects funded with voluntary contributions from countries in the region. They include the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (2 regional projects), Brazil (6), Colombia (1) and Mexico (2). Many of these voluntarily funded regional projects have become linchpins of FAO areas of work. Examples include projects to promote school feeding linked to the purchase of healthy food from family farms (with the cooperation of Brazil), the eradication of hunger in Mesoamerica (with the cooperation of Mexico), and the strengthening of civil society (with the cooperation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela).

7. Technical cooperation has also been mobilized through projects under FAO's Regular Programme, in such areas as the sustainable use of natural resources, climate change adaptation and risk management, pest and disease management, prevention and control of illegal fishing and systems for the public procurement of food from family farms.

8. South-South cooperation success stories include: (a) strengthening school feeding programmes in 17 countries on the basis of Brazil's experience;¹ (b) strengthening the cotton value chain in six countries with the support of a group of Brazilian institutions;² (c) preparing the binational agricultural health programme of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, with the cooperation of Cuba; (d) strengthening Panama's coconut farming programme, also with Cuban cooperation;³ (e) enhancing agricultural health in Nicaragua with the cooperation of Mexico;⁴ (f) implementation of rainwater harvesting systems in six countries, with the emphasis on territories in Central America's dry

¹ <http://www.fao.org/in-action/program-brazil-fao/projects/food-security/en/>

² <http://www.fao.org/in-action/program-brazil-fao/projects/cotton-sector/en/>

³ <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/south-south-cooperation/news/news-article/zh/c/1037635/>

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/nicaragua/noticias/detail-events/en/c/1029156/> and <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7764s.pdf> [in Spanish only]

corridor,⁵ with the cooperation of Mexico; and (g) community forest monitoring in indigenous communities, provided by Panama in Guatemala and Paraguay.⁶

9. The Latin America and Caribbean region continues to share its experience with countries in other regions of the world. Examples during the period have included: (a) an exchange of experiences between delegates from the Government of the Republic of Kenya, on the one hand, and Peru and Ecuador, on the other, regarding governance mechanisms for food and nutrition security, investment in agriculture, and decentralization;⁷ (b) sharing of experience by the Parliamentary Front against Hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean with the European Parliament, Spanish Parliament and Pan African Parliament;⁸ and (c) dialogue on the challenges and opportunities for South-South cooperation in the cotton value chain in Africa and Latin America, held in Brazil and attended by representatives from 14 African countries.⁹

B. Thematic partnerships

10. At the end of the 2016-2017 biennium, five thematic partnerships were formed, bringing together around 150 of the region's leading experts. Thematic partnerships are an innovative means for mobilizing existing expertise in the region, in support of Member Nations' demands and priorities. These partnerships will make it possible not only to improve the technical quality of FAO proposals, incorporating regional knowledge and lessons learned, but also to make available to Member Nations the partnerships' high-level experts to respond to specific demands in their areas of expertise.

11. The partnerships established so far include: (a) eradication of rural poverty;¹⁰ (b) rural migration in Central America's Northern Triangle;¹¹ (c) food systems, overweight and obesity; (d) agricultural, food-system and rural resilience to climate change; (e) governance and institutions for agricultural, food-system and rural transformation.

12. The formation and initial stages of these partnerships were made possible by non-recurring appropriations from FAO's Regular Budget and the partnership's continuance will depend on strategies for mobilizing voluntary contributions from Member Nations.

C. Sectoral partnerships

13. Another means for mobilizing skills and experience in the region is the partnerships that have been established with various actors representing a broad cross-section of society.

14. *Civil society.* FAO's strategy for partnerships with civil society provided the framework for consolidating collaboration in that sector, with an emphasis on fighting hunger and poverty. In the last biennium, closer ties were forged with the Alliance for the Food Sovereignty of the Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, whose members include the most important networks of family food producer organizations (artisanal fisheries and family and smallholder farmers) and of priority sectors of rural society (indigenous peoples, women and young people). Collaboration covers such matters as voluntary guidelines on tenure of natural resources, agroecology, family farming and food-system

⁵ <http://www.fao.org/colombia/noticias/detail-events/es/c/1062189/> [in Spanish only]

⁶ <http://www.infona.gov.py/index.php/noticias/paraguay-y-panama-comparten-experiencias-en-sistemas-de-monitoreo-forestal-comunitario> and <http://www.fao.org/panama/noticias/detail-events/en/c/433504/> [in Spanish only]

⁷ <http://www.fao.org/americas/eventos/ver/en/c/1033233/>

⁸ <http://parlamentarioscontraelhambre.org/en/temas/internacionalizacion/> [in Spanish only]

⁹ <http://www.fao.org/americas/noticias/ver/en/c/1033948/> [in Spanish only]

¹⁰ This partnership was established as a joint initiative with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

¹¹ This partnership was established as a joint initiative with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

sustainability. The Alliance also serves as the contact point and lead organization for the bridge between social movements in the region and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

15. FAO continues to provide technical and operational support to subregional public policy platforms for family farming, connecting governments with social movements. They include the MERCOSUR Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF) and the Central American and Dominican Republic Commission on Family Farming (CCAF), linked to the Central American Integration System (SICA)/Central American Agricultural Council (CAC). FAO hosts and manages the REAF Family Farming Fund (FAF). These platforms have contributed significantly to the design and dissemination of public policies and specific instruments for family farming, including programmes for the public procurement of food from family farms, and family farmer registries.

16. *Private business sector.* FAO has recognized that much closer dialogue and collaboration has to be forged with the Latin American and Caribbean private business sector. The private sector has a decisive role to play in matters relating to FAO's three regional initiatives (hunger and malnutrition; poverty and rural development; and environmental sustainability and risk management). Moreover, it will be impossible to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development without the aid of the business sector. In order to establish permanent forums for regular dialogue, a meeting with private-sector representatives was held recently for each regional initiative to identify an agenda of mutual interest and to establish a roadmap for increasing business-sector involvement in the activities of the regional initiatives. The matters initially identified include: incorporation of family farmers into value chains; reduction of carbon emissions and the water footprint of agrifood systems; food systems and quality nutrition aimed at reducing overweight and obesity; and rural labour markets.

17. FAO is working with firms in the technology sector to put new information and communication technologies at the service of agriculture, food and rural development, and it is on the verge of signing a memorandum of understanding with Telefónica.

18. Another area of collaboration with the private sector is food loss and waste reduction. For example, FAO, the Government of the Argentine Republic, Unilever and Carrefour launched the #NoTiresComida (#Don'tWasteFood) campaign in Argentina, under a national programme to reduce food loss and waste.

19. *Food consumers.* As part of the drive to establish a food-system approach in the region, linked to the promotion of healthy eating, FAO and Consumers International (CI) launched a promising collaboration agenda, which was formalized in a memorandum of understanding in 2016. This partnership, initiated in Latin America, has been successfully scaled up globally.

20. *Academia.* The need to integrate science, technology and innovation into public policy processes has fostered a growing rapprochement between academia and FAO, with an agenda covering the issues of food and nutrition security, rural development and sustainable agriculture. Since it was established in 2011, the Right to Food and Nutrition Watch has held annual regional meetings and has supported over 50 investigations. The Watch has forged links with the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights relating to the right to food. In October 2017, the food and nutrition security group of the Latin American Council of Social Sciences (CLACSO) was established, with the initial participation of researchers from 12 institutions in 8 countries in the region. Lastly, FAO continues to support the MERCOSUR research group on public policy for family farming (GIPPAF), linked to REAF.

D. Inter-agency partnerships

21. FAO has stepped up its work in partnership with other multilateral, governmental, civil-society and, more recently, private-sector organizations. FAO's partnership policy in the region is guided by the principle that the region is host to a vast body of skills and experience that can and

should be mobilized to give better-quality technical assistance to Member Nations and so speed up the achievement of FAO Strategic Objectives and the SDGs themselves. The aim is to promote the role of coordinating and mobilizing the top skills and experience existing in the region, matching the demand for technical assistance to supply.

22. As part of the effort to reform the United Nations system, FAO has revitalized its partnership with other agencies, funds and programmes. To roll out this effort nationally, it has developed a new methodology to make sure that the CPF stays in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

23. At a regional level, new instruments were established for collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). FAO stepped up its collaboration with ECLAC for the joint submission of reports to the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in New York in July 2017. It formed a partnership with ECLAC to meet the challenges of migration in Central America's Northern Triangle countries (El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras) and Mexico. Jointly with ECLAC and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), FAO published *The outlook for agriculture and rural development in the Americas: a perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2017-2018* and a bulletin on the bioeconomy in 2017.

24. In addition, FAO signed a memorandum of understanding with IICA at the nineteenth regular meeting of its Inter-American Board of Agriculture (IABA), with the aim of strengthening the technical cooperation provided to Member Nations. This will entail the promotion of joint projects, especially in Central America's dry corridor and Colombia, and options will be explored to rationalize the respective networks of offices in Caribbean countries.

25. In line with the objectives, mandates, policies and rules of the Rome-based Agencies, FAO, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have pledged to jointly improve their capacity to support the Latin American and Caribbean countries where they are working to achieve SDGs 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13 and 15. FAO signed regional memorandums of understanding with its IFAD and WFP counterparts, on 9 and 23 October 2017 respectively, which will allow multi-stakeholder working groups to be consolidated to develop work plans and mobilize performance-related funding. The initial objective is to conduct collective actions in three priority countries: Colombia, Guatemala and Haiti, where the country representatives have already begun to discuss the way forward.

26. In connection with the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, FAO has strengthened its partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and its Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), which led to joint publication of the 2016 and 2017 editions of *Panorama of Food and Nutritional Security in Latin America and the Caribbean*. In addition, a jointly held Regional Symposium on Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy Eating provided an important regional forum to follow up the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN-2).

II. Resource mobilization

27. In the 2016-2017 biennium, 41% of FAO disbursements in Latin America and the Caribbean were funded from the Regular Programme and 59% from voluntary contributions. In turn, 36% of voluntary contributions came from multilateral organizations (such as the Global Environment Facility and financial institutions), 28% from developed countries and their organizations, and 36% from countries in the region. In the future, at best, contributions from developed countries are not expected to increase, compelling FAO to mobilize contributions from the multilateral system and, in particular, Member Nations in Latin America and the Caribbean.

28. ECLAC has estimated public spending in the region to total around USD 1.7 billion at current prices (2016). Seven countries in the region are classed as high-income, with a further 21 classed as middle-income. This means that, quite apart from extraregional sources, there are significant resources in Latin America and the Caribbean that FAO can mobilize to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, eliminate poverty, boost economic and social progress and ensure the sustainable use of natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

29. Under the Plan for Food Security, Nutrition and Hunger Eradication 2025 of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the 100 territories free from hunger and poverty initiative has been launched to accelerate the eradication of hunger from the region by 2025, through three lines of action that will serve to mobilize partners and to further the shift to a hunger-free Latin America and the Caribbean. This partnership between FAO and CELAC for the technical and policy implementation of the initiative affords a valuable opportunity to strengthen and broaden FAO's base of strategic partners and allies in its different areas of action, at local, national and regional levels.

30. An ambitious goal has been set for the Latin America and Caribbean region during the 2018-2019 biennium: to double voluntary contributions. This regional goal has been subdivided into goals for each Country Office and Subregional Office, and for the Regional Office itself.

31. Furthermore, a policy has been set for the region that FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (PCT) resources should be prioritized for projects that not only meet all the PCT requirements set by FAO Governing Bodies but also demonstrate strong potential to act as a catalyst both in terms of project outcomes and in terms of mobilizing voluntary contributions from the region.

32. FAO invites Member Nations in the region to support the achievement of its objectives and its plan of work for 2018-2019 by providing significant voluntary contributions, linked to mutually agreed national, subregional and regional projects that help to meet shared goals.