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Food and Agriculture
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et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

COUNCIL

Hundred and Sixtieth Session

Rome, 3-7 December 2018

Report of the 125th Session of the Programme Committee (Rome, 12–16 November 2018)

Executive Summary

The Programme Committee examined a number of matters relating to programme planning and evaluation, in particular with regards to:

- a) Preparation for the Reviewed Medium Term Plan 2018-21 – priorities arising from the Technical Committees (*paragraph 3*)
- b) Evaluation of FAO's contribution to integrated natural resource management for sustainable agriculture (SO2) (*paragraph 4*)
- c) Follow-up report to the Evaluation of FAO's evaluation function (*paragraph 5*)
- d) Follow-up report to the Evaluation of FAO's Contribution to Strategic Objective 5 – Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises (*paragraph 6*)
- e) Indicative rolling work plan of evaluations 2019-2021 (*paragraphs 7-10*)
- f) Report on the outcome of the pledging conference on the eradication of peste des petits ruminants (PPR) (*paragraph 11*)
- g) Progress report on FAO's Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) (*paragraph 12*)
- h) Any other business (*paragraphs 13-16*)

The Committee brings its findings and recommendations on these matters to the attention of the Council.

Suggested action by the Council

The Council is requested to endorse the findings of the Programme Committee, as well as its recommendations on matters within its mandate.

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

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REPORT OF THE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Rome, 12-16 November 2018

Introduction

1. The Committee submitted to the Council the following report of its Hundred and Twenty-fifth session.
2. In addition to the Chairperson, His Excellency Johannes Petrus Hoogeveen (Netherlands), the following representatives of Members were present:

H.E. María Cristina Boldorini (Argentina)	Mr Fiesal Rasheed Salamh Al Argan (Jordan)
Ms Jennifer Fellows (Canada)	Mr Muhammad Rudy Khairudin Mohd Nor (Malaysia)
Mr Marc Mankoussou (Congo)	Mr Donald G. Syme (New Zealand)
Mr Kouamé Kanga (Côte d'Ivoire)	Ms María Carolina Carranza Núñez (Peru) ¹
H.E. Mohammad Hossein Emadi (Islamic Republic of Iran)	H.E. François Pythoud (Switzerland)
Mr Toru Hisazome (Japan)	H.E. Marie-Therese Sarch (United Kingdom)

Preparation for the Reviewed Medium Term Plan 2018-21 – priorities arising from the Technical Committees²

3. The Committee:
 - a) recalled the importance of the technical priorities which contribute to achievement of the Strategic Objectives highlighted by the Technical Committees in 2018;
 - b) took note of the priorities expressed by the Technical Committees as summarized in document PC 125/2 for the Technical Committees' item on *FAO's programme of work under the reviewed Strategic Framework* and in the full reports of those Committees;
 - c) noted that, in line with the established planning and programming cycle at FAO, the priorities emanating from the Technical Committees would serve as input for the Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2018-21 (reviewed) for consideration by the Council in April 2019, alongside the conclusions and regional priorities expressed by the five Regional Conferences and the Informal Regional Conference for North America which have already been endorsed by the 159th session of the Council;
 - d) recognized the difficulty at this stage in addressing all the priorities identified in the context of the current flat nominal Regular Programme budget for FAO, recognized the guidance and principles of the Conference decision (document C 2017/3), and looked forward to further information on the cost implications as part of the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB);
 - e) took note of the recent developments in trends and emerging issues influencing the work of the Organization in the medium term and acknowledged their continued relevance in the context of FAO's Strategic Framework and the implementation of FAO's Medium Term Plan 2018-21;

¹ Ms María Carolina Carranza Núñez has been designated to replace Ms Claudia Elizabeth Guevara de la Jara as representative of Peru for the 125th Session of the Programme Committee

² PC 125/2

- f) stressed the importance of all sustainable and innovative approaches and highlighted, in particular FAO's work on assisting countries in achieving the 2030 Agenda, including policy support, capacity building, scientific advice, standard setting, partnerships and work on SDG indicators;
- g) encouraged the further development of multistakeholder partnerships at national, regional and global levels, and the continued close collaboration and strategic synergies with other UN organizations, especially the Rome-based agencies;
- h) noted the COAG request to prepare a resolution on the further integration of sustainable agricultural approaches, including agroecology, and recommended the text to be presented to the next session of the COAG Bureau, and to present it to the Programme Committee at its next session prior to its submission to the Council;
- i) noted the ongoing work of the COAG Bureau on the International Code of Conduct for the Use and Management of Fertilizers and recommended that any programmatic and budget implications be submitted to the next session of the Programme Committee.

Evaluation of FAO's contribution to integrated natural resource management for sustainable agriculture (SO2)³

4. The Committee:
 - a) welcomed the evaluation report recognising the particular importance and relevance of FAO's work under SO2, and highlighted the relevance of FAO's work in promoting sustainable food and agriculture;
 - b) recommended that future evaluations reports provide direct answers to evaluation questions, provide clear links between these and the reports' conclusions and recommendations, and be more impact and results-oriented;
 - c) underscored the importance of appropriate context analysis in project design and coherence with the country programming frameworks (CPFs), the national ownership of programmes and the continuity and scaling up of project results;
 - d) recommended to reinforce more comprehensive project performance management and increase the number of key performance indicators (KPIs) in the strategic results framework in order to better measure and monitor results, and report within the results framework in the Mid Term Review and Programme Implementation Report (PIR);
 - e) encouraged the Management of SP2 to enhance guidance provided to project managers and share the full range of approaches in sustainable food and agriculture, technologies and innovations, while addressing inherent synergies and trade-offs across the three pillars of sustainability, along with mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues such as gender, youth and nutrition;
 - f) highlighted the need to build upon FAO's comparative advantages and technical expertise and the need to harmonize existing knowledge platforms or establishing a dedicated knowledge platform to share best practices, lessons learned and results achieved in sustainable food and agriculture production;
 - g) noted with concern that a majority of SO2 technical interventions had not been sustained beyond their pilot phases, for a variety of reasons, and recommended, in addition to improved project design and performance monitoring as mentioned above, to ensure greater ownership by governments of the projects, via national steering committees and stronger engagements with multistakeholders along the entire relevant value chain;

³ PC 125/3; PC 125/3 Sup.1

- h) encouraged FAO to strengthen and broaden partnerships with different partners with a view to leveraging programme results, and in particular the private sector at the national and local levels;
- i) encouraged FAO to promote further integration with other SOs at the country level to facilitate the implementation of SDGs in a cross-cutting manner;
- j) requested Management to report on action taken on finding 13 on gender and 14 on nutrition; as well as work to improve collaboration between the SP Management team, technical divisions and regional coordinators in supporting the implementation of the programme in the follow-up report in 2020;
- k) recommended a strategic review of partnerships and multistakeholder platforms and other funding mechanisms, including South-South Cooperation, to identify opportunities, gaps and possible actions to ensure increased funding;
- l) recommended reinforcing corporate communication and outreach at all levels, through campaigns, dedicated events, multistakeholder platforms and other innovative communication tools to raise awareness and promote sustainable food and agriculture systems;
- m) welcomed FAO's efforts to develop sustainability performance measurement in the context of the development of SDG indicator 2.41;
- n) agreed that FAO should continue promoting cross-sectoral and integrated approaches as key elements of solutions to sustainability. At the same time, FAO technical departments, with the support from SP2, should fully consider opportunities for mainstreaming sustainable practices in sector-specific approaches, with due consideration of inherent trade-offs and synergies.

Follow-up report to the Evaluation of FAO's evaluation function⁴

5. The Committee took note of the follow-up report, and:
 - a) reiterated the importance of national evaluation capacity development, appreciated the launch of the community of practice – Eval-ForWARD, and encouraged expanding the participation from all regions;
 - b) highlighted the importance of independence of the Office of Evaluation (OED) within the context of the Charter for OED, including with respect to institutional arrangements;
 - c) looked forward to reviewing the assessment of progress made in the implementation of the action plan at the next Committee session and the post adjustment proposal within the Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21;
 - d) recommended that evaluation reports be strengthened with a rating system that assesses key evaluation questions, for example with a 'traffic light' system;
 - e) recommended that OED prioritise the recommendations it makes in future reports within time and resource constraints;
 - f) recommended a further review of the governance and overview mechanisms for country-level evaluations and of the availability of financial resources before considering a proposal for decentralized evaluations.

⁴ PC 125/4;

Follow-up report to the Evaluation of FAO's contribution to Strategic Objective 5 – Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises⁵

6. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to discuss the *Follow-up report to the Evaluation of FAO's Contribution to Strategic Objective 5 – Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises*, and:

- a) complimented FAO on the high quality and comprehensive scope of the report, the progress made in implementing the five sets of recommendations;
- b) recommended that resilience building in the face of increasingly protracted crises, climate change and disruption of livelihoods continue to be a priority for FAO;
- c) noted with appreciation, the key relevance and comparative advantage of FAO's work and technical contributions in the humanitarian-development-peace nexus;
- d) acknowledged the capacity and commitment of SP5 to foster and maintain strategic partnerships within the Organization and externally with various actors, notably the RBAs and other UN agencies;
- e) welcomed the Global Report on Food Crises and recommended strengthening operationalizing of the Global Network against Food Crises in cooperation with the World Bank, IFAD and other stakeholders;
- f) recommended mainstreaming gender in future work, and further details on the SP5 gender mainstreaming work, as part of the gender reporting in the Programme Implementation Report;
- g) recommended further work by FAO in close cooperation with WFP and other UN organizations in the development of an overarching Information and Early Warning System Strategy;
- h) recommended continuation of SP5's strong knowledge management focus and initiatives, including the Knowledge Sharing Platform on Resilience (KORE) which provides methodological support for learning and good practice documentation;
- i) recommended strengthening and broadening partnerships with a wider range of partners with a view to leveraging programme results and to increasing multistakeholder funding;
- j) recommended continuation of such work in order to support and inform good resilience programming and cross-fertilization of successful approaches and practices across countries and regions.

Indicative rolling work plan of evaluations 2019-2021⁶

7. The Committee appreciated the proposed work plan and the evaluations presented so far, and requested:

- a) Synthesis of lessons learned from the evaluations of Strategic Objectives at the next session (126th session)
- b) Evaluation of FAO's work on statistics (as the basis for the SDG evaluations) at the 127th session, together with the evaluation of FAO's private sector partnership strategy
- c) Evaluation of FAO's contribution to zero hunger (SDG2) at the 128th session, together with evaluation of FAO's civil society partnership strategy

⁵ PC 125/5

⁶ PC 125/6

8. The Committee invited OED to submit regional syntheses of lessons learned from, and trends identified in the country programme evaluations to the Regional Conferences (2020).
9. The Committee recommended OED:
- a) conduct SDG evaluations in partnership with relevant UN agencies and development partners;
 - b) present the evaluation of Lake Chad crisis at an informal session in late 2019 or early 2020.
10. The Committee requested that OED include in its work plan an evaluation of FAO's Strategic Results Framework to assess the efficiency of the results framework; to assess its effectiveness in supporting the results based management of FAO's programme of work as an accountability tool; and to identify lessons that can inform the formulation of FAO's next Strategic Results framework in 2020.

Report on the outcome of the pledging conference on the eradication of peste des petits ruminants (PPR) (7 September 2018 Brussels, Belgium)⁷

11. The Committee welcomed the report and outcomes of the PPR Global Conference, and:
- a) underlined the importance of the PPR Global Eradication Programme (GEP) which addresses one of the root causes of hunger and poverty for 300 million families across the globe;
 - b) encouraged FAO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) to pursue their strategic partnership with a view to eradication of this devastating disease by 2030;
 - c) noted that the first phase of the GEP would focus on controlling PPR, and the second phase would focus on eradication, and recommended reviewing and evaluating the costs and benefits to fully eradicate PPR against costs and benefits to control PPR worldwide;
 - d) encouraged FAO to organize a dedicated meeting on PPR GEP for all Permanent Representatives in collaboration with the Group of FAO Permanent Representatives "Friends of PPR-GEP" for securing the funding needed to finance priority actions of the PPR GEP;
 - e) requested management to identify the requirements and challenges (technical and non-technical) for PPR eradication and actions required by governments and other stakeholders, taking account of experience gained since the launch of the programme;
 - f) encouraged FAO to promote multistakeholder collaboration, as well as South-South Cooperation across regions, and to mainstream this dimension in implementing the PPR GEP;
 - g) recommended strengthening communication and outreach at all levels to raise awareness and support;
 - h) requested management to develop a monitoring and evaluation system to track progress towards global control and eradication by 2030;
 - i) requested management to provide a progress report to the Committee in two years' time.

⁷ PC 125/7

Progress report on FAO's Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR)⁸

12. The Committee welcomed the progress report on the FAO Action Plan on antimicrobial resistance, and:

- a) supported FAO's continued efforts on this issue using a One Health approach, in close collaboration with the Tripartite partners (World Health Organization and World Organisation for Animal Health), other UN partners (such as UN Environment) and private sector and continued support of the Interagency Coordination Group;
- b) supported the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Tripartite and the proposed areas of work in the Tripartite Workplan;
- c) encouraged a more concrete assessment of progress on the objectives of FAO Action Plan in line with the Global Action Plan, including indicators for outcomes and outputs to be included in the strategic results framework, and to highlight challenges in implementation, and whether available resources (financial and in kind) are sufficient;
- d) stressed the importance of efficient and effective public awareness raising by the Tripartite Plus partners (FAO, OIE, WHO and UN Environment), governments and all other actors;
- e) highlighted the importance of continued work with the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

Any other business

13. The Committee agreed on the value of technical symposia and side events, and:

- a) noted the Director-General's authority in convening these events under the general framework established by the FAO Conference and Constitution, with a balanced approach;
- b) stressed that information on meetings, symposia, seminars and other events convened is disseminated through the corporate channels of the PWB and PIR.

14. The Committee recognised the importance of considering the outcomes of these events within the framework of governing bodies, including the Technical Committees, Council and Conference.

15. The Committee reviewed arrangements for its 126th session, and agreed the following Agenda items:

- a) *Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21*
- b) *Mid-term Review synthesis report – 2018*
- c) *Evaluation of FAO's work on gender*
- d) *Follow-up to the evaluation of FAO's contribution to reduction in rural poverty (SO3)*
- e) *Synthesis of the lessons learned from the Strategic Objective evaluations*
- f) *Evaluation of the strategy and vision for FAO's work on nutrition*
- g) *Progress in the implementation of the Action Plan of the Office of Evaluation*
- h) *Tentative Agenda for its 127th session*

In addition, the Committee agreed to have as a standing item on its Agenda a:

- i) *Progress report on the implementation of Programme Committee recommendations*

⁸ PC 125/8

16. The Committee agreed to hold informal meetings prior to the formal session, both to facilitate discussion on some formal Agenda items, and to consider *inter alia*, as possible topics the following:

- a) Briefing on the Evaluation Office, including content of the evaluations, oversight and a country project evaluation, including terminologies, framework and methodologies
- b) Briefing on the next proposal of the PWB/MTP
- c) Update on FAO's global strategy to improve agriculture and rural statistics
- d) Update on plans for formulating the KPI for project performance management
- e) Progress of the implementation of the UN RC system
- f) Oceans and food security
- g) Update on FAO's Action Plan on AMR, and possible follow-up

Date and place of the Hundred and Twenty-sixth Session

17. The Committee was informed that its 126th session would take place in Rome from 18 to 22 March 2019.