

168th Session of the Council

Item 4: FAO's Response to COVID-19: Building to Transform

FAO highly appreciates the comments provided by Australia, and fully agrees with opportunities highlighted such as building resilient markets, food safety standards, and further strengthening the work on One Health.

With regard to expanding efforts to support Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the Organization would like to reaffirm its commitment and make reference to the Office established on SIDS with a specific focus for addressing the challenges faced.

FAO appreciates the comments provided by the United States of America and words of encouragement for all the efforts carried out by the Organization on data, monitoring and analytical work.

FAO would like to emphasize its close collaboration with the World Bank, for example, ongoing collaboration on the 50x2030 Initiative, close coordination on the COVID-19 recovery plans, coordination with the IMF, and continued cooperation with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) on analytical reports on the impacts of COVID-19 including through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) we have in place.

FAO appreciates the comments provided by Spain and the areas of work highlighted that are fully in line with the priorities.

FAO fully agrees with the need to strengthen resilience of rural livelihoods and the Organization has been working to protect rural employment, strengthening rural women's economic empowerment and building evidence on the impacts of COVID-19 on rural livelihoods of vulnerable rural populations. Moreover, on Tuesday 23 November 2021, the State of Food and Agriculture 2021 Report was published implementing four indicators to measure resilience across the agri-food systems.¹

In addition, One Health has been a priority area of work and focus under the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme and beyond.

FAO appreciates the comments provided by France and took note of the points to be addressed with regard to One Health and indicated paragraphs.

With regard to the Lessons Learned, FAO agrees with the importance of the One Health approach and sustainability as an important lesson and the integration of this approach into the work.

The Organization fully agrees with paying equal attention to all forms of innovation in addition to digital technologies, and the Office of Innovation is indeed an example of the importance FAO is giving to this area of work.

FAO highly appreciates comments provided by the European Union, and the words of encouragement related to specific areas of work such as the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) and the Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) that have contributed significantly to the Organization's efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic.

FAO agrees with extra attention to be given to improving livelihoods, strengthening social protection programmes, support to vulnerable groups and the importance of the One Health approach, in addition to closer cooperation with UN agencies, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE).

FAO takes note of the need for present specific lessons learned from the pandemic and its application.

¹ <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb4476en>