



# FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA

## Thirty-third Session

**Rabat, the Kingdom of Morocco, 26-28 March 2024 and 18-20 April 2024**

### **Country Office Network – Current Status and Way Forward: A policy paper**

#### **Executive summary**

The effectiveness of FAO's assistance to countries in reaching their 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development targets is linked to the Organization's ability to make best use of available resources and deliver at scale at country level through a modern and efficient FAO Decentralized Offices Network, allowing the Organization to respond to the aspirations of countries in the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to observe international standards of accountability, internal control and good management.

Over the past years, the FAO Governing Bodies, starting with Regional Conferences, have provided guidance on the Decentralized Offices Network transformation, to ensure greater flexibility and efficiency in the use of the Organization's financial and human resources to better respond to Members' expectations, on a cost neutral basis and without negatively impacting the technical capacity at headquarters.

This document responds to guidance from the Governing Bodies to strengthen the Organization's work at country level and proposes measures to address current challenges, prioritizing and tailoring support to the specific needs of countries. In so doing, the overarching principles guiding the adjustment of FAO's country presence are that:

- a. the proposed approach and resource allocations are tailored to countries' evolution, specificities, capacities and needs;
- b. flexibility, improved agility (including through pooling of resources) and strengthened capacity (structure and resources) are built in;
- c. office staffing structures reflect modern ways of operating and delivering, with an improved balance between staff and non-staff resources and with due attention to internal controls;
- d. changes are to be implemented in a progressive manner including taking into account current staffing; and
- e. proposed adjustments do not negatively impact the regional budgetary allocation to the FAO Representation Network.

Further details on the proposed adjustments for the Africa region are presented in the document.

### **Suggested action by the Regional Conference**

The Regional Conference is invited to:

- a. provide feedback and guidance on the proposed measures presented to 33rd Session of the Regional Conference for Africa (ARC 33) to adjust the FAO Country Offices Network to better respond to Members' expectations for FAO support and delivery under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 in support of the 2030 Agenda and beyond;
- b. express in principle support to the set of proposals outlined in this document; and
- c. request Management to proceed with a transparent process of consultations with countries for the progressive implementation of the proposed arrangements.

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

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## I. Introduction and scope

1. A modern and efficient FAO Decentralized Offices Network is key to support countries in reaching their targets for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). FAO supports the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) through the transformation to more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life*, leaving no one behind. To deliver successfully under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, FAO Country Offices need to position themselves strategically within the United Nations (UN) system in responding collectively to aspirations of countries in the attainment of the SDGs while fully observing international standards of accountability, internal control and good management in adherence of FAO Basic Texts.

2. FAO Governing Bodies have provided guidance over the past years on the FAO Decentralized Offices Network, including:

- a. In June 2016, the 154th Session of the Council endorsed the region-specific recommendations arising from each of the 2016 sessions of the Regional Conferences, including the creation of new offices or the support for strengthening of existing capacities on a cost-neutral basis, ideally on a cost-sharing agreement with the host government concerned.<sup>1</sup>
- b. The FAO Council at its 163rd session (December 2019) noted the need for the strengthening of the work of Decentralized Offices without negatively impacting the technical capacity at headquarters.<sup>2</sup>
- c. The 42nd session of the FAO Conference (2021) endorsed the reports of the 2020 sessions of the Regional Conferences, including the specific guidance from the Report of the 31st Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa (ARC/20/REP) to: *pursue the adjustment of its decentralized offices business models, in particular in light of the UN Development System repositioning, in order to ensure greater flexibility and efficiency in the use of the Organization's existing limited financial and human resources, aiming to respond to Members' emerging needs and priorities in line with the SDGs*<sup>3</sup> and to *reconsider the skills and competency mix needed to improve programme delivery*<sup>4</sup>.

3. During 2020-2022, FAO embarked upon a focused effort to address the efficiency and effectiveness of Decentralized Offices. Specific actions included *inter alia*: (i) better integration of Decentralized Offices into the corporate structure and further empowering of Regional Offices in their oversight in conformity with 'One FAO'; and (ii) a revamped organizational structure of Regional and Subregional Offices (overview summary shown in Annex 1).

4. This document responds to the aforementioned guidance with focus now placed on FAO Representations and other Country Office modalities, to strengthen the Organization's work at country level in the implementation of the Strategic Framework 2022-2031 and to better respond to countries' needs to achieve the SDGs. The document presents proposed measures to address current challenges, prioritizing and tailoring support to meet the specific needs of countries considering the evolving context of operations. The proposals are also in line with the vision of the "four R's" communicated by the Director General for his second mandate: *recovery* from the pandemic and conflicts, *reform* of our systems to be fit for purpose, a *rebuild* of FAO's network and capacity, and a *renaissance* of FAO for a better future.

5. The Regional Conference is invited to reflect on the proposals in this document. Following endorsement in principle, a transparent process of consultation, with due consideration to current realities regarding staffing and resources, will be undertaken, leading to the elaboration of an implementation road map of the proposed arrangements.

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<sup>1</sup> CL 154/REP, paragraph 18b)

<sup>2</sup> CL 163/REP, paragraph 10 a) ii

<sup>3</sup> ARC/20/REP, paragraph 47 v

<sup>4</sup> ARC/20/REP, paragraph 47 ix

## II. Background

6. FAO Decentralized Offices were established pursuant to Article X of the FAO Constitution which states: “1. There shall be such regional offices and subregional offices as the Director-General, with the approval of the Conference, may decide. 2. The Director-General may appoint officials for liaison with particular countries or areas, subject to agreement of the government concerned”<sup>5</sup>.

7. The first Decentralized Offices of FAO were the five Regional Offices which opened between 1952 and 1961<sup>6</sup>. The establishment of full-fledged FAO Representations, i.e. those offices where the function of an FAO Representative has been officially agreed with the Host Government through a signed Host Country Agreement (HCA), was initially approved by the Council at its 69th Session in 1976<sup>7</sup>. The establishment of Subregional Offices was endorsed by the Council at its 106th Session<sup>8</sup> in 1994. Over the years, FAO slowly built up the decentralized offices network with currently 144 FAO Representations, with the most recent full-fledged office established in South Sudan in 2013.

8. In the Africa region, the Regional Office (RO) was established in Accra in 1959, while the Subregional Offices (SROs) respectively opened for Central Africa (Libreville) in 2006, for Eastern Africa (Addis Ababa) in 2007, for Southern Africa (Harare) in 2006 and for West Africa (Dakar) in 2018<sup>9</sup>. Over the years, 34 full-fledged FAO Representations have been established in the Africa region, the first in the Republic of the Congo (1977) and the most recent in South Sudan (2013).

9. As shown in the table below, other modalities of country coverage in the Africa region include five countries where the representation is co-located in the Regional or Subregional Offices, three Partnership and Liaison Offices, and five countries covered through multiple accreditations.

**Table 1: Modalities of FAO’s presence at country level – Africa region (2023)**

FAO country coverage modalities in the Africa region	# of countries	% of total
Full-fledged FAO Representation	33	70
Partnership and Liaison Office	3	6
FAO Representation co-located in an RO/SRO	5	11
Multiple accreditation	6	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100</b>

10. For the purposes of this document, the totality of these modalities is referred to as “FAO Country Offices”.

<sup>5</sup> FAO Basic Texts (2017 edition), Volume I. A. page 10

<sup>6</sup> 1952 Latin America & Caribbean and Near East & North Africa; 1956 Asia and the Pacific (to note that the Regional Office for Asia and the Far East was first temporarily opened in China in 1947. Through a decision of the Governing Bodies, in 1948 the office moved to its present location in Bangkok which subsequently became its permanent site in 1953, while the HCA was officially signed in 1959); 1959 Africa; 1961 Europe and Central Asia (to note that the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia was established initially in Geneva in 1961 until 1970 and re-established officially through HCA in Budapest in 2007)

<sup>7</sup> CL 69/REP, paragraphs 26-29

<sup>8</sup> CL 106/REP, paragraph 34

<sup>9</sup> Following transfer from the Regional Office in Ghana.

### III. Roles and functions of FAO Country Offices

11. FAO Country Offices, working under overall corporate guidance and in line with the Strategic Framework, offer policy advice and support to countries in the mandated areas of FAO, facilitated through partnerships, resources and an active country programme to provide technical assistance, develop capacities and deliver core services while fully observing international standards of accountability to establish leadership and strengthen impact at country level.

12. The offices deliver on the programmatic priorities of each country as agreed in their respective Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and ensure effective and efficient operations with adequate human and financial resources. Specifically, FAO Country Offices: (i) advocate, inform and support policies and investment in the areas of FAO's mandate; (ii) provide technical assistance and deliver core services; (iii) assist and catalyse partnership and resource mobilization activities to support agrifood systems transformation; (iv) position FAO as the specialized/authoritative technical agency in food and agriculture and agrifood systems transformation; and (v) ensure risk-smart and accountable operations and management.

### IV. Evolving context – Drivers of change

13. Over the years, both external and internal drivers of change have impacted the development context and hence the needs and expectations from FAO Country Offices which need to be taken into account when considering FAO Country Office transformation.

*External drivers of change include:*

- a. changes in income levels, economic development and evolution of country context, and structural transformation of countries (impacting the role of agriculture, employment and source of livelihoods);
- b. changes in development agendas to respond to evolving global socio-economic and environmental challenges and the SDGs (climate change, crises and conflicts, migration, etc.);
- c. changes in the agrifood policy context and agrifood systems approach; and
- d. increasing vulnerabilities due to climate change, ecosystems degradation and other factors, including, *inter alia*, for the Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

*Internal drivers of change include:*

- a. changes in the size, complexity and type of funding of operations managed by the FAO Country Offices, with a significant portion of these resources derived from extrabudgetary contributions, in the context of a flat nominal Regular Programme budget for FAO (past 12 years);
- b. evolution of global initiatives and goals for which FAO needs to support countries and monitor progress;
- c. evolution of digitalization and work modalities; and
- d. UN repositioning bringing new programming modalities and efficiency changes in the operational environment.

14. Two of these drivers are elaborated further below, namely changes in income level of countries and changes in the size, complexity and type of funding of operations managed by the FAO Country Offices.

*Country income levels, economic development and evolution of country context*

15. In the Africa region, country income levels have slightly improved over the last 30 years, with a considerable increase in the number of countries in the lower-middle-income status (40 percent currently versus 19 percent in 1993). However, 45 percent of countries remain in the low-income category, while only 15 percent of countries belong to the high and upper-middle-income categories.

16. However, despite this improvement in country income levels, Africa is not on track to meet the food security and nutrition targets of SDG 2. After a long period of improvement between 2000 and

2013, hunger has worsened substantially in the region with its worst deterioration occurring between 2019 and 2020<sup>10</sup>. In reviewing FAO Country Office presence, it is therefore necessary to not only consider country income but also further categorization under the income level (e.g. SIDS, LIFDC) and other factors impacting food security and sustainable development, such as susceptibility to natural disasters and climate change and conflict protracted crises.

#### *Size and funding of operations managed by FAO Country Offices*

17. In the past ten years, the operational context of FAO has changed significantly with Regular Programme resources remaining largely stagnant and extrabudgetary resources almost doubling. In 2022, FAO Country Offices in the Africa region operated 715 active projects with a total budget of USD 1.7 billion. In the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25, the net appropriation budget for the Africa region is USD 160 million with extrabudgetary delivery expected to be more than five and a half that amount, reaching an estimated USD 880 million, highlighting the growing dependence on and importance of extrabudgetary contributions.

18. With this growing divergence between Regular Programme and extrabudgetary resources, a growing variation in the size and complexity of country portfolios is also seen. In the Africa region in 2022, four countries accounted for more than 40 percent of the extrabudgetary resources mobilized and managed in 2022 (Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi, Somalia and South Sudan).

19. Yet, despite these significant changes in the demand on FAO and the size and funding of operations over the last decade, the Regular Programme staffing model of FAO Country Offices has remained stagnant.

## **V. Challenges and gaps**

20. Five main challenges and gaps need to be addressed to improve the functioning of Country Offices in the current context, while keeping within existing Regular Programme budget allocations to the Decentralized Offices Network globally and at regional level:

- a. Criteria for Regular Programme resource allocation<sup>11</sup> to Country Offices within the region are not based on defined models.
- b. Regular Programme staffing profiles do not adequately reflect the current realities, complexities and evolving demands of office operations.
- c. Structural, budgetary and administrative set-ups in Country Offices is not agile, with for example, 97 percent of Regular Programme resources funding budgeted posts.
- d. Set-ups do not take into consideration specific country situations and differing needs.
- e. The major rise in the size of country programmes funded by extrabudgetary contributions carries an increase in the level of risks to be managed. Fit for purpose administrative and operational procedures and appropriate delegations of authority supported by strengthened operational and internal control capacities are not fully in place to ensure appropriate delivery at scale, while ensuring effective risk management.

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<sup>10</sup> FAO, ECA and AUC. 2021. *Africa – Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2021: Statistics and trends*. Accra, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb7496en>

<sup>11</sup> With the exception of Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) resources

## VI. Proposed measures for improvement

21. To address the evolving context and the challenges and gaps identified, measures are proposed to be put in place which seek to provide Country Offices in the region with:

- a. A renewed business model, better reflecting country contexts based on agreed principles and criteria.
- b. Increased flexibility via a strategic adjustment in staffing profiles funded through the Regular Programme, along with the enhanced allocation of non-earmarked resources ('general operating expenses' [GOE]) specifically tailored to match the evolving realities and complexities of operating in a specific country; this includes aligning Regular Programme staff to core functions.
- c. Increased agility through a share of resources being pooled at regional level, enabling a more targeted and effective response to specific country-level needs.
- d. Increased programmatic approach, pulling together extra-budgetary and regular budget resources at country level.

22. The overarching principles guiding the proposed adjustments are that: the approach and resource allocations are tailored to countries' evolution, specificities, capacities and needs; flexibility, improved agility and strengthened capacity are built in; office staffing structures reflect modern ways of operating and delivering, with due attention to internal controls; changes are implemented in a progressive manner, including taking into account incumbency status and natural attrition; and proposed adjustments do not negatively impact the regional budgetary allocation to the FAO Representation network.

### *Adjustments to country coverage, Country Office structures and related Regular Programme allocations*

23. A flexible business model with a solid foundation is key for more effective cooperation to tackle today's challenges as well as adjust to new dynamics and demands likely to arise in the future. FAO Country Offices should be able to quickly adapt to the nature and size of the project portfolio in the country, following a programmatic approach in support to the UNSDCF and the CPFs.

24. *Table 2* outlines four models with two subcategories. The four models, which would be applied taking into consideration unique country situations and specificities, take into consideration a combination of factors, including country income level and further categorization under the income level (e.g. SIDS, LIFDC), specific vulnerabilities such as climate change impacts, conflicts or protracted crises, size of the country programme, and location of the Country Office in relation to the Regional or Subregional Office.

25. Each model describes a proposed indicative staffing level to be funded by Regular Programme to meet the challenges of delivering FAO's multifaceted and global mandate in a rapidly evolving environment. With these models, approximately 10 percent of overall resources would be available for more flexible expenditures, including other human resources and general operating expenses.<sup>12</sup> The models and the countries therein would be reviewed regularly to ensure an agile system for adjustments in response to changing circumstances.

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<sup>12</sup> Up from the current 3 percent

**Table 2: Proposed models (Regular Programme funded)**

<b>Models of Country Offices</b>	<b>Indicative number of Regular Programme funded Staff (Core)</b>
<b>Model 1: Countries with large programmes and/or with major economic, environmental and social challenges</b>	
<b>1.A</b> – Crisis countries and/or countries with large programmes	Up to Seven (7) core staff
<b>1.B</b> – Low-/Lower-middle-income countries which are also Least Developed and/or low-income food-deficit countries	Up to Seven (7) core staff
<b>Model 2: Countries with middle-income level</b>	
<b>2.A</b> - Lower-middle-income countries	Up to Five (5) core staff + government encouraged to second staff
<b>2.B</b> – Upper-middle-income countries	One (1) core staff (International FAO Representative) + enhanced national ownership and contribution encouraged
<b>Model 3: Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Landlocked Countries</b>	
<b>3.A</b> – Small-size SIDS (population of less than 100 000)	One (1) National Correspondent (NC) + increase in “non staff/operating expenditures” allocation
<b>3.B</b> – Larger SIDS and small landlocked countries	One (1) National Professional Officer (NPO)) + increase in “non staff/operating expenditures” allocation
<b>Model 4: FAO Representations co-located with a Regional or Subregional Office</b>	
<b>4.A</b> – Country Office co-located with Regional Office	One (1) NPO with (Deputy) Regional Representative as Head of the Country Office
<b>4.B</b> – Country Office co-located with Subregional Office	One (1) NPO with Subregional Coordinator as Head of the Country Office

26. In the Africa region, crisis and large programme countries (Model 1.A), as well as low-/lower-middle-income countries which are also least developed and/or LIFDCs (1.B), will gain agility in terms of Regular Programme funded resource allocations, allowing them to deliver at scale and better match the challenges and complexities of the specific operating environment. The core staff would cover an international FAO Representative and national staff. The increase in more flexible non-staff/ GOE resources would allow the Country Office to respond in an agile manner to needed support in key areas such as an unforeseen need for specific technical priorities, programme development and support, and risk management and internal controls. The countries with large extrabudgetary project delivery would further benefit from appropriate, complementary, and mutually supportive project funding allocations, as described in Section VI.

27. Progressive enhanced ownership and cost-sharing in line with national capacities is the recommended approach in middle-income countries (Model 2). The core staffing would cover an international FAO Representative and national staff, with governments encouraged to consider seconding additional national staff to Country Offices. For upper-middle-income countries, enhanced national ownership and contribution would better leverage national development and institutional capacities to support both government priorities and a potential for regional and global South-South Cooperation.

28. Special attention is granted to SIDS and Landlocked countries (Model 3) to account for growing vulnerability and climate change threats. The capacities of these Country Offices in the Africa region



would be strengthened with appropriate staffing models<sup>13</sup> and by providing a yearly allocation of non-earmarked resources to support the local capacity for project/programme development and implementation. FAO Representatives heading larger SIDS through multiple accreditation would be supported by an Assistant FAOR (NPO) recruited locally. The proposed adjustments would also support promoting FAO's presence, coordination, and collaboration with the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs). Other measures would include (i) drawing on regional and/or project support and resources to boost allocations provided; (ii) strengthening capacity by outposting (on a rotational basis) staff with the required profiles from the Regional Offices, Subregional Offices and/or headquarters; and (iii) seeking specialized secondments from donors.

29. FAO Representations co-located with a Regional or Subregional Office (Model 4) would be restructured in order to benefit fully from the strong support and expertise available through these offices.

30. All models imply an evolution in the staffing composition of FAO Country Offices. Traditionally, positions have included several drivers (covering tasks such as physical distribution of mail and documentation), receptionists, library/record and archive assistants, as well as administrative and office assistants. Yet, digitalization, the corporate move towards vertical integration of non-location specific administrative transactions in the Shared Services Centre (SSC) in Budapest, and the evolving future of work (e.g. new working modalities) have changed requirements and expanded opportunities and tools, necessitating FAO to adapt. Positions such as information resource assistants are now present in many offices and staff time has been liberated for more substantive work, particularly in decentralized locations, challenging the concept of required functions to cover certain tasks.

31. High-income countries may wish to strengthen partnerships with FAO through the hosting of regional knowledge hubs with distinctive features and complementary functions, to leverage FAO's full potential and advance innovation-driven transformation of agrifood systems.

### *Additional agility and flexibility*

32. Beyond the proposed changes in country coverage, structure and budget allocation shown in *Table 2*, additional capacity would be built in to enable "advance funding" for emerging needs, fast changing country situations, and/or required programme development support. A pool of resources, equivalent to approximately 12 percent of the staff costs for the FAO Representation network in the region, would be held at regional level for rapid allocation to Country Offices as needed for prompt response to specific requirements (e.g. programme development support, particularly for countries with very low portfolios, interventions to address administrative bottlenecks, specific risks arising, etc.).

## **VII. Further measures**

33. Elements to be considered for future developments, some of which are already under implementation, are presented below for information. These measures are designed with the principle of a cost-neutral Regular Programme allocation to Decentralized Offices, good risk management and adjustment to country specificities and vulnerability level (e.g. SIDS).

### *Extrabudgetary programmes/project management*

34. With the growing number of countries managing large, complex extrabudgetary-funded projects and programmes, ensuring the capacity for timely and high-quality delivery while also ensuring the capacity for an adequate and compliant management of the pool of resources entrusted is becoming more acute, requiring strengthened operational capacities, the introduction of specific compliance and internal control measures and minimum standard staffing for Country Offices. This approach not only supports compliance but also enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation. It is therefore proposed that project/extrabudgetary resources approved in support of the CPF be pooled and used in a systematic fashion to permit proper resources management, simultaneously bolstering

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<sup>13</sup> Model 3 applies to those SIDS and Landlocked Countries where the current Country Office capacity is less than the model.

operational support for projects and ensuring the strengthening of internal control measures and risk management over the implementation of field activities.

35. Two examples illustrating possible indicative minimum requirements in terms of complementary extrabudgetary funded staff resources (national and/or international) to ensure adequate management and delivery of projects/extrabudgetary funded programmes with risk mitigation and support at country level are provided below:

- a. For a large portfolio under direct execution (between USD 100-300 million) extrabudgetary funded staff could include: Deputy FAOR (P-5); Food Security Analyst (P5/P4); Head of Operations/Emergency Coordinator (P5) in case of emergency portfolio; Project(s) Manager (P4/P5) - number may depend on country set up, e.g. if federal states; Procurement Officer (P4/P3); Logistics Officer (P3); Operations Officer (P3/P4); Monitoring Officer (M&E) (P3); Admin/Finance or HR Officer (P4/P3); Compliance/Ethics/Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (PSEA) Officer (P4); Communications (P3); Security Officer (P4) in case of significant risks in the country.
- b. For a small non-emergency portfolio under direct execution (e.g. USD 5-25 million) extrabudgetary funded staff could include: Food Security Analyst (Consultant [national or international]); Project Manager (Consultant) or Operations Officer (P-3); Compliance/Ethics/PSEA (NPO); Security Officer (NPO or Consultant).

36. Dialogue with donors will be pursued and internal guidelines developed to ensure that minimum standard staffing structures be implemented, as appropriate.

### ***Managerial environment***

37. Corporate transformational changes and management adjustments underway which would help address challenges and bottlenecks at the Decentralized Office level include:

- a. the strategic transformation of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) (covering improvement of business processes and of the systems that support them), which will support better monitoring and reporting, facilitate internal control measures and support further delegation of authority;
- b. the vertical integration of servicing work, i.e. centralizing some of the non-location specific administrative transactions to the SSC in Budapest, which will improve speed and coherence and meet internal control requirements in a homogenous manner;
- c. capacity building and career development for Country Offices, including growth opportunities for national staff (e.g. training, missions, international travel, international temporary assignments, etc.) and the development of a human resources approach to facilitate the progression of well-performing national staff to international positions; and
- d. the strategic review of Project Cycle and Operational Modalities to ensure fit for purpose processes for project implementation and refinement of fast-track procedures for Level 3 emergency countries to ensure agile and timely responses.

## **VIII. Next steps**

38. The Regional Conference is invited to reflect on the proposed measures presented to ARC 33 to address the challenges encountered in the delivery of the FAO Strategic Framework at country level and provide their feedback and guidance.

39. Should the set of proposals outlined in this document be supported in principle, individual consultations will take place with countries, with a view to expedite a concrete and transparent implementation of the proposed arrangements.

**Annex 1****Selected action taken in 2020-2022 at headquarters and in the regions to improve efficiency and effectiveness of Decentralized Offices**

1. In 2020-21, FAO embarked upon a focused effort to address the efficiency and effectiveness of the business models of Decentralized Offices, in line with the restructuring of headquarters units and to support the implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031. Specific actions in this regard included: (i) Abolition in 2020 of the Office of Support to Decentralized Offices (OSD) at headquarters to strengthen the integration of Decentralized Offices in the structure and management of the Organization in the spirit of One FAO and pursue the empowerment of Regional Offices; (ii) a rethink of the organizational structure of Regional and Subregional Offices as an integral part of Regional Offices; and (iii) Launching of the Country Office Management and Monitoring Indicators Tool (COMMIT) - a Management information system tool to support more effective oversight capacity to assess Decentralized Offices' performance and delivery on programme implementation.
2. The Restructuring of Regional and Subregional Offices was completed in 2022. The Regional Office structures have been aligned with the new headquarters' model and with the view to improve relevance, timeliness, cost-efficiency, technical quality and effectiveness of the support which Regional and Subregional Offices, through Country Offices, provide to Members. This restructuring (budget and post neutral) followed the principles of One FAO, under a collegial leadership including the Subregional Coordinators to provide integrated policy advice through technical and investment support teams using virtual networks and achieving an improved, interactive regional governance.
3. The transformation of the regional structures implied changes in the business model with more integration between regions and subregions, thinking together, planning together, acting together and achieving results together. It enabled the integration of Subregional Offices as part of the region, with a customized structure to respond to the specific regional and subregional contexts and the needs and capacities of each Regional and Subregional Office. The new structures of Subregional Offices include capacities for strategic thinking and foresight, multidisciplinary technical support, leveraging partnerships and liaison functions, improving oversight and management functions, introducing more client-oriented services for administrative and operations support through promotion of vertical integration and strengthened support services, with the Regional Office or SSC, and finally the adoption of a more effective and efficient administration moving towards a digital FAO in all locations.
4. A Global Common Functional Organigramme was developed by the regions (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Regional Offices - Global Common Functional Organigramme



5. The revised set up was designed with built-in flexibility to adapt its main features to the specificity of each region. The implemented transformed structures of the Regional Office for Africa (RAF) and Subregional Offices for Central Africa (SFC), Eastern Africa (SFE), Southern Africa (SFS) and West Africa (SFW) integrating some region-specific features, are provided in Figures 2 to 6 below.

Figure 2. FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF) – Transformed structure

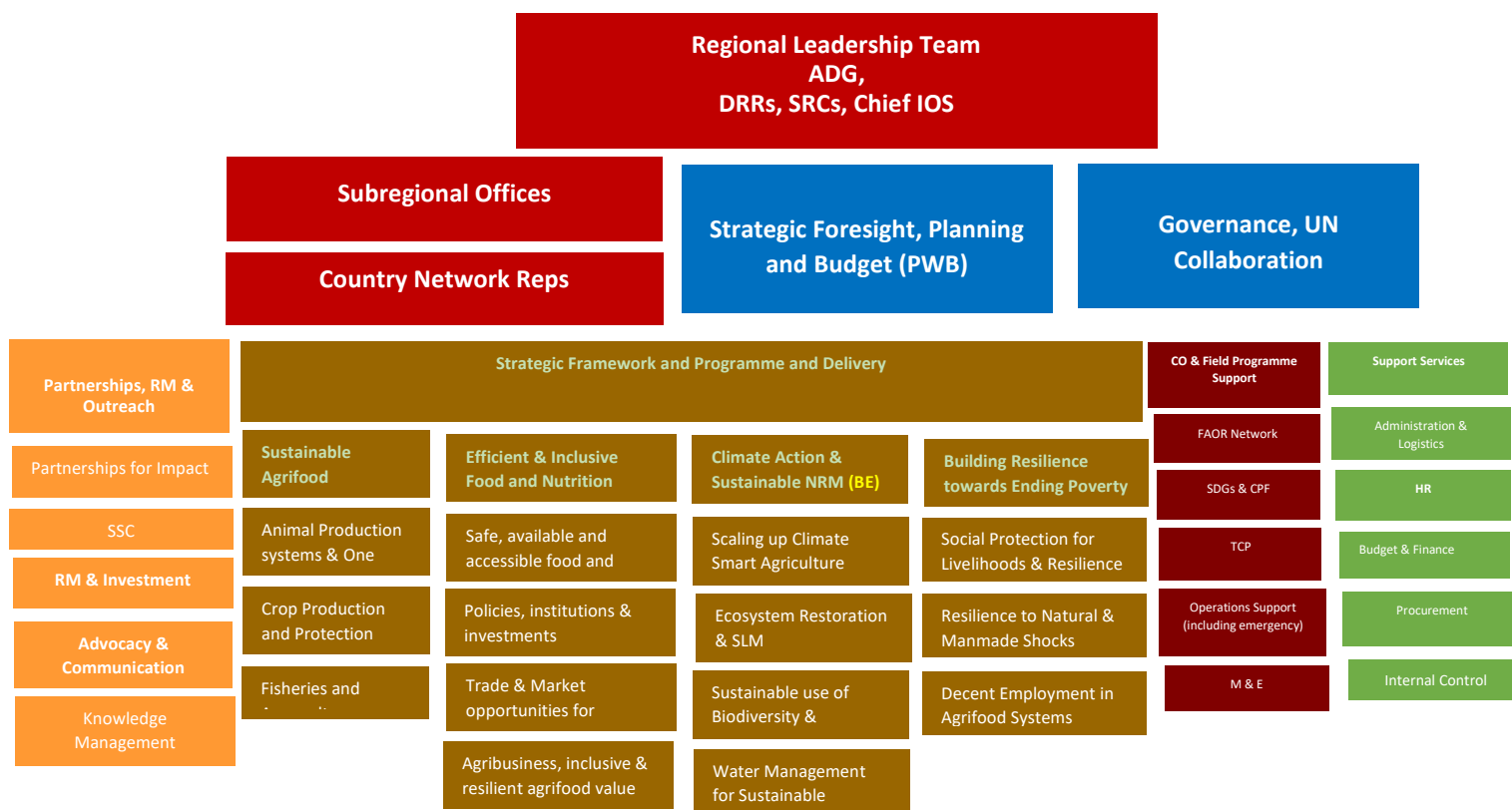


Figure 3. FAO Subregional Office for Central Africa (SFC) – Transformed structure

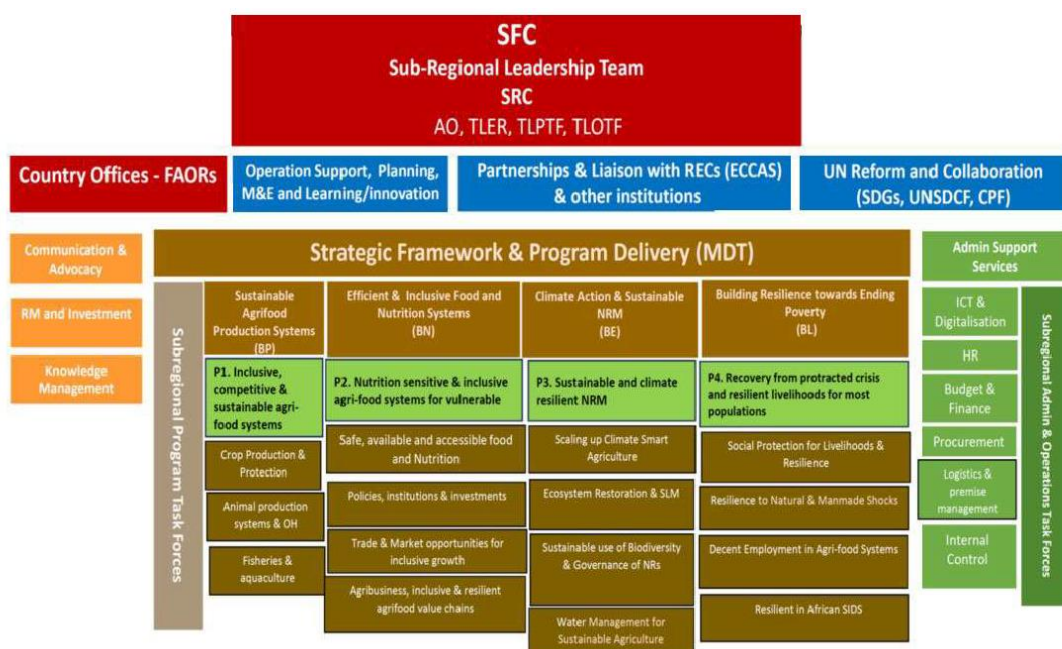
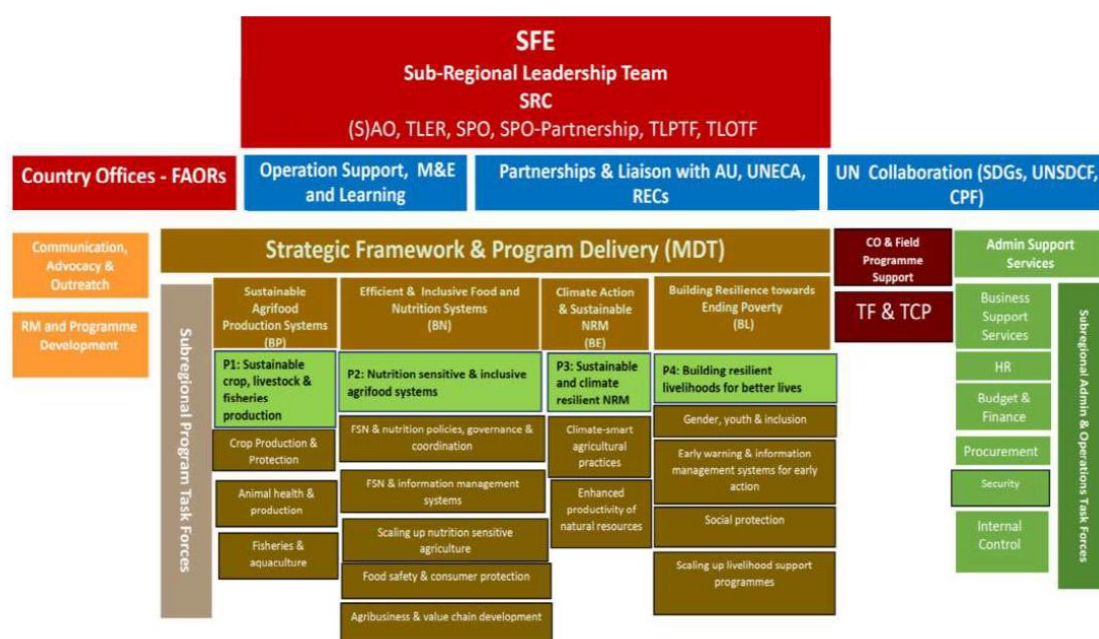


Figure 4. FAO Subregional Office for Eastern Africa (SFE) – Transformed structure



- TLER: Team Leader for Emergency and Resilience
- AO: Administrative Officer
- SPO-Partnerships: Senior Programme Officer-Partnership
- TLPTF: Team Leader for Programme Task Force
- TLOTF: Team Leader for Operation Task Force

Figure 5. FAO Subregional Office for Southern Africa (SFS) – Transformed structure



Figure 6. FAO Subregional Office for West Africa (SFW) – Transformed structure

