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**REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIES FOR
PARTNERSHIPS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY AND
WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

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Introduction

1. The FAO Strategies for partnerships with civil society organizations and with the private sector (the Strategies) were submitted for review by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees in March 2013,¹ and for approval by the 146th session of the Council in April 2013.
2. The Strategies provide a framework for collaboration with civil society organizations and the private sector respectively which, together with a set of complementary tools, guide FAO staff on how to establish effective partnerships with these non-state actors (NSA) in support of FAO's Strategic Objectives (SOs).
3. The Strategies were developed to foster partnerships with NSA to reduce poverty and food insecurity, under the understanding that, given the intrinsic nature of its membership and governance, the main interlocutors for FAO are its member governments.
4. Following the guidance of the 146th session of the Council,² FAO has established mechanisms to ensure the impartiality of the Organization and a decentralized approach for the implementation of the Strategies, while also maintaining two of FAO's fundamental characteristics: (i) the capacity to provide a neutral forum for discussions; and (ii) its evidence-based knowledge work.
5. Since the approval of the Strategies in April 2013, 54 agreements have been formalized between FAO and NSA which are considered critical in the achievement of FAO's Strategic Objectives, within the six areas of collaboration identified in the Strategies: (i) development and technical programmes/field programme; (ii) policy dialogue; (iii) advocacy and communication; (iv) norms and standard setting/normative activities; (v) knowledge management and dissemination/knowledge sharing and capacity development; and (vi) mobilization of resources/joint use of resources in emergency situations.
6. Following the request of the 146th Session of the Council, a progress report on the implementation of the Strategies is presented to Member States, through the Joint Meeting of the 116th session of the Programme Committee and the 156th session of the Finance Committee. The document outlines the initial progress in the implementation of the Strategies, including the following sections: a) enabling partnerships in the reviewed Strategic Framework; b) partnerships in action; c) tools; d) multi-stakeholder processes; e) monitoring and evaluation; f) risk management system and g) guidance sought.

A. Enabling partnerships in the reviewed Strategic Framework

7. The Office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development (OPC) is the unit responsible for implementing the Strategies by fostering effective and efficient collaboration with NSA, including civil society organizations, the private sector, cooperatives and producer organizations, and academic and research institutions.
8. OPC contributes to developing the capacity of FAO staff to promote strategic partnerships for the achievement of FAO's mandate. This is done through the promotion of a set of skills that are both technical and process-oriented, leading to effective negotiations and risk management, as well as the production of tools and mechanisms for the identification, formalization, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of sustainable partnerships at centralized and decentralized levels.
9. When developing partnerships, OPC ensures that: (i) all collaboration with NSA effectively contributes concretely to Outputs within the Strategic Objectives; (ii) in agreement with governments, strategic partners are identified at decentralized levels in support of the priorities defined in the Country Programming Framework (CPF).
10. To ensure coherent implementation of the Strategies at the global and decentralized levels, coordination has been strengthened as follows: five Partnerships Officers positions have been established in regional offices; and Partnership Focal Points have been nominated by respective ADGs

¹ CL 146/8; JM 2013.1/2

² CL 146/REP

from technical divisions at FAO headquarters. OPC supports and works in close collaboration with these networks, providing constant guidance and capacity building, improving the development, coordination and monitoring of ongoing and potential collaboration with NSA.

11. Regional offices developed a plan of action to engage NSA in the regional work plans, identifying key activities within the regional initiatives that would benefit from the contributions of NSA. FAO has been sharing its experience and knowledge on working with different stakeholders and fostering participatory processes with other entities in the UN system, in particular ECOSOC, WFP, WHO, UNEP and UNDP,³ which are also applying holistic approaches to engaging NSA.

B. Partnerships in action

12. Following approval of the Strategies in April 2013, 54 agreements have been formalized with a variety of NSA, within the six areas of engagement identified in each Strategy, in support of the Strategic Objectives of the Organization. Because of the flexibility of partnership as a tool, these partners provide FAO with a very broad range of support, from resource mobilization and capacity development to outreach and advocacy.⁴

13. In addition to fostering partnerships with civil society organizations and the private sector, partnerships with academia and research organizations,⁵ producer organizations (POs) and cooperatives⁶ have been developed and are being implemented, given their central role in the fulfilment of FAO's mandate.

14. In support of the Strategic Objectives, ten agreements have been formalized with civil society organizations, nineteen with the private sector, one with cooperatives and producer's organizations and twenty-four with academia and research organizations. Among the 54 formalized agreements:

- 9 percent contribute to *SO1 - Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition*
- 31 percent to *SO2 - Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner*
- 4 percent to *SO3 - Reduce rural poverty*
- 11 percent to *SO4 - Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems at local, national and international levels*
- 6 percent to *SO5 - Increase the resilience of livelihoods*
- while 44 percent of the agreements are cross-cutting.

15. Examples of the current operational partnerships include:

16. ***World Vision: Joint distribution of emergency livelihood kits in South-Sudan - SO5***

In March 2014, FAO and WVI jointly distributed 3,000 emergency fishing kits in Unity State, South Sudan, reaching around 9,000 people. Additionally, joint distributions of emergency crop, vegetable and fishing kits took place in Upper Nile State reaching beneficiaries in Fashoda, Manyo, Melut and Renk. Over 7,300 kits were distributed to beneficiaries thus far.

17. ***Rabobank: Small farmer's access to credit in Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia - SO3 and SO4***

Smallholders' access to credit in Africa is being improved through a combination of Rabobank's financial know-how and FAO's technical expertise and local networks. In Tanzania, 520 smallholders are supported to become eligible for formal lending, which allows them to finance and develop agro-

³ Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); World Food Programme (WFP); World Health Organization (WHO); United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

⁴ A complete list of partnerships, including their link to Strategic Objectives and initial progress in their implementation can be found at: <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/en/>

⁵ An expert consultation was organized in June 2014 to review the *Framework for FAO-Academia Partnerships* and develop a road map for its implementation <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/academia/en/>

⁶ The partnerships with PO and cooperatives follow three mutually reinforcing tracks: (i) supporting governments to create a conducive environment for the development of POs and cooperatives; (ii) strengthening organizational capacities of POs and cooperatives through partnerships; and (iii) generating and sharing knowledge and information. <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/cooperatives/en/>

value chain activities and turn them into profitable ventures. In Kenya, preferential rate loans are provided to farmer groups that are practicing Conservation Agriculture. In Ethiopia, the capacity of 41 leaders of cooperative unions, producer cooperatives, and governmental leaders from the region, is being developed on agricultural financing for cooperatives and small-medium enterprises.

18. ***World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC): Community media for food security and family farming - Cross-cutting***

FAO and AMARC are partnering to ensure that farmer's voices are heard and that farmer's organizations actively participate in policy processes. Community radio is being used as a platform to involve the farming community in the 2014 International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) policy dialogues in different regions worldwide.

19. ***Eataly: Access to global markets for local women's cooperatives in Ethiopia - SO4***

A FAO–Eataly partnership is helping women's cooperatives of Ethiopia to access global markets with improved cactus marmalade, significantly increasing their income. FAO is providing technical assistance while Eataly is granting access to global markets and in-kind donations.

20. ***Slow Food: global advocacy on Quinoa and Family Farming – cross cutting***

Within the celebration of the International Years of Quinoa in 2013 and Family Farming in 2014, FAO and Slow Food joined efforts to raise global awareness on the important role that quinoa and family farming play in the eradication of hunger, malnutrition and poverty. Activities included the publishing of “Quinoa in the kitchen”, a collection of quinoa based recipes from top chefs, and the organization of Family Farming Expo in June 2014.

21. ***Grameen Foundation: Technology for traditional and new practices in Uganda - SO2***

FAO and Grameen Foundation are facilitating knowledge sharing of smallholder's traditional and new practices. In Uganda, Grameen Foundation uses information from the TECA (Technologies and practices for small agricultural producers) platform (<http://teca.fao.org/>) to reach more than 275,000 farmers in 37 districts via smart phone through the Community Knowledge Workers (CKW) Search Tool.

22. ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies: Increased collaboration for resilience – SO5***

The delivery of the FAO resilience agenda is done through closer collaboration at all levels with the IFRC and its national societies. In international fora, IFRC and FAO lead joint advocacy work for vulnerable countries and communities at risk and in crisis situations. They also combine forces by including FAO e-learning material on agriculture, food, nutrition into the IFRC learning platform, reaching out to their network of several million of staff and volunteers. In many crisis countries, IFRC is an active member of the Food Security Cluster, providing key human resources at global and national levels. In Central African Republic, FAO and IFRC worked together in the L3 emergency response operation ensuring distribution of seeds and tools to affected vulnerable households.

23. ***Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF): Fostering statistical capacity building in Bangladesh – SO4***

In collaboration with the (BMGF), FAO is involved in a number of projects in the field of agricultural statistics and policies. Bangladesh is currently receiving support to improve its agricultural market information systems, using innovative methods and digital technology. This initiative was designed in the context of the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) established at the request of the Agriculture Ministers of the G20 to enhance food market transparency and encourage coordination of policy action in response to market uncertainty.

24. **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development: Investment growth in Ukrainian grain sector – SO4**

The cooperation with the EBRD gives a voice to the private sector in policy-making processes, facilitating investment in all segments of the food chain. One example is the joint work conducted by FAO and EBRD to improve policies in the Ukrainian grain sector, which has contributed to attract important investment and boost production in this strategic sector. Another priority area is to facilitate public-private collaboration for the development of quality and origin-based labels – mainly in the form of Geographical Indications – as a tool to increase producers' incomes.

25. **Peer-to-peer partnership in Burkina Faso**

An FAO-brokered partnership between producer's organizations (the Confédération Paysanne du Faso), the Association pour le Développement International Agronomique et Industriel des Protéagineux et Oléagineux (Agropol), and the Union des Producteurs Agricoles du Québec – Développement International (UPA-DI) has led to improved small producers' productivity (tripling of production yields) and access to markets through contract farming with processors, increased incomes and reduced dependency on imported products in the sunflower value chain. FAO provided the technical assistance. The WEAMU (West African and Monetary Union) has shown interest in upscaling the approach at the subregional level in West Africa. The initiative is now included as a priority in the National Programme for the Rural Sector of Burkina Faso.

C. Tools

26. OPC has developed a set of tools and resources that complement the Strategies and strengthen staff and partners' organizational capacity to work with NSA in the areas of FAO's mandate:

27. ***Principles and guidelines for partnerships with civil society organizations:*** Criteria that should be taken into account by FAO staff, prior to engaging in partnerships with civil society organizations, so as to ensure the neutrality, impartiality and transparency of the Organization, as well as a strong alignment with the SO and a balanced representation of civil society in FAO's activities, based on geography, gender, constituency and type of organization.⁷

28. ***Principles and guidelines for partnerships with the private sector:*** provides detailed operational guidance on the selection, approval and management of partnership arrangements, including monitoring and evaluation and risk management of partnerships with the private sector.

29. ***Cooperatives and PO's Learning Module 4 on organizational analysis and development (LM4):*** presents approaches and tools to enhance the performance of organizations to improve food security, reduce poverty and promote sustainable development. LM4 includes practical cases and a toolset for use by producer organizations, cooperatives, civil society organizations, private sector entities among others to strengthen their organizational performance through partnerships.⁸

30. ***Right to Food Handbooks:*** In collaboration with civil society organizations FAO prepared a series of handbooks based on the different volumes of the Right to Food Methodological Toolbox, whose purpose is to provide practical information and guidance to practitioners on how to implement the right to food and apply human rights-based approaches to key areas of work, namely, legislation, monitoring, assessment, budget and education. (Available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese).⁹

31. ***Guidelines for the involvement of the private sector in the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security (VGGT)*** are currently under development.

32. The ***Partnerships Web site*** has been updated to facilitate reciprocal flows of information among FAO, Member States and key partners, providing relevant information, tools and clear steps on

⁷ <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/civil-society/details-resources/en/c/214543/>

⁸ http://www.fao.org/docs/eims/upload/314528/FAO_CD_LM4.pdf

⁹ <http://www.fao.org/righttofood/knowledge-centre/right-to-food-hanbooks/en/>

how to initiate collaborations, as well as an up-to-date list of current partnerships

<http://www.fao.org/partnerships/>

33. Partnership development often leads to joint *resource mobilization*. Several Trust Funds have been set up to facilitate participation of civil society organizations in policy-making processes and to encourage contributions from the private sector. Resources can be allocated to specific areas identified in support of the SOs.

34. A *corporate database* of past and ongoing partnerships has been set up in close collaboration with the FAO Legal and Ethics Office. This database facilitates the systematic follow-up of existing collaboration, while identifying the technical unit responsible for implementation. This database will be available to all FAO staff through the Intranet.

35. A new *online FAO Registration system* for FAO meetings was launched in April 2013 to facilitate the assessment of expressions of interest from stakeholders and to manage NSA registration for global events in a simple, accurate and efficient manner.

36. FAO has conducted a thorough *analysis of the INGOs currently holding formal status with the Organization*, aiming at identifying those organizations that are still active and interested in collaboration. From an original list of 208 organizations, only 125 have been making active use of their formal status in the last five years. The updated list¹⁰ is available on the Partnerships Web site.

D. Multi-stakeholder processes

37. In recent years, multi-stakeholder processes have emerged as an increasingly important modus operandus. Following the request of the Joint Meeting in March 2013, a set of guidelines containing criteria on how to engage in and implement multi-stakeholder partnerships is currently under development.

38. In line with the UN system, FAO continues to support multi-stakeholder processes, joining efforts from all sectors to increase efficiency, transparency and institutional synergy.¹¹ Examples of this work include:

- a) **International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) 2014:** FAO is facilitating the implementation of the International Year of Family Farming 2014, in collaboration with governments, international development agencies, farmers' organizations and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system.
- b) **Save Food Initiative:** FAO and Messe Düsseldorf are collaborating with donors, bi- and multi-lateral agencies, financial institutions and private sector partners to develop and implement a programme on food loss and waste reduction.
- c) **The World Banana Forum:** this innovative partnership is a permanent platform that gathers the main stakeholder groups of the banana sector. It includes representatives from farmer organizations, companies, governments, research institutions, worker unions and other civil-society organizations. The Forum promotes the adoption of good practices for sustainable production and trade by the banana industry worldwide. It operates through specialized working groups where the stakeholders jointly develop practical guidance in various areas such as reduction of pesticide use, occupational health and safety, gender equity, costs of sustainable production and distribution of value.
- d) **Livestock Environmental Assessment and Performance (LEAP) Partnership:** The objective is to develop comprehensive guidance and methodology for understanding the environmental performance of livestock supply chains. Partners include private sector, Member States, academia, public and private standard setting bodies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

¹⁰ <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/civil-society/details-resources/en/c/174288/>

¹¹ Please refer to <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/en/> for a complete list of Multi-stakeholder partnerships and processes

- e) *The Global Soil Partnership* brings together governments, regional organizations, institutions and other stakeholders at various levels, to improve governance of the limited soil resources of the planet in order to guarantee healthy and productive soils for a food secure world. At decentralized levels, Regional Soil Partnerships link national and local networks, partners, projects and activities to ensure that the partnership process is country-driven.

39. FAO facilitates the active participation of non-state actors in decision-making processes. Examples include:

- a) Within the implementation of the *Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT)* negotiated and approved in the Committee on Food Security, workshops have been organized to support FAO country offices and governments to ensure that relevant stakeholders provide inputs and views to the national dialogues, with a view to creating the conditions to establish or strengthen existing multi-stakeholder platforms at country level.
- b) *Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)*: FAO and WHO have developed a road map to enable NSA to make their contributions in the process leading to ICN2 which will be held at FAO from 19 to 21 November 2014, as well as during the Conference, in keeping with the rules and practices concerning participation by and engagement with NSAs, in the activities and meetings of the two agencies. At the request of Members, an informal meeting was convened with NSA in June 2014 at FAO. Three pre-Conference events will take place on 17 and 18 November 2014 during of which private sector representatives, civil society organizations and parliamentarians will have the opportunity to discuss and agree on common positions to be presented at ICN2.
- c) *Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP)*: with strong involvement of regional and national offices, FAO is contributing to support the regional strategy for food and nutrition security of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), in particular by strengthening national governance frameworks and multi-stakeholder platforms for the achievement of food and nutrition security in Angola, Cape Verde and East Timor.

E. Monitoring and Evaluation

40. FAO is developing a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system to report on and measure how its partnerships are contributing to global goals and assess their added value against the strategic objectives. Through a Letter of Agreement, FAO has commissioned The Partnering Initiative (TPI), a non-profit organization with over 20 years of cutting edge work in the development of cross-sector partnerships, to develop the M&E system for partnerships. TPI drives widespread, systematic and effective collaborations between civil society, government, donor organisations, development agencies and the private sector. It has been working extensively with FAO for two years, supporting the organization as it scales up its partnering approach. More widely, TPI has worked with multiple UN Agencies including UNICEF, UNDP, IFAD, WFP, UNESCO and PAHO, supporting the development of partnering strategies, setting up processes and tools, and building partnering capacity among staff. A set of indicators and criteria will evaluate performance of each partnership. The M&E system for partnerships is aligned with FAO's corporate information and project management tools and informs and complements the corporate results-based management framework. It promotes continuous improvement by capturing, systemizing and sharing best practices and lessons learned.

F. Risk Management System

41. As requested by Member States, FAO has established mechanisms to identify and manage actual or potential risks of partnering with NSA. The review process of partnerships has been strengthened to ensure effective risk management in the implementation of FAO partnerships. The composition of the renewed Sub-Committee for Review of Financial and other Agreements

(SubCom-RFA) has been expanded to include a representative of each Strategic Objective and ensure coordination with decentralized offices.¹²

42. FAO conducts a rigorous due diligence of NSA, screening against a set of eligibility and exclusionary criteria. In addition to ensuring compliance with UN Global Compact Principles, this due diligence process takes into account a new set of issues that are particularly relevant to the FAO context, such as responsible agriculture supply chains, agricultural investments, and the compliance with the VGGT. The assessment of proposals involving the use of the corporate identity (FAO logo) by NSA was reinforced while strengthening the coordination mechanisms between the different offices involved in the evaluation (LEG, OCC, OPC and ODG). Since April 2013, FAO has screened 93 prospective partners, of which 54 were endorsed.

G. Guidance sought

43. The Joint Committee is invited to note the progress made in the implementation of the FAO Strategies for partnerships with civil society organizations and with the private sector and provide comments as deemed appropriate.

¹² For the detailed Review System please refer to the Director-General's Bulletin No. 2014/14, issued on 31 March 2014.