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Hundred and Sixtieth session of the Finance Committee**

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**PROGRESS REPORT ON FAO STRATEGY FOR PARTNERSHIPS
WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

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1. The FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector, approved by the 146th Session of the FAO Council in 2013,¹ provides a framework for FAO's collaboration with the private sector. The Strategy is complemented by a set of tools aimed at guiding FAO staff on how to establish effective partnerships in support of FAO's Strategic Objectives (SOs).
2. FAO recognizes that the private sector is a key stakeholder in the fight against food insecurity, malnutrition and rural poverty, and acknowledges the potential that better coordination and collaboration between the public and private sectors can offer in the delivery of the SOs.
3. Institutional mechanisms have been established to ensure the neutrality of the Organization and a decentralized approach for the implementation of the Strategy, while also maintaining FAO's fundamental characteristics such as: (i) the capacity to provide a neutral forum for discussion without altering the decision making capacity of Member States; and (ii) the Organization's evidence-based knowledge work.
4. The Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development Division (OPC) is responsible for implementing this Strategy and the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organization by fostering effective and efficient collaboration with Non-State Actors (NSA), including civil society organizations, the private sector, cooperatives, producer organizations, academia and research institutions.
5. Strategic partnerships have been crucial during 2015 and are expected to demonstrate further results and impacts as they continue to support the implementation of the 2016-17 Programme of Work and Budget. Since the last report,² FAO has formalized 12 agreements with private sector entities in support of the SOs,³ raising the total number of active private sector collaborations to 27.
6. Following the request made during the Joint Meeting of the 116th session of the Programme Committee and the 156th session of the Finance Committee,⁴ a specific progress report on the implementation of the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Private Sector is presented. *Section I - Enabling and implementing Strategic Partnerships* of this document reports on the progress made in terms of issues common to both Strategies, including accountability and monitoring; capacity building and support to multi-stakeholder processes;⁵ *Section II - FAO Partnerships with the private sector* provides specific information on the implementation of the Strategy.

I. Enabling and implementing strategic partnerships

7. Partnerships with NSAs are at the heart of FAO's mission to eradicate hunger and malnutrition. Through the implementation of the Strategies, partnerships are increasingly becoming central to the impact of the Organization in its areas of work.
8. For the Organization to respond to the evolving needs and challenges at global and local levels, the effectiveness of its engagement with NSAs covers a number of aspects including: institutional arrangements ensuring alignment with FAO's Strategic Framework; strengthening the capacity of FAO staff; generating wider corporate understanding of the value-added of strategic partnerships and ensuring good governance and accountability. In addition, relevant FAO-led processes and major events are enhanced by NSA engagement, facilitating greater and longer-lasting impacts.
9. Ensuring a coherent implementation of the Strategies at decentralized level continues to be a priority for the Organization. The role of the regional Partnership Officers has been strengthened,

¹ CL 146/REP paragraph 14

² JM 2014.2/2

³ A complete list of partnerships with the private sector, including their link to Strategic Objectives and progress in their implementation can be found at <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/en/>

⁴ CL 150/6

⁵ *Section I Enabling and implementing Strategic Partnerships* is also included in the Progress Report on the Implementation of the FAO Strategy with Civil Society Organizations (JM 2015.2/3).

resulting in increased effective engagement of key stakeholders in the implementation of Regional Initiatives.

10. Furthermore, partnerships are being expanded with the introduction of the new FAO Partnership and Liaison Offices, including the recently opened offices in Azerbaijan, Cameroun, Equatorial Guinea and Kazakhstan. These new offices focus on cooperation between the country and FAO through the development of national and South-South Cooperation projects, as well as promote partnerships with relevant NSAs to facilitate exchanges in matters related to FAO's mandate.

A. Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of partnerships

11. Partnerships with NSAs serve as a means for generating wider and stronger engagement in achieving food security and agricultural development at all levels, directly contributing to results in countries within FAO's Strategic Framework. The Organization has developed a quality assurance and tracking system to ensure that partnerships with NSAs contribute meaningfully to the SOs and are systematically designed with quality, and supported in all their phases. OPC provides guidance and works in close collaboration with staff at headquarters (HQ) and decentralized offices (DOs) and within the Strategic Objectives Management Teams to ensure the development of effective partnerships throughout the following four stages:

12. *Stage 1 - Initiating the partnership:* collaborations with NSAs can be initiated by potential partners and FAO staff at HQ and/or DOs. At national level, in agreement with the government, potential strategic partners are identified in support of the priorities defined in the Country Programming Framework (CPF). In all cases, potential partnerships undergo a risk assessment analysis where FAO conducts a rigorous due diligence screening against a set of eligibility and exclusionary criteria in compliance with the UN Global Compact Principles and food and agriculture-related standards considering environmental, social and governance issues.

13. With OPC's guidance, Lead Technical Officers and the Strategy Objectives Management Teams have a key role in monitoring implementation and providing relevant information to assess the partnership's value added to the Organization.

14. *Stage 2 - Designing and implementing the partnership:* during this stage, all steps are taken to formalize the partnership. As the Organization moves forward in the implementation of its Medium Term Plan 2014-2017, OPC ensures that partnerships are designed to directly contribute to the achievement of the SOs results framework. In this regard, a high-level partnership work plan is jointly elaborated from its inception with the direct engagement of Strategic Programme Leaders (SPLs), regional offices, FAO Representatives and the partner. The work plan is a requirement in formalizing a partnership to guarantee efficient monitoring of jointly planned activities.

Contribution to Country Programming Framework (CPF)

15. A renovated system has been in place to streamline the formulation, implementation and reporting of CPFs since May 2015. Partnerships are one of the key issues addressed in this new approach by stressing the need to facilitate the development of effective collaborations with different stakeholders at country level. In liaison with country representatives, FAO assists countries in identifying key local partners, whose contributions can assist in the formulation and implementation of the CPF.

16. *Stage 3 - Monitoring and evaluation of the partnership:* results achieved through partnerships will be included in the corporate end-of-biennium assessment reporting process. In addition, a dashboard for operational monitoring is being put in place to track partnerships progress with the aim to increase accountability.

17. Performance of partnerships is assessed following these criteria:

- a) Contribution to areas of engagement of the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector: formal collaboration with the private sector should be in at least one of the six areas of engagement included in the Strategy: (i) Development and Technical Programmes;

- (ii) Knowledge management and dissemination; (iii) Policy dialogue; (iv) Resource mobilization; (v) Norms and standard setting; (vi) Advocacy and communication.
- b) Contribution to FAO's Strategic Framework: a partnership will be assessed based on the review of its contribution to the corporate Outputs by the SPLs and Teams (including FAORs, and regions).
- c) Replicability and scalability: new partnerships may start with pilot projects in small areas and a limited time-frame. This allows for proper assessment of the effectiveness of the partnership before considering a possible expansion. Lessons learnt will be an important element in evaluating partnership replicability. In addition, potential opportunities, risks and benefits associated with replicability and scalability of specific areas of work within the partnership will be carefully considered.
- d) Enhanced visibility: when establishing partnerships with NSAs, FAO increases its potential to raise public awareness on issues of common interest, strengthening networking capacity and outreach. Partners can benefit by reaching broader groups and stakeholders, jointly producing evidence-based information key to decision-making and informing the general public. This is another aspect taken into account when assessing a partnership's added value.

18. *Stage 4 - Sustaining partnerships*: during this stage, and after the first three stages have been completed, lessons will be internalized to build greater institutional capacity and guide future decisions in terms of next scenarios whether replicating, up-scaling, expanding or terminating the partnership. In 2014, many partnerships have been re-negotiated with partners and stakeholders, adjusting their focus according to lessons learned, and taking the necessary steps for proper expansion.

19. When expanding the collaboration, attention is given to finding ways of securing greater engagement from partner and non-partner organizations, as well as strengthening local capacities to build upon the established cooperation with local government and public sector agencies. The need for engagement to encompass other sectors and key stakeholders is also addressed (relevant multistakeholder processes, regional/global processes).

B. Enabling broader capacity development

20. Ensuring successful implementation of the Strategies at all levels entails the development and dissemination of appropriate tools, knowledge and resources to strengthen the capacity of staff to develop partnerships that address needs identified by FAO and governments at decentralized level. In this regard, in 2015, efforts focused on the development of capacity development activities in the following areas.

21. Guidance and practical tools on partnerships are now included in the "FAOR Programme & Community" platform to equip FAO Representatives with essential means to facilitate partnerships at regional and country levels. The materials include: short videos, job aids and reference materials. By the end of 2015 a new eLearning product on "Partnerships with Non-State Actors" accessible by all staff will be added to the platform. The resource material and complementary eLearning tools provide guidance on FAO's approach in partnering with different types of NSAs; main areas of engagement; and risk assessment, pre-screening and partnership approval processes.

22. Thirty-three high-level FAO officers received a five-day training on Corporate Social Responsibility in the private sector, aimed at identifying opportunities for FAO to achieve its strategic objectives by engaging in this area, as well as recognizing opportunities and risks inherent in this kind of partnerships as well as linkages with sustainable development. This training will also be extended to representatives from decentralized offices.

23. The publications *FAO Strategies for Partnerships with the Private Sector and with Civil Society Organizations*⁶ are now available in all FAO languages, contributing to increased visibility, awareness and outreach on FAO's work with NSAs in all regions.

⁶ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3443e.pdf> and <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3444e.pdf>

C. Multistakeholder processes (MSPs)

24. In recent years, multi-stakeholder processes have emerged as an increasingly important modus operandi. The “FAO Guidelines for Engaging in Multi-stakeholder Processes” are being drafted. Their purpose is to inform and guide Members and FAO staff on the corporate approach for conducting MSPs at global, regional, and national levels at initial or advanced stages. They will describe operational procedures and modalities, present guiding principles, and clarify the roles when the Organization leads, hosts, engages, and facilitates MSPs. An extensive consultation process is underway, which will seek inputs and advice from Members, multistakeholder partnership secretariats housed within FAO, the Strategic Objectives Management Teams, decentralized offices, and all relevant stakeholders.

25. Parliamentarian activities against hunger: In the framework of the Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative, FAO is partnering with the Latin American and the Caribbean Parliamentary Front against Hunger and its national chapters. The objective is to foster national, regional and multilateral parliamentary commitments - in cooperation with other key stakeholders such as civil society organizations, private sector, academia, cooperatives and producer organizations, towards the development of legal frameworks and public policies that contribute to the progressive realization of the Right to Adequate Food, within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals. A South-South Cooperation programme is being set up to build on the successful Latin American experience to support the creation of parliamentary fronts for food security and nutrition (FSN) in Asia and Africa.

FAO partnerships with the private sector

A. FAO’s approach to partner with the private sector

26. FAO considers the private sector to be a key ally in the fight against hunger. Effective engagement with the private sector is proving to help the fight against hunger and malnutrition by enhancing FAO’s work in agriculture, fishery, forestry, natural resource management, and contributing to more inclusive and effective food systems.

27. For FAO, the private sector includes enterprises, companies or businesses, covering all sectors of the food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries systems from production to consumption and associated services (finance, investment, insurance, marketing and trade). This also comprises private financial institutions, industry and trade associations, and consortia that represent private sector interests.

28. Collaboration with the private sector focuses primarily on the following topics and areas of engagement: development of more inclusive and sustainable value chain models; inclusive finance and access to markets for smallholders; joint use of innovation and technology to improve monitoring of policies and price volatility; food loss and waste reduction; joint use of resources in emergency situations; increased private sector engagement in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the areas of FAO’s mandate.

29. Since the last report, FAO has formalized 12 agreements with private sector entities in support of the SOs, raising the total number of active private sector collaborations to 27. Of the 12 formalized agreements, once contributes to SO1, three to SO2, one to SO3, and three to SO5.

30. FAO is providing guidance to private sector companies that would like to engage in the promotion and/or implementation of the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (RAI). Special attention is given to adequately regulating investments and promoting key principles to ensure: (a) that the rights of small-scale producers, workers and communities are respected; (b) that local markets and producer organizations are not exploited; (c) the compliance with environmental safeguards.

31. Private Sector Partnerships Dialogue: the fourth edition of the yearly meeting between the private sector and the Director-General took place on 14 October, in the framework of the 42nd Session of the Committee on World Food Security. Two parallel sessions addressed public-private

collaboration for agricultural investment mechanisms in the context of the RAI, as well as innovations in agricultural finance to bridge financial institutions with value chain actors. The discussion focused on the concrete operational support that key private actors can provide to the SOs, identifying roles that each partner can play in increasing finance and investment in agriculture, ensuring the generation of greater benefits for poor rural households and smallholder families.

Enabling partnerships with the financial sector

32. In support of its Strategic Objectives, FAO's work on enhancing policies, financial instruments and investment mechanisms that promote more inclusive and efficient agrifood systems is being further developed. This requires the effective support of partnerships geared towards enhancing and improving private investment in food security and nutrition, as well as a more systematic interaction with private sector actors and the financial sector.

33. In this context, FAO has identified practical actions and approaches for improving and expanding the provision of rural financial services to smallholders and a number of partnerships are being developed to ensure that policies and public-private investments better respond to the opportunities and constraints faced by stakeholders.

34. These partnerships address the financial constraints that limit rural development and deploy joint efforts in increasing the broad-based access to agricultural finance by smallholder families, women, youth and the small and medium agro-enterprises (SMAEs). In addition, these financial institutions are uniquely placed to support the implementation of the RAI.

B. Contribution to the achievement of FAO's Strategic Objectives

35. By joining forces, FAO and its partners support the achievement of FAO's five SOs.

SO1: Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition

36. Partnerships are at the core of SO1, being one of its pillars to ensure that action can lead to relevant impacts. When contributing to the achievement of SO1, partnerships and collaboration with the private sector provide mechanisms that address the following areas: (a) awareness raising and advocacy for FSN and the Right to Adequate Food among private sector partners by contributing to the development of more inclusive and strategic coordination mechanisms across sectors and stakeholders for food security and nutrition; (b) facilitate private sector contribution to the development of sectoral and cross-sectoral policy frameworks, investment plans, programmes, legislation and codes of conduct for FSN; (c) promote and support the adoption of international codes of conduct and guidelines by the private sector; helping to bridge the gap between policy and implementation; (d) leverage private sector knowledge in technology and research, providing adequate information and analysis to enhance evidence-based policy advice and decision-making, as well as monitoring and accountability mechanisms for assessing FSN policy impact on the ground.

Key partnerships and collaboration with the private sector contributing to SO1

37. **Global awareness raising on hunger eradication:** FAO is collaborating with international media organizations such as the National Geographic Society, the Thomson Reuters Foundation, The International Federation of Agricultural Journalists and the EFE Agency to jointly advocate and raise public awareness on the need to eliminate hunger and the leading role FAO is playing in support to the Member-States. This is done by increasing knowledge exchange between journalists and experts to enhance the production and dissemination of information on food security and nutrition related themes.

38. **Fostering private sector compliance and dissemination of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT):** A "Technical Guide for Investors" has been developed to promote agricultural land-based investments in compliance with VGGT. The Guide has been elaborated

following a thorough multistakeholder consultation and its dissemination involves the development of an E-learning module targeting private sector companies⁷.

SO2: Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner

39. The increased provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries under SO2 involves multiple stakeholders with competing interests on the ground. The path must be negotiated by all stakeholders involved, which makes partnerships essential as a mechanism to align objectives and goals, while recognizing different viewpoints.

40. When contributing to the achievement of SO2, partnerships and collaboration with the private sector provide mechanisms that address areas of collaboration which work towards the following objectives: (a) ensure a holistic approach to sustainable business models for natural resource management, by facilitating an inclusive governance process that puts smallholder interests at the center of the discussion while addressing conflicting objectives and trade-offs; (b) promote sustainable livelihoods and preserve ecosystems taking into account competing uses and benefits for long term economic, environmental and social wellbeing; (c) influence the implementation of codes of conduct; (d) contribute to evidence-based decisions in planning and managing agricultural sectors and natural resources; (e) support the dissemination of best practices, capacity development tools and institutional knowledge related to sustainable natural resource management and monitoring.

Key partnerships and collaboration with the private sector contributing to SO2

41. **Advancing forest certification among small-holders in Vietnam:** FAO and Ikea are jointly elaborating a diagnostic study for advancing forest certification and sustainable forest management in Northern Vietnam. The study will feed into the preparation of forest management plans and define the institutional and technical support required to reach forest certification goals in targeted locations. This work constitutes the pilot phase of the collaboration, which has the potential to grow into a significant joint effort in Vietnam, and eventually in the region.

42. **Facilitating private sector involvement in ongoing FAO processes:** OPC has provided guidance and support to ensure that participation of private actors in FAO meetings and processes takes place in compliance with the Strategy, through efficient, transparent and participatory mechanisms. In this regard, private sector engagement has been facilitated in the following ongoing FAO processes within SO2: (a) Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA); (b) International Symposium on Agroecology for Food Security and Nutrition; (c) International Symposium on Biotechnology.

SO3: Reduce rural poverty

43. The private sector contributes to strengthening rural livelihoods and managing risks through supporting farm and non-farm activities, and improving access to technology and inputs, including financial services.

44. In strengthening social protection measures and policies, the private sector plays an essential role in creating and improving mechanisms that work towards the following objectives: (a) contribute to a holistic approach in collaboration with private actors across the value chain and ensuring smallholder interests are at the center of the discussion; (b) support the development of inclusive and sustainable value chains, empowering local producers and farmers to produce value-added goods with higher margins; (c) bring cooperatives and producer organization into private sector business models to allow more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems; (d) contribute to the elaboration and dissemination of best practices and capacity development tools to generate and maximize synergies between social protection measures and rural development programmes.

⁷ The following companies have pledged compliance to VGGT as per June 2015: Coca-Cola Company, PepsiCo, Nestlé, Cargill and Illovo Sugar.

Key partnerships and collaboration with the private sector contributing to SO3

45. **Technology for financial inclusion and social protection in Kenya:** FAO and Mastercard are partnering to develop inclusive payment systems to support small-scale farmers and poor families. Through a cash and voucher programme, credit and money is provided to households in Kenya for purchasing of basic goods and farming inputs on local markets, supporting local economies and putting financial tools in the hands of economically marginalized communities.

46. **Access to agricultural information and financial services to strengthen livelihoods:** Grameen Foundation's expertise in mobile technology complements FAO's country programmes by strengthening smallholder farmers' access to agricultural information and financial services in selected countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. This partnership in support of rural livelihoods helps the poorest to better manage their crops, livestock and finances, through income-generating opportunities in order to break the cycle of poverty.

47. **Poverty reduction and inclusive finance for producer organizations and family farmers in Gambia:** the collaboration between FAO and AgriCord provides grants to women in smallholder communities and Indigenous Peoples' producer organizations in Gambia, through the FAO "Forest and Farm Facility". The grants aim at enhancing the capacities of family farmers on food production and food security, to overcome low productivity and improve their income. As a result, rural communities and producers are being organized and have the capacity to invest in sustainable farm management, while gaining access to productive markets.

48. **Capacity development and advocacy in the area of financial inclusion for food security and rural poverty reduction:** The partnership between FAO and the Boulder Institute of Microfinance is facilitating capacity development, knowledge management and advocacy on rural financing systems that are inclusive, in support to smallholder families, contributing to improved food and nutrition security. The joint activities aim at designing training programmes on rural and agricultural finance among private and public actors, connecting financial risk management instruments to social protection interventions. A particular emphasis is given to the financial inclusion and social protection for the rural poor, with a focus on women and youth.

SO4: Enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems

49. FAO partners with the private sector, which plays a fundamental role in including smallholder farmers and producers in the new globalized marketplace.

50. When contributing to the achievement of SO4, partnerships and collaboration with the private sector provide mechanisms which work towards the following objectives: (a) identify and scale-up inclusive and efficient business models in support of more inclusive and efficient agriculture and food systems; (b) support the identification of improved financial approaches, mechanisms and services, including the promotion of effective principles for responsible investment; (c) support business models that address the challenges of food loss and waste; (d) support smallholders in gaining access to productive resources and markets by forging public-private collaborations; and (e) support more inclusive and efficient food and agricultural systems by synergizing investment and financial access mechanisms in support small and disadvantaged producers.

51. Key partnerships and collaboration with the private sector contributing to SO4 include:

52. **Small farmer's access to credit in Tanzania, Kenya and Ethiopia:** Smallholders' access to credit in Africa is being improved through a combination of Rabobank Foundation's financial know-how and FAO's technical expertise and local networks in Tanzania, Ethiopia and Kenya. Building on the progress achieved so far, this collaboration will be expanded in five African countries on issues related to knowledge sharing, access to finance, seeds and rural employment.

53. **Access to inclusive agrifood chains for family farmers:** The Autogrill-FAO partnership is helping family farmers to access global markets, significantly increasing their income. FAO is providing technical assistance while Autogrill is enabling the introduction of products of small-scale farmers in motorway and airport restaurants in developing countries. Other activities include

awareness-raising on the Save Food Initiative and resource mobilization through cause-related marketing activities.

54. Resource mobilization and coherent action for reducing the global energy footprint:

Auralight - a sustainable lighting company - will donate 1% of net revenue from the realization of sustainable lighting projects over a period of 18 months. The financial contribution generated through this mechanism will feed into the newly established FAO private sector trust fund intended to allow private sector companies to support FAO projects and programmes financially. Other areas of engagement include knowledge sharing on issues related to environmental sustainability and pro-bono sustainable lighting assessments in various regions.

55. Increased food security through reduced food loss and waste in Africa: thanks to the collaboration with the Rockefeller Foundation, and through the Global Initiative on Food Loss and Waste, technical guidance and strategic support will be provided to implement the agricultural goals set in the Malabo Declaration on Agriculture and Postharvest Losses.

56. Responsible investment growth in Southern and Eastern Mediterranean countries: the cooperation with an International Financial Institution focuses on areas where FAO's technical expertise and neutrality complement the IFI's expertise in order to facilitate responsible private sector agricultural and agribusiness investment. The cooperation focuses on the improvement of the efficiency and inclusiveness of agrifood chains, bringing government and private sector stakeholders to the table for open dialogue, capacity building and investment in agriculture.

57. Strengthening agricultural market information systems in Bangladesh, Nigeria and India: in collaboration with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), and through the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), FAO is implementing projects aimed at enhancing the capacities of national stakeholders in Bangladesh, Nigeria and India, to produce updated information and analysis to design and implement efficient and inclusive market and trade strategies, reducing price volatility which ultimately prevents food insecurity. This collaboration will be expanded through new areas of focus currently being identified.

SO5: Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

58. When contributing to the achievement of SO5, partnerships and collaboration with the private sector provide mechanisms which work towards the following objectives : (a) contribute to mobilize humanitarian actions effectively as well as develop capacities to address and present risks as well as reduce vulnerabilities; (b) enhance dissemination of knowledge and regular information as well as contribute to the development of disaster preparedness with early warning and alert systems; (c) identify emerging threats to agriculture, food and nutrition; and (d) strengthen insurance schemes for small-scale farmers and their crops through resilience programmes;

Key partnerships and collaboration with the private sector contributing to SO5

59. Enhanced capacities for humanitarian and agro-industrial logistics in South-Sudan and Tanzania: the Kuehne Foundation and FAO are partnering for the design and delivery of field training on humanitarian and agro-industrial logistics, addressed to FAO field staff and local partners. In South-Sudan, the trainings enabled a more efficient response to Level-3 emergencies. In Tanzania, the training enhanced the capacities of public and private actors involved in agro-industrial logistics. Other joint activities include the elaboration of standard logistics policies, guidelines and operating procedures for Level-3 emergencies.

C. **FAO partnerships with academia and research institutions**

60. FAO has developed internal guidelines for partnering with academia and research institutions. Such partnerships can mobilize academic knowledge for the achievement of FAO's mandate and SOs; strengthen capacities; stimulate inter-disciplinary research and disseminate FAO knowledge and experience. With their independent and uncompromised voices, partnerships with academia can bring diverse and balanced perspectives to enrich policy dialogues for informed decision-making.

61. FAO's new approach seeks to increase and strengthen existing collaboration with local and regional academia and research institutions, in support of in-country programmes and regional priorities.

62. Since the last report, FAO has formalized 14 agreements with academia and research institutions in support of the SOs, of which five directly contribute to SO1, seven to SO2, two to SO3, three to SO4, two to SO5 and two are cross-cutting

Key partnerships and collaboration with academia and research institutions

63. **Enhanced statistical analysis for informed policy formulation in the Eurasian region:** FAO and the Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECSF) of Moscow State University are partnering to contribute to the development of the Global Soil Partnership commemorating 2015 as the International Year of Soils. Under the partnership agreement, ECSF acts as Secretariat for the Eurasian sub-region and provides support to the Global Soil Partnership. It will also develop and oversee the implementation of a subregional action plan on the adoption of statistical tools, methods for market and trade information.

64. **Improving governance policy of tenure in Latin America and the Caribbean:** FAO and the International Institute of Social Studies, an international graduate school of social sciences of Erasmus University, are carrying out regional and national case studies (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Guatemala) aiming at identifying challenges and opportunities for the implementation of VGGT in communities that seek to promote better distribution and access to land, fisheries and forests, and/or seek protection or restitution of tenure rights. These studies increase the possibilities for improved collaboration to defend the rights of the most vulnerable and marginalized populations.

65. **Enhancing agricultural innovation for smallholders in Asia and other developing countries:** FAO and Agrinatura – a consortium of 31 European Universities and Research Centers – are partnering to strengthen capacities to accelerate agricultural innovation processes and partnerships between Universities and Research Centers throughout Europe and developing countries. A joint project amounting EUR 12,000,000 for "Strengthening Agricultural Innovation for Smallholders in Developing Countries" is being implemented in eight countries in Asia (Bangladesh, Laos), Africa (Angola, Ethiopia, Niger, Rwanda) and Latin America (Guatemala and Honduras), with funding from the European Commission.

66. **Improved capacities on integrated pest management in Europe and Central Asia:** in collaboration with Galilee International Management Institute, a regional workshop on integrated pest management (IPM) was organized in Israel with the participation of 12 REU countries. This has allowed for the capacities of senior plant protection experts, researchers and extension specialists to significantly improve in the development, testing, adaptation, validation and promotion of IPM into farmers' fields. This training was also a useful opportunity to jointly develop the outlines of the national strategies on promotion of IPM in REU countries.

67. **Support to Global Policy Development and Implementation:** in partnership with the Michigan State University, FAO jointly convened the first Global Conference on Inland Fisheries in January 2015, to facilitate policy and decision-making for promoting responsible inland capture fisheries at the global level.

68. FAO partnered with the Association of Universities of Latin America and the Caribbean (UDUAL) – a network of 226 universities - and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) for the joint development of a Master's Degree in Food Security, based on FAO's

e-learning courses available through the FAO e-learning Center. Thanks to the partnership with UDUAL, knowledge and education are made accessible to thousands of professionals working in food security and nutrition in Latin America and the Caribbean to design, implement and evaluate agriculture and food security policies and programmes more efficiently. The Master's Degree is being delivered by the Open and Distance University of Mexico (UnADM), since May 2015.

D. FAO Partnerships with cooperatives and producer organizations

69. Cooperatives, producer organizations (POs) and other forms of collective action are important partners for FAO to achieve its mandate of ending hunger. Their role has been highlighted in the reviewed Strategic Framework to reduce rural poverty and to enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems at local, national and international levels.

70. During the period 2013 to 2015, FAO has been engaging in a wide range of initiatives to strengthen its partnerships with cooperatives and POs. Since the last report, FAO formalized five agreements with cooperatives and POs in support of the SOs. In addition to formal agreements, FAO has reinforced its collaboration in support of cooperatives and POs at the global, regional and country levels by working in broader partnerships with the private sector as well as academia, other international governmental and civil society organizations.

Key partnerships and collaboration with cooperatives and producer organizations

71. **Enhanced capacities to empower agricultural cooperatives:** Building on their ongoing collaboration in support of strengthened cooperatives, FAO and the International Labour Organization (ILO) are enhancing and developing joint learning products targeting policy makers, as well as cooperative leaders, managers and members. The joint products encompass the following topics: financial services and management, fostering the legal framework for cooperatives, and strengthening governance and performance of agricultural cooperatives. FAO and ILO are also co-leading an initiative to improve the quality of statistics on cooperatives. This work includes a joint stocktaking of current initiatives, with the aim of developing a harmonized methodology for generating comparable statistics on cooperatives.

72. **Strengthening farmer organizations capacities in the North Africa Region:** FAO and the Union des Producteurs Agricoles du Québec –Développement International (UPA-DI) are joining forces through participatory, innovative and proven approaches to strengthen producer organizations. Thirty-eight producers' representatives from four countries (Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia) and three value chains (small ruminants, small-scale fisheries and apiculture) were trained on cooperatives performance, equity, governance and management. The training module was co-published with UPA-DI and will be adapted for different contexts.

73. **Global advocacy for cooperatives and producer organizations:** As an active member of the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC), FAO collaborates with the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) and other COPAC members (WFO, ILO and UN-DESA) to promote international visibility on the critical role of cooperatives in achieving food security. Examples include the International Day of Cooperatives that is celebrated annually, and participation in and organization of events in international fora such as the CFS 42, Expo Milan 2015 and international research conferences.

74. In partnership with the World Farmers' Organisation (WFO), FAO supported the participation of producers from developing countries to be part of the event "Farmers in Expo" and the WFO General Assembly, both organized in the Expo Milan 2015. During the WFO General Assembly, FAO supported the involvement of WFO members in an awareness-raising and capacity development event on the VGGT. Further, FAO has partnered with WFO to support its members in implementing the VGGT at country level, including through their participation in the related awareness-raising workshops.

75. FAO has also partnered with the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) to facilitate VGGT implementation, as in the joint organization of an awareness-raising and capacity development event to assess the needs of agricultural cooperatives on the VGGT and to strengthen their capacity to implement the Guidelines. The event, that took place during the ICA Global Conference and General Assembly of Members in November 2015, Turkey, was an important occasion to strengthen dialogue between policy makers and agricultural cooperatives about VGGT implementation.

E. Guidance sought

76. The Joint Committee is invited to note the progress made in the implementation of the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector and provide comments as deemed appropriate.