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## JOINT MEETING

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**Progress report on the strategies for partnerships with the private sector  
and civil society organizations**

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## Background

1. The FAO Strategies for partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations (the Strategies) approved at the 146<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO Council in 2013<sup>1</sup> provide a working framework for the development of partnerships between the Organization and non-state actors. The Strategies provide a set of tools that aim to guide FAO staff in establishing effective partnerships that support the Organization's Strategic Objectives (SOs).
2. This report will address institutional cross-cutting issues related to both Strategies as part of FAO's approach to establishing strategic alliances with non-state actors and will take into account relevant issues raised in the Programme of Work and Budget 2018-2019. Some examples will also be provided of the results achieved through partnerships with the private sector and civil society in the context of the SOs.<sup>2</sup>
3. The Partnerships and South-South Cooperation Division (DPS) is responsible for implementing both Strategies, which foster effective and efficient collaboration with non-state actors, such as civil society organizations, the private sector, cooperatives, producer organizations, academic and research institutions, and other related institutions such as parliaments.
4. The 40<sup>th</sup> session of the FAO Conference (July 2017)<sup>3</sup> welcomed the promotion of strategic partnerships with other stakeholders, especially the private sector and key players in development and South-South Cooperation, and encouraged strengthening of partnerships and alliances.<sup>4</sup>

### I. General context for strategic partnerships

5. Strategic partnerships have been key in 2016-17 and are expected to generate more results and impact insofar as they continue to support the implementation of the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2018-19. FAO has established 130 strategic partnerships with non-state actors, 36% of which are private sector entities, 25% are civil society organizations (CSOs) and cooperatives, and 39% of are represented by agreements with academic and research institutions.<sup>5</sup> The number of partnerships established in recent years is an adequate level to secure effective contributions under the FAO strategic programmes.
6. In the past year, 11 new agreements have been signed and 23 agreements (18%) are in the process of being renewed in all sectors, such as for example: *Rabobank*, *Fundación Rockefeller*, *La Via Campesina*, the *International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC)*, *Agrinatura* and others. Efforts have been focused on deepening, replicating and broadening the scope of existing collaboration. Agreements that did not perform as well as expected or that ended without identifying new areas of work were not renewed.
7. When FAO renews agreements with each partner, it pays particular attention to identifying the contributions made by the agreements towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this regard, private sector companies and civil society organizations can contribute towards achieving the priorities of the Agenda 2030 through: (i) the exchange of knowledge and capacity-building; (ii) advocacy and communication; and (iii) the mobilizing of resources.
8. Institutional arrangements have been put in place that guarantee the neutrality of the Organization and that a decentralized approach is used to implement the Strategy, while maintaining and strengthening FAO's fundamental character on issues such as: (i) the capacity to provide a neutral

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<sup>1</sup> CL 146/REP

<sup>2</sup> The Strategies for partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations are available at: <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/>

<sup>3</sup> C 2017/REP

<sup>4</sup> The Medium-Term Plan (MTP) ratifies one of the FAO core functions, which is to: "Facilitate partnerships for food security and nutrition, agriculture and rural development, between governments, development partners, civil society and the private sector", recognizing that FAO has a broad mandate that includes major development challenges, which must be approached from a holistic perspective.

<sup>5</sup> The full list of partnerships with the private sector and civil society and progress made in implementing them is available at <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/background/>

forum for discussion to support countries' decision-making capacity; and (ii) the Organization's work on disseminating agricultural and food knowledge.

9. In general, concrete progress is being made in the implementation of the Strategies, and their implementation is well consolidated in FAO's work, thus actively contributing to the implementation of the PWB, expanding the technical capacity for action and strengthening coordination between the various actors on the ground.

10. Against this background, FAO has continued to strengthen technical capacities in decentralized offices to identify partnerships in the countries and in support of the Regional Initiatives and activities identified by governments in their country programming frameworks (CPF). One of the main developments in this regard has been the strengthening of the role of partnerships in planning Strategic Programmes at headquarters, Regional Initiatives and CPFs at a national level.

11. In building a regional and global public policy dialogue, FAO has included non-state actors, whose contributions have enriched the debates, making their various viewpoints and technical considerations known to the Members, such as the contributions from the private sector and civil society organizations at the symposia on Agro-ecology and Biotechnologies.

12. FAO continues to promote the use of e-Learning tools in partnerships to ensure the Strategies are applied consistently in the decentralized offices. These tools provide the staff with guidance on: FAO mechanisms for partnering with different types of non-state actors; key areas of engagement; and risk assessment, partnership screening and approval.

13. In 2017, FAO consolidated the process launched in 2014 to ensure the network of regional, subregional and liaison offices had partnership officers dedicated to implementing the Strategies. This practice has gathered strength with the creation of "partnership teams", which have coordinators that work with various sectors (private sector, civil society, and other mechanisms such as Parliamentary Alliances), depending on each specific context.

14. FAO has the appropriate mechanisms to identify and manage risks<sup>6</sup> that could undermine its intergovernmental nature, independence and impartiality, such as: conflicts of interest; undue influence on setting standards; and unfair advantages obtained by specific companies. Only proposals for partnerships with actors that respect the relevant international instruments<sup>7</sup> and therefore do not represent risks for FAO will be approved as the Organization's potential partners. Risk management is complemented by the assistance that DPS provides to headquarters and decentralized offices by guiding and reviewing FAO's participation at meetings with the private sector and/or civil society.

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<sup>6</sup> see chapter VI. FAO Risk Management Strategy <http://www.fao.org/docrep/018/i3444e/i3444e.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> The assessment takes into account the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business, and considers issues related to specific rights, declarations and conventions: Human Rights; Labour Law; Environmental Law; the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work; the Rio Declaration on the Environment; and the United Nations Convention against Corruption. This review also includes checks on non-state actors' recognition of the standards and principles that are part of FAO instruments, such as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) and the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS-RAI).

## II. FAO private sector partnerships

### A. Focus of FAO's work with the private sector in 2017

15. In the past year, efforts have focused on deepening existing partnerships and supporting the implementation and/or renewal of existing formal collaboration agreements. However, in view of the strategic nature of some partners, FAO has also established agreements with new companies such as *Unilever*, *Fertitecnica Colfiorito*, *Nibulon* and others.

16. In view of the results that have been achieved and the possibility of extending and replicating successful experiences, agreements have started to be renewed with existing partners, such as Rabobank, the Kuehne Foundation and the Grameen Foundation and others. Given the process of planning the Strategic Programme and the best practice identified, FAO is also developing potential strategic partnerships with some companies such as: *Alibaba*, *Telefónica*, *Eni* and *NEC*.

17. Recently, the implementation of the strategy with the private sector has focused primarily on the following three main areas of work: (i) increasing the private sector's contribution to FAO's work at global, regional and national levels, through access to new technologies, technical capacities, and political support in the fight against hunger; (ii) promoting the private sector's participation in policy dialogue, especially on issues relating to setting international standards; and (iii) encouraging the private sector to disseminate and implement international conventions such as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT), and the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS-RAI).

18. The partnerships focus primarily on thematic areas in the agrifood system where the private sector has an important role to play, such as: (i) reducing food waste; (ii) access to new technologies in financial and agricultural services; (iii) nutrition; and (iv) antimicrobial resistance.

19. To this end, in 2017 the dissemination of the VGGT and CFS-RAI Principles was increased among key private sector companies. This work has resulted in companies such as *Rabobank*, *Nestlé*, *PepsiCo*, *Mars* and *Coca-Cola Company* expressing an interest in being involved in their implementation.

20. In addition, implementation of "public-private partnership" (PPP) platforms as a means of supporting the SDGs has been incorporated as a new area in the work on partnerships. While they are commonly used in the field of infrastructure, PPPs in agriculture could boost inclusive growth in the global agricultural and food sectors.<sup>8</sup>

21. FAO has been involved in some pilot experiments with PPPs, such as the implementation of the Mozambican government's e-coupon programme to increase smallholder access to agricultural inputs. FAO provided the government with technical assistance to implement this programme using technology supplied by information and communications technology companies, with backing from the Government of Japan. FAO is currently exploring the possibilities of this model and its potential for implementation in local contexts.

22. Another relevant issue to the private sector is the reduction of food waste. FAO recently organized an expert consultation on the SDG 12.3 indicator on measures to meet the target for reducing food loss and waste. This consultation involved representatives from the private sector to discuss suitable approaches to achieve this goal, including the possibility of establishing a common framework to measure and report on progress achieved in reducing food waste at national level.

23. The Organization's priority remains to ensure that the Strategies are implemented coherently in the decentralized offices. To this end, FAO regional offices have continued their efforts to promote private sector contributions that support regional initiatives.

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<sup>8</sup> C 2017/30

24. Against this background, in 2017:
- a) in **Africa**, work has continued through existing relationships with the *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation* and the *Rockefeller Foundation* on increasing sustainable production and developing the value chain;
  - b) in **Europe**, cooperation with the private sector has been implemented through awareness-raising and SDG capacity-building workshops in certain countries (at present, Georgia, Moldova, Albania, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan);
  - c) in **Latin America and the Caribbean**, “National Dialogues” have been scheduled with the private sector with a view to holding a regional workshop to discuss local initiatives and the role of the private sector;
  - d) in **Asia**, awareness-raising work on the magnitude of food loss and waste has continued as part of the Asia-Pacific regional initiative, as well as the global SAVE FOOD initiative on reducing food loss and waste;
  - e) in the **Near East and North Africa**, work continues on identifying ways of collaborating to build community resilience, improve the small-scale agricultural sector and others.

### **B. Support for the achievement of the FAO’s Strategic Programmes (SPs)**

25. In accordance with recommendations made by the Joint Meeting and the Council in 2016 and the Strategy, FAO stepped up efforts to ensure that all partnerships with the private sector continue to contribute specifically to achieving the Organization’s five SOs, as well as the additional Objective on technical quality, statistics and cross-cutting themes (climate change, gender, governance and nutrition). Some areas of impact have also been identified for some SDGs related to SOs/SPs. The following paragraphs describe each SP’s approach to partnership work.

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

26. Activities carried out within the framework of private sector partnerships focus on promoting coordination measures and support for inclusive processes relating to food security, nutrition and the right to adequate food. Work has also focused on increasing the commitment of private sector entities to responsible investments that promote the creation of more sustainable food systems to ensure food security. In this context, encouraging compliance with and implementation of Guidelines on Tenure (VGGT) has been an area of high interest supported by the private sector.

27. These partnerships impact on SDG 2 by helping to improve the visibility and effectiveness of international and local public awareness initiatives through joint communiques, media information campaigns and the sponsorship of FAO’s activities linked to the the additional Objective on cross-cutting themes (nutrition). In this context, strategic partnerships have been established with partners contributing to the scope of this objective. *EFE news agency*, the *El País* newspaper, *Unilever* and *Fertitecnica Colfiorito*.

#### *SO2: Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable*

28. Activities carried out in support of SP2 include ensuring the application of sustainable business models for natural resource management, by facilitating an inclusive governance process that puts smallholders’ interests at the centre of the discussion. Support for the establishment, dissemination and use of best practices, capacity-building tools and institutional knowledge in this area has become a major area of interest in partnerships with the private sector.

29. These partnerships support initiatives in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa for capacity-building in rural development, forestry management and sustainable land use, sustainable agricultural mechanization and the combating of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; some of these are linked to the additional Objective on cross-cutting themes (climate change).

30. Partners supporting SP2 include: *Google*, *Agriidea*, *Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS)*, *Asia-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management and Rehabilitation (APF Net)*,

*Agricultural Equipment Manufacturers' Association (CEMA)*, the *TRAGSA Group*, and others. These partnerships have an impact on some SDGs, including SDGs 15 and 13.

*SO3: Reducing rural poverty*

31. SP3 has allowed the inclusion of partnerships to support the development of inclusive and sustainable value chains, empowering local producers and farmers to generate more income. These partnerships support various initiatives in Asian, African and Latin American countries that allow a favourable environment for the generation of agricultural and non-agricultural rural employment, by improving access by small farmers, women and young people to agricultural information and financial services and building capacities in rural and agricultural finance. Partners supporting this objective include: *AgriCord*, *Boulder Institute of Microfinance*, *Grameen Foundation*, *MasterCard*. These partnerships have an impact on several SDGs, in particular SDG 1, 5, 8, 10 and others.

*SO4: Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems*

32. Partnerships under SO4 support specific initiatives for access to finance and investment to support small farmers in African countries, as well as institutional support from FAO and its partners for resource mobilization, nutritional educational campaigns, food safety, market access for family farm products, among others.<sup>9</sup> Globally, these partnerships promote specific measures for food loss and waste reduction through the SAVE FOOD initiative. Partners supporting this objective include: *Unilever*, *Fertitecnica Colfiorito*, *Messe Düsseldorf*, *Club de Exportadores de España*, *Mars*, *Autogrill*, *Auralight*, *La Fundación Rockefeller*, *Rabobank*<sup>10</sup> and others. These partnerships have an impact on several SDGs, in particular SDG 8, 9 and 12.

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

33. Partnerships developed to support SP5 included technical capacity-building in humanitarian and agro-industrial logistics aimed at FAO field staff and local partners in African countries, to improve risk management and increase resilience in the countries involved. Partners supporting this objective include: the *Kuehne Foundation* and *RedR Australia* and others. These collaborations have an impact on several SDGs, mainly SDGs 1, 2, 11 and 13.

**C. Examples of the enablement of partnerships with the private sector**

34. Some examples are given below of results arising out of the enablement of partnerships with the Private Sector during 2017 in support of the Organization's SOs:

*Fertitecnica Colfiorito - Access to markets for small farmers:*

35. In March 2017, FAO and Fertitecnica Colfiorito, an Italian market leader in pulses, signed an agreement to facilitate access by agricultural cooperatives in developing countries to the pulses markets by using Fertitecnica's distribution network. This initiative provides considerable support to smallholder farmers in the southern hemisphere while also helping to promote healthy and sustainable food in Italy and Europe.

36. Profits from the sale of certain Fertitecnica Colfiorito products will be used to support FAO projects in developing countries. The FAO technical units involved and Fertitecnica Colfiorito are evaluating the cooperatives selected by the FAO network of decentralized offices to guarantee the quality of the products in the end market.

*Unilever - Technology exchange and innovation, reducing food waste:*

37. In September 2017, the FAO Director-General and Unilever's Executive Director signed an innovative strategic partnership at the UN General Assembly focusing on five strategic areas for action, including: digital innovation, the implementation of VGGTs and building resilience for smallholder farmers, as well as climate change and food loss and waste.

<sup>9</sup> These collaborations have an impact on the additional Objective on cross-cutting themes (nutrition).

<sup>10</sup> In July 2017, Rabobank received the FAO international Jacques Diouf Award in recognition of its efforts to provide financial strength and support to small farming communities in developing countries.

38. In Argentina, FAO and Unilever are currently working on a pilot initiative that can be replicated worldwide to train, share experiences and raise awareness on reducing food waste.

39. Joint advocacy platforms on climate change will also be developed, including joint support of key high-level forums, such as the Global Framework for Action initiative to address water scarcity and the United Nations Climate Change Conference, especially the forthcoming COP23.

40. Unilever and FAO are also jointly exploring how to develop innovative digital solutions that can provide smallholder farmers and family farmers with agricultural information on market opportunities, prices, the weather situation and other issues.

*Google - Sustainable forest management:*

41. In 2015, Google and FAO signed an agreement to optimize Google's technical expertise in geospatial products and use its technology to enhance forest and land monitoring data. This year, this collaboration has made significant progress with the FAO Collect Earth application, which works with Google Earth to analyse forest areas in conjunction with Google Earth Engine and Open Foris Collect. FAO and other partner institutions have used this technology to conduct the first detailed assessment of trees and forest cover in dryland biomes.

42. The findings include an estimate of the global forest area in dryland biomes, based on an analysis of more than 210 000 0.5-hectare plots, using large databases with high-resolution spatial and temporal satellite imagery available through the Google Earth platform. This enables access to more accurate information and allows forest assessments to be carried out more swiftly compared to using other methods. According to the data from this analysis, previously undeclared forest areas in drylands have increased global forest cover estimates by at least 9%. The preliminary results of this work were published in the "Science" journal in May 2017 as a reference for the global monitoring of drylands.<sup>11</sup>

*Mars - Food safety, reducing food waste:*

43. In 2015, FAO and Mars signed an agreement to share information and data on mycotoxin contamination. The agreement contributes to FAO food safety programmes and enables access to technical data as well as providing experts in key areas such as food traceability. In 2017, actions focused on mycotoxin prevention and control and Mars produced data with the aim of expanding the functionalities of the FAO sampling tool, including combinations of mycotoxins/basic products not currently covered by the Organization. Mars' information has been useful to FAO work on food safety risk assessment.

44. Mars is also supporting the implementation of a TCP project on mycotoxin management in Tanzania. Its mycotoxin specialist will undertake an assignment towards the end of this year to assess the value chain and contribute to guidelines on mycotoxin prevention, including storage management in food safety warehouses.

45. A proposal is being prepared in line with the Global Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), the FAO Conference Resolution on AMR and the FAO Plan of Action to facilitate dialogue with Mars on the providing resources to support the implementation of these global initiatives. The focus would be on capacity-building for AMR data collection, data exchange and the development of global tools to share AMR data on the food and agriculture sector.

*Rockefeller Foundation - Increasing resilience:*

46. This partnership, launched in September 2016, has allowed FAO and the Rockefeller Foundation to support the global initiative on food loss and waste reduction in the African region for the implementation of the Malabo Declaration on agriculture and post-harvest losses 2025. This partnership has enabled institutional capacity-building by training national government officials and private sector actors to design investment policies, strategies and programmes aimed at reducing food losses. These initiatives have made it possible to define the key indicators to monitor and report on post-harvest losses. The work in the region is being successfully carried out in Kenya, Tanzania,

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<sup>11</sup> This article is available at: <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/356/6338/635>



Zambia and Zimbabwe with pilot experiments in the implementation of this approach as part of the Foundation's "YieldWise" programme, which aims to reduce post-harvest losses in Africa.

47. FAO has also partnered with the Rockefeller Foundation's Resilience Measurement Community of Practice (CoP) initiative to measure resilience capacity, which is being conducted by FAO as part of the SAVE FOOD initiative. This has allowed FAO to establish its participation and leadership on progress made on pilot tests to measure the monitoring of resilience, evaluation and learning capacity. USAID<sup>12</sup> and the Rockefeller Foundation are making funds available to FAO to continue the above-mentioned activities.

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<sup>12</sup> United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

### III. FAO partnerships with civil society, cooperatives and producer organizations

#### A. Focus of FAO's work in 2017

48. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development contains several references and mandates that involve civil society, major groups and other stakeholders in its implementation and monitoring. To support this process, the Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs):

i) provides practical guidance on how to engage with CSOs and smallholder cooperatives; ii) supports producer organizations and strengthens their organizational performance, including the services they provide to their members.

49. In the past year, efforts have focused on strengthening existing partnerships with CSOs, cooperatives and producer organizations (POs), supporting the implementation and/or renewal of the working plans for various formal collaboration agreements in force. Nevertheless, considering the strategic nature of the partners and the added value of their contributions, FAO has established agreements with some key CSOs such as: *Consumers International*, *Réseau International URGENCI (Urgenci)*, *Interpeace International* and others.

50. Taking into account the results achieved and the possibility of extending and replicating successful experiences, agreements have also been renewed with partners such as the *International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC)*<sup>13</sup> and *La Via Campesina (LVC)*, organizations that continue to support the implementation of VGGT. The development of the Toolkit on “Peasant Agroecology Schools and the Peasant-Peasant Method of Horizontal Learning” was finalized through the LVC,<sup>14</sup> providing an overview of the agro-ecology applied in the Agro-ecology Schools for Farmers.

51. FAO has also begun to explore potential strategic collaborations with organizations such as: *Oxfam International*, the *World Rural Forum*, the *Network of Peasant Organizations and Agricultural Producers in West Africa (ROPPA)* and others.

52. Work with civil society is carried out using a two-pronged approach, in which CSOs and their broad networks simultaneously: (i) facilitate the dissemination and communication of FAO's key messages, helping to raise awareness on the importance of the fight against hunger; and (ii) promote the dissemination of FAO's technical knowledge thanks to their proximity to poor populations and growing presence in the field, alongside with the traditional knowledge of smallholder farmers' organizations strengthening their capacity, toward improving food security conditions.

53. Through this mechanism, work in recent years on disseminating and sharing knowledge has been extended to promoting sustainable farming practices, especially the agro-ecological approach and the conservation of plant genetic resources, linked to the implementation of Farmers' Rights under the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), on which CSOs possess traditional knowledge and employ best practice that can be replicated in different social contexts. These innovative exchanges complement the traditional decades-long approach of working with CSOs through FAO. Many organizations help to distribute inputs and repair agricultural systems in emergency situations.

54. In 2017, support continued to be given to the various collaborative initiatives in areas identified as being of mutual interest, such as: i) support for the implementation of FAO's regulatory frameworks, including the VGGT, the Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security and the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SFF Guidelines); (ii) the application of FAO's principles of sustainable agriculture, especially through the agro-ecological approach and sustainable use of plant genetic resources; and (iii) the combined use of inputs in emergency situations.

<sup>13</sup> The International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) is the global platform for coordinating more than 800 rural workers' organizations and social movements related to agricultural and food issues.

<sup>14</sup> The toolbox is available at: [https://viacampesina.org/downloads/pdf/en/TOOLKIT\\_agroecology\\_FINAL.pdf](https://viacampesina.org/downloads/pdf/en/TOOLKIT_agroecology_FINAL.pdf)

55. The inclusion of associations as part of the SPs' programme cycle has highlighted the need to establish new partnerships with consumer organizations (e.g. *Consumers International* and *Urgenci*), since the various activities recognize the need to strengthen the role of consumers to drive a move towards more sustainable and equitable food systems.

56. Similarly, this year, the exchange of technical know-how and capacity-building has been strengthened with activities based on farmer-farmer methodology, which have promoted exchanges between organizations in Asia, Africa and Latin America in a spirit of South-South Cooperation in the areas of: family agriculture, the right to food, resilience and water management, peacebuilding and peacekeeping, rural finance, forest management, the promotion of gender balance, cooperative management, agro-ecology, the creation of civil society platforms, indigenous peoples and others.

57. In 2017, the technical units at headquarters and decentralized offices have demonstrated more interest in considering CSOs as potential partners for the Organization. Proactive action has been taken to establish partnerships and focus FAO's work on guiding and leading new initiatives at a corporate level. FAO's regional offices have continued their efforts to promote CSO and PO contributions to supporting regional initiatives. The involvement of non-state actors in regional symposia on: "The role of agricultural biotechnologies in sustainable food systems and nutrition" and "Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy Diets and Improved Nutrition", together with civil society consultations to be held at the Regional Conferences in 2018, represent a further opportunity to strengthen these relationships.

58. In this context, in 2017:

- a) in **Africa**, relations have been strengthened with two regional bodies: the *Pan-African Parliament (PAP)*, with a view to concluding a partnership agreement. Other areas, such as strengthening cooperatives, are being supported by the *International Co-operative Alliance (ICA)*;
- b) in **Europe**, working sessions and workshops have been held at national level to enable consultation with civil society during the process of defining CPFs in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Capacity-building activities have also been prioritized with the aim of sharing best practice among small food producers;
- c) in **Latin America and the Caribbean**, a work schedule has been coordinated with the main CSOs, including indigenous peoples' organizations, based on the FAO specific strategy on cooperation with Indigenous Peoples;
- d) in **Asia**, active collaboration is taking place with the *Asian Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)*, through the FAO Forest and Farm Facility (FFF), to support the AFA initiative for knowledge-sharing on sustainable forestry and forest management;
- e) in the **Near East and North Africa**, work has focused on linking CSOs in strategic water resource planning initiatives and promoting small-scale agriculture, through organizations such as *Urgenci*, *CIHEAM*,<sup>15</sup> and others.

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<sup>15</sup> International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM)

## B. Contribution to the achievement of FAO's Strategic Programmes (SPs).

59. In 2017, efforts were stepped up to ensure that through the Strategic Programmes, inputs and contributions of CSOs, cooperatives and POs were considered in support of the SOs/SPs. The focus of partnership work for each SP is described below.

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

60. Within the context of SP1, CSOs support the work of FAO by conducting awareness and promotion activities within their extensive networks on the main issues relating to food security and nutrition. Similarly, knowledge-sharing and capacity-building in CSOs is encouraged to ensure their participation in various FAO's processes and programmes at regional and local level. These partnerships at global level have helped to improve the visibility and awareness of various policy frameworks and Voluntary Guidelines (VGGT, SSF, Right to Food), among others, that have an impact on SDG 2 and support specific initiatives in Asian, Latin American and African countries linked to the additional objective on cross-cutting themes (nutrition). Partners supporting SO1 include: the *International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC)*, *Action-Aid International (AAI)*, the *International Union of Notaries*, *Caritas Internationalis*, among others.

### *SO2: Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable*

61. In contributing to the achievement of SP2, partnerships and collaboration with CSOs, work has focused on increasing the effectiveness of FAO's field projects and programmes based on civil society experience in poverty alleviation and sustainable natural resource management. These partnerships have supported several initiatives in Asian and African countries in the areas of sustainable forest management and agroecology. Organizations working for SO2 include: *Action-Aid International (AAI)*, *World Vision International (WVI)*, *La Vía Campesina (LVC)*, *International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC)* and the *World Wildlife Fund (WWF)*, amongst others. These alliances have repercussions on SDGs 15 and 13, among others.

### *SO3: Reduce rural poverty*

62. Partnerships with family farmers, social movements and producer organizations supporting the work of FAO in the field of SP3 seek to disseminate good practices through communication for development, generating synergies between social protection measures and rural development programmes to effectively reduce food insecurity in rural populations.

63. Within the scope of this objective, CSOs in partnership with FAO have continued to contribute to the family farming knowledge platform, which collects quality digital information on family farming throughout the world, considering national laws and regulations, public policies, good practices and relevant data and statistics, as well as research, articles and publications. Similarly, work has continued on specific initiatives in Latin American and Asian countries intended to strengthen community communication resources as a driver of social change and development in rural areas.

64. This work has been supported by the various activities carried out in the Near East and Africa with cooperatives and POs, aimed at building management and organizational capacities to improve the governance of cooperative organizations and the arrangements by which they relate with public and private sectors. Partners supporting SP 3 include: the *World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC)*, *We Effect*, *SEWA*,<sup>16</sup> *UPA-DI*,<sup>17</sup> among others. These partnerships have repercussions on SDGs 1, 5, 8 and 10, among others.

### *SO4: Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems*

65. When contributing to the achievement of SP4 partnerships and collaboration with CSOs, attention was focused on carrying out joint activities for knowledge sharing and capacity building

<sup>16</sup> Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA)

<sup>17</sup> Union des Producteurs Agricoles (UPA) Développement international (UPA-DI)

based on inclusive and efficient business models to support farming and food systems, as well as to address problems posed by food waste and loss.

66. Various specific partnerships covering countries in Latin America and Africa enabled FAO, based on the technical capacity of CSOs, to identify innovative models that increase access to family farming product producer markets, as well as initiatives to protect consumers against food hazards. Partners supporting SP4 include *Consumers International*, *Food Banking Regional Network* and *Slow Food*, among others. These partnerships have repercussions on SDGs 8, 9 and 12, among others.

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

67. Partnerships with CSOs within the context of SP5 focus on jointly mobilizing and using the extensive available human, physical and financial resources, increasing the scale and priority of technical support from FAO aimed at increasing resilience, as well as disseminating knowledge and periodic reporting, particularly on disaster preparedness with the support of early warning systems.

68. These partnerships support specific actions in the Near East and Africa. Some of these are part of the work of the Global Food Security Cluster (GFSC) led by FAO and the WFP in order to coordinate the international response with regard to food security during a humanitarian crisis. The main partners include: *Interpeace International*, *Welthungerhilfe e.V. (WHH)*, *International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*, *World Vision International*, among others. These partnerships have repercussions on SDGs 1, 2, 11 and 13, among others.

**C. Examples of the implementation of partnerships with Civil Society Organizations, cooperatives and producer organizations**

69. Some examples are given below of results arising out of the enablement of partnerships with CSOs, cooperatives and POs during 2017 in support of the Organization's SOs:

*Consumers International Promoting sustainable food systems:*

70. In April 2017, FAO and Consumers International (CI, the world confederation of consumer groups) signed an agreement aimed at improving CI's access to the FAO knowledge and information network while the Organization can work more closely with the network of CI member organizations to strengthen consumer protection against food hazards, including awareness of safe food handling along the value chain and promotion of healthy nutritional habits and sustainable diets.

71. As part of the ongoing work, CI and FAO are developing a training framework to increase and reinforce the knowledge of FAO's technical staff on consumer perspectives and their proactive efforts to bring about healthy and environmentally sustainable changes in food systems.

72. In Latin America and the Caribbean, CI has also supported the development of public policies to improve access to healthy food and optimize nutritional information. This has contributed significantly to discussions convened by FAO at regional level by providing consumer perspectives and viewpoints. As part of these actions, progress has been made in organizing a Latin American and Caribbean meeting of consumer organizations to promote healthy eating.

*SEWA - Access to rural financial services with the inclusion of women and young people:*

73. In 2016 SEWA and FAO signed an agreement to step up joint efforts toward building the capacities of the rural poor, with particular emphasis on ensuring the inclusion and empowerment of women and young people.

74. In the first year of implementation, a series of knowledge-sharing and capacity-building activities were carried out on the following topics: i) facilitating the exchange of knowledge, experiences and lessons learned on the role of rural institutions in promoting inclusive development, sustainable agriculture and food systems and improving local food security – and ii) improving access by rural women to services, employment and market opportunities.

75. In particular, an analysis was conducted on SEWA's rural financial services (particularly the community microcredit scheme), which FAO's Rural Finance Team will provide with technical advice to improve their performance. During the year, an exchange visit was also held between farmers and

forestry organizations and agricultural producers in Nepal with the aim of sharing knowledge on agroforestry practices between SEWA, women entrepreneurs and producer groups participating in the FAO Forest and Farm Facility (FFF).

*International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) - Improving access to information for farming cooperatives:*

76. FAO and the ICA have designed a global digital database and an on-line platform on cooperative law known as Cooplex. This brings together information, legal texts, court cases, academic articles and other resources from around the world and provides a forum for discussion and exchange for registered users.

77. FAO also works with *Roma Tre University*, the *ACI-Africa Regional Office* and the *Uganda Cooperative Alliance* to implement and document the field research of two cooperative unions and an area cooperative enterprise (ACE) in Uganda to explore the role of Cooperatives in promoting agricultural investment accountability. FAO also provided technical support to ACI-Africa in setting up a new African agricultural cooperative federation. In Latin America and the Caribbean, an event was organized in conjunction with the ACI-Americas Regional Office and the Cooperatives of the Americas Network and REAF/MERCOSUR<sup>18</sup>. This focused on the exchange of innovative knowledge and experience with the aim of developing a regional action plan in this area.

*International Centre for Advanced Mediterranean Agronomic Studies (CIHEAM)- Developing the capacities of the rural population in the Mediterranean region:*

78. The partnership with CIHEAM focused on promoting political dialogue on migration. Ministers of Agriculture in CIHEAM member countries proposed implementing a platform for political dialogue on factors driving rural migration.

79. Other areas of cooperation included dissemination of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity as well as the development of voluntary guidelines for the sustainability of the Mediterranean Diet in the Mediterranean region. Capacity-building activities were also carried out within the sphere of measures to prevent the introduction and dissemination of *Xylella fastidiosa* in countries of the Near East and North Africa, the promotion of plant health measures in synergy with the *International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)*, among others.

*Union des producteurs agricoles de Quebec-Développement International (UPA-DI) - Strengthening the capacities of agricultural cooperatives:*

80. FAO has been working with UPA-DI to implement a Technical Cooperation Programme in Egypt: "Support to Cooperatives Reforms in Egypt". This project concerns the reform of agricultural cooperatives in Egypt to ensure that they are more efficient, fair and inclusive enterprises that contribute to reducing rural poverty for the benefit of small farmers. UPA-DI's role has been to foster a participatory process and dialogue within the Egyptian cooperative movement and relevant government institutions with the ultimate aim of helping agricultural cooperatives analyse and participate actively in their internal reform process. This year, a series of workshops were organized with the participation of more than 200 representatives. Farmer-to-farmer methodologies were applied as a crucial aspect of FAO's capacity-building strategy to support Producer Organizations and Cooperatives.

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<sup>18</sup> Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF) / Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR)

#### IV. FAO partnerships with academic and research institutions

81. In recent years, FAO has increased and stepped up its existing partnership with Public and Private local and regional academic and research institutions, in support of the Country Programming Framework (CPF), regional initiatives and SOs. This has made it possible to identify specific areas of work in which knowledge exchange is promoted with the aim of attracting academics conducting research and studies that contribute to FAO's work and disseminating the body of knowledge held by the Organization through research institutions. In particular, these partnerships support SP2 and SP4.<sup>19</sup>

82. In 2017, FAO signed six new partnership agreements<sup>20</sup> in the areas of climate change, migration, forestry, food safety, agricultural production and rural development. In the academic field, seven agreements<sup>21</sup> were renewed in addition to two extensions<sup>22</sup> containing a working plan for the next three years.

83. Part of the work carried out this year was devoted to promoting the SDGs. FAO held online seminars (webinars) with universities, aimed at raising the profile of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development among students and academics in FAO's partner institutions. The seminars supplemented the University undergraduate and postgraduate courses and highlighted FAO's work in achieving the SDGs. Participating universities included the *Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre (CATIE)* (forestry), *Mississippi State University* (aquaculture), the *Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology* (water conservation); *Aleksandras Stulginskis University* (forestry) and *Texas A&M University* (hydraulic engineering), among others.

84. These activities have strengthened promotion and communication initiatives that academic partners continue to deliver following FAO's mandate and the SDGs through events such as: i) Seminar on Food Loss and Waste (Asian Institute of Technology - AIT); ii) Promotion of student work with Google Earth and an event on the International Year of Legumes (La Sapienza University); iii) Symposium on the Impact of Climate Change on Food and Agriculture (Kyoto University).

85. Some examples of work done over the past year in academic and research institutions on various topics are given below.

86. *Agricultural intensification*: Training of farmers in rice intensification in Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Thailand (AIT), expansion of irrigation and rain fed technologies for intensification of agriculture in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia (ICARDA); study and workshop on small-scale agriculture in Egypt, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia (CIRAD) and capacity assessment workshop for agricultural innovation systems in Rwanda, Guatemala and Honduras (Agrinatura).

87. *Agroforestry and reforestation*: Workshops on forest restoration in Rwanda and El Salvador (WUR), course on landscape restoration for South American land restoration and a study on intelligent agroforestry in the Central American Dry Corridor (CATIE), agroforestry studies and assessment of cocoa plantations in Ghana and a seminar on Japanese-Brazilian agroforestry approach in Ghana (Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology-TUAT) and a study on sustainable non-forest products to produce fuel for refugee camps in northern Cameroon (University of Liege).

88. *Climate*: Development and publication of data on climate shock and resilience in Uganda, Tanzania and Ghana (IFPRI), drought predictive alert system, which was tested in Kenya and deployed in 21 arid countries in the East African region - IGAD (TAMU).

<sup>19</sup> FAO applies several procedures to ensure that the agreements with Research Academies and Institutions are consistent with the Organization's rules and procedures. Agreements with publicly funded academic institutions follow the procedure set out in the Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations. Privately-funded agreements follow the procedure laid down in the Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector.

<sup>20</sup> Université catholique de Louvain (Belgium); University of Liege (Belgium); Université Laval (Canada); RUFORUM (a consortium of 66 African universities); Research Institute of Agricultural Economics (Hungary) and the International Rice Research Institute (Philippines).

<sup>21</sup> Wageningen University Research (Netherlands); Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology (Japan); M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University (Russia); Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Centre (Costa Rica); Agrinatura (Association of 28 European universities and research centres); International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (Lebanon) and the Japan International Research Centre for Agricultural Sciences).

<sup>22</sup> CIRAD (France) and Agreenium (France) extended until 31 December 2017.

89. *Fisheries/Blue Growth*: Development of a training course on inland fishery resistance to disease and climate in Malawi (Michigan State University), course on responsible aquaculture for food security and economic progress with 20 participants from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean (WUR).

## **V. Other arrangements linked to partnerships with the private sector and civil society**

90. *Parliamentary Alliances for Food Security and Nutrition*: parliamentarians are key stakeholders for implementing political commitments in the area of food security and nutrition when it comes to drafting laws and approving public budgets. During 2017, FAO continued its partnership with this sector at regional and national level. In Latin America, the Parliamentary Front Against Hunger (FPH-ALC) continued its active work promoting and giving technical support to the formation of national fronts, most recently in Haiti. In parallel, the FPH developed a model law on family farming in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will serve as a reference document for future national laws in the countries concerned.

91. Through South–South and Triangular Cooperation, FAO developed a technical cooperation programme with the Pan-African Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition of the Pan-African Parliament, which in turn promoted the formation of national alliances in Madagascar and Benin. Partnership between FAO and the EU has been strengthened through political dialogue with Parliamentary Committees, members and the European Union Fight Against Hunger Parliamentary Alliance. An Italian Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security was also set up. Outreach efforts in countries in the Asian region led to the setting up of the FAO Parliamentarian Friendship League in Japan. In recent years, FAO has facilitated the establishment of 29 parliamentary alliances covering the regions of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and Europe.

92. *Alliance for Food Security and Peace between FAO and Nobel Peace Laureates*: in 2017, the Nobel Peace Laureates continued their work as a group of experts supporting FAO by disseminating the organization's key messages in the fight against hunger, highlighting the essential role of food security for peacekeeping in conflict and post-conflict situations. The 2016 Nobel Peace Laureate Juan Manuel Santos, President of Columbia, has joined the alliance.

## **VI. Challenges and areas to be strengthened with regard to civil society and the private sector**

93. Strengthening partnerships with non-state stakeholders has made it possible to benefit from the comparative advantage offered by their broad networks to promote FAO's work in global, regional and national contexts. However, it is still a challenge to include these stakeholders in consultation processes when formulating CPFs and Regional Initiatives, where they can provide technical input on a wide variety of issues. Such processes make it easier to monitor and assess the stakeholders' contribution to FAO. Decentralized offices are required to strengthen the framework of collaboration with non-state stakeholders (private sector, civil society, cooperatives and academia) with the support of Member States for implementation of the Country Programming Frameworks.

94. In recent years the Programme of Work and Budget has acknowledged the value of technical contributions from civil society in: i) policy dialogue processes and ii) in the implementation of capacity-building activities in local contexts. However, new sources of financing must be identified to encourage the inclusion of such stakeholders in these processes.

95. With regard to the private sector, efforts must continue toward forging and diversifying alliances with small and medium-sized enterprises, through cooperatives and producer organizations and local companies constituting small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The support of Member States in establishing and facilitating FAO's work with local companies to achieve more substantial contributions to the SDGs is crucial.

96. Although in recent years the private sector has mobilized a large amount of in-kind resources for the Organization and to a lesser extent financial resources, work done with the SPs has highlighted the need to increase the level of financial resources from the private sector to support FAO's activities,



as well as Governing and Statutory Bodies'. However, implementation of a Multi-Donor Fund to allow the mobilization of private sector financial resources under the Strategy involved some difficulties, due to a lack of interest by companies in making general financial contributions (non-targeted or slightly targeted) to support programmes and activities aligned with FAO's SOs. This situation warrants further efforts by FAO and Member States to encourage such contributions and develop innovative arrangements.

97. Focus on work with the private sector continues to be on achieving greater involvement of the companies in the implementation, support and promotion of VGGTs and Principles of Responsible Investment in Agriculture (CFS-RAI) and their synergy with other technical instruments such as the Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) and OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains, among others.

98. One ongoing challenge when implementing work with the private sector is the identification and management of potential risks that could affect FAO's neutrality and independence. It is common for some companies to approach FAO with the aim of facilitating the opening of trade markets for their services and products in developing countries, which is against the objectives of the partnerships. It is important for Member States and the DPS to work together to provide private sector entities with more information on the objectives and expected contributions of partnerships with FAO to achieving 2030 Agenda objectives.