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PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Hundred and Thirty-fourth Session
Rome, 7-11 November 2022
Follow-up report on the Evaluation of FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

➢ The recommendations of the Evaluation of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) were welcomed by Management and acted upon in close consultation with Members through the TCP Strategic Exercise.

➢ Recommendations are being implemented and results are becoming evident.

GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

➢ The Programme Committee is invited to take note of the information provided in this document and continue to provide guidance in the context of the TCP Strategic Exercise agreed with Members, through the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees.

Draft Advice

The Committee:

➢ **appreciated the information provided in the Follow-up report in relation to the measures taken to implement the recommendations of the TCP Evaluation within the context of the TCP Strategic Exercise, carried out in close consultation with Members.**

I.   Overview/Highlights

1.   Management welcomed the Evaluation of the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP).[1] In particular, Management was pleased to note that the Evaluation confirmed the value of the TCP as a vital instrument to support Members in addressing their priority needs, as well as the emphasis throughout the report on the strategic and catalytic use and effects of TCP resources.

2.   Following up on the recommendations of the TCP evaluation is an integral part of the Strategic Exercise agreed with Members. A series of informal and formal consultations with Members have been completed since the TCP Evaluation was discussed at the 129th Session of the Programme Committee in November 2020.

3.   Documents submitted to the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees summarize the process followed and progress achieved in the implementation of recommendations of the Evaluation.[2]

4.   With regard to the strategic use of TCP, it has been underlined that resource allocation occurs in the context of country level programming through the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs). The CPF process is now fully derived from the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF).[3] In addition, all new and ongoing FAO projects and programmes must identify their contribution to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets through the related Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31.

5.   FAO Regional Representatives take full advantage and leverage the catalytic role of TCP, in particular for resource mobilization, resulting in an increased and varied number of projects with evidence of impacts. Operational guidelines emphasize this role and communication efforts support sharing and adoption of good practices.

6.   Far reaching simplifications to procedures have been introduced over the last few years and an ongoing corporate initiative to enhance the programmatic approach is expected to result in further streamlining, including for TCP.

7.   The Strategic Exercise resulting from the Evaluation has set the TCP on a new course through an inclusive process with Members and FAO. Work on improving and refining implementation is ongoing and will continue.

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[1] PC 129/2

[2] JM 2020.2/2; JM 2021.1/2; JM 2021.2/2; JM 2022.1/2; JM 2022.2/2

[3] cf. JM 2022.2/3

Follow-up report on Evaluation of TCP Matrix[4]

Accepted evaluation recommendations (a)	Action agreed in the management response (b)	Description of actions actually taken, or reasons for actions not taken (c)	MAR score (d)[5]	Impact of/changes resulted from taken actions (e)
Recommendation 1 FAO should transform TCP to be more strategic, as a facilitative instrument of the Organization to support Members with technical assistance to achieve the 2030 Agenda.	This will be emphasized with all stakeholders and supported through a revised Strategic Framework, as well as with the new generation of CPFs, duly derived from the UNSDCF, and the corporate alignment with the SDGs. Mechanisms to ensure TCP assistance is linked to the specific aspects/components of national policies, plans, strategies and other FAO flagship programmes in the country will be reinforced. Partnerships and strategic collaboration will be further enhanced.	a) TCP resource allocation occurs in the context of country level programming. As outlined in document JM 2021.1/2, all new CPFs are derived directly from the UNSDCF. UNSDCF outcomes and outputs relevant to FAO's work, as well as related SDG targets and indicators, are copied verbatim into the CPF. The Annualized Resources Matrix of the CPF captures how TCP resources are being allocated in support of achieving CPF outputs and outcomes and, in turn, SDG targets and indicators. At the same time, there is flexibility to adjust programming to respond to countries' emerging needs. b) Operational guidelines and tools have been updated to underline and better document the strategic alignment of TCP with the 2030 Agenda and the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31. As of 2022, it is possible to document how TCP expenditures contribute to specific SDG targets, FAO's *four betters* and individual PPAs (see document JM 2022.2/2).	6	The contribution of TCP to the 2030 Agenda and alignment with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 is now documented.
Recommendation 2 FAO should take concrete efforts to increase the number and proportion of TCP projects that have a catalytic effect from the current levels.	Building on the detailed recommendations of the Evaluation, existing best practices and TCP criteria, new approaches and modalities to specifically emphasize and monitor this role of TCP will be developed.	a) Deputy Director-General (DDG)-level communications and consultations with Regional Offices (ROs) highlighted good practices and examples were shared across regions. All Regional Representatives are identifying opportunities for the catalytic potential impact in resource allocation decisions. As a result, there is an increased and varied number of projects with evidence of impacts. b) As reported in document JM 2022.1/2, data collection efforts have shown that for every USD 1 invested through TCP, USD 9 were mobilized in 2018-19. In 2020-21, this figure increased to USD 17 for every USD 1 invested. Data as of September 2022 show that, since 2018, TCP has supported the mobilization of USD 3.4 billion. More than USD 1 billion of these resources was channeled through FAO in the form of Trust Funds.	6	The catalytic role of TCP, in particular for resource mobilization, has been fully embraced and evidence of successes is mounting.

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[4] cf. PC 129/2 Sup.1

[5] Management Action Record (MAR) Score: **1 - None**: no action was taken to implement the recommendation; **2 - Poor**: plan and actions for implementation of the recommendation are at a very preliminary stage; **3 - Inadequate**: implementation of the recommendation is uneven and partial; **4 - Adequate**: implementation of the recommendation has progressed; there is no evidence yet of its results on the intended target; **5 - Good**: the recommendation has been fully implemented and there is some initial evidence of its impact on the intended target; **6 – Excellent**: there is solid evidence that the recommendation has had a positive impact on its intended target.

Accepted evaluation recommendations (a)	Action agreed in the management response (b)	Description of actions actually taken, or reasons for actions not taken (c)	MAR score (d)[5]	Impact of/changes resulted from taken actions (e)
		c) Operational guidelines have been elaborated to support and emphasize the catalytic role of TCP projects, and regional TCP officers support country offices with developing proposals accordingly. Good practices and success stories are being shared with all stakeholders, including on social media (see document JM 2022.1/2).		
Recommendation 3 FAO has to simplify TCP in terms of processes, procedures and structures to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.	Building on the simplifications already introduced since 2018, the project cycle for TCP will be further streamlined including through an enhanced programme approach. Mechanism to strengthen practical technical support to the formulation and implementation of TCP-funded activities will be expanded.	a) After significant streamlining of procedures in 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic required adjustments to ongoing projects that led to the introduction of an additional set of simplifications in 2020 targeting the re-programming of TCP resources. This enabled country offices to adjust implementation modalities for ongoing projects and to respond to COVID-19 related needs timely and effectively. b) In April 2022, further simplifications have been agreed in close consultation with ROs and updated operational guidelines and tools have been released. c) The ongoing corporate initiative to enhance the programmatic approach is expected to result in further streamlining at all levels.	5	Decentralized offices have expressed appreciation for the efficiency gains achieved.
Recommendation 4 FAO should establish institutionalized mechanisms for monitoring of TCP results, follow-up of TCP after project closure, and systems for capturing and reporting best practices and lessons learned.	Results monitoring systems will be further developed including at corporate level. Mechanisms to share and build on best practices and lessons learned will be established and the possibility of providing follow-up assistance institutionalized.	a) TCP results are now being systematically recorded and published on FAO's website (see document JM 2022.1/2). b) Best practices and lessons learned are being shared through enhanced communication efforts (e.g. in-focus stories and social media) with the aim of inspiring good use of TCP among all stakeholders. c) FAO is refining the monitoring system for improved oversight of TCP projects, including all catalytic outcomes of TCP and best practices.	5	Decentralized Offices have much appreciated the opportunity to see TCP investment success stories recognized and to learn from other colleagues. Transparency on TCP use and results has provided Members with reassurances on the value of TCP.
Recommendation 5 FAORs and Lead Technical Officers (LTOs) need to improve their understanding of result-based management and	The TCP specific tools introduced in 2018 will be further enhanced and hands-on support provided, including Results-based Management (RBM) training, provided to formulators by intensifying related efforts through regional TCP officers and capacity building of stakeholders.	a) Operational guidelines and tools have been updated to guide better formulators on specific RBM requirements. b) RBM training has been initiated in some offices and regional TCP officers support formulators with quality TCP results-based project design.	5	Improved project design is leading to better-quality reporting of results.

Accepted evaluation recommendations (a)	Action agreed in the management response (b)	Description of actions actually taken, or reasons for actions not taken (c)	MAR score (d)[5]	Impact of/changes resulted from taken actions (e)
ensure the quality of the TCP project design.				
Recommendation 6 Allocation to countries by Regional Offices should remain transparent, and criteria should be revisited, as relevant.	Allocation criteria will continue to be under the responsibility of Regional Offices and monitored by PSS. The use of TCP resources for multi-country projects will be based on stronger consultation with country offices and emphasize catalytic effects.	Following the request from Members to consider ways of achieving greater uniformity among regions, while keeping flexibility to respond to regional specificities, a new set of common principles and approach was developed with Regional Representatives to be applied to within-region resource allocation as of biennium 2024-25 (see JM 2022.2/2).	5	The harmonized approach will result in improved transparency and strengthened governance, while maintaining the required flexibility to respond to countries' emerging needs.
Recommendation 7 If FAO is able to demonstrate an increase in number and proportion of TCP projects that have catalytic effect, which *inter alia* require the full implementation of the previous recommendations, Governing Bodies may consider an increase in appropriation in increments to enable FAO to provide adequate technical assistance to Members in better achieving the 2030 Agenda.	To be discussed with Members.	The Programme Committee "*discussed the issue of future appropriations for TCP and highlighted that these should be based on, but not limited to, evidence-based criteria*" (CL 165/10).	n/a	Changes to the TCP appropriation are decided by Members.