



COUNCIL

Hundred and Thirty-ninth Session

Rome, 17 – 21 May 2010

Report of the Hundred and Third Session of the Programme Committee Rome, 12 - 16 April 2010

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Matters requiring attention by the Council

Item 3: Prioritization of Technical Work of the Organization	
9.	The Committee <u>recommended</u> that the Independent Chairperson of the Council, supported by the Secretariat, take steps to ensure that the Regional Conferences would be in a position to provide clear recommendations on areas of regional priority to Council through the Programme and Finance Committees.
10.	The Committee <u>recommended</u> that the Independent Chairperson of the Council convene a meeting with the Chairpersons of the Technical Committees and the Programme and Finance Committees to discuss and agree on the approach to handling the discussion of priorities in the Technical Committees.
10.	The Committee <u>requested</u> that supporting documentation on priorities be prepared by the Secretariat for the Technical Committees, which should start from the approved results frameworks in the MTP-PWB and take into account emerging issues, lessons learned from initial operational planning, major evaluations and any resulting proposed shifts in emphasis within the relevant Strategic Objectives.
12.	The Committee <u>requested</u> the Secretariat to prepare a summary paper drawing on the outcomes of the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees on priorities, and giving clear indications on where shifts in emphasis were being recommended, in order to facilitate discussions in the October Session.
14.	The Committee <u>requested</u> an additional session in early 2011 to consider the reports of NERC and COFI concerning priorities and shoulder the heavy workload in this shorter biennium planning cycle.
14.	The Committee <u>recommended</u> that future sessions of the Technical Committees and Regional Conferences be scheduled within the new cycle of governing body input to the MTP-PWB as approved by Conference.
Item 4: Charter for the FAO Office of Evaluation	
17.	The Committee <u>requested</u> the Office of Evaluation to include in its guidelines for preparing evaluation follow-up reports the programme and policy impact stemming from the implementation of the recommendations of evaluation.
18.	The Committee <u>endorsed</u> the Charter for the Office of Evaluation, as included in Annex 1, for approval by the Council.
Item 5: Indicative Rolling Workplan of Strategic and Programme Evaluation 2010-2012	
19.	From the priority list, the Committee <u>decided</u> that the following evaluations should be initiated in 2010 or early 2011: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Gender Aspects of FAO's work; b. FAO's work on Nutrition; c. Land Tenure and Access to Land.
20.	For implementation starting in 2011, the Committee <u>assigned highest priority</u> to evaluations of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Policy Assistance at Country Level; b. Capacity Building in Support of Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries; c. Sustainable Management of Forest and Trees, including work related to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD).
21.	The Committee <u>gave priority</u> to an evaluation of the Regional and Subregional Offices for Africa in 2012. It <u>requested</u> that another rolling workplan should be submitted to it for consideration in 2011, at which time the Committee would take stock of the work completed and advise on priority evaluations for 2012 and subsequent years.

22.	The Committee <u>endorsed</u> that future country evaluations should include large, rapidly developing countries, countries with large emergency and rehabilitation programmes and middle-income countries. In selecting countries for evaluation, due consideration should be given to maintaining regional balance.
23.	The Committee <u>stressed</u> that the June 2007 decision of the Council ¹ regarding funding of evaluations should be respected by donors and brought to their attention where necessary by the FAO Secretariat. The Committee <u>requested</u> that FAO should report to it on the implementation of the Council decision in 2011.
Item 6: The Evaluation of FAO's Operational Capacity in Emergencies	
24.	The Committee <u>requested</u> a more standardized format for evaluation reports submitted to it.
27.	It <u>urged</u> the Secretariat to develop sustainable systems to support emergency operations and ensure efficient technical support to emergency operations. Such systems should take into consideration the enhanced role given to regional and subregional offices in providing technical support to the field programme and make greater use of regional and national experts, including when appropriate through South-South Cooperation.
29.	The Committee <u>stressed the need</u> of continuous attention to and inclusion of gender issues in every evaluation.
Item 7: Joint Thematic Evaluation of FAO and WFP Support to Information Systems for Food Security	
31.	The Committee <u>endorsed</u> the principle of continued joint work between FAO and WFP on food security information. The Committee appreciated the fact that Management agreed to finalize a corporate strategy for Food Security Information Systems and a joint strategy with WFP. The Committee <u>underlined</u> the importance of appropriate systems for assessing food security not just in emergency situations, but also in development contexts.
Item 8: Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work related to Water	
35.	The Committee <u>suggested</u> : 1) a balanced coverage of the regions; and 2) clearer prioritization among recommendations in future evaluations.
36.	The Committee <u>endorsed</u> the establishment of an FAO Water Platform, as an internal coordination mechanism to better address water-related issues across the Strategic Objectives and organizational structure. The Committee stated that the Water Platform could be created immediately as governing body endorsement would not be required for an internal coordination mechanism.
38.	The Committee felt that the Evaluation should be drawn to the attention of the forthcoming meetings of the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees so that water may be assessed by these bodies as part of their role in setting priorities for FAO.
Item 9: Programme Committee Multi-year Programme of Work 2010-13	
44.	The Committee <u>approved</u> its Multi-year Programme of Work 2010-13, as included in <i>Annex 2</i> .
Item 13: Access to TCP on a Grant Basis – Outcome of consultation with selected countries	
50.	The Committee <u>decided</u> that the eligibility criterion of the TCP should be the subject of a further discussion from the viewpoint of principle and credibility.
51.	The Committee <u>requested</u> the Secretariat to provide it with a paper for the continuation of the discussion of this issue at its next session.
Item 14: Preliminary Review of Statutory Bodies with a view to allowing them to Exercise Greater Financial and Administrative Authority while remaining within the Framework of FAO	
52.	The Committee <u>requested</u> the Secretariat to provide, for its next session, a comprehensive list of statutory bodies covered by the review and a discussion paper highlighting the key issues, impacts, and guidance sought from the Programme Committee on this matter.

¹ CL 132/REP, paragraph 76

REPORT OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRD SESSION OF THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

12 – 16 April 2010

Introduction

1. The Committee submitted to the Council the following report of its Hundred and Third Session.
2. The following Members were present:

Chairperson: Ms R. Laatu (Finland)
Members: Mr A.R. Ayazi (Afghanistan)
Mr C.A. Amaral (Angola)
Ms M. del Carmen Squeff (Argentina)
Mr T.S. Power (Australia)
Ms S. Afroz (Bangladesh)
Ms M van Dooren (Belgium)
Mr M. Valicenti (Canada)
Mr A.A.M. Hosni Abdel Aziz (Egypt)
H.E. C. Obama Ondo (Equatorial Guinea)
Ms S. Helbing (Germany)
Mr K. Shioya (Japan)
Ms L.H. Coronel Correa (Paraguay)

3. The Chairperson informed the Committee that Mr Katsumasa Miyauchi had been designated to replace Mr Kazumasa Shioya for part of the session as the representative of Japan. A summary of the qualifications of Mr Miyauchi is given in the addendum to this report².

Item 1: Adoption of the Agenda and Timetable³

4. The Agenda and a modified Timetable for the meeting were approved.

Item 2: Election of Vice-Chairperson for 2010

5. Ms M. del Carmen Squeff of Argentina was elected Vice-chairperson for 2010.

Item 3: Prioritization of Technical Work of the Organization⁴

6. The Committee took note of the significant past efforts by Members and the Secretariat in developing priority setting methodologies, tools and processes. It recognized that priority-setting at FAO was essentially a political process of Members while the Secretariat also had a role in the process of prioritization. It recalled that the Conference had emphasized the need for improvements in prioritization of the technical work of the Organization under the new results-based Medium Term Plan 2010-13.
7. The Committee resolved to focus its own work on improving the prioritization process at FAO over the next four years, recognizing the ongoing and iterative nature of the process and the

² CL 139/4 Add. 1

³ PC 103/1; PC 103/INF/1 Rev. 3

⁴ PC 103/4

opportunity to learn from experience. It acknowledged that the priority setting cycle for the upcoming 2012-13 biennium would be one of transition, with the aim to have a systematic approach to prioritization in place for the 2014-15 biennium.

8. The Committee took note of the tight timeline for the first full cycle of results-based planning in 2010-11 leading to the preparation, approval and any necessary adjustment of the PWB 2012-13. It emphasized the importance of receiving clear advice with supporting information from the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees at its October 2010 Session to advise on its consideration of priorities and recommendations to Council.

9. With regard to the 2010 sessions of the Regional Conferences, the Committee noted that the documentation on regional priorities had been prepared by the Secretariat for the three sessions scheduled in April and May. The Committee recommended that the Independent Chairperson of the Council, supported by the Secretariat, take steps to ensure that the Regional Conferences would be in a position to provide clear recommendations on areas of regional priority to Council through the Programme and Finance Committees.

10. With regard to the 2010 sessions of the Technical Committees, the Committee was informed that the documentation on priorities had not yet been finalized by the Secretariat. The Committee therefore recommended that the Independent Chairperson of the Council convene a meeting with the Chairpersons of the Technical Committees and the Programme and Finance Committees to discuss and agree on the approach to handling the discussion of priorities in the Technical Committees. The Committee requested that supporting documentation on priorities be prepared by the Secretariat for the Technical Committees, which should start from the approved results frameworks in the MTP-PWB and take into account emerging issues, lessons learned from initial operational planning, major evaluations and any resulting proposed shifts in emphasis within the relevant Strategic Objectives.

11. The Committee acknowledged its unique role in advising on priority-setting for matters transcending individual Strategic Objectives. The Committee resolved to specifically treat cross-cutting issues as an integral part of its discussion on priorities at its October 2010 Session.

12. In order to facilitate discussions in the October Session, the Committee requested the Secretariat to prepare a summary paper drawing on the outcomes of the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees on priorities, and giving clear indications on where shifts in emphasis were being recommended.

13. The Committee considered that informal meetings with the Strategy Teams would provide useful input to its discussions of priorities, and resolved to organize such meetings allowing adequate time to feed into the prioritization process.

14. The Committee was concerned that the 30th Regional Conference for the Near East (NERC) and the 29th Committee on Fisheries (COFI) were scheduled to take place after its October 2010 Session. The Committee requested an additional session in early 2011 to consider the reports of NERC and COFI concerning priorities and shoulder the heavy workload in this shorter biennium planning cycle. The Committee recalled that the Conference had eliminated the summary PWB. It recognized that the draft MTP-PWB documentation would not be available until late February and that its recommendations would be considered by the Council in April 2011. The Committee recommended that future sessions of the Technical Committees and Regional Conferences be scheduled within the new cycle of governing body input to the MTP-PWB as approved by Conference.

15. The Committee resolved to undertake a self-assessment of its performance in facilitating priority-setting by the end of the current biennium.

Item 4: Charter for the FAO Office of Evaluation⁵

16. The Committee recalled that it had reviewed three successive draft versions of the Charter for the Office of Evaluation at its sessions in 2008 and 2009. It also recalled that the Council had agreed that the Charter should not be finalized until the Director of Evaluation was recruited and could participate in the process. The new Director of Evaluation, who was appointed effective 1 September 2009, informed the Committee that he had reviewed the Charter upon taking office and was satisfied with the version presented to the Committee at its current session.

17. The Committee received clarifications on various aspects of the principles, types and methodologies of evaluation, mechanisms for evaluation follow-up, and staffing and budget for evaluations. The Committee requested the Office of Evaluation to include in its guidelines for preparing evaluation follow-up reports the programme and policy impacts stemming from the implementation of the recommendations of evaluations.

18. The Committee endorsed the Charter for the Office of Evaluation, as included in *Annex 1*, for approval by the Council.

Item 5: Indicative Rolling Workplan of Strategic and Programme Evaluation 2010-2012⁶

19. The Committee found that the proposed rolling workplan included many topics of significance that should be examined by independent evaluations. From the priority list, the Committee decided that the following evaluations should be initiated in 2010 or early 2011:

- a. Gender Aspects of FAO's work;
- b. FAO's work on Nutrition;
- c. Land Tenure and Access to Land.

20. For implementation starting in 2011, the Committee assigned highest priority to evaluations of:

- a) Policy Assistance at Country Level;
- b) Capacity Building in Support of Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries;
- c) Sustainable Management of Forest and Trees, including work related to Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD).

21. The plan also covered evaluations that could begin in 2012, as a three-year rolling workplan was requested by the Committee at its 100th Session. The Committee gave priority to an evaluation of the Regional and Subregional Offices for Africa in 2012. It requested that another rolling workplan should be submitted to it for consideration in 2011, at which time the Committee would take stock of the work completed and advise on priority evaluations for 2012 and subsequent years.

22. The Committee endorsed that future country evaluations should include large, rapidly developing countries, countries with large emergency and rehabilitation programmes and middle-income countries. In selecting countries for evaluation, due consideration should be given to maintaining regional balance. The Committee would continue to receive synthesis reports on evaluations of similar types of countries.

23. The Committee stressed that the June 2007 decision of the Council⁷ regarding funding of evaluations should be respected by donors and brought to their attention where necessary by the

⁵ PC 103/5

⁶ PC 103/6

FAO Secretariat. The Committee requested that FAO should report to it on the implementation of the Council decision in 2011.

Item 6: The Evaluation of FAO's Operational Capacity in Emergencies^s

24. The Committee commended the report for its excellent quality and appreciated the detailed analysis and diagnosis contained therein, and commended also the Management Response. It noted that Management agreed with most of the recommendations while stressing the need of adopting a phased approach to their implementation given the extent of the changes required. It noted with appreciation that many actions suggested in the report were already included in the recently launched TCE Operational Strategy (2010-13). However, the Committee would have appreciated more detail about implementation plans for some of the accepted recommendations in the Management Response. The Committee also requested a more standardized format for evaluation reports submitted to it.

25. The Committee noted advice that certain types of disasters were predictable, protracted, and long-term in nature and some were recurrent. These could therefore be anticipated in programming, and there was accordingly a need to strengthen FAO's response capability in particular at country level. The increased appreciation of disaster risks also facilitated better preparedness for emergencies. The role of FAO in transition and in linking emergency to rehabilitation and development should result in enhanced collaboration among the various units in the Organization contributing to FAO's emergency work and at all levels: headquarters, regional, subregional and country offices.

26. The Committee stated that constraints for FAO's preparedness work, deployment of human resources, security and technical support should be addressed. FAO Management should clarify where additional funding was required, prioritize the requirements, and explore new funding mechanisms. The Committee noted Management's appreciation of SFERA⁹ as a tool to improve timeliness and effectiveness of FAO's response to emergencies and agreed that SFERA funds should be divided into three windows, to improve its efficiency: advanced funding, funding for needs assessment, and programmatic funding.

27. The Committee suggested that management should move speedily on implementation of agreed recommendations and actions that do not require additional funding. It urged the Secretariat to develop sustainable systems to support emergency operations and ensure efficient technical support to emergency operations. Such systems should take into consideration the enhanced role given to regional and subregional offices in providing technical support to the field programme and make greater use of regional and national experts, including when appropriate through South-South Cooperation.

28. The Committee appreciated the progress made towards increased local procurement and encouraged further collaboration on this with other organizations. Local purchase might also lead to capacity development at country level over time.

29. The Committee noted that gender issues in emergency operations had not been addressed in the evaluation. In this respect, while noting with appreciation management's recent mapping of gender mainstreaming in FAO Disaster Risk Management activities and its decision to disseminate the recently completed Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidelines and e-training

⁷ CL 132/REP, paragraph 76

⁸ PC 103/7-FC 132/10; PC 103/7-FC 132/10 a);

⁹ Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA)

on gender mainstreaming in emergencies, the Committee stressed the need for continuous attention to and inclusion of gender issues in every evaluation.

Item 7: Joint Thematic Evaluation of FAO and WFP Support to Information Systems for Food Security¹⁰

30. The Committee complimented the quality of the Evaluation report, which was the first evaluation implemented jointly between FAO and WFP. The Committee appreciated the limited number of recommendations of the Evaluation, which were focussed and useful for giving future direction. The Committee welcomed the Management Response and noted that action had been initiated on some of the recommendations, and agreed on the overall approach suggested in it. The Committee noted the importance of food security information for the reformed CFS¹¹ and urged close collaboration with the CFS on the implementation of the Evaluation recommendations.

31. The Committee endorsed the principle of continued joint work between FAO and WFP on food security information. The Committee appreciated the fact that Management agreed to finalize a corporate strategy for Food Security Information Systems and a joint strategy with WFP. The Committee underlined the importance of appropriate systems for assessing food security not just in emergency situations, but also in development contexts.

32. The Committee agreed that sustainability was an important issue. It emphasized that ownership of systems had to be developed through involvement of all relevant stakeholders, especially member countries; that long-term funding, which required advocacy activities with donors, was desirable; and that clear exit strategies needed to be developed during design of interventions.

33. The Committee underlined the importance of effective communication in the development of food security information systems. Communications strategies should be finalized and integrated into the process and these needed to consider foremost needs of intended users.

34. The Committee noted that gender, nutrition and urban food security issues had not received sufficient attention in most food security information systems and stated that these considerations should receive greater attention in future work.

Item 8: Evaluation of FAO's Role and Work related to Water¹²

35. The Committee welcomed the Evaluation report, noting that the methodology followed was sound, a large group of stakeholders had been consulted and that the report was well-structured. The Committee recognized that the topic was complex. However, the evaluation report would have benefited from: 1) a balanced coverage of the regions; 2) clearer prioritization among the many recommendations; and 3) more detailed elaboration of the context for FAO's work in water. The Committee suggested that points 1 and 2 above be taken into account in future evaluations.

36. The Committee appreciated the management response to the evaluation, which was focussed on the perceived key recommendations of the Evaluation. The Committee endorsed the establishment of an FAO Water Platform, as an internal coordination mechanism to better address water-related issues across the Strategic Objectives and organizational structure. The Committee stated that the Water Platform could be created immediately as governing body endorsement would not be required for an internal coordination mechanism. Both decentralized offices and headquarters units should be involved in the development of the Water Platform. The FAO Water Platform would strengthen cooperation with external partners of FAO, when appropriate. The

¹⁰ PC 103/8; PC 103/8 a)

¹¹ Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

¹² PC 103/9; PC 103/9 a)

activities of the Technical Cooperation Department would have to be an integral part of the work of the Platform in order to ensure better horizontal linkages to field work and mirror the multi-disciplinary nature of water.

37. The Committee noted that many of the recommendations had funding implications, which underlined the need for setting priorities. A primary task of the Water Platform would be to develop a Water Strategy for FAO. The creation of the Platform and the development of the Strategy was thus felt to be urgent and should commence immediately, so resource requirements could be assessed in the preparation of the Programme of Work and Budget for 2012-13. The Committee wished to revisit FAO's work related to water once the Water Platform was developed.

38. The Committee felt that the Evaluation should be drawn to the attention of the forthcoming meetings of the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees so that water may be assessed by these bodies as part of their role in setting priorities for FAO.

39. The Committee noted the lack of impact identified in the Evaluation for some of the field projects that had been examined and agreed that there was a need to improve linkages between normative and field project work in FAO's work related to water and ensure proper backstopping. This would be a task for the Water Platform.

40. The Committee agreed that major cross-cutting issues, such as environment and gender, required greater consideration in FAO water-related activities. As transboundary water can also be a source of contention that may affect food security, these should also receive emphasis in FAO's work.

41. TCP resources should concentrate on policy development or capacity building related to water.

Item 9: Programme Committee Multi-year Programme of Work 2010-13¹³

42. As called for by the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal,¹⁴ the Committee considered its draft Multi-year Programme of Work 2010-13, which had been prepared by the Chairperson in consultation with Programme Committee Members.

43. The Committee focussed its discussion on improving its methods of work and efficiency. It recalled the need for timely delivery of documents to Members in all required languages, i.e. at least 28 days before the session commences, and agreed to include an indicator to this effect. The Committee underlined the need for concise documentation to facilitate discussion and formulation of clear and precise recommendations to Council. It requested the Secretariat to include a standard cover page for each Agenda item giving background to the item, key issues for the attention of the Committee, guidance sought, key contact(s) in the Secretariat, and a list of attachments.

44. The Committee approved its Multi-year Programme of Work 2010-13, as included in *Annex 2*.

¹³ PC 103/10

¹⁴ C 2008/4 actions 2.70 – 2.72

Item 10: United Nations Joint Inspection Unit Reports

*Review of information and Communication Technology Hosting (ICT) Services in the UN System Organizations (JIU/REP/2008/5)*¹⁵

*Review of Management of Internet Websites in UN System Organizations (JIU/REP/2008/6)*¹⁶

45. The Committee took note of these Reports.

Item 11: Date and Place of the Hundred and Fourth Session

46. The Committee was informed that the Hundred and Fourth Session of the Programme Committee was scheduled to take place in Rome from 25th to 29th October 2010.

Item 12: Any Other Business

47. There was no discussion under this Agenda item.

Item 13: Access to TCP on a Grant Basis – Outcome of consultation with selected countries

48. The Committee recalled that the issue before it was the inconsistency created by the situation of countries which belonged to both the category of countries that should receive priority attention for TCP assistance and to the category of high-income countries. The high-income countries can enjoy non-emergency TCP assistance on a full cost-recovery basis only; the priority attention countries can enjoy the same assistance on a full grant basis. Six countries fell under this situation.

49. The Committee took note of the follow-up undertaken by the Secretariat to the request made at the 101st and 102nd Sessions to obtain the reaction of the six concerned countries and the respective Regional Chairs. It was informed that five countries had replied and all wished to continue being considered for development TCP assistance on a full-grant basis. One country had not replied.

50. The Committee further noted that the impact of this inconsistency on the use of the TCP appropriation was relatively small. The Committee decided, however, that the eligibility criterion of the TCP should be the subject of a further discussion from the viewpoint of principle and credibility.

51. The Committee requested the Secretariat to provide it with a paper for the continuation of the discussion of this issue at its next session. This paper should explain the inconsistency arising from the current eligibility criterion and provide an update of the impact of that inconsistency. The paper should also contain a set of options which would allow for the inconsistency to be addressed, indicating their respective advantages and inconveniences. Lastly, the paper should clarify the process for submitting any recommendations that the Committee might make to the next level of the governing bodies for endorsement.

¹⁵ CL 138/INF/8

¹⁶ CL 138/INF/9

Item 14: Preliminary Review of Statutory Bodies with a view to allowing them to Exercise Greater Financial and Administrative Authority while remaining within the Framework of FAO¹⁷

52. The Committee recalled that, at its previous session, it had underlined the importance of a review being undertaken as foreseen in the IPA (action 2.69) aimed at addressing issues regarding autonomy of statutory bodies, with particular reference to Article XIV bodies, placed under the framework of FAO and their relationship with FAO.¹⁸ The Committee took note of the preliminary review of statutory bodies prepared by the Secretariat for this purpose, which had been considered by the CCLM at its 88th Session in September 2009.¹⁹ The Committee requested the Secretariat to provide, for its next session, a comprehensive list of statutory bodies covered by the review and a discussion paper highlighting the key issues, impacts, and guidance sought from the Programme Committee on this matter.

Item 15: Follow-up to the Evaluation of the FAO Emergency and Rehabilitation Assistance in the Greater Horn of Africa (2004-07)²⁰

53. The Committee took note of this document.

Item 16: Information on Junior Professional Officer/Associate Expert/Associate Professional Officer Programmes in United Nations System Organizations (JIU/REP/2008/2)²¹

54. The Committee appreciated the information note provided in response to the request made at its earlier session. The Committee acknowledged the information provided by the Director, Human Resources Management Division on the new programme targeting young professionals from non- and under-represented developing countries and female candidates at the P-1 level, and concluded that such discussions were part of the regular review by the Finance Committee of the implementation of Corporate Human Resources Strategy and will be further addressed in that context.

Item 17: Progress Report on the Follow-up to Past Programme Committee Recommendations²²

55. The Committee took note of the Report.

¹⁷ CCLM 88/3

¹⁸ CL 136/9 paragraph 35

¹⁹ CCLM 88/3 and CL 137/5 paragraphs 7-22

²⁰ PC 103/INF/3

²¹ PC 103/INF/4

²² PC 102/INF/5

ANNEX 1

CHARTER FOR THE FAO OFFICE OF EVALUATION**I. Evaluation in FAO**

1. The FAO Evaluation Service was established in 1968 to assure the effective operation of evaluation in the Organization. The evaluation function is one part of the oversight regime of FAO, which also includes external audit, internal audit, inspection and investigation.
2. Evaluation provides accountability to member countries and to the Director-General. It gives member countries a more in-depth understanding and objective basis for their decisions in the governing bodies and for cooperation in the Organization's programmes. Evaluation also contributes to corporate learning, feeding lessons into a robust feedback loop. Evaluation provides a sound basis for improvements in the Organization's programmes in terms of their relevance to countries, definition of objectives, their design and implementation. FAO also participates in system-wide evaluation initiatives. Thus evaluation contributes to assessments of development effectiveness by the UN system.
3. All work of FAO financed from the regular budget of the Organization (mandatory assessed contributions) as well as that financed from voluntarily contributed extra-budgetary resources, is subject to evaluation. The policies for evaluation are set by member countries in the governing bodies.
4. Evaluation is an integral element of a functioning results-based management (RBM) system. It provides accountability on results, in particular on outcomes and impacts of FAO's work. It informs the formulation of programmes, the definition of priorities and the arrangements to maximise institutional effectiveness.

II. Purpose and Principles of Evaluation**A. DEFINITION OF EVALUATION**

5. An evaluation is "an assessment...of an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area, institutional performance, etc. It focuses on expected and achieved accomplishments, examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality, in order to understand achievements or the lack thereof. It aims at determining the relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the interventions and contributions of the organizations of the UN system. An evaluation should provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful, enabling the timely incorporation of findings, recommendations and lessons into the decision-making processes of the organization and its members"²³.

B. PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION

6. FAO strives for the highest international standards in its evaluation practice. It adheres to norms and standards established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)²⁴. These norms

²³ Adapted to become specific to FAO from the "Norms for Evaluation in the UN System", United Nations Evaluation Group, 2005.

²⁴ **The United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)** <http://www.uneval.org> is a professional network that brings together the units responsible for evaluation in the UN system including the specialised agencies, funds, programmes and affiliated organisations. UNEG currently has 43 such members. UNEG aims to strengthen the objectivity, effectiveness and visibility of the evaluation function across the UN system and to advocate the importance of

and standards provide a benchmark against which all organizations and programmes of the UN system can gauge their performance and aim to strengthen, professionalise and improve the quality of evaluation throughout the UN system.

7. The primary principles underpinning evaluation in FAO are: Independence, Impartiality, Credibility, Transparency and Usefulness. These are inter-related.

8. **Independence:** Independence should be protected throughout the evaluation process: policy, institutional framework, management of the evaluation function, conduct of evaluations and follow-up. The evaluation function must be located in the Organization outside the line management that it is mandated to evaluate, and have a direct line of reporting to the governing bodies and the Director-General. In this way, it remains separate from those responsible for the design and implementation of the policies and operations that are evaluated. It must be free from undue influence by management through independent control of the financial and human resources allocated to evaluation, including independent performance assessment of evaluation staff. It must have freedom to design and conduct evaluations according to professional quality standards.

9. **Impartiality:** Evaluation must be free from bias. This means that evaluators must demonstrate professional and personal integrity and conflicts of interest must be avoided. Independence and quality of evaluation design are additional pre-requisites for impartiality. Evaluations must value the input of the main stakeholders, demonstrating a degree of empathy while at the same time maintaining intellectual rigour. Because no individual is totally impartial, evaluation teams must balance different perspectives and backgrounds.

10. **Credibility:** Evaluations must command a high degree of credibility, both from the governing bodies and from managers who must make and implement decisions. Besides impartiality and independence, the credibility of evaluation also requires that the team of evaluators has proven technical competence in the area under evaluation and its context as well as demonstrated competence in evaluation. Independent peer review of evaluation reports also reinforces their credibility.

11. **Transparency:** Evaluation reports and management responses are in the public domain. Evaluations follow a consultative process, whereby evaluators and evaluation managers engage in dialogue to the maximum extent possible with main stakeholders throughout the evaluation process

12. **Usefulness:** Usefulness should always be a prime consideration for selection of a topic for evaluation. Evaluations will be most useful when addressing key areas of concern for the governing bodies and/or FAO management, especially when there are perceived to be problems, priorities are changing or if there are new opportunities. Evaluation should be timed to fit into the management decision-making process.

III. Types of Evaluation in FAO

13. It is FAO policy that all the work carried out by the Organization is subject to evaluation, regardless of the source of funds, through three types of evaluation.

14. **Evaluations for the governing bodies** are decided upon by the Council on the advice of the Programme Committee. Such evaluations focus on key elements of the results-based hierarchy, including strategic and functional objectives, impact focus areas, organizational results

evaluation for learning, decision making and accountability. UNEG provides a forum for members to share experiences and information, discuss the latest evaluation issues and promote simplification and harmonisation of reporting practices.

and core functions²⁵. They also include thematic and programmatic studies and strategic partnership agreements. Major evaluations include all aspects of the work in the area covered, regardless of funding source, and deal with work at headquarters, regional and country levels. The programme of evaluations is defined in a rolling four-year plan. Criteria for selecting evaluations include: specific requests from the Programme Committee; requirements for evaluation expressed by the Director-General; and the need to achieve a balanced coverage of the Organization's strategies and priorities over the medium term.

15. **Country evaluations** comprehensively examine the results of all of FAO's work at country level, including technical cooperation, use made of normative work and functioning of the country office. Synthesis reports consolidating the results across country evaluations are considered by the governing bodies.

16. **Evaluations of individual programmes and projects, usually funded from extra-budgetary resources.** Results of such evaluations are directly used by stakeholders including managers, funders and others directly concerned, often at country level.

IV. Evaluation Scope and Methodology

17. Evaluation in FAO is governed by guidelines that direct and ensure consistency in evaluation processes and methodologies. The key components are:

18. Scoping the evaluation and terms of reference: An approach paper for each major evaluation is developed by the Evaluation Office in consultation with the units most closely involved in implementing the strategy or programme and other stakeholders, including, as appropriate, national government representatives and the representatives of donors.

19. Scope of Evaluations: All evaluations follow UNEG criteria and assess relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact.

20. Evaluations include examination of:

- relevance to the needs and priorities of the member countries and the international community;
- functionality and clarity of the objectives, strategy, design and implementation plan to meet those needs and priorities;
- institutional strengths and weaknesses;
- changes in the external environment in which FAO functions;
- quality and quantity of outputs, in relation to resources deployed in undertaking the work (efficiency);
- outcomes resulting from the activities and outputs in relation to resources deployed for the work (effectiveness);
- impacts and their sustainability in terms of benefits to present and future generations for food security, nutrition, social and economic well-being, gender equity, the environment, etc.; and
- FAO's comparative advantage in addressing the priority needs.

21. Evaluation methodology: The methods and tools used are tailored to the individual evaluations and to answer specific evaluation questions. Triangulation of information across stakeholders is a key tool for gathering and validation of evidence. Evaluations are carried out using a participatory approach, seeking and sharing opinions with stakeholders at different points in time, as this is important for learning and acceptance of evaluation findings. Tools most frequently used include semi-structured interviews, focus groups, checklists, desk studies, direct observation through field visits and surveys.

²⁵ The Charter may need to be revised in the future, to take account of experience with Results-Based Management approaches and its implications for the Organization's evaluation programme.

22. Evaluations seek to identify and measure long-term changes induced through interventions. Separate impact assessments are undertaken for country and other major evaluations, in areas where FAO has had a substantial volume of work. In some cases where impact evaluation is not possible or cost-effective, beneficiary assessments or other forms of field enquiries may be used to gather key information from the targeted population. The intent is to determine whether the Organization has contributed to change and impact in a meaningful line of causality.

23. The evaluation team: Evaluations are managed by the Office of Evaluation. Teams are led and largely composed of independent external consultants²⁶. Evaluation team leaders are consulted where possible on the composition of the remainder of the team. The size of the teams is related to both the scale and complexity of the evaluation, 3-4 lead consultants being a typical number.

24. The evaluation report: The evaluation team is solely responsible for its findings and recommendations, subject to quality assurance by the Office of Evaluation. The Office assures adherence to the terms of reference and recognised quality standards, timeliness, and to provide information and methodological support to the evaluation.

V. Mechanisms for Evaluation Follow-up

25. In order to develop an effective evaluation system, mechanisms must be in place to ensure that evaluation reports are fully considered and agreed recommendations are acted upon. In FAO, this is done through management responses to each evaluation undertaken and follow-up reports on the implementation of the management response.

26. Management response: Each evaluation has a management response, including management's overall view of the evaluation, comments on each recommendation and an operational plan for implementation of agreed recommendations. The Office of Evaluation checks that responses meet required standards of comprehensiveness and clarity, but responsibility for the substance of a response lies with the manager(s) concerned.

27. Follow-up report: The follow-up report ensures compliance with agreed recommendations and, if necessary, accounts for any variation between actions decided in the management response and those actually implemented. The follow-up report is prepared by the organizational unit responsible for the management response and the Office of Evaluation ensures that it meets required standards.

28. For reports presented to the governing bodies, both the management response and the follow-up report are also considered by the Programme Committee.

29. All evaluation reports, management responses and follow-up reports are available to all members and posted on the FAO evaluation website. Consultative groups and workshops will be used to bring key evaluation reports to the attention of member countries.

VI. Quality Assurance

30. Mechanisms are instituted to ensure that the evaluation function in FAO corresponds to needs of Members and conforms to UNEG norms and standards. These measures include: a) peer review of major evaluation reports; b) biennial review by a small group of independent peers for conformity of evaluation work to best practice and standards; c) independent evaluation of the evaluation function every six years.

²⁶ Office of Evaluation staff but not other staff of FAO may also serve as evaluation team members

31. The biennial review and independent evaluation of the evaluation function will result in a report to the Director-General and the Council, together with the recommendations of the Programme Committee.

VII. Institutional Arrangements

32. The institutional arrangements for evaluation ensure independence of the evaluation function so as to fulfill its accountability role while ensuring use of evaluation results by the governing bodies and management.

A. THE OFFICE OF EVALUATION

33. The Office of Evaluation is responsible for ensuring the relevance, effectiveness, quality and independence of evaluation in FAO. It is located inside the FAO Secretariat structure, reporting to the Director-General and to the Council through the Programme Committee.

34. The Office receives guidance from the Council and its Programme Committee and consults with the Evaluation Committee (Internal). It is solely responsible for the conduct of all evaluations (with the exception of auto-evaluations), including the selection of evaluators and the terms of reference. It is thus operationally independent within the Organization. In addition to its responsibilities for the conduct of evaluations, the Office also:

- 1) facilitates feedback from evaluation through follow-up to individual evaluations and in communicating lessons for more general application;
- 2) ensures timely reporting on the implementation of those evaluation recommendations accepted by the governing bodies, management and other concerned stakeholders;
- 3) has an institutionalised advisory role on results-based management and programming and budgeting;
- 4) contributes to the enhancement of evaluation within the UN through active participation in the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG);
- 5) contributes to the evaluation of the effectiveness of the UN system and other partners as it relates to areas of FAO's mandate through joint evaluations;
- 6) coordinates its work programme with the rest of the UN system, taking into account the work of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU); and
- 7) for staff training, provides comments on training requirements to the Human Resources Management Division.

B. ROLE OF THE GOVERNING BODIES IN EVALUATION

35. The Council is the decision-making body on evaluation policy and work programme. It exercises oversight over evaluation and ensures that there is transparent, professional and independent evaluation of the Organization's performance in contributing to its planned outcomes and impacts, including feedback of evaluation into planning and programming.

36. The Programme Committee is the direct recipient of evaluation reports for the governing bodies. Reports involving financial or administrative matters may be referred to the Finance Committee. The functions of the Programme Committee with respect to evaluation are to advise the Council on overall policies and procedures for evaluation and to:

- 1) approve the rolling workplan for major evaluations;

- 2) consider major evaluation reports and the management response to the evaluation and its findings and recommendations. The Committee presents its conclusions on both the evaluation and the management response to the Council in its report as well as its recommendations for follow-up action; and
- 3) receive progress reports on the implementation of evaluation findings and recommendations and provide recommendations to the Council.

C. ROLE OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

37. The role of the Director-General with respect to evaluation is to:

- 1) make proposals on the work programme of the Office of Evaluation and request specific independent evaluations of FAO programmes and activities;
- 2) for evaluations to the governing bodies, present the Management Response through the Programme Committee, including whether each recommendation is accepted, partially accepted or rejected, and an operational plan on follow-up;
- 3) prepare and present to the governing bodies through the Programme Committee, follow-up reports on actions taken with respect to agreed recommendations;
- 4) facilitate feedback from evaluation to improve learning from strategic planning results-based management; and
- 5) ensure that the Evaluation Office functions within its approved budget and work programme and the agreed rules and procedures.

D. THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE (INTERNAL)

38. The Committee advises the Director-General and the Office of Evaluation on matters pertaining to evaluation in FAO with respect to the Organization as a whole. Its aim is to assist the Organization in implementing an evaluation regime which is efficient and responsive to the needs of both the Organization's Members and its Secretariat. It also exercises a quality control function on management responses and follow-up reports. In line with the decisions of the Council, the Committee will support the independent role of the Office of Evaluation within FAO and will review and advise the Director-General on all policy matters pertaining to evaluation. The Committee interacts with the Programme Committee as appropriate.

39. Subject to any organizational changes which may occur as a result of the implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action for FAO Renewal, the Committee comprises five permanent members, among whom the Director-General will designate a Chairperson: Deputy Director-General (Knowledge), Deputy Director-General (Operations), Assistant Director-General, Technical Cooperation Department (TC), Legal Counsel, and the Director, Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management; and, rotating on a two-year term: the Assistant Directors-General of two technical departments and one Assistant Director-General/Regional Representative. Other members may be co-opted as required by the Chairperson. The Director of the Office of Evaluation serves as Secretary.

40. The scope of the Committee's work includes:

- a) advice on the implementation of decisions of the governing bodies on evaluation;
- b) maximise the benefits from evaluation in feedback to planning, programming and management decision-making;
- c) review of the coverage of evaluation, proposals for the evaluation work programme and the terms of reference of major evaluations;

- d) review of Management Responses to major evaluations for consideration by the governing bodies;
- e) assessment and oversight of progress in implementation of management follow-up actions to evaluations;
- f) advice on the adoption of measures to ensure the Evaluation Office applies international quality standards to its work; and
- g) review of available resources for evaluation in the light of the Organization's needs.

VIII. Staffing of the Office of Evaluation

41. All appointments for evaluation, including that of the Director of the Office of Evaluation, staff and consultants follow transparent and professional procedures with the primary criteria being those of technical competence and behavioural independence but also with considerations of regional and gender balance. The Director of Evaluation will have the responsibility for the appointment of evaluation staff and the appointment of consultants, in conformity with FAO procedures.

42. A competitive procedure applies for appointment of the Director of Evaluation. A panel, consisting of representatives of the Director-General and the Programme Committee, as well as evaluation specialists from other UN agencies will review the terms of reference and statement of qualifications for the post. Based on the review, a vacancy announcement will be prepared, issued widely and a list of qualified candidates for interview compiled. The panel will then review these candidates and make a final recommendation regarding candidates appropriate for appointment by the Director-General.

43. The Director of Evaluation serves for a fixed term of four years with a possibility of reappointment only once for a further term of four years. The renewal of the appointment of the Director of Evaluation is subject to consultation with the Programme Committee. Likewise, the Director-General shall consult with the Programme Committee before the termination of the appointment of the Director of Evaluation. The Director of Evaluation may not be reappointed within FAO to another post or recruited as a consultant during a period of one year following the expiry or termination of the appointment.

IX. Budget for Evaluation in FAO

44. The Regular Programme budget for evaluation will attain the level of at least 0.8% of the total Regular Programme Budget. In consideration of the fact that the Evaluation Office also reports to the governing bodies of the Organization, the evaluation budget will be allocated in full to the Evaluation Office upon approval by the Council and Conference as part of the Programme of Work and Budget.

45. The translation and reproduction of evaluation documents for the governing bodies, and certain indirect costs of evaluation such as office space, are covered outside the evaluation budget.

46. An allocation for evaluation is included in all extra-budgetary supported activities. Two Trust Fund pool accounts have been established to receive the evaluation funds: one for emergency and rehabilitation projects and another for technical cooperation for development projects, including programme support to normative work. The Trust Funds will be utilised to finance thematic, programme and country evaluations.

47. Large projects of technical cooperation for development (including those financed through Unilateral Trust Funds) will have a separate independent evaluation at least once in their lifetime. The criteria for separate evaluation and the levels of allocation in project budgets for evaluation will be in accordance with published guidelines that may be reviewed periodically by the governing bodies.

ANNEX 2

PROGRAMME COMMITTEE MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK 2010-13

I. Overall Objective for the Programme Committee

The Programme Committee will provide FAO Council with a solid analytical basis for sound, timely, effective and efficient decision-making with respect to choice of priorities, programmes and plans in order to improve the quality of FAO's work and strengthen the delivery of its services to Member Nations.

II. RESULTS

A. PROGRAMME PLANNING AND PRIORITY SETTING

Result: Programme Committee recommendations on priorities are favourably considered by the Council

Indicators and targets:

- 75% of the Programme Committee recommendations on priorities are included in the Council report
- 75% of the Programme Committee recommendations made on the Medium Term Plan (MTP) and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) are included in the Council Report

Outputs: Clear, precise and consensual recommendations to Council

Activities:

- Review of proposed priorities taking into account the Reports of the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees
- Assessment of Strategic Framework (once every four years)
- Assessment of proposed MTP: consistency with the Strategic Framework, and incorporating the experience of results-based approach of the previous biennium
- Assessment of proposed PWB: responsiveness to emerging priorities, drawing lessons from performance, cognizant of resource availability, stress on integrated budget, absorbing key recommendations of major evaluations

Working methods:

- Informal consultations with Assistant Directors-General (ADGs) and other key members of Secretariat
- Close collaboration with the Independent Chairperson of the Council
- Close collaboration with the Finance Committee on financial and staff resources
- Standard approach for receiving and analyzing advice from Technical Committees and Regional Conferences
- Consultation with the bureaus of Technical Committees and Regional Conferences

B. RESULTS-BASED MONITORING OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Result: Council advice and decisions on adjustments to programme reflect Programme Committee recommendations

Indicators and targets: 75% of Programme Committee recommendations adopted by the Council in providing advice and taking decisions

Outputs: Clear, precise and consensual recommendations to Council

Activities:

- Annual review of PWB implementation and proposal of adjustments, including:
 - Justifications for in-course modification of the on-going PWB
 - Review of allocation and management of the integrated budget: balance and trend between assessed contributions and extra-budgetary funds
 - Review of the allocation and use of extra-budgetary resources: alignment with organizational results and National Medium-term Priority Frameworks (NMTPFs), funding sources, balance between emergency and other funding, compliance with Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Accra Agenda of Action, and Good Humanitarian Donorship principles, funding for the Impact Focus Areas (IFAs)
- Biennial Programme Implementation Report (PIR) review and proposal of adjustments to the next PWB

Working methods:

- Close collaboration with the Finance Committee

C. EVALUATION

Results:

- Evaluations focus on strategic issues
- Evaluation recommendations are incorporated in the programme planning process and in new policies and strategies
- Evaluation function reflects UNEG best practices and norms and standards

Indicators and targets:

- 50% of evaluations are strategic
- All agreed recommendations are followed-up by management, and 75% of relevant recommendations are reflected in the Programme of Work and Budget within one biennium
- 100% of evaluations follow the UNEG Norms and Standards

Outputs: Clear, precise and consensual recommendations by the Programme Committee

Activities:

- Review and recommendation of the Charter for the FAO Office of Evaluation
- Approval of the rolling evaluation plan: focus on strategic issues, good balance among topics and types of evaluation, including possible *ex-post* evaluations, taking into account the geographic balance between regions, focused joint evaluations with other organizations, emphasis on feedback from evaluation to programming and implementation, judgement on the adequacy of evaluation resources,
- Oversight of follow-up of evaluation recommendations
- Review of individual evaluations
- Biennial peer review of evaluation practices (2012 and 2014) and independent evaluation of the evaluation function at least once in six years (2016)

Methods of work:

- Close contact with the Evaluation Office and concerned units
- Interaction with Members

D. IPA IMPLEMENTATION AND INTEGRATION INTO PWB

Results:

- Council agrees on the way ahead on the remaining IPA issues pertaining to the Programme Committee mandate (results-based monitoring and reporting, resource mobilization and management strategy, and field and decentralized work)
- Council provides advice and makes decisions aimed at improving the progress of already agreed IPA actions pertaining to the Programme Committee mandate which may be encountering problems in their implementation

Indicators and targets:

- Programme Committee recommendations on the remaining IPA issues are included in the Council Report to the Conference
- Programme Committee recommendations on any IPA items encountering problems are included in the Council Report

Outputs: Clear, precise and consensual recommendations to Council

Activities:

- Review of the results-based monitoring and reporting system based on a proposal by the FAO Secretariat
- Review of the resource mobilization and management strategy based on a proposal by the FAO Secretariat
- Review of a proposal by the FAO Secretariat on the field and decentralized work
- Review of IPA implementation in areas of Programme Committee mandate

Methods of Work:

- Close collaboration with the CoC and the Independent Chairperson of the Council
- Close collaboration with the Finance Committee
- Informal consultations with FAO staff in charge of IPA implementation in general, and those in charge of remaining IPA issues

E. IMPROVED METHODS OF WORK AND EFFICIENCY OF THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Results: The Programme Committee works in a proactive and inclusive way, and has a forceful advisory role

Indicators and targets:

- Agenda of the meetings focus on a few strategic issues
- Technical recommendations of the Programme Committee achieve regional consensus
- Documents received in all required languages 28 days before a session commences
- Have a standardized cover page for all substantive Agenda items

Outputs: Clear, precise and consensual recommendations to Council

Activities:

- Prepare the Multi-year Programme of Work for the Programme Committee
- Report on the Multi-year Programme of Work at the end of the biennium

Methods of work:

- Informal consultations on the Multi-year Programme of Work
- Consultations on major strategic issues with the Strategy Teams
- Clear mandates for Programme Committee Members from their Regional Groups
- Close collaboration with the Independent Chairperson of the Council
- Close collaboration with all governing bodies
- Close collaboration with the CoC

- Early engagement in the preparation of MTP and PWB
- Timeliness of availability of documents in all required languages
- Engagement with FAO staff responsible for issues covered by the Programme Committee