

43rd Session of the Conference

Secretariat Response to Item 14: Progress report on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System

FAO is grateful to its Members for acknowledging the Organization's recent achievements and continued efforts to align its strategic planning and results framework with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) cycle.

In the context of the QCPR, FAO confirms its strategic direction to continue placing the transformation of agrifood systems at the centre of sustainable development, while ensuring tailored context-dependent solutions and approaches reflecting disparities between and within countries.

FAO appreciates the recognition of its vital role in UN repositioning, particularly at the country level, and is determined to further develop strategized, integrated and country-focused partnerships with the entire UN system, to leverage much needed investments, efficiencies and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) financing at scale.

Detailed comments on specific observations raised by the Members are provided below.

On resource mobilization:

Since 2021, FAO has invested effort to provide more detail and granularity on the sources of voluntary contributions to FAO's integrated budget, now available at the newly launched website for Members [here](#).

The [Annual Funding Overview](#) provides details regarding all resource partners' contributions between 2020 and 2022.

FAO is the third largest implementing agency of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the second largest UN partner of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), as Members request FAO to act as an accredited or executing entity for their GEF and GCF allocations. This reflects the recognition of the very high quality of the technical work provided by FAO.

While the increase in private sector funding appears large, these figures represent a small absolute amount, just 1.5 percent of the total funding, and fluctuations between years are common. For example, 60 percent of all private sector contributions were provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Thankful for the generosity of donors, FAO will continue to provide Members with regular and transparent information on the Organization's resource mobilization portfolio and emerging trends.

On gender-disaggregated statistics in agriculture and rural development:

In April, FAO launched a new report entitled *The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems (SWAFS)*, which showed that significant gaps remain regarding the availability, scope and granularity of gender data and statistics in agriculture and food systems.

FAO supports countries to address the data gaps by raising awareness about the need for gender data, advising on gender-responsive and transformative policies, supporting the implementation of rigorous gender analyses, and providing trainings, guidelines and advice on good practices.

FAO presented new gender statistics on employment in agrifood systems and on food security during the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Group of Experts on Gender Statistics meeting, held in Geneva in May 2023.

In September 2023, FAO and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) will co-host the launch of a new metric called "Women's Empowerment Metric for National Statistical Systems", being developed by IFPRI and Emory University in close collaboration with the 50x2030 Initiative to Close the Agricultural Data Gap.

On Efficiency reform:

FAO has been fully engaged in the UN efficiency agenda initiatives at all levels and has launched the internal UN Efficiency Board, which brings together internal divisions and offices responsible for the various components of the agenda, to improve efficiency gains across the Organization.

Common Premises (CP): FAO enjoys government-provided premises for Decentralized Offices, in line with the host country agreement's provisions. The modality in place already caters for efficiencies/benefits, which otherwise would have required securing additional resources for rental of office space at the country office level. As of the end 2022, FAO had 12 percent of its offices under the CP arrangements, including 50 Country Offices across the globe, with the largest share in Africa.

Common Back Office (CBO): FAO is engaging in this fast-evolving initiative, with ten pilots moving forward in 2023. FAO's expected benefits need to be assessed case-by-case, given that FAO's Global Shared Service Centre – one of the longest serving across the UN – has consolidated the location of independent services both horizontally (from headquarters) and vertically (from the field).

On data collection for SDG monitoring and reporting:

FAO is committed to enhancing data collection capacities leading to improved SDG monitoring and reporting. FAO is implementing activities on harmonizing data collection and reporting tools with those used by other custodian agencies through the UN Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators and the Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System.

On FAO's role in the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus:

As recommended by the first ever evaluation across the UN system of FAO's role in the HDP nexus (2021), the Organization is investing more in conflict-sensitive and peace-responsive programming, in line with its normative and technical mandates and comparative advantages.

FAO has built partnerships with the Peacebuilding Support Office and the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), and is a member of the Peacebuilding Contact Group and the Peacebuilding Strategy Group; the latter represented at Deputy Director-General (DDG) level. The Organization is currently implementing over 30 joint PBF projects in 24 countries, across various thematic areas such as cross-border transhumance and natural resource management, partnering with entities across the UN system, as well as national and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

Support from the PBF is a good example of bridging traditionally siloed donor funding-streams across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding, along with providing advance financing for upstream conflict prevention.

In line with the Secretary-General's request, FAO contributes to local-level peacebuilding, particularly through building resilience and improving livelihoods through our programmes. In 2022, FAO published Operationalizing pathways to sustaining peace in the context of Agenda 2030: a how-to guide¹

¹ (<http://www.fao.org/3/cc1021en/cc1021en.pdf>).