

April 2007



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PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Ninety-seventh Session

Rome, 21 - 25 May 2007

Real Time Evaluation of the FAO Emergency and Rehabilitation Operations in Response to the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami

Management Response

A. OVERALL RESPONSE TO THE EVALUATION

1. Management accepts with some caveats almost all of the recommendations of the real time evaluation of FAO's response to the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami that occurred on 26 December 2004 and is pleased to note that many of the recommendations are already being implemented, either fully or in part, in the responses to other crises.
2. In its final report, the evaluation team notes that the large and complex FAO tsunami response with operations in seven widely dispersed countries was sometimes implemented in harsh conditions in a very fluid environment with hundreds, if not thousands, of NGOs and other actors. Indeed, the findings of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition with regard to the overall international humanitarian response, which covered the operations of more than 50 agencies, highlighted a number of serious shortcomings and identified possible areas for improvement by all actors with regard to future emergencies. It follows that management acknowledges the significant challenges that the unprecedented character of the emergency also posed for the evaluation team and welcomes the depth, breadth and value of the recommendations that they have presented.
3. Management welcomes the real time approach as opposed to ex-post evaluation for protracted emergency and rehabilitation operations. The real time approach can provide feedback that enables management to make adjustments to ongoing programmes and act sooner upon systemic issues thereby benefiting other programmes. Management looks forward to future real time evaluations.

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4. While the evaluation notes the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami was an unprecedented disaster, which was met with an equally unprecedented generous response, management would highlight that in many respects, FAO's response was also unprecedented. This was, for example, the first time that FAO had been able to launch a large scale operation in response to a sudden onset disaster in Asia and to one where the fisheries sector was most affected. Before donors had responded, FAO using available and TCP resources was able to deploy national and international staff to multiple field sites in several countries within a few days of the disaster to conduct rapid assessments of the damage to agriculture and fisheries, and shortly thereafter, with regard to damage to forest resources. Management acquired valuable experience that will enable the Organization to respond better to other disasters including the predicted¹ increase in the severity and frequency of extreme weather events, i.e. floods, windstorms, and droughts.

5. Use of FAO's Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA) was also unprecedented. The SFERA was a new instrument, established in April 2004 with US\$2 million of FAO's own resources to expedite rapid deployment of staff and assessments and provide working capital in anticipation of receiving approved donor funds. The Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami represented the first time that some donors contributed to the SFERA and with relatively little conditionality and that FAO was able to use it on a large-scale. It allowed FAO to implement an approach that was timelier, less burdensome administratively and more programmatic, i.e. it enabled FAO to fill gaps and glue together the traditional projects to which the most donor contributions were directed. It also gave FAO the flexibility to better support indirect strategic activities, which are difficult to obtain funding for in emergency appeals, as donors and recipient governments understandably prioritize direct assistance to the people affected by the crisis. Examples of indirect strategic assistance included investment in coordination, technical assistance, capacity building, and employment of FAO's Investment Centre Division to assist the governments and the international financial institutions and regional development banks with the longer-term reconstruction programming, which all influenced the allocation of the far greater resources at the disposal of other actors. The success of this precedent led to the programme approach being adopted by FAO for the control of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and has encouraged additional donors to support SFERA.

6. Management believes that it is important to assess the Organization's response to the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami in relation to broader trends and improvements in FAO's emergency and rehabilitation operations. For example, annual voluntary contributions to FAO's emergency and rehabilitation operations have risen more than twelve-fold from US\$ 24 million in 1996 to US\$ 300 million in 2006, which has required ever-increasing recruitment of new operations staff who need time to acquire experience of FAO and its procedures. Concurrently, expansion of FAO's emergency and rehabilitation operations has placed an increasing burden on central and technical services during which time the Regular Programme budget has declined in real terms. When the tsunami struck at the end of 2004, FAO's emergency operations were already heavily involved in combating the desert locust upsurge in the Sahel countries and responding to a series of other crises in Africa and elsewhere. Wholesale redeployment of experienced operations staff to the tsunami response would have weakened management of other crises; therefore, some spreading of experience was required in combination with taking on and developing additional capacity. With subsequent expansion of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza programme and other country programmes, competition for highly experienced operations staff did not diminish in 2005 and 2006, so recruitment of additional personnel continued to accelerate. Although flexibility to reduce operations personnel has been retained in case of declining demand, considerable efforts have been made over the last few years to stabilize core operations staff, invest in training including that of the FAO country representations, and further involve and compensate central and technical services.

¹ UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

B. COMMENT ON FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

a) *Resource mobilization and marketing*

7. In general, management accepts the findings and they are particularly useful in helping FAO to advocate to donors the advantages of the SFERA. The evaluation notes that FAO raised insufficient resources for longer-term reconstruction and development, which it attributes to overfunding of the emergency phase and donor fatigue. It also calls for FAO to plead the case for longer time frames in UN humanitarian appeals in order to allow for the more complex support required to restore livelihoods and food security. However, this finding does not take into account that the UN and NGOs tend to be well funded for the short-term provision of essential services directly to beneficiaries when a government is overwhelmed by a crisis and a surge of external donations. Funding for UN humanitarian response activities typically declines rapidly after a disaster and tends to shift towards a focus on technical cooperation and capacity building once institutions have been re-established and suitable mechanisms have been put in place, such as World Bank administered multidonor trust funds for medium- and longer-term reconstruction, and as soon as governmental absorption capacity has been augmented.

b) *Coordination between units*

8. Management agrees with the findings and the need to better define shared goals and strategies and promote orderly transition from early rehabilitation to development. As noted above, management would note that the response to the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami triggered unprecedented collaboration among FAO departments, and between headquarters, RAP and the FAORs. Lessons learned have informed the operation of the Avian Influenza programme. Meanwhile, responsibility for managing support to tsunami affected areas has been transferred from TCE to the FAORs everywhere except in Aceh, Indonesia and conflict affected northeast Sri Lanka.

c) *Programme design and management*

9. Management largely agrees with the findings. Considerable progress has been made already in implementing the recommendations regarding damage and needs assessments. Integrated Livelihood Assessment Guidelines have been developed together with the ILO including minimum baseline data to be collected by country teams in high risk/low capacity countries in preparedness for a shock, how to conduct immediate assessment within ten days of a shock to inform the UN Flash Appeal, and more detailed assessment over the next 30 days for revision of the appeal and formulation of a short- and medium-term strategy. The guidelines have been tested and refined in the response to the earthquakes in northern Pakistan and Yogyakarta, Indonesia, and to the recent typhoon in the Philippines. Further testing is underway with ILO and in tandem with an FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Mission to flood affected Bolivia as part of a pioneering interagency post-disaster needs assessment in collaboration with the Government and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. Rosters of staff from the operations and technical divisions and consultants with relevant experience to conduct such assessments have also been developed. It is also planned to train the selected staff as well as FAO and ILO country teams and national counterparts in selected countries with high risk of disasters on how to use the guidelines. In addition the country teams will be trained in contingency planning. In Pakistan, FAO followed up the initial assessment with a recovery assessment after six months. However, capacity to conduct regular recovery assessments in all cases over a period of two to three years will be subject to availability of funding.

10. With regards to the findings that FAO should place stronger emphasis on provision of policy advice, technical assistance, and capacity building there is no disagreement. However, it should be recognized that in the response to an emergency, it is not always possible to obtain funding from donors for such types of activities. Experience shows that donors prioritize assistance that provides immediate, short-term and direct benefits to vulnerable groups affected by the disaster. Similarly, recipient governments tend to prefer direct assistance and question more than minimal technical assistance.

11. Concerning monitoring, steps have been taken already to develop standard processes, overseen by an interdepartmental working group including PBE. As for provision by FAO of mapping and remote sensing services, management believes this should be decided on a case by case basis and subject to obtaining adequate funding. In large scale, high profile disasters, remote sensing and mapping services may be better provided and resourced by the World Bank and other cross-sectoral coordination agencies, as occurred in Aceh and Sri Lanka.

d) *Operational capacity and efficiency*

12. Management accepts there is room for improvement. As noted above and in partial mitigation, FAO's emergency and rehabilitation operations have expanded rapidly in recent years. Moreover, significant efforts have been made and are underway to improve systems and capacity. For instance, in the last year better adapted procedures have been identified and some have already been adopted, all operations staff have undergone training in procedures, and all of the FAORs and their respective Emergency Coordinators in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East will have undergone training by the end of May 2007 on how to better handle emergency operations and have been provided with a handbook.

e) *Working with partners*

13. The findings are in line with what FAO is doing already and seeking to improve. Stronger and increasingly operational partnerships are developing rapidly with ILO, UNIDO, UNHCR and WFP, as well as with a number of international and national NGOs. For example standby agreements with international NGOs are being explored. Two senior staff from WFP have been seconded to FAO's Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) to promote interagency collaboration and look at options for taking advantage of WFP's greater logistic capacity. This has already delivered positive results, for example, with regard to greater collaboration on joint needs assessments and in more joined up programming in the earthquake affected northern areas of Pakistan. As for logistics, agreed interim measures include joining the UN Humanitarian Response Depot System and signing the technical agreement with WFP, FAO to become part of WFP's standby partner agreement scheme for secondment of staff in emergencies, WFP to start in May with half-day logistics introduction courses for all TCE operations staff, and FAO and WFP to pilot a field agreement for downstream logistics services in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

f) *Quality, adequacy and impact of FAO tsunami response*

14. Management partially agrees with the findings. Management notes that the beneficiary figures provided, 106 000, refer to households rather than individuals, meaning that the total number of people affected by FAO's response was probably more than 500 000. It should also be noted that each household would also benefit from restoration of food production and family income. In addition, some of the recipients would employ labour, and restarting agricultural and fishing activities would generate multiplier benefits for associated enterprises and the wider economy. Likewise, activities related to forest rehabilitation would generate income in the short term and improve environmental conditions and contribute to livelihoods in the long term. The unquantifiable benefits of indirect assistance, i.e. support for coordination, technical assistance and investment programming by the governments and the banks which influenced the allocation of the far greater envelope of resources that was not channelled through FAO, should also be taken into account.

15. Regarding beneficiary selection, the evaluation suggests that "activities that consist of the replacement of lost individual assets lend themselves to helping the better off segments of society." The evaluation does not recommend excluding those who have lost assets but recommends reaching out to the poorest segments of society including at times "donating to the poor access to assets that they may not have possessed before the disaster." Asserting that replacement of lost assets assists the better off may be misinterpreted or misleading. The coastal farming and fishing communities affected by the earthquake and the tsunami were, in almost all cases, very poor, with most producers struggling to meet the basic needs of their families. Fishing,

aquaculture and farming constituted the bedrock of the local economy and needed to be rebuilt better in order to restore self-reliance and stimulate the wider economy upon which families with non-agricultural and fishing incomes depended. While efforts should be made to provide assets to those who did not possess them before, it should be understood that it is likely that they will need more training to ensure sustainability. However, FAO does not have a comparative advantage in assisting people who have no opportunity for economic activity in agriculture or fisheries, and whose problems are better addressed by other agencies or social safety nets. Regarding gender the evaluation findings appear contradictory. On the one hand, the evaluation concludes that women did not receive sufficient attention because most of the damage was in the fisheries sector and FAO focused on repair and replacement of boats and fishing gear for fishermen. On the other hand the evaluation reports that women involved in fish processing were assisted, others received training in nutrition, and that in the agriculture sector the women met by the evaluation missions considered they had received their due share of assistance.

16. Lastly, management fully supports the finding that FAO should continue to develop rapid consultation processes and livelihoods approaches for rehabilitation and reconstruction. As noted above under programme design and management, considerable progress has been made in developing guidelines and conducting training in the livelihoods approach. A recent joint evaluation by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) and PBE of efforts to mainstream the sustainable livelihoods approach in FAO concluded that it had been most successful in the emergency and rehabilitation operations. Similarly, management would note that FAO's support for forest rehabilitation and wood supply for rehabilitation in tsunami-affected areas underlines the importance of integrating ecosystem rehabilitation and environmental considerations into early rehabilitation efforts in order to avoid collateral environmental damage.

17. In closing, management once again recognizes the value of this evaluation and welcomes almost all of the recommendations contained therein. It will endeavour to ensure timely, effective and efficient responses and in a number of cases, has already implemented the necessary changes and adjustments. Management's response to each of the 33 specific recommendations and the actions to be taken are provided in the appended matrix.

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
1: FAO should review the scope of SFERA operations and the reporting requirements of FAO management, individual donors and governing bodies, and should implement appropriate solutions including financial set-up so as to automate accounting.	Accepted.	TCE will provide AFF with revised requirements. TCE and AFF to identify the best financial set-up to meet needs.	Revised financial set-up in place by end of 2007.	TCE/AFF
2: FAO should continue to raise the awareness of donors on how useful SFERA has been and on the advantages of flexibility and cost of conditionality. TCE should be more conscious of the risk it takes when accepting some donors' conditions, and at times should send the right message by turning down funding propositions which come with too many strings attached.	Accepted.	TCE will continue to raise donor awareness of SFERA, highlighting its flexibility and core principles. Diverse fora and media will be used, including donor briefings and specific appeals.	Continuous	TCE

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
<p>3: FAO and other organizations involved in livelihood rehabilitation should plead the case for longer timeframes in consolidated appeals with OCHA and the IASC, arguing the differences between humanitarian/relief assistance destined to save lives which rely on easy to quantify and stockpile “kits”, and more complex support to the restoration of livelihoods which involves re-capitalizing affected communities with materials that are likely to change from one crisis to the next.</p>	<p>Accepted. FAO agrees with the recommendation but notes that it is a complex issue and that FAO’s capacity to influence donor strategy is limited. Donor budgets for humanitarian assistance are primarily directed at saving lives and immediate relief. As a result, some donors do not support the inclusion of livelihood support and early recovery activities in humanitarian appeals, leading to a situation whereby these types of activities are frequently under-funded in donor responses to Appeals. It is noted however, that several of the fisheries projects supported by donors in response to the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami included livelihood-centred components.</p>	<p>TCE will continue to highlight the importance of longer timeframes and the need to focus on restoration of livelihoods and will continue to prepare projects and appeals centred on these approaches, in consultation with the technical services concerned. TCE, in collaboration with TCAP, will also continue to emphasise these points in key strategic fora and will seek to build partnerships with external partners to jointly highlight these approaches.</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>TCE/TCAP</p>

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
4: There is a need for high-level corporate coordination groups to define shared goals and strategies for the Organisation as a whole and to promote an orderly collaboration between units and a smooth transition from early rehabilitation to longer-term reconstruction and development.	Accepted. The recommendation could be extended to include a wider range of disaster risk management activities undertaken within the Organization, such as those associated with disaster prevention and mitigation, disaster preparedness, early warning, rapid response and recovery and rehabilitation.	TC will identify and establish a high-level corporate coordination group and will ensure that emergency-specific coordination groups will be established on an ad hoc basis as and when required, in line with previous practice. The coordination group will include representation from units responsible for following donor strategies in general (TCAP).	6 months	TCE/TCA/ technical departments
5: In large-scale emergencies, FAO should conduct multi-disciplinary, holistic damage and needs assessments for all areas within its mandate, communicated to all partners through a consolidated document, and should strive to carry them out in cooperation with all relevant FAO technical divisions, and with national agencies and other international organizations.	Accepted. TCE is developing integrated livelihood assessment guidelines in collaboration with FAO technical divisions, the ILO and other members of the OCHA cluster working group on early recovery. They have been used and tested in Pakistan, Indonesia and the Philippines and are currently being updated and revised to incorporate lessons learnt. Additional and complementary assessment tools and	Integrated livelihood assessment guidelines finalised. FAO and other UN staff in selected disaster-prone countries trained in use of guidelines. Integrated livelihood assessment guidelines used on a systematic basis in post-disaster contexts as part of system-wide post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA).	September 2007 January 2008 Continuous from March 2008	TCE/ technical departments (TCA/TCO kept informed)

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
	<p>guidelines are being developed by technical divisions, including for example, nutritional assessments and forest and natural resource assessments. Reflecting the specificities of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, FI, in collaboration with the Consortium to Restore Shattered Livelihood Communities in Tsunami-devastated Nations (CONSRN) has developed tools to provide continuous real-time damage assessments that have enabled physical assets to be identified and replaced in a timely, equitable and transparent manner to tsunami-affected households. In all cases, FAO is striving to ensure that assessments are used as part of an integrated and coordinated international humanitarian response, and in line with established inter-agency agreements and protocols.</p>	<p>Complementary technical modules and assessment tools for emergency assessments in fisheries and other technical areas developed.</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
<p>6: Time and accessibility permitting, needs assessment reports should attempt to cover: (1) over and beyond damaged assets, an inventory of key assets that were not damaged and that could be used to jump-start the recovery ; (2) an analysis of non-production segments of market chains affected by the disaster; (3) an identification of the most affected and vulnerable groups; and (4) a clear articulation between FAO's proposed role and priorities and the broad needs of the sector to be covered by others.</p>	<p>Accepted in part. It is important to distinguish between the different types of assessments that are normally undertaken immediately after a sudden-onset emergency. Activities 1, 2 and 3 for example, are beyond the scope of what can be achieved during the initial quick impact assessment that is undertaken in the first few days after a sudden onset disaster and which form the basis for Initial Flash Appeals. It is agreed that these activities could be included in subsequent and more in-depth assessments and revisions of Appeals. The only exception may be the fisheries sector, in which case it is often possible to identify the most affected and vulnerable groups immediately after a sudden onset disaster. FI would also highlight the need to assess the carrying capacity of the fisheries resource base in the disaster-affected area in order to determine the best possible response strategy.</p>	<p>See Recommendation 5 – it is expected that the integrated livelihood assessment guidelines and technical modules and tools will respond to the issues raised in this recommendation.</p> <p>Develop additional tools to strengthen capacity to analyse market chains affected by the disaster.</p>	<p>See timings for Recommendation 5</p> <p>Continuous</p>	<p>TCE/ technical departments</p>

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
7: In the tsunami response as well as in other contexts, FAO should try to provide regular recovery assessments in areas of its mandate over a period of two to three years after the disaster.	Accepted, subject to availability of funding which may constitute a significant constraint in many instances. This approach was adopted in the case of the Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami and enabled FAO to assist governments in the development of national strategies and reconstruction programmes. TCE agrees that this approach is to be encouraged. In addition, an initial recovery assessment of the type foreseen in the recommendation was undertaken in Pakistan six months after the earthquake. This approach is also a feature of FAO's Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC), which is being rolled-out in the greater Horn of Africa region. It should be noted that in specific regard to fisheries, recovery assessments should include the recovery of management and institutional capacities.	TCE will continue efforts to mobilise resources to undertake regular recovery assessments. Technical departments will initiate activities to identify institutional shortcomings and design tools and methodologies for providing the required institutional and technical capacity building.	Continuous Continuous	TCE/ technical departments

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
8: FAO should help recapitalize food producers and processors during the initial response through the distribution of new equipment or by repairing damaged equipment. The procurement of simple production inputs such seed or fertilizer should be gradually phased out thereafter.	Accepted. There is a need to further develop understanding of how food processors' needs might be evaluated and on appropriate mechanisms for their recapitalization.	TCE and AGS to implement process to identify appropriate technical guidelines.	9 months	TCE/AGS
9: There is a need for stronger emphasis on support such as policy advice, coordination, overall sector monitoring, community and institutional capacity building, but also on the provision of more diversified "hardware", such as the rehabilitation of small infrastructure and of entire food and value chains.	Accepted in principle. In particular, it is accepted that there is a need for technical departments to provide governments with policy advice, coordination, overall sectoral monitoring and community and institutional capacity building. The Organization has limited direct experience in emergency situations with regard to the identification and delivery of some of the different types of "hardware" foreseen. There may be a need to strengthen in-house technical expertise in these areas.	Initiate stock-taking exercise to identify lessons learned, critical gaps and institutional weaknesses. Identify and implement – once resources are available – appropriate strategies to build required technical and institutional capacities.	9 months Continuous from February 2008 onwards	Technical departments/ TCE/ decentralized offices
10: The specificities of the fast-paced emergency and reconstruction context need to be recognised when providing technical assistance: (1) focus capacity building on key capacity gaps of other aid providers; (2) keep policy advice and capacity building events simple, focussed and hands-on; and (3) be	Accepted in part. It is not clear why FAO should focus its efforts on capacity gaps of other aid providers. While this is certainly important, FAO has a lead role to play, and should therefore prioritize, strengthening capacities in technical areas of its	Technical departments will draft guidelines on how to provide policy advice in support of longer-term reconstruction strategies in post-disaster contexts.	Continuous	Technical departments/ TCE/ decentralized Offices

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
ready to take some political risks in providing policy advice.	expertise and mandate. It is also important to note that FAO is well positioned to provide technical assistance and policy advice in support of longer-term reconstruction strategies and general sectoral development and to integrate these considerations into its immediate emergency support to governments.	TCE will operationalise this recommendation through its coordination and advocacy role as part of the UN cluster approach at country level.	Continuous	
11: FAO should develop standard monitoring processes per intervention type, involving a simple reporting system for implementing partners, regular beneficiary surveys contracted to teams of well-trained third-party enumerators, basic mapping of programme areas and results, and frequent visits to programme sites.	Accepted. Steps are already being taken towards the establishment of standard monitoring processes, but it is agreed that further development is required.	TCE to finalise standardised monitoring process, including regular beneficiary surveys combined with simple reporting system and frequent visits to programme sites.	September 2007	TCE/ technical departments/ TCOM/PBE/ FAORs
12: In future crises, FAO should provide mapping and remote sensing services over a longer period, with an emphasis on damage assessments at the onset of the response, then on basic agro-ecological zoning to support links between rehabilitation assistance and local livelihoods. This work should be conducted in partnership with UNHIC and maps posted on Relief Web to help ensure wide dissemination.	Accepted in part. This can be done subject to obtaining donor funding and when it does not duplicate services by other actors. In the specific case of the Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, the World Bank and other actors provided mapping and remote sensing services. FAO agrees that in some crisis situations and/or where no alternative is available, that resources should be requested for mapping and remote sensing activities.	NR and TC to seek resources for mapping and remote-sensing activities in new crisis situations when necessary.	Continuous	NRC/NRL/ TCE

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
13: FAO should provide significant delegation of authority to FAORs for LoAs and procurement, up to a minimum of US\$100,000 per transaction, generalize impress accounts in emergency operations of significant size, and include the delivery of emergency projects in the performance assessment criteria for FAORs.	Accepted in principle. It is agreed that in emergency operations greater delegation of authority for procurement should be considered, however, only in a context of adequate resources and capacity to handle such procurement and when the local market conditions allow it to be exercised in a competitive and transparent manner.	Processes implemented, on a case-by-case basis, to increase delegation of authority for procurement, when adequate resources and capacity exist at the country level and when local market conditions permit.	Continuous	OCD/AFD
14: In parallel, FAO should continue to invest in administrative skills, operational capacity and control mechanisms at the national level.	Accepted. Administrative skills, operational capacity and control mechanisms at the national level are a prerequisite for greater delegations of authority. AFSP is investing in, and preparing, a procurement training module which can be distributed to Offices to ensure that basic procurement knowledge is available.	OCD and AFSP to finalise and implement the required training modules.	December 2007	OCD/AFS

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
<p>15: For significant emergency and rehabilitation programmes, both TCE and Technical Departments should strive to deploy experienced staff to the field level. This should be part of Terms of Reference for TCE Operations Officers.</p>	<p>Accepted. The recommendation is consistent with AFH advice to TCE to establish and maintain on fixed-term contracts a core staff of emergency personnel in order that they may be readily deployed on an as-needed basis. TCE would also note that the significant increase in the number and scale of emergency and rehabilitation operations in recent years has led to a relative shortage in the number of experienced staff who could be deployed to the field. The general situation is expected to improve in time as newer staff members gain in experience. In some instances, it may be more expedient for technical divisions to draw upon the expertise and knowledge of experienced international consultants to provide this type of longer-term support at the field level.</p>	<p>TCE and technical departments to implement processes to build necessary surge capacity and rosters.</p>	<p>December 2007</p>	<p>TCE/ technical departments</p>

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
<p>16: Every effort to maximise on the existing possibility for TCE to contract up to 11 months should be used. Also, mandatory breaks in consultancy contracts should be waived for emergency projects, and the recruitment of national consultant and staff should always be handled in the field.</p>	<p>This recommendation, involving a complex matter, is accepted in part. Every effort is being made to maximize the use of 11-month contracts, and recruitment in the field is already available under MS 319. Furthermore, mandatory breaks in consultancy contracts are actively considered on a case-by-case basis, and waivers granted when appropriate. However, <i>carte blanche</i> waiver of breaks in service for all consultants working on emergency projects, irrespective of a review of the circumstances, is not advisable, as this might create expectations for continued employment, in accordance with applicable administrative case law, and, in the event of appeals, could constitute a potential source of liabilities.</p>			
<p>17: The optimal ERCU team composition should strike a balance between international and national staff (with ample national staff of sufficient seniority and authority), and between younger and older staff so as to balance enthusiasm and experience, but also to reach out to various audiences.</p>	<p>Accepted.</p>	<p>TCE to continue efforts to ensure optimal team composition.</p>	<p>Continuous</p>	<p>TCE</p>

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
18: To facilitate procurement of basic items, TCE should stockpile standard equipment for rapid office set up when a disaster strikes (office-in-a-box: security/MOSS compliance, vehicles, telecommunications, computers, office protocols and operation manuals).	Accepted in principle. The recommendation is consistent with FAO's ongoing efforts to strengthen contingency planning with regard to sudden onset emergencies.	Discussions are ongoing with the UN store in Brindisi and a senior logistics officer from WFP has been seconded for 3 months in 2007 to help identify new options to meet FAO's logistic requirements including opportunities for increased collaboration with WFP. Where appropriate, and in line with international public sector accounting standards (IPSAS), FAO will seek donor agreement to retain project inventory (e.g. vehicles) after project closure as a basis for stockpiling standard equipment.	Continuous Continuous	TCE
19: Tenders should be analysed against a variety of pre-set criteria, including the track record of the bidders with FAO.	Accepted	Processes already in place.		AF/AUD

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
20: Splitting large procurements in smaller and quicker-to-produce quantities, ordered on the basis of regular recovery assessments, would reduce risks of procurement failure or delay and help progressively test and fine-tune programme implementation modalities.	Accepted in principle. Procurement orders have been split for these reasons when there is sufficient justification to do so. However, in each case, the advantages of adopting this approach should be measured against possible increases in administrative and transaction costs that may arise from splitting procurements in this way. In some instances this approach may increase rather than decrease the risk of delay.	To be implemented on a case-by-case basis pending outcome of assessment in each specific case.	Continuous	AFS/AUD/ TCE
21: Improved training material should be designed and more in-depth procurement training provided to local and international staff in the field.	Accepted. Such training materials are currently being prepared.	Preparation of training materials to be finalised, tested and distributed.	January 2008	TCE/AFSP

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
<p>22: For fast-paced emergency / early rehabilitation programmes, technical clearance of items to be procured should be delegated to country offices if the required technical capacity is available. When the capacity does not exist in country, it should be created, for instance by out posting the appropriate technical officer from headquarters to the country during relevant parts of the programme or hiring trusted national on part-time basis.</p>	<p>Accepted in part. In the case of large-scale, complex and long-term emergencies, there may be advantages associated with out posting appropriate technical officers to the country level. However, in most cases, it is unlikely that a single individual will have the full range of technical knowledge and expertise. Furthermore, FAO would note that technical clearance does not necessarily require physical presence in the country; the general guiding principle should remain that it is performed by the most qualified and experienced office in the Organization, regardless of location. It is also important to recognise the possible strains that would be placed on technical divisions if technical officers were out posted for long periods.</p>	<p>To be handled within existing Interdepartmental mechanisms or by a new working group, with the mandate to review the recommendation and identify appropriate measures.</p>	<p>December 2007</p>	<p>Technical departments</p>

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
23: FAO should continue to experiment with voucher schemes for purchases on the market on a more significant scale in collaboration with partner NGOs and governments.	Accepted in principle. FAO already has good experience with vouchers schemes in response to slow onset and protracted crises in east and southern Africa. However, use of vouchers depends on markets being able to provide adequate quantities of sufficient quality. Where availability is an issue, vouchers can induce price inflation and when quality is poor more harm may be done than good – for instance, poor viability and quality of seeds; adulterated, poorly packaged and prohibited chemicals; and mesh size of fishing nets too small.	To be applied on a case-by-case basis, based on an assessment of local markets, local security situations and the capacity of country partners etc.	Continuous	TCE
24: FAO should continue to convene national coordination meetings in its areas of competence. Meetings should be open to all actors, well facilitated, neutral, participatory, well documented and sharply focussed on issues requiring coordination. A governmental chairmanship or co-chairmanship should be instituted as soon as possible.	Accepted.	This is consistent with current FAO practice in many countries as part of the UN cluster approach at the country level.	Continuous	TCE/FAORs

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
25: In each country or crisis, FAO and its partners should seek a progressive build up in terms of intensity of coordination, starting with information exchange, and moving gradually to advocacy, review of project and policy documents, standard setting and, ultimately, trying to promote innovative collaboration	Accepted.	The recommendation reflects current FAO practice as part of UN cluster approach at the country level.	Continuous	TCE/FAORs/ technical departments
26: As a way to speed up the implementation of initial projects in future emergencies, stand-by partnership agreements should be explored with international NGOs.	Accepted. The Organization is currently exploring this possibility. At the same time the Organization is also working on refining its instruments to enter into partnership agreements with NGOs.	TC, AF and LEG to prepare new standard partnership agreements for collaboration with UN partners and NGOs.	March 2008	TC/AF/LEG
27: A new, simpler project document format should in most cases replace the LoA, with the legal fine print placed in annex and the objectives and implementation modalities upfront. The document should allow for donations in-kind only, display the contribution of the implementing partner, and emphasise the fact that it is a joint effort by FAO and one or several partner(s).	Rejected. The Organization recently released the new Standard Project Document (SPD) format and therefore does not need any new one. This issue will be addressed as part of the modalities for Partnership in Development Projects which are expected to be reviewed in the near future by one of the Interdepartmental Working Groups. In addition, it should also be noted that donations in kind generally need complementary funds for successful delivery.			

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
28: Sub-contracting to WFP and the United Nations Joint Logistics Centre should be further developed to increase FAO's logistic capacity, and also arrangements should be piloted with WFP to sub-contract some contracting and purchasing functions.	FAO is not in a position to respond to this recommendation at the present time. A senior logistics officer from WFP and former head of UNJLC has been seconded to FAO to recommend options for all of FAO's logistic requirements including the extent to which services can be provided by WFP.	TCE to further explore this issue and make recommendations to Senior Management, also taking account of the initiative to promote back-office collaboration amongst the Rome-based agencies.	December 2007	TCE
29: Corporate commitments to vulnerable groups such as women and the poorest of the poor must be translated into action. Disaster-stricken activities performed by women should be supported like those of men, and female-headed households should receive their fair share of distributed assets. FAO should strive to reach out to the poorest segments of society in its input distribution programmes, without excluding the better-off who are employers of the poor. At times this means donating to the poor access to assets that they may not have possessed before the disaster, as long as they have the capacity to use them well.	Accepted in part. Whilst there is full agreement that corporate commitments to vulnerable groups, in particular, women and the very poor, must be translated into action, it is not certain that the strategies proposed are necessarily the best. For example, donating assets to those that did not possess them may not be viable and may need more time and resources for training. While other non-agricultural based livelihood activities or safety nets may be more appropriate for which other agencies are better qualified and resourced.	Identify and implement measures to strengthen targeting of vulnerable groups in emergency programmes.	December 2007	TCE
30: For small or sharable assets (e.g. seeds, tools and fertilizer), a simple beneficiary selection process facilitated by an NGO and involving local officials and community members should normally suffice.	Accepted	The recommendation reflects current FAO practice.		TCE

Recommendations	Accepted, partially accepted or rejected giving reasons if not accepted in full	Action to be taken	Timing	Responsible FAO Unit
31: When assets are costly and/or unlikely to be redistributed, and/or their oversupply likely to have negative consequences, beneficiary selection should be carefully planned, conducted and monitored. The beneficiary lists provided by local authorities and village heads should be systematically checked by a neutral third party. For costly assets, FAO should also continue to experiment with sharing arrangements between a small number of beneficiaries, as these seem to have worked well in the tsunami response.	Accepted.	TCE and technical department responsible for technical clearance to ensure that project documents define these oversight mechanisms and include the necessary budgetary provisions for their establishment and technical support.	Continuous	TCE/ technical departments
32: FAO should continue to develop rapid consultation processes and livelihoods approaches for rehabilitation and reconstruction, but should remain mindful of the risk of delays entailed in the limited timescale typical of many “emergency” projects.	Accepted.	TCE will continue to liaise with donors to ensure that project time frames allow for effective implementation of all livelihoods components.	Continuous	TCE/TCAP in the case of all non-emergency projects involving these issues
33: Cross-sectoral initiatives should be promoted selectively, focusing on precise and pressing issues that can only be successfully addressed this way. Synergies tapped by working cross-sectorally should offset the additional cost, time and complexity.	Accepted	TCE will ensure that these efforts are pursued progressively.	Continuous	TCE