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Food and Agriculture
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Продовольственная и
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Organización de las
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COUNCIL

Hundred and Seventy-second Session

Rome, 24-28 April 2023

Report of the Joint Meeting of the 135th Session of the Programme Committee and 195th Session of the Finance Committee (Rome, 13 and 15 March 2023)

Executive summary

In its Report, the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees **brings to the attention of the Council for its endorsement**, the conclusions regarding: the Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25; the Feasibility study on the integration of administrative services among the Rome-based Agencies; the update on the work of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub; and the process for Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs).

Suggested action by the Council

The Council is invited to:

endorse the conclusions of the Joint Meeting on:

- a) the Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25;
- b) the Feasibility study on the integration of administrative services among the Rome-based Agencies;
- c) the update on the work of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub; and
- d) the process for Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs).

Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:

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Introductory Items

1. The Joint Meeting submitted its Report to the Council.
2. In addition to the Chairperson, Ms Imelda Smolčić Nijers (Uruguay) and H.E. (Ms) Yael Rubinstein (Israel), the Chairperson of the Programme Committee, the following representatives of Members were present:

H.E. (Mr) Carlos Bernardo Cherniak (Argentina) ¹	Ms Jenny Reid (New Zealand)
Ms Emma Hatcher (Australia) ²	Ms Tahirou Rahila Rabiou (Niger)
Mr Arnaldo de Baena Fernandes (Brazil) ³	Ms Bjørg Skotnes (Norway)
Mr Maarten de Groot (Canada)	Mr Tomás Duncan Jurado (Panama)
Mr LI Bo (China)	Mr Vladimir V. Kuznetsov (Russian Federation) ⁶
Mr Mina Rizk (Egypt)	Mr Mohammed M. Alghamdi (Saudi Arabia)
Mr Kaba Urgessa Dinssa (Ethiopia)	Ms Saadia Elmubarak Ahmed Daak (Sudan)
Mr Michel Lévêque (France)	Ms Pernilla Ivarsson (Sweden)
H. E. (Ms) Neena Malhotra (India)	Ms Ratchanok Sangpenchan (Thailand)
Mr Kuraya Yoshihiro (Japan)	Mr Rodney Hunter (United States of America) ⁷
H.E. (Mr) Aly Coulibaly (Mali) ⁴	Mr Kayoya Masuhwa (Zambia)
H.E. (Mr) Miguel García Winder (Mexico) ⁵	

3. Iraq was not represented.
4. The Joint Meeting thanked the Director-General for his comprehensive statement and appreciated his leadership of the Organization in these very unprecedented times.

I. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

5. The Joint Meeting adopted the Provisional Agenda for the Session.

II. Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25

6. The Joint Meeting:
 - a) reviewed the *Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25* budgetary proposal and noted it included the request for incremental resources to cover estimated cost increases aiming at preserving purchasing power parity;
 - b) appreciated the importance of supporting the Programme of Work of the Organization in this critical period and after many years of a flat nominal budget, while also noting the potential impact of the current budgetary proposal on assessments within the prevailing global, economic and financial climate;
 - c) took note of the budgetary recoveries from incremental support costs and the re-allocations to strengthen programming, management and oversight, and support services;
 - d) stressed the importance of funding for the conventions, treaty bodies, and intergovernmental arrangements, as well as the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), and recommended resources to those areas continue to be prioritized;

¹ Mr Guillermo Rodolico was designated to replace H.E. (Mr) Carlos Bernardo Cherniak for part of the Session.

² Ms Emma Hatcher was designated to replace Ms Lynda Hayden.

³ Mr Arnaldo de Baena Fernandes was designated to replace H.E. (Mr) Fernando José Marroni de Abreu.

⁴ H.E. (Mr) Aly Coulibaly was designated to replace Ms Traoré Halimatou Kone.

⁵ Mr José Luis Delgado Crespo was designated to replace H.E. (Mr) Miguel García Winder for part of the Session.

⁶ Mr Denis Cherednichenko was designated to replace Mr Vladimir V. Kuznetsov for part of the Session.

⁷ Mr Hammad Hammad was designated to replace Mr Rodney Hunter for part of the Session.

- e) noted the increase in forecasted delivery under extrabudgetary resources of large-scale development and emergency and resilience programmes, and stressed the need for all funding to be deployed to support the priorities established through the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31; and
 - f) recognized Management's efforts to foster efficiencies and deliver the Programme of Work in the context of increasing needs, unprecedented challenges and a longstanding flat budget.
7. The Joint Meeting encouraged all efforts towards reaching a consensus on the level of the budget, including through informal consultations between Members and Management, in the period leading up to the 43rd Session of the Conference.
8. The Joint Meeting furthermore:
- a) recommended that possible adjustments be considered to offset the impact of cost increases, including through reallocation of resources from other areas of the budget and any further anticipated increases in cost recovery, while noting the importance of sound oversight and support functions to implement the growing integrated budget; and
 - b) further recommended that Management provide an information note before the 172nd Session of the Council, with additional scenarios with a lower budgetary impact, up to and including zero nominal growth, and their potential impact on the Programme of Work, by taking into account, for example, cost recovery and details on long-term vacancies.

III. Feasibility study on the integration of administrative services among the Rome-based Agencies

9. The Joint Meeting:
- a) welcomed the updates provided on the Feasibility study on the integration of administrative services among the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), and appreciated its executive summary highlighting opportunities for closer collaboration among the three agencies at headquarters level;
 - b) recognized that further administrative integrative efforts shall be pursued under the overall UN efficiency agenda, in line with the Joint Evaluation on RBA collaboration carried out in 2021; and
 - c) looked forward to receiving further updates on the agencies' continued implementation of the UN efficiency agenda and consideration of other areas for administrative integration at forthcoming sessions of the Joint Meeting and/or Finance Committee as appropriate.

IV. Update on the work of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub

10. The Joint Meeting:
- a) welcomed the update provided on the work of the Hub and the preparations for the first UN Food Systems Stocktaking Moment;
 - b) noted that a Stocktaking Moment will take place on 24-26 July 2023 at FAO headquarters with the support of the Italian Government, welcomed the report presented by the Director of the Office of SDGs, reiterated the importance of this event to be inclusive, and encouraged regionally balanced participation;
 - c) emphasized the need for the Hub to encourage countries to share their experiences in line with their national pathways on food systems transformation through peer-learning and voluntary reporting;
 - d) reiterated that data used for the Hub's work should come from diverse sources and ensure regional balance;
 - e) stressed that a balanced regional representation and gender equality should guide the work of the Hub; and

- f) highlighted the importance to further integrate the work of the Hub with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs), and reiterated that the Hub should avoid duplication, ensuring the complementarity of efforts.

V. Process for Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs)

11. The Joint Meeting:

- a) commended the Organization's ongoing efforts to strengthen FAO CPF process to ensure engagement in the UN development system repositioning at country level in the wider frame of UNSDCF; and
- b) welcomed the creation of a user-friendly and transparent CPF Repository webpage accessible from the FAO Members Gateway and looked forward to it being kept up to date, as appropriate.