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Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Organisation des Nations
Unies pour l'alimentation
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Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الأمم المتحدة
للأغذية والزراعة

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COUNCIL

Hundred and Sixty-eighth Session

29 November - 3 December 2021

Report of the Joint Meeting of the 132nd Session of the Programme Committee and 188th Session of the Finance Committee (Rome, 8, 9 and 12 November 2021)

Executive Summary

The Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees brings to the attention of the Council its finding and recommendations on:

- a) Adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23;
- b) Update on the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) Review and Strategic Exercise;
- c) FAO's response to COVID-19: Building to Transform; and
- d) Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies collaboration.

Suggested action by the Council

The Council is requested to endorse the findings and recommendations of the Joint Meeting.

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, H.E. (Ms) Yael Rubinstein (Israel) and Ms Imelda Smolčić Nijers (Uruguay), the Chairperson of the Finance Committee, the following representatives of Members were present:

H.E. (Mr) Carlos Bernardo Cherniak (Argentina)	H.E. (Mr) Miguel García Winder (Mexico)
Ms Lynda Hayden (Australia)	Mr Donald G. Syme (New Zealand)
H.E. (Mr) Fernando José Marroni de Abreu (Brazil)	Ms Tahirou Rahila Rabiou (Niger)
Mr Maarten de Groot (Canada)	H.E. (Mr) Morten von Hanno Aasland (Norway)
Mr NI Hongxing (China)	Mr Denis Cherednichenko (Russian Federation) ²
Mr Mina Rizk (Egypt) ¹	Ms Saadia Elmubarak Ahmed Daak (Sudan)
Ms Delphine Babin-Pellier (France)	Ms Pernilla Ivarsson (Sweden)
Mr Bommakanti Rajender (India)	Mr Thanawat Tiensin (Thailand)
Mr Zaid Al-Ani (Iraq)	Ms Jennifer Harhigh (United States of America) ³
Mr Kuraya Yoshihiro (Japan)	Mr Kayoya Masuhwa (Zambia)
Ms Traoré Halimatou Kone (Mali)	
3. Ethiopia, Panama and Saudi Arabia were not represented.
4. The Session was convened in a hybrid modality, with designated representatives of some Members attending in person at FAO headquarters (Argentina, Australia, Canada, Egypt, France, India, Japan, Mali, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, United States of America and Zambia) and others participating virtually (Brazil, China, Iraq, Niger, Russian Federation, Sudan and Thailand) on an exceptional basis due to the COVID-19 pandemic in Italy and worldwide.
5. Having regard to this exceptional modality, the Joint Meeting confirmed, that participation by designated representatives through virtual modality constituted attendance at the Session, which was convened at the seat of the Organization in accordance with Rule II (5) of the Rules of Procedure of the Programme Committee and Rule II (4) of the Rules of Procedure of the Finance Committee.
6. The Chairperson informed Members that, should technical connection fail, the meeting would be suspended if the quorum was not reached.
7. The Joint Meeting thanked the Director-General for his comprehensive statement and appreciated his leadership of the Organization in these very unprecedented times of the COVID-19 crisis.

I. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

8. The Joint Meeting adopted the Provisional Agenda for the Session with the request to receive information on Multilingualism at FAO, under Item 7 - Any Other Matters.

II. Adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget 2022-23

9. The Joint Meeting:
 - a) welcomed the document reflecting the guidance and decisions of the Conference on the Strategic Framework 2022-31, and Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) 2022-23;
 - b) expressed satisfaction that the proposed adjustments would be managed within the overall approved budget level of USD 1,005.6 million;

¹ Mr Mina Rizk was designated to replace Mr Haitham Abdelhady Elshahat.

² Mr Denis Cherednichenko was designated to replace Mr Vladimir V. Kuznetsov.

³ Ms Jennifer A. Harhigh was replaced by Ms Alison Storsve for part of the Session.

- c) took note of the reviewed number of Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) and allocation of budget between the *four betters* to ensure a better balance among the three pillars of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental);
- d) recalling that the 42nd Session of the Conference highlighted the importance of flexible, lightly earmarked and unearmarked voluntary contributions, looked forward to further elaboration of possible mechanisms and approaches to attract more flexible voluntary funding, in order to support balanced budget resources for effective implementation of the Strategic Framework;
- e) welcomed the improved approach to integrate Country Programming Framework (CPF) in the results framework in line with the repositioning of UN development system (UNDS);
- f) supported the reallocation of USD 1.2 million to strengthen science and innovation, including moving forward the Science and Innovation Strategy and supporting science and innovation implementation in the field;
- g) supported the revised distribution of the net appropriation by budgetary chapter as reflected in *Table 2* and recommended it for approval by the Council;
- h) noted the revised budgeted post establishment (*Table 3* and *Annex 8*);
- i) took note of the updated estimates for extra budgetary resources (*Table 4*) and encouraged Members, taking into account para d), to provide voluntary contributions to facilitate achievement of the Strategic Framework 2022-31 and implementation of the integrated Programme of Work;
- j) noted that there are many approaches to sustainable agriculture production, there is no one-size-fits all approach and prescriptive language, which has no consensus among Members on its direct interlinkages with sustainable agriculture production, should be avoided given the different perspectives expressed on geographical indications (GIs)⁴ and climate-smart agriculture, among other concepts, and this should be reflected in the results framework; and
- k) reiterated the importance of using the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other multilaterally agreed language and concepts, in particular those agreed by the FAO Governing Bodies, noting that the Sustainable Development Goals are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development, and recommended that any documents related to this PWB use this language accordingly.

III. Update on the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) Review and Strategic Exercise

10. The Joint Meeting:

- a) commended the inclusive and transparent process followed in refining the approach for regional Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) resource shares, and the efforts that went into developing a methodology for the calculation of scenarios based on the criteria recommended by Members;
- b) noted that established current shares would continue to guide the regional TCP resource shares for the 2022-23 biennium, until the strategic exercise on the review of regional shares is completed;
- c) welcomed the progress in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of TCP operations, including alignment of TCP funded activities with FAO's Strategic Framework 2022-31;
- d) encouraged the continuation of the inclusive and transparent approach in 2022, ensuring Members' participation in the strategic exercise to refine the criteria of regional TCP resource shares; and
- e) invited Management to provide updates on the refinements of the criteria for TCP resource allocation within regions, considering ways to ensure greater uniformity while keeping the required flexibility to respond to regional specificities.

⁴ Article 22, Section 3, part 2, of the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)

IV. FAO's Response to COVID-19: Building to Transform

11. The Joint Meeting:

- a) took note that the COVID-19 pandemic is entering a new phase and that, although the containment measures had short-term effects on agriculture and food trade in 2020, the pandemic has contributed to the largest single-year increase in global hunger;
- b) noted with concern the exacerbated inequalities caused, especially in rural areas, and underlined the importance of targeted assistance and investment for rural poor;
- c) appreciated the results achieved by FAO through the comprehensive COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme and its seven priority areas of work;
- d) encouraged FAO to continue its collaboration with the Tripartite and UNEP and other relevant international organizations, in line with their respective mandates in this regard, to ensure the One Health approach is included in the work of the Organization with a special focus on preventing zoonotic diseases;
- e) recognized the importance that when examining the behaviour of food prices from a systemic perspective, it would be necessary to take into account changes in macro-economic development, including exchange rates, interest rates and their drivers;
- f) recognized the importance of trade for contributing to the availability, accessibility and affordability of food;
- g) expressed concern on the inequality of vaccine access globally and its negative impacts on food security and nutrition; and
- h) commended the close collaboration with the G20 Presidency and FAO's tireless efforts towards placing food security, nutrition, agriculture and food systems as an integral part in the G20 Rome Leaders' Declaration and G20 Ministerial Meetings, including the recognition of the Food Coalition in the Matera Declaration, as a means to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 in food security and nutrition.

V. Progress Report on Rome-based Agencies collaboration

12. The Joint Meeting:

- a) welcomed the Progress Report and underscored its concrete achievements, in-depth examples and strategic directions of Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration;
- b) appreciated the strengthened RBA collaboration at country, regional and headquarters level, resulting in tangible impacts and concrete contributions to the United Nations development system (UNDS) repositioning, in line with the recommendations from the Joint evaluation on collaboration among the United Nations Rome-based Agencies dated 3 October 2021;
- c) encouraged further strategic collaboration among RBAs, especially within the UNDS repositioning, and to build on the Agencies' collective expertise to support countries' needs and priorities, and requested to further explore the areas of potential synergies, complementarities and economies of scale with the aim to raise the efficiency of RBA collaboration;
- d) recalled the report of the Joint Meeting of the 127th Session of the Programme Committee and the 178th Session of the Finance Committee requesting FAO to provide a first assessment regarding the feasibility of integrating administrative functions and greater collaboration in some oversight functions that remains overdue;
- e) expressed the importance of including Members at the centre of the process that boosts synergy between RBAs, prioritizing the specific needs of countries and regions in the implementation of common progress;
- f) encouraged the continued support to the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Secretariat and promotion of CFS agreed voluntary products; and
- g) noted the UN Food Systems Summit implementation and follow-up is still under discussion, recognized it as an opportunity to strategically enhance cooperation among all RBAs and relevant UN funds, agencies and programmes, recognized that, in relation to the Summit follow-up, FAO will host the Food Systems Coordination Hub, agreed that

the Hub should not replicate existing UN functions and capacities, and requested further written information on the Hub including its staffing and financing, and its reporting structure to be finalized, incorporating Members' feedback through the relevant Governing Bodies.

VI. Annual Report on Corporate Policy, Processes and Measures on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

13. The Joint Meeting:

- a) welcomed the updates in the Annual Report on Corporate Policy, Processes and Measures on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, and commended the commitment to strengthen the prevention;
- b) recognized the progress made in alignment with UN system-wide initiatives and inter-agency collaboration in this regard, and appreciated FAO's efforts to reform its culture emphasizing a victim-centred, transparent, accountable, dynamic, engaged and ethical workplace;
- c) encouraged FAO to further improve the effectiveness, independence and fairness of sexual harassment investigations; and
- d) further encouraged FAO to continue strengthening its policies on protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination and abuse of authority, ensuring a victim-centred approach.

VII. Any Other Matters

14. The Joint Meeting noted the information provided on Multilingualism and looked forward to the Progress Report on Multilingualism at FAO, to be considered by the 168th Session of the Council.