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**Food and
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Продовольственная и
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**Organización
de las
Naciones Unidas
para la
Alimentación y la
Agricultura**

JOINT MEETING

Hundred and Fourteenth Session of the Programme Committee and Hundred and Fifty-first Session of the Finance Committee

Rome, 13 November 2013

Enhancement of the Technical Cooperation Programme

Executive Summary

➢ At its 144th session, the Council "requested that proposals for overall enhancement of the Technical Cooperation Programme, consistent with the Strategic Thinking Process and Country Programming Frameworks, be submitted at its next session for its consideration through the Programme and Finance Committees". At its 145th session, the Council "approved the measures for improving the TCP" and "requested that a plan for implementing these measures be submitted to a Joint Meeting by end of 2013".

➢ This paper therefore presents a plan for implementing TCP enhancement measures that better align the TCP to the reviewed Strategic Framework and facilitate a more strategic use of TCP funding, taking into account transformational changes in the Organization, and guidance received from Council. This Implementation Plan was reviewed and endorsed by the Corporate Programme Monitoring Board (CPMB).

Guidance sought from the Joint Meeting

The Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees is invited to endorse the proposed plan for implementing the TCP enhancement measures.

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I.   Introduction

1.   The TCP was created to allow the Organization, drawing from its own Regular Programme (RP) resources, to make its know-how and technical expertise available to member countries and respond to constitutional functions namely "to furnish technical assistance as governments may request"[1] It allows the implementation of demand-driven technical assistance intended to respond to governments' priority needs, catalyse change, foster capacity development and assist countries in mobilizing resources.

2.   Following the decentralization of the TCP in 2010, the transformational change process and the Strategic Thinking Process during 2012-13 that led to the reviewed Strategic Framework , Members had requested the Secretariat to ensure that the TCP adapt to the new context and remain a Programme of importance and relevance for Members as a means for accessing FAO's technical expertise.

3.   At its 144th session, the Council "requested that proposals for overall enhancement of the Technical Cooperation Programme, consistent with the Strategic Thinking Process and Country Programming Frameworks, be submitted at its next session for its consideration through the Programme and Finance Committees".[2] At its 145th session in December 2012, the Council "approved the measures for improving the TCP, in particular: (a) the use of the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) as a starting point for the prioritization of in-country TCP assistance in line with the Strategic Objectives (SOs); (b) greater role and responsibilities for Decentralized Offices; and (c) further simplification and harmonization of procedures".[3] The Council further "requested that a plan for implementing these measures be submitted to a Joint Meeting [of the Programme and Finance Committees] by end of 2013".[4]

4.   This paper therefore presents an implementation plan for the approved TCP enhancement measures that better align the TCP to the SF and facilitate a more strategic use of TCP resources, taking into account the transformational changes in the Organization, and guidance received from Council. The plan was reviewed and endorsed by the Corporate Programme Monitoring Board (CPMB).

5.   In developing this implementation plan, the Secretariat has also taken into account the recommendation provided in early 2013 by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to improve the management of the TCP including the establishment of programme level performance indicators, consistent with the Organization's emphasis on results based management.

II.   Implementation plan

6.   A number of actions were identified that will better align the TCP to the implementation of the reviewed Strategic Framework, taking into account transformational changes in the Organization, and guidance received from Council. An implementation timeline is presented in Annex 1.

A.   Towards a more strategic use of TCP funding

7.   With the Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15, FAO is reorienting its efforts in a more focused manner. All resources available under the integrated budget should support the achievement of results under the Strategic Framework and Medium Term Plan. Against this background, the TCP is an important instrument available to support Members' priorities as expressed in the SOs and CPFs.

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[1] FAO Constitution, Article I paragraph 3a

[2] CL 144/REP para. 39

[3] CL 145/REP para. 18

[4] CL 145/REP para. 21

Alignment with the Strategic Framework

8.   One of the principles for the implementation of the Strategic Framework is that FAO moves as rapidly as possible to a full programmatic alignment and convergence between programmes and projects in the decentralized offices and the SOs' Action Plans and their results frameworks. In the end all activities funded from the RP, TCP resources and voluntary contributions should converge and be aligned with the SOs' action plans. TCP funds are available during the biennium for allocation to programmatic activities at country or regional level related to the SOs, preferably as catalytic instruments to complement or co-finance programmes with other sources of funding.

9.   CPFs identify the priorities that guide the mobilization of resources, including the TCP. Therefore, at country level the alignment of the TCP to the SF is ensured through the CPF process: development, revision/refinement as appropriate and implementation.

10.   During the CPF formulation phase, the FAOR will highlight, under the strategic priorities identified, those outputs and/or activities which could be achieved through TCP contributions. The indicative TCP pipeline will be added as an Annex to the CPF document and included in its resource mobilization plan.

11.   For the use of the TCP at (sub)regional and inter-regional level, alignment to the Strategic Framework is ensured through consultation between the formulating unit (subregional office, regional office) and SO Teams.

Measuring and monitoring TCP performance

12.   TCP performance indicators are being reviewed to improve the management of the TCP and monitor TCP performance in support of the Strategic Framework. These indicators, which will be consistent with the overall monitoring framework, will cover two performance levels: (i) relevance and sustainability of TCP development interventions; and (ii) approval and delivery rates of TCP resources.

13.   The information will be collected and analysed through the Field Programme Management Information System (FPMIS). The first TCP annual performance report will be issued for the year 2014.

Emergency TCPs

14.   The emergency window allows FAO to respond to unpredicted events which may occur at national, subregional, regional or global levels. Resources are directed at the sustainable rehabilitation of productive activities and at technical cooperation to support effective responses to crisis. Emergency TCP activities are directly linked to the Strategic Framework as they support the achievement of results under Strategic Objective 5, Organizational Output 4 "Countries and regions affected by disasters and crises with impact on agriculture, food and nutrition prepare for, and manage effective responses". Prevention, preparedness or long-term rehabilitation are funded through the development allocation. Geographic allocations of resources under the emergency allocation vary from one year to another due to the relative unpredictability of threats and crisis.

B.   Resource mobilization

15.   In addition to the direct provision of technical assistance, TCP resources are also used to implement pilot actions, formulate strategies and contribute to new or strengthened partnerships and alliances. The TCP can also, *inter alia,* enable the FAO Representative to negotiate and enter into arrangements for co-financing, a strong marketing asset for an increasing number of resource partners.

16.   In the CPFs, resource mobilization targets are identified for the delivery of the outputs and achievement of the outcomes. The TCP will be used more strategically as a catalytic tool when initiating discussions on priority areas of intervention outlined in the CPF, with government and development partners including other UN bodies.

C.   Organizational and managerial actions

Roles and responsibilities well defined

17.   The approval of use of TCP resources under the development allocation is governed by the subsidiarity principle. With the decentralization of the TCP since 2010, decentralized offices have taken a greater role in the management and quality assurance of the TCP, with technical departments supporting technical officers in decentralized offices in ensuring quality of technical interventions. The current roles and responsibilities regarding Technical Departments (TDs), regional offices, subregional offices and FAORs are considered largely adequate, but need to take account of the new roles and responsibilities of the Strategic Objective Coordinators (SOCs).

18.   SOCs are responsible for the management and successful implementation of the Strategic Objective Action Plans as well as ensuring that programmes and projects at all levels are aligned with the reviewed Strategic Framework. In relation to the TCP, the SOCs involvement should be primarily at the CPF level. In particular SOCs will: (i) in collaboration with Regional Representatives, identify those products/services in Strategic Objectives' delivery projects, including the Regional Initiatives, to which the TCP could contribute; and (ii) during the quality control process of CPFs, be consulted for technical consistency with the SO Action Plans reviewing also the appropriateness of proposed TCP pipeline allocation.

19.   In order to improve the functioning of the TCP network, the roles, responsibilities and relationship of staff that have TCP-related responsibilities in headquarters and decentralized offices have been reviewed to optimize oversight, management and advisory services, building on the integration of emergency and development projects' quality assurance, monitoring, reporting and support functions.

Procedures are simplified and harmonized

20.   Harmonization between TCP and the project cycle procedures will be undertaken taking into account alignment with the Strategic Framework, TCP enhancement measures, lessons learned from the decentralization of the TCP management, improvement of project preparation time and simplification of procedures. The Project Cycle guidelines are intended to: (i) ensure the strategic focus and quality of FAO's projects and programmes; (ii) represent a single reference to project cycle; and (iii) include all projects/ programmes implemented by FAO irrespective of the source of funding. The Project Cycle guidelines and the TCP manual will therefore be revised, and one single set of guidelines will be made available to users.

21.   The current TCP criteria (Annex 2) aim at ensuring that each intervention funded by the TCP will lead to a transfer of FAO's technical knowledge to a member country. These criteria are considered as a tool that guides what types of assistance or interventions can be supported by the TCP programme. The ten TCP criteria are good practice criteria available to all assistance. Harmonization with the criteria used for other types of assistance should be carried out in the context of the revision of the TCP Manual and alignment with Project Cycle procedures.

Capacity development

22.   Appropriate capacity development activities at all levels will be carried-out in support of this implementation plan. Efforts to support the capacity of decentralized offices and headquarters staff will continue. The TCP is also part of an integrated approach to capacity development that includes *inter alia* the Country Programming Framework, resource mobilization and Project Cycle.

Guidance sought by the Joint Meeting

23.   The Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees is invited to endorse the proposed plan for implementing the TCP enhancement measures.

Annex 1: TCP Enhancement: Implementation Plan and Timeline

Actions	June to Dec 2013	Jan to June 2014	June to Dec 2014
Alignment to the reviewed Strategic Framework			
The TCP is aligned to and contributes to the reviewed Strategic Framework and CPFs at country level, which include a TCP priority pipeline	x	x	x
TCP performance indicators are developed	x		
Resource mobilization and partnerships			
TCP contributes to enhanced resource mobilization and partnerships	x	x	x
Organizational implications			
TCP and Project Cycle procedures reviewed and aligned	x	x	
New roles and responsibilities communicated	x		
Capacities developed	x	x	x

Annex 2: TCP Criteria

Criteria	Development TCP assistance	Emergency TCP assistance
Country eligibility	All FAO Members are eligible for access to TCP-supported technical assistance. However, TCP gives special attention to assisting the neediest countries, especially Low-income, Food-deficit Countries (LIFDCs), Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Access by high-income economies and by Members of the European Union to technical assistance through the TCP modality should be only on a full cost-recovery basis.	Fifteen percent of the TCP appropriation is indicatively earmarked for emergency and rehabilitation projects, accessible to all FAO Members.
Aims and purposes	TCP-supported assistance should contribute directly to at least one Organizational Outcome of FAO's Strategic Framework.	TCP-supported emergency and early rehabilitation assistance should contribute to Organizational Outcome 4 of Strategic Objective 5, aiming at ensuring that countries and partners respond more effectively to crises and emergencies with food and agriculture related interventions.
Country or regional priorities	TCP-supported assistance should be directed at national or regional priorities linked to the aims and purposes identified in Criterion 2 and, where they are in place, should be consistent with FAO's Country Programming Frameworks and emerge from TCP priority-setting processes at the country level.	Emergency TCP assistance is not subject to any priority setting process.
Critical gap or problem	TCP-supported assistance should be directed at a clearly defined critical technical gap or problem that has been identified by beneficiaries or stakeholders and which necessitates technical cooperation within the timeframe that can be provided by the Programme, but which either cannot or should not be provided through other resources.	Emergency TCP assistance should be designed for very rapid response in support of interventions in thematic areas in which the Organization has a demonstrated comparative advantage.

Criteria	Development TCP assistance	Emergency TCP assistance
Sustainable impacts	TCP-supported assistance should result in clearly defined outputs and outcomes leading to impacts. It should have catalytic or multiplier effects such as increased mobilization of investment funds. The outcomes and impacts should be sustainable. TCP requests will not be accepted when they are a consequence of the ineffective follow-up to previous TCPs.	TCP emergency assistance should be directed at the sustainable rehabilitation of productive activities and at technical cooperation to support effective government (or donor) response. TCP-supported emergency and rehabilitation assistance should be directed at interventions that increase the likelihood of additional donor and/or government resources being directed to immediate relief and longer-term rehabilitation. Repetitive assistance to address recurrent types of emergencies in the same country should be avoided and be redirected towards more lasting impact assistance for the prevention of and preparedness for these same emergencies.
Scale and duration	No TCP project should require a budget of more than USD 500,000 and should be completed within 24 months. The duration may be extended to 36 months, when justified, and on a case-by-case basis. The budget ceiling for a TCP Facility project is USD 200 000 per biennium which can be increased to a maximum of USD 300,000 per biennium subject to the agreement of the Regional Representative responsible for the regional allocation. A TCP Facility project should be completed within 24 months, but may be extended to 36 months, when justified, and on a case-by-case basis.	
Government commitment	Requests for TCP assistance should include a formal commitment by government(s) or regional organizations to provide all necessary inputs, staff and institutional arrangements to ensure the timely and effective start-up, implementation and follow-up of the requested TCP-supported assistance.	
Capacity building	Wherever possible, TCP-supported development assistance should help build national or regional capacities to ensure that the critical gaps and problems to which they are directed would either not appear again or that they could be resolved effectively at the national or regional level.	TCP-supported emergency and rehabilitation assistance should increase the capacity of the government and affected communities and households to either withstand, or respond to similar shocks in the future, without resorting to external assistance.
Gender-sensitivity	TCP-supported assistance must be gender-sensitive in identification, design and implementation, in line with the Organization's Gender Plan of Action.	
Partnership and participation	Wherever possible, TCP-supported assistance should contribute to new or strengthened partnerships and alliances, including through co-financing, and should lead to the increased participation of food-insecure and poor men and women in key decision-making processes.	