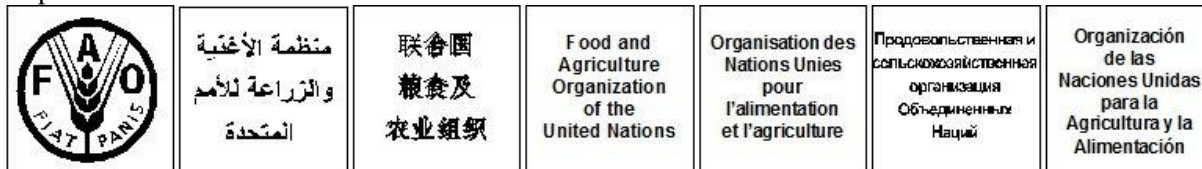


September 2011



## FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Hundred and Fortieth Session**

**Rome, 10 - 14 October 2011**

**Annual Report on the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation  
Activities (and Governance and Management of the Fund)**

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

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- As per the request of the Finance Committee at its hundred and thirty-fifth Session in October 2010, this annual report of the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA) presents the governance and management of the Fund and detailed financial data on the activities implemented over the period 1 July 2010 -30 June 2011.
- The SFERA enables FAO to take rapid and effective action in response to food and agricultural threats and emergencies. The Fund has three components: (i) **a working capital component** to advance funds, once a donor's commitment is secured, towards the immediate procurement of inputs to protect livelihoods, restart agricultural activities or contribute to the immediate response to a crisis; (ii) **a revolving fund component** to immediately support coordination and operations in the field, such as needs assessment, programme formulation and early establishment of an emergency and rehabilitation coordination unit (ERCU); and (iii) **a programme component** which pools resources in support of a programme framework for large-scale emergencies.
- The SFERA is operated in compliance with Financial Regulation 6.7, which governs the Director-General's acceptance of voluntary contributions. The operations, accounting and financial control of the SFERA are subject to the Organization's administrative and financial controls, as well as auditing by the Inspector-General and the External Auditor. The governance arrangements of the SFERA ensure a strict adherence to FAO's rules and regulations and comply with required good management and accountability practices including annual oversight of SFERA activities by the Finance Committee.
- Since inception and up to 30 June 2011, SFERA had received USD 100.9 million. Of this total, USD 3.4 million was used to set up or reinforce ERCUs and implement needs assessment and programme formulation missions. Since inception, USD 164.2 million has been advanced to fund immediate emergency needs, of which USD 31.6 million over the reporting period. The advances which were still outstanding as at 30 June 2011 total USD 8.0 million. The cash balance of SFERA at 30 June 2011 was USD 26.7 million.

### GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

- The Finance Committee is invited to take note of the information provided in the document.

#### **Draft Advice**

- **The Finance Committee notes the performance of the SFERA over the period 1 July 2010 - 30 June 2011 and appreciates the key role of the Fund in enabling FAO to respond rapidly in the critical early stages of an emergency, ensuring the protection and restoration of livelihoods. The Committee acknowledges the governance and management of the Fund which have enabled the SFERA to be an efficient and effective instrument to support FAO's emergency and rehabilitation programme.**

## Background

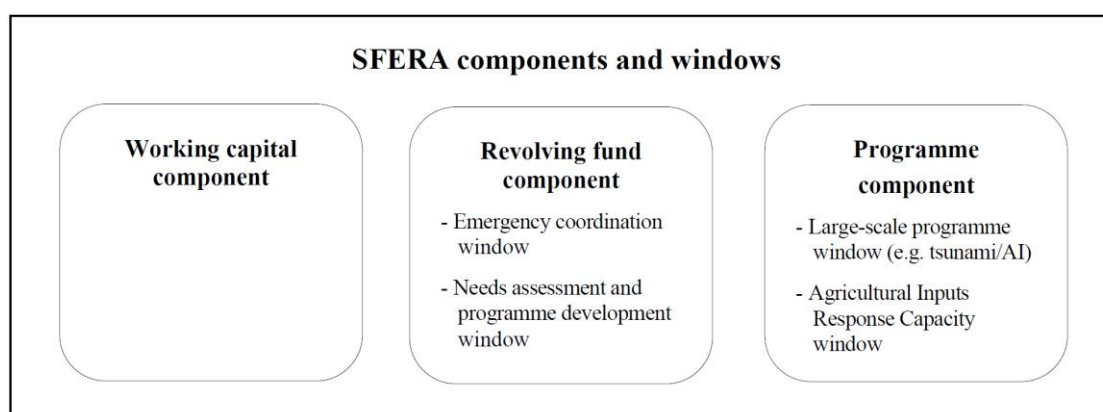
1. The Finance Committee supported the creation of the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities (SFERA) at its Hundred and Second Session in May 2003 with the purpose to “...enable the Organization to rapidly initiate emergency operations by participating in interagency needs assessment and coordination activities, establishing an emergency coordination unit (ECU), preparing a programme framework and projects, and providing advance funding for procurement of inputs when a donor’s commitment has been obtained.”<sup>1</sup> During its Hundred and Tenth Session in September 2005, the Finance Committee reviewed the use of the SFERA and requested regular reports on each year's activity.

2. At its Hundred and Thirty-Fifth session in October 2010, the Committee requested the Secretariat “to include in future annual reports more detailed financial data on the activities implemented through the SFERA” and asked “to review the governance and management of the SFERA within the framework of the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation on FAO operational capacities in emergency”.

3. This annual report contains financial data both for the twelve-month period, ending 30 June 2011 and for the seven years since the Fund became operational. This report further includes detailed financial data on the activities implemented through the SFERA as well as a brief description of the major operations initiated with SFERA funds over the reporting period. As per the request of the Committee, the report describes also the governance and management arrangements of the Fund.

## SFERA Set-up and Comparative Advantage

4. SFERA has three components: (i) a **working capital component** to advance funds to initiate project activities rapidly before donor funds on agreed projects are received, with the funds then being transferred back to SFERA upon receipt; (ii) a **revolving fund component** to support FAO's involvement in needs assessment, programme development and early establishment of emergency and rehabilitation coordination units (ERCUs); and (iii) a **programme component** to support work on specific large-scale emergency programmes.



<sup>1</sup> FC 102/14

5. **The working capital component** initiates response activities rapidly before donor funds are received. Rapid delivery of agricultural inputs not only enables families to restore food production and livelihoods, but also averts preventable losses at the peak time of vulnerability. Veterinary supplies and feed prevent the further loss of livestock, on which families, especially women depend. The SFERA allows to speed up the reaction time to emergencies and fosters earlier recovery.

6. **The revolving fund component** supports FAO's involvement in assessments, coordination, programme development, rapid deployment of experts and reinforcement of capacity of emergency country teams. A solid foundation for response lies in identifying the most critical needs of affected populations, securing sufficient capacity to respond and ensuring coordinated and technically sound action. SFERA funding enables FAO to participate in assessment missions; lead coordination efforts for harmonized and effective response in the agriculture sector; and contribute to the formulation of response programmes that address the priority needs of affected populations.

7. **The programme component**<sup>2</sup> facilitates faster and more programmatic assistance that can be tailored to evolving needs on the ground. The SFERA's pooled funding approach provides the necessary flexibility to adjust activities to channel support to the geographical and thematic areas of greatest need. The programme approach has proven especially crucial in response to large-scale crises, such as in contributing to member countries' fight against Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and responding to the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. The programme approach provides the necessary flexibility to adapt operations to evolving situations and streamline procedures so as to ensure that the most appropriate assistance reaches affected populations sooner. For 2011, the programme component of the SFERA was active through the Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity (AIRC) window, which was initiated in December 2008 through a contribution from Belgium. AIRC channels pooled funds towards the immediate procurement and delivery of time-critical inputs. Discussions are underway to establish a window in support of disaster risk reduction (DRR).

### SFERA Governance and Management

8. The SFERA is operated in compliance with Financial Regulation 6.7, which governs the Director-General's acceptance of voluntary contributions. This means that expenditure for projects financed through extrabudgetary funds should not create financial obligations on the Regular Programme. The operations, accounting and financial control of the SFERA are subject to the Organization's administrative and financial controls, as well as auditing by the Inspector-General and the External Auditor. The Finance Committee is provided at its fall session with an annual status report, highlighting the financial performance of the SFERA and the results achieved under each component of the fund. The annual report gives an analysis of the receipts, applications and advances throughout the reporting year.

9. The SFERA is funded through voluntary contributions from various donors and resources from the Direct Operating Cost Recovery account. Donor contributions include:

- direct contributions from interested donors;
- retention of fund balances on completed projects, as authorized by donors; and
- retention of interest earnings on project fund balances, as authorized by donors.

10. The Fund is operated under the general authority of the Assistant Director-General, Technical Cooperation Department (TC), as per the conditions provided in the documents FC 108/9 "Utilization of the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities" and FC 113/12 "Flexible use of the SFERA". The management of the Fund is delegated to the Director, Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE), whose decisions are based on established criteria, which were elaborated as per the recommendations of the evaluation on FAO's operations capacities in emergency. The approval process for a SFERA allocation ensures a segregation of duties:

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<sup>2</sup> Since 2010, the programme component has been recorded in a separate account, in order to facilitate control and reporting.

the request for SFERA is initiated by an operations unit, reviewed by a senior programme officer and cleared by a service chief before the Director, TCE approval.

11. Requests for the use of the SFERA for an advance under the **working capital component** are reviewed and approved according to the following criteria:

- a) a signed agreement with the donor or a written confirmation of the firm commitment;
- b) donor's history record with FAO's emergency programme: major donors with funding over USD 5 million over the last three years are considered solid partners; new donors will be analysed on a case-by-case basis;
- c) any advance request over USD 5 million to be approved by the ADG-TC;
- d) funds to be advanced to cover most urgent actions which cannot be delayed, mainly procurement activities (including human resources); and
- e) the length of anticipated period for receipt of funds and corresponding reimbursement of the advance received should not exceed six months.

12. Requests for the use of the SFERA for an allotment under the **revolving fund component** are reviewed and approved according to the severity and nature of the crisis as well as the level of resources available at field level to initiate a quick response. Proposed activities are catalytic and remains limited over time. The request indicates the anticipated level of funds, which will be recovered.

13. The **programme component** of the SFERA is managed as a multidonor programme in response to large-scale crises. For each window, a multidonor trust fund is established and is backed by a programme document which indicates the objectives of the intervention, the proposed activities and identified results. The current AIRC window is exclusively for the urgent distribution of agricultural inputs (e.g. seeds, tools, fertilizer, etc.) and their related costs (e.g. targeting of beneficiaries and distribution of inputs) to deliver the assistance successfully.

14. The governance arrangements of the SFERA ensure a strict adherence to FAO's rules and regulations and comply with good management and accountability practices including annual oversight of SFERA activities by the Finance Committee. The governance and management of the Fund have enabled the SFERA to be an efficient and effective mechanism to support FAO's emergency and rehabilitation programme.

### SFERA Resources

15. **Receipts** – SFERA has been operational since April 2004. Since then, the Fund has received USD 100.9 million. Of this amount, USD 67.2 million were provided by the member countries listed in the following table. Of these, USD 5.3 million were from donors<sup>3</sup> who agreed to devolve balances of closed emergency projects to the SFERA. During the 12 months up to 30 June 2011, deposits to the SFERA amounted to USD 3.8 million.

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<sup>3</sup> Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, the World Bank and the private sector donor CONAD have authorized transfers of unspent balances from their completed projects. Other donors to emergency projects have also been asked to consider this.

<b>MEMBER COUNTRIES</b>	<b>12 months to 30 June 2011 (USD 000)</b>	<b>Since inception (USD 000)</b>
Sweden	0	23 662
United Kingdom	1 237	9 293
Norway	313	8584
France	134	6 067
Belgium	2 245	4 594
Finland	11	3 979
Switzerland	0	3 697
Italy	0	1 407
Saudi Arabia	0	1 375
Germany	0	1 304
Austria	0	1 125
Canada	0	814
China	0	500
Spain	222	303
Greece	0	227
Ireland	6	140
Jordan	0	60
Australia	0	59
Luxembourg	8	8
Other members	3	9
<b>Total members</b>	<b>4 179</b>	<b>67 207</b>
World Bank	0	17
OPEC <sup>4</sup> fund	0	450
Others including from emergency project support costs reimbursements	(341) <sup>5</sup>	33 215
<b>Total received</b>	<b>3 838</b>	<b>100 889</b>

*As at 30 June 2011.*

*Source: compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.*

<sup>4</sup> Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

<sup>5</sup> correction made in July 2010 of an erroneous credit recorded in the prior reporting period in June 2010

16. Under the working capital component, USD 164.2 million, of which USD 31.6 million for the reporting period, were advanced to various projects. Of this amount, USD 8 million remain outstanding, pending receipt of donor funds. Of the total USD 100.9 million contributed, USD 3.4 million, of which USD 0.8 million for the reporting period, were approved under the revolving fund component. Under the programme component, a total of USD 62.6 million, of which USD 1.7 million for the reporting period, were allocated. The details of funds applied are given in the following table.

<b>ADVANCES</b>	<b>12 months to 30 June 2011 (USD 000)</b>	<b>Since inception (USD 000)</b>
Total advances made during the period	31 643	164 163
Refunds on advances paid during the period	39 754	156 172
<b>Total advances outstanding</b>		<b>7 991</b>

<b>APPLICATIONS</b>	<b>12 months to 30 June 2011 (USD 000)</b>	<b>Since inception (USD 000)</b>
For emergency coordination unit setup	500	1 574
For needs assessment missions	300	1 800
<b>Subtotal revolving fund component</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>3 374</b>
Avian Influenza campaign	0	45 928
Agricultural Inputs Response Capacity (AIRC) <sup>6</sup>	1 747	5 497
Tsunami campaign	0	10 002
Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (ISFP)	0	1 168
<b>Subtotal programme component</b>	<b>1 747</b>	<b>62 595</b>
<b>Total applications</b>	<b>2 547</b>	<b>65 969</b>

*As at 30 June 2011.*

*Source: compiled from subsidiary records and agreed to the general ledger.*

17. The cash balance of the SFERA at 30 June 2011 was USD 26.7 million. The cash balance is calculated as: cumulative receipts of USD 100.9 million, less applications of USD 66.2 million, less outstanding advances of USD 8 million.

### **Use of the SFERA**

18. **Advances** over the reporting period, mainly benefited contributions from 11 donors, which represent approximately 97 percent of advances between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011, as shown in the following table.

<sup>6</sup> The resources related to the AIRC are recorded under a newly established General Income (GINC) account to ensure a segregation between the advances and applications.

<b>DONORS BENEFITING FROM SFERA WORKING CAPITAL COMPONENT (ADVANCES/REFUNDS)</b>		
<b>(USD 000)</b>		
<b>12 months to 30 June 2011</b>		
<b>DONORS</b>	<b>ADVANCES</b>	<b>REFUND</b>
UN - Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs - OCHA	7 408	6 908
Japan	5 000	5 000
United Kingdom	4 220	4 370
European Union	3 767	9 387
Common Fund for Humanitarian Action in the Sudan – CHF	2 700	2 920
Sweden	1 993	1 993
Belgium	1 550	2 250
Netherlands	1 300	1 300
United States of America	1 250	2 450
Italy	950	950
Spain	450	1 136
Other donors	1 055	1 090
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>31 643</b>	<b>39 754<sup>7</sup></b>

19. On the beneficiary side, advances mainly supported ten major programmes, representing 86 percent of advances between 1 July 2010 and 30 June 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Some of these refunds refer to advances made over the previous reporting period.



<b>COUNTRIES BENEFITING FROM SFERA WORKING CAPITAL COMPONENT (ADVANCES/REFUNDS)</b>		
<b>(USD 000)</b>		
<b>12 months to 30 June 2011</b>		
<b>COUNTRIES</b>	<b>ADVANCES</b>	<b>REFUND</b>
Pakistan	5 370	5 370
Afghanistan	5 100	5 800
Sudan	3 880	5 600
Somalia	3 098	2 918
Zimbabwe	2 800	2 950
Madagascar	2 500	2 500
Sri Lanka	1 700	1 250
Regional Africa	1 000	1 000
Ethiopia	950	120
Gaza Strip and West Bank	735	450
Niger		3 800
Other countries	4 510	7 996
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>31 643</b>	<b>39 754<sup>8</sup></b>

20. Support provided through the SFERA's working capital component was critical to ensure a smooth implementation of the operations in the field.

In **Pakistan**, SFERA advances expedited the provision of crop and livestock support to families affected by the 2009 internally displaced person (IDP) crisis and the severe flooding in July 2010. It was crucial to ensure that crop and livestock losses were not compounded by delayed recovery efforts. Through the assistance, vital livestock resources were preserved, vegetable production was resumed and wheat was planted in time, rather than delayed by one year.

In **Afghanistan**, SFERA helped to strengthen the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster, and deliver quality wheat seed and fertilizer to families affected by natural disaster, conflict and high food prices. The wheat seed provided will also increase the dissemination of quality seed through farmer-to-farmer exchanges and sale in subsequent seasons.

Two SFERA advances in **North Sudan** focused on assisting returnees, IDPs, refugees and host communities through the provision of assorted seeds and tools, livestock protection services and training. A third intervention improved the coordination of food security interventions in the three Darfur States, including an in-depth livelihood analysis of vulnerable communities living in different livelihood situations. These livelihood support activities benefited around 60 food security and livelihood partners targeting assistance to an estimated 4.8 million vulnerable people. The intervention also increased vegetable production and provided pastoralists with access to regular and sustainable veterinary services in areas affected by drought and prone to livestock disease.

<sup>8</sup> Some of these refunds refer to advances made over the previous reporting period.

In **Somalia**, SFERA advances helped to launch operations rapidly to catalyse economic activity and employment in the livestock and crop subsectors. Efforts to boost livestock-based livelihoods focused on promoting the production, trade and marketing of quality assured meat and meat products in domestic and regional markets of Somaliland. The improvement of irrigation infrastructure enabled small-scale farmers in the Middle and Lower Shebelle regions to have a more reliable source of water and access to markets, while generating cash-for-work opportunities. In Lower and Middle Juba and Lower Shabelle regions, advances helped to build the resilience of drought-affected communities through cash transfers, providing quality farming inputs, and rehabilitating water catchments and irrigation infrastructure.

SFERA advances in **Zimbabwe** catalysed efforts to strengthen existing coordination mechanisms with timely information on the status of agriculture and food security in the country, such as improving the Agriculture and Food Security Monitoring System; introducing the Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification (IPC); conducting national surveys and assessments; and capacity-building of the Government Department and non-governmental organizations.

In **Madagascar**, a locust upsurge posed a serious threat to rural communities in Grand Sud – an estimated 460 000 households could have been affected over an area of 500 000 hectares. A SFERA advance kick-started FAO efforts to mobilize expertise, provide material inputs, develop local capacity and take action at the appropriate bio-ecological time. The timely locust control campaign helped to prevent an estimated USD 135 million in crop damage – nearly 30 times the cost of its prevention. Advance funding also fast-tracked the provision of quality seeds and cuttings to farmers in drought-stricken areas of the south, and market gardening kits to families in urban and peri-urban areas affected by increased food costs and the consequences of the economic slowdown.

In **Sri Lanka**, the assistance aimed to restore immediately the food production capacity of conflict-affected farmers returning to abandoned arable lands in their former villages in time for the Maha agricultural season to avoid dependency on unsustainably high levels of food aid. The advance facilitated a rapid transfer of inputs such as rice seed, vegetable gardening kits, fruit trees and poultry to diversify production. Support was also rushed to flood victims in Central and Eastern Provinces to restore food production, including paddy, other field crops and vegetables.

In **Ethiopia**, interventions supported through SFERA addressed livelihood recovery needs in flood-stricken areas of Gambella and Amhara regions related to the sustainable resumption of crop and animal production. SFERA advances enabled seeds, tools and essential vaccines to reach rapidly affected families in both regions. Efforts in Gambella focused on disaster risk reduction and early warning, including a vulnerability mapping and flood mitigation study.

A timely response was crucial in combating an outbreak of Tomato Leaf Miner infestation in the **Gaza Strip**. FAO helped vulnerable farmers maintain crop production levels and raised awareness of pest identification, scouting and control techniques to mitigate future outbreaks. In both the **West Bank** and **the Gaza Strip**, SFERA advances assisted conflict-affected families to resume food production and develop new skills and income generating activities. With focus on women and youth, training and inputs were provided for backyard agricultural and livestock production, fresh food processing, cottage industry and junior farmer field and life schools. Future interventions and beneficiaries in the region will also benefit from improved access to data (at governorate level) on household food consumption and nutrient intake, and improved means to measure resilience and evaluate the impact of humanitarian assistance on affected populations.

21. **Emergency coordination** – this window of the SFERA’s revolving fund component permits the rapid deployment of emergency coordinators, the reinforcement of the existing teams to face a sudden increase in activities or to fill funding gaps over a short period of time. During the past year, support was provided in Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, South Sudan, Sub-Saharan Africa, Southern Africa and West Africa. The following table briefly presents the use of the allotments made.

<b>COUNTRY/REGION</b>	<b>SUPPORT</b>
<b>Côte d'Ivoire</b>	Extension of emergency coordination position to bridge funding bottleneck and ensure programme continuity
<b>Democratic People's Republic of Korea</b>	Filling critical funding gaps to maintain operations and conduct technical backstopping
<b>Guinea Bissau</b>	Extension of emergency coordination position to bridge funding bottleneck and ensure programme continuity
<b>Liberia</b>	Emergency coordinator rapidly deployed to expand FAO programming and resource mobilization in response to the refugee crisis
<b>Madagascar</b>	Rapid recruitment of experts in support of locust survey and control operations
<b>Mauritania</b>	Extension of emergency coordination position to bridge funding bottleneck and ensure programme continuity
<b>Sub-Saharan Africa</b>	Address funding gaps to ensure continuity of operations of the Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Disease (ECTAD) decentralized subregional Unit for Sub-Saharan Africa in Gaborone, and ability to respond to potential animal health threats in the region
<b>South Sudan</b>	Emergency coordinator rapidly deployed to expand FAO programming and resource mobilization in the lead up to independence
<b>Southern Africa</b>	Recruitment of monitoring and evaluation expert in support of regional projects
<b>West Africa</b>	Filling critical funding gaps to sustain programming capacity at subregional level

22. **Needs assessment and programme development** – this window of the revolving fund component finances needs assessment missions at the onset of a crisis to ensure that the Organization and its partners obtain appropriate information essential to formulate their response programme. Over the reporting period, needs assessment and programme formulation missions were deployed to Benin, Haiti, Japan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Madagascar, Pakistan, Southeast Asia, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The following table briefly presents the use of the allotments made.

COUNTRY/REGION	SUPPORT
<b>Benin</b>	Needs assessment mission in flood-affected areas
<b>Haiti</b>	Fielding of livestock experts to assist the Government in the formulation of a project proposal in livestock sector
<b>Japan</b>	Fielding of food safety experts to assist in emergency assessment work related to the nuclear emergency
<b>Kenya</b>	Plan of Action formulation mission
<b>Kyrgyzstan</b>	Mission to support to the recently established Food Security and Agriculture Cluster
<b>Libya</b>	Rapid assessment and project formulation exercises to boost surge capacity
<b>Madagascar</b>	Plan of Action formulation mission
<b>Pakistan</b>	Immediate support to the Pakistan floods response operation in terms of needs assessment, coordination and programme development
<b>Southeast Asia</b>	Development of an action plan to roll-out IPC in selected countries, to be gradually scaled up across the region
<b>South Sudan</b>	Land tenure programme formulation mission, anticipating the challenges and opportunities of independence
<b>Syrian Arab Republic</b>	Participation in joint United Nations (UN)/Government needs assessment mission and emergency portfolio development in response to low rainfall/precipitation in the north
<b>West Bank and Gaza Strip</b>	Fisheries appraisal mission to develop recommendations for more comprehensive livelihood assistance in the sector

23. The programme component of the SFERA focused exclusively on the AIRC over the reporting period.

COUNTRY/REGION	INTERVENTION	AIRC allotment (USD 000)
<b>West Bank and Gaza Strip</b>	<i>“Emergency food production support to poor families in the Gaza Strip”</i>	400
<b>Pakistan</b>	<i>“Emergency assistance to support flood-affected vulnerable farmers in Khyber Pukhtunkhwa Province, Pakistan”</i>	197
<b>Benin</b>	<i>“Assistance à la relance des activités productives des ménages affectés par les inondations au Bénin”</i>	300
<b>Togo</b>	<i>“Assistance d’urgence aux populations victimes des inondations de 2010 dans les régions Maritime, Centrale, Kara et Savanes du Togo”</i>	500
<b>Libya, Niger, Egypt and Tunisia</b>	<i>“Emergency support to vegetable production in coastal and urban/peri-urban areas”</i>	350
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1 747</b>

**In Pakistan**, FAO rushed compound feed and veterinary supplies (de-worming applications) to families in Kohistan, one of the districts most affected by the 2010 floods. The assistance reached 5 700 households. Project efforts enabled these families to keep their livestock alive, healthy and productive, and prevented distress sales of animals. Disruptions to the annual production cycle were minimized, allowing for at least a partial recovery. Nine out of ten beneficiaries receiving livestock support through FAO's flood response reported up to 50 percent increase in milk yield, worth an additional USD 1.05 per day.

By providing poor households with backyard and rooftop gardens, an AIRC project in **the Gaza Strip** improved the availability of quality vegetables, as well as protein (in the form of fish). Furthermore, it encouraged the sustainable use of scarce resources through drip irrigation and the recycling of nutrient-rich water from fish tanks to irrigate plants. A total of 450 households received training, inputs and follow-up support to grow vegetables on small plots of land in rural and semi-rural areas. An additional 119 households living in urban areas were supported with rooftop units connected to a fish tank – a form of vertical agriculture developed especially for the project. In order to promote awareness of this system for those without access to land, 24 demonstration rooftop garden units were also installed in locations such as local schools and family centres run by the United Nations Children's Fund.

An ongoing AIRC project in **Benin** is providing livelihood support to farming families severely affected by flooding in 2010. The families receiving assistance are smallholder farmers, cultivating 0.5 hectare plots on average, who derive their income and food requirements primarily by growing maize and rice. The project aims to increase cereal and vegetable production to restore the livelihood and economic activity of around 9 000 households.

FAO is also providing seed kits to around 25 000 crisis-affected households in peri-urban areas of the **Lybian** coastal belt and up to 10 000 host families in **Egypt, the Niger and Tunisia** to maintain food diversity at household and market levels. The kits, which comprise six major fruit and vegetable crops and fertilizer, will improve household food and nutrition security levels, reduce pressure on local food prices and strengthen the livelihoods of vulnerable groups, including host families and returning migrants. A portion of the inputs will serve as buffer stock to respond to possible seed and fertilizer shortages.

Lastly, in **Togo**, FAO is providing support to small-scale farmers whose livelihoods were severely affected by flooding in late 2010. Approximately 2 500 households are receiving quality seeds, tools and fertilizer to restore their production of cereals (maize, rice), vegetables (tomato, onion and pepper) and tubers (cassava). In total, the project expects to rehabilitate and restore smallholder production on approximately 1 450 hectares of land.

## Conclusions

24. SFERA continues to prove to be a very valuable tool to enable FAO to improve its performance in the humanitarian response. It supports successful implementation of the Strategic Objective I "Improved preparedness for, and effective response to food and agricultural threats and emergencies". Appropriate governance and management arrangements are making SFERA a flexible instrument to respond faster and better to new crisis. FAO seeks to pursue and expand its partnership with donors to maximize the use of SFERA.