

Concept Note

Side Event 1 on FAO Strategic Programmes

Background and justification

During the past five years, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has made a remarkable difference in its approach to support member countries through its new Strategic Framework which was developed and adopted in 2013 and reviewed in 2016. This was done through a consultative strategic thinking process, taking into account the strong and consistent support expressed by the FAO Governing Bodies for continuity in the strategic direction of the Organization. This process involved identification of global trends expected to frame agricultural development over the medium term, and sectoral and regional trends arising from regional strategic reviews and priorities identified through deliberations of the FAO Regional Conferences and Technical Committees; identification of main challenges expected to be faced by countries and development actors in food and agriculture in the coming years; analysis of main global developments setting the overall context in which FAO operates; and analysis of the implications of these challenges and developments for FAO's Strategic Objectives in the context of FAO's basic attributes and core functions. The review also took into account the major global developments, most importantly, the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and entry into force of the Paris Agreement on climate change which will provide the broad context in which FAO will operate and adapt for enhanced delivery and impact of the Organization's work.

The Strategic Framework provides the basis for fine-tuning the conceptual framework and theory of change of FAO's five Strategic Objectives within the context of the Organization's vision, attributes and core functions in support of member countries towards a world free of hunger and poverty and with sustainable management and use of natural resources (FAO global goals). The five Strategic Objectives are:

- (1) Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition;
- (2) Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable;
- (3) Reduce rural poverty;
- (4) Enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems; and
- (5) Increase the resilience of livelihoods and threats and crises.

Moreover the Strategic Framework also includes an additional objective that addresses technical quality, statistics and cross-cutting themes of climate change, gender, governance and nutrition.

The Strategic Framework addresses the unique challenges African countries face and the priorities they have set for themselves. Challenges of hunger and malnutrition, poverty, low level of productivity, weak value chains, and high levels of vulnerability to different types of risks and crises, both natural hazards and human-induced, all characterize the food and agriculture systems in Africa.

The Strategic Programmes have been instrumental in terms of enabling FAO to effectively respond to those challenges and priorities in the Africa region, in a coherent, consistent and synergetic manner. More specifically the Strategic Programmes have:

- enhanced the relevance and coherence of the global commitments (e.g. SDGs) to regional priorities (Malabo commitments on agriculture), and facilitated a cross-sectoral integrated approach in terms of supporting implementation and delivery at country level;
- helped to articulate FAO's contribution to national priorities within the Country Programming Framework (CPF) in a more holistic and coherent manner, linking them with regional and global commitments;
- enabled identification of relevant interlocutors, beyond the traditional ministries of agriculture, and facilitated constructive intersectoral and multistakeholder engagement and coordination, around programmatic interventions, paving the way for mutual accountability for results;
- helped in the articulation of Regional Initiatives, as delivery mechanisms, to effectively respond to the pertinent aspects of the regional priorities of (1) ending hunger and malnutrition; (2) sustainable production intensification and value chain development; and (3) strengthening resilience to address vulnerabilities; and achieve results.

Venue and date: Khartoum, the Sudan, 21 February 2018

The event will gather high-level representatives, ministers and senior officers of African member countries, regional bodies such as the African Union Commission (AUC), Regional Economic Communities, Civil Society Organizations, technical and resource partners, and FAO Senior Management.

Duration: one hour

Purpose and Expected Outcomes

The purpose of the Side Event is to demonstrate how FAO's Strategic Framework/Strategic Programmes have been instrumental in terms of guiding priority setting at regional and country levels and providing coherent support for integrated programming and enhanced delivery at country level.

The Side Event is expected to achieve the following outcomes:

- promote enhanced awareness and recognition of: (a) the key role that the Strategic Programmes have been playing in integrating FAO's technical work at regional and country level to address multifaceted development challenges and provide efficient and adequate support to countries on the SDGs; (b) the importance of the Strategic Framework in providing direction for FAO's technical work to address priorities in the region and ensuring effective delivery of results at country level; and (c) the important contribution of the Strategic Programmes to the delivery of normative products and services, such as standards, voluntary guidelines and legal instruments, at regional and country level;
- facilitate mutual experience sharing among countries related to cross-sectoral, multistakeholder engagement for synergy and coordination;
- explore opportunities for networking, partnerships and resources mobilization to further enhance the impact of the Strategic Framework.

Structure

The Side Event will start with an opening statement and brief introductory presentations by FAO, as the host, to be followed by a facilitated panel discussion composed of representatives from countries and regional partners (e.g. AUC).

The introductory presentations will highlight: (a) the relevance of FAO's Strategic Framework/Strategic Programmes in terms of responding to regional and country priorities; (b) how Strategic Framework/Strategic Programmes address socio-economic dimensions and challenges in the region (as reflected under Regional Initiatives on Africa's Commitment to End Hunger [RI1] and Building Resilience in Africa's drylands [RI3] - SP1, SP3 and SP5); and (c) how the Strategic Framework/Strategic Programmes address issues of food systems and sustainable agriculture (as reflected under the Regional Initiative on Sustainable Production Intensification and Value Chain Development (RI2 - SP2 and SP4).

The Round Table with ministers and a representative of a regional organization (e.g. AUC) will highlight how the Strategic Framework has facilitated prioritization and programme delivery.

| Tentative agenda of the Side Event on FAO Strategic Programmes | |
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| 3 minutes | Opening Remarks, FAO |
| 15 minutes | Presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relevance of FAO Strategic Programmes in addressing issues of sustainable food and agriculture systems and in responding to regional and country priorities, FAO |
| 45 minutes | Facilitated Round Table Discussion |
| 5 minutes | Summing-up of discussions/way forward |