

Chair's Aide-Mémoire

Meeting of Working Group III of the Conference Committee for IEE Follow-up (CoC-IEE)

Wednesday 20 May 2009

Noel de Luna, Chair WG III

Consideration of Root and Branch Review Recommendations

1. The Working Group appreciated the introductory statement by the Chair of the Finance Committee and the presentation by Ernst & Young of the Stage 2 Report of the Root and Branch Review (RBR). It welcomed the RBR Report as well as the Management Response (available at www.fao.org/uploads/media/RBR%20Management%20Response_1.pdf) which, Members noted, gave overall support for the recommendations made by Ernst & Young.

2. Management formulated a series of comments on the recommendations regarding the various work streams, and on the costs and savings estimates provided in the RBR Report. It pointed out that some important costs were not included, and therefore the net savings estimates needed to be treated with caution. For example, the Report did not include necessary investment costs associated with the redeployment or separation of staff. Management indicated that it would hold further consultations with Ernst & Young in order to produce a modified costs and savings analysis for further review by the Working Group. Following this, the RBR recommendations will be considered alongside other related IPA activities to determine an overall sequencing of activities in 2009 within the funds available in the Trust Fund, or in the next biennium.

3. Members supported the sense of urgency conveyed by the RBR Report as it was crucial not to lose the momentum of the reform. In discussing the RBR recommendations, Members considered that, looking forward, it will be important to:

- ensure the provision of quality translation services, in an effective, timely and cost-efficient manner, taking account of the urgent and confidential nature of the documents to be translated. This could entail revisiting the existing back-charge system, while pursuing the policy of outsourcing at a level commensurate with the required quality and timeliness of translations;
- undertake a review of the Office of the Director-General. Management agreed on the need for such a study, noting that it could be carried out by Ernst & Young and that the estimated funding requirements had already been identified, so that it would not entail additional costs for the IPA Trust Fund. Management was asked to expedite the process so that work on the study could begin by late June 2009;
- take into account the needs of the Decentralized Offices, on equal footing with Headquarters, while reforming the administration of the Organization;
- adopt a more strategic planning mechanism of the extra-budgetary funds for the period of the PWB and the Medium Term Plan (MTP);
- provide regular reporting back on the implementation of the RBR recommendations. In view of this, Management was planning to set up an internal monitoring mechanism under the responsibility of the IPA project leaders, through whom progress would be reported to the CoC-IEE and the Finance Committee;
- increase collaboration amongst the Rome-based UN agencies. In this regard, Members supported the creation of a joint procurement mechanism and encouraged Management to seek

further clarification on the modalities recommended by Ernst & Young, and to explore collaboration opportunities in other areas;

- look at possible ways of achieving further savings in the area of travel.

Consideration of Human Resources Management Strategy Framework

1. The Working Group welcomed the revised *Human Resources Management Strategy Framework* (www.fao.org/uploads/media/CoCIEEdoc%20on%20HR%20managementENGLISH.pdf), noting that considerable progress had been made since its last meeting on this matter. Management had also continued to develop Functional Objective Y (*Efficient and effective administration*) in connection with the preparation of the PWB 2010-11 and the MTP 2010-13, considering it essential that the Human Resource (HR) Management Strategy Framework fit together into the overall framework of Functional Objective Y. It was noted that the three HR goals embodied in the Strategy Framework were consistent with Functional Objective Y and its associated Organizational Results that are being developed for the MTP 2010-13. It was acknowledged that the HR Management Strategy Framework was a 'living' document and will be revised and updated as necessary to reflect new, emerging HR initiatives and improvements.

2. It was recalled that, at its last session in May, the Finance Committee reviewed a document providing a brief description and estimated resource requirements in 2009 for each of the six key initiatives identified in the Strategy Framework. The Finance Committee acknowledged the central importance of the six initiatives for successful HR reform in FAO.

3. Members noted the proposed mapping of the RBR recommendations to the HR goals and provided comments on various aspects, including the following:

- they confirmed HR as a key area for a successful reform of the Organization, urging Management to continue considering it as a priority;
- they reaffirmed the six HR initiatives as high priority items to be built into the HR strategy and policy framework and MTP 2010-13; and
- they noted the need to give adequate attention to gender and geographical representation in this context.

Annex 1

Agenda for the meeting

1. Chair's introduction
2. Consideration of Root and Branch Review Recommendations
3. Consideration of HR Management Strategy Framework and Impact of the Root and Branch Review recommendations