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**Executive Board
Annual Session**

Rome, 8–12 June 2009

ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Agenda item 12

For information*

COLLABORATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUSINESS PROCESSES AMONG FAO, IFAD AND WFP

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* In accordance with the Executive Board's decisions on governance, approved at the Annual and Third Regular Sessions, 2000, items for information should not be discussed unless a Board member specifically requests it, well in advance of the meeting, and the Chair accepts the request on the grounds that it is a proper use of the Board's time.

NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for information.

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal point indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.
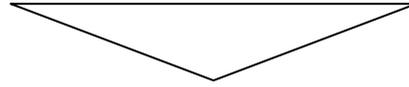
Coordinator for Special Projects, FL*:   Ms K. Muiu   tel.: 066513-2771

Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact Ms C. Panlilio, Administrative Assistant, Conference Servicing Unit (tel.: 066513-2645).

* Finance and Legal Division

DRAFT DECISION*

The Board takes note of "Collaboration on Administrative and Business Processes among FAO, IFAD and WFP" (WFP/EB.A/2009/12-A).

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* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

Contents

I. BACKGROUND

1. This paper provides information on progress made in collaboration on administrative and business processes among the three Rome-based United Nations agencies – the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Collaboration referred to in this document does not include that undertaken in the context of broader United Nations cooperation through formalized mechanisms such as the High-level Committee on Management, the United Nations Development Group and others.

2. Closer collaboration among the three Rome-based agencies is a recurrent theme in the discussions of the governing bodies of these three organizations. In no small measure, this can be attributed to the fact that the cost of administration has always been considered a major challenge, not only for the three Rome-based agencies but for the entire United Nations System. Over the years, administrative costs have been pushed upwards as a result of the impact of rising external costs such as those of human resources (both staff and non-staff), goods and services, and systems development and maintenance.

3. It is also for this reason that the three Rome-based agencies have collaborated in various areas. In addition, the external Root and Branch Review of FAO's administrative processes and services is expected to identify opportunities for a more cost-effective and efficient delivery of services in cooperation with other agencies in Rome and will provide an initial presentation of cost savings and an implementation time frame. WFP and IFAD agreed to provide their views to Ernst & Young, the consulting firm conducting the Root and Branch Review.

II. DELIVERY MECHANISM

4. A delivery mechanism (in terms of structure and process) was established in May 2007 to guide and maximize initiatives for collaboration, and ensure that all three agencies reap the full benefits and gain from the efficiencies achieved. **While this mechanism focuses on the three agencies, it does not preclude collaboration solely between two of the three or the inclusion of other institutions in some initiatives**.

5. The mechanism established is the Inter-Institution Coordination Committee, composed of the Heads of Administration and Finance Departments, and Heads of Units responsible for inter-agency affairs. The committee is chaired by department heads in rotation and meets twice yearly. It is responsible for reviewing, approving and prioritizing the overall programme of inter-organization activities and authorizes the use of the necessary resources. It ensures that approved initiatives are included in each overall management plan and considers mechanisms for joint service provision, such as initial memoranda of understanding.

III. AREAS OF CURRENT COLLABORATION

6.   The Rome-based agencies have been collaborating over the years in many ways to combine strengths and bring complementary perspectives and expertise to the challenge of achieving cost savings and efficiency gains. This document provides information on a number of areas of back-office service delivery that are undertaken jointly by the three agencies, including procurement, human resources, finance, treasury procurement, information technology, security, conference, protocol and knowledge sharing. Annex II provides an overview of initiatives for joint working arrangements to be explored.

A. Human Resources

7.   FAO is responsible for the management of the medical insurance contracts covering staff and retirees of the three agencies (and those of the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)). FAO also administers the participation of all FAO and WFP staff members in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) and all matters relating to their pension benefits, in accordance with the agreements between the UNJSPF and the three agencies. Additionally, the Staff Compensation Plan for accidents incurred in the course of official duties is administered by FAO for both FAO and WFP. Staff and Management of the three Rome-based agencies are represented in the joint committees responsible for overseeing the provision of these services and articulating the policies relating to such provision in the respective agencies.

8.   The three agencies also collaborate in conducting General Service salary surveys and place-to-place cost-of-living surveys. FAO also maintains the Administrative Manual that sets out the administrative provisions governing the application of regulations and rules for both FAO and WFP. Although IFAD has its own regulations and human resources procedures manual, it also adopts United Nations System policies and procedures.

9.   Language training is provided jointly, as is recruitment testing for General Service staff; reciprocal consultation regarding candidates for temporary short-term General Service work also takes place as a matter of course. FAO organizes pre-retirement seminars twice a year to prepare staff for retirement; the seminars are also attended by WFP and IFAD staff. Other common initiatives include the Rome-based Management Development Centre and collaboration with the United Nations System Staff College.

10.   FAO handles, on behalf of WFP, cases of appeals lodged by WFP staff members to the Appeals Committee regarding decisions of the Executive Director that have been impugned by staff.

11.   A new initiative in reinforcing the current collaborative modalities has been the establishment of a more systematic consultative process with WFP on the introduction of new human resources policies. All proposed corporate human resources policies are shared with WFP so that it can provide comments. This is expected to be extended to IFAD, as part of the enhanced information-sharing process among the three agencies.

WFP

B. Procurement

12. The procurement services of the three Rome-based agencies have significantly expanded their areas of collaboration and their joint efforts. Over the last two years, the agencies have increasingly issued joint tenders, including information technology (IT) consultancy services, banking services, travel agency, international courier services, annual actuarial review services, the procurement of an e-tendering portal and services related to the development of the Management Development Centre. These joint tenders have resulted in a significant decrease in transaction costs incurred in the tendering processes. They have also provided opportunities for obtaining more competitive pricing due to the increased economies of scale brought about by the combined needs of the three agencies.

13. In early 2009, the procurement services of the three agencies developed a joint procurement plan for 2009/2010 (Annex I), which is a clear demonstration of the commitment of all three to procure goods and services jointly over the next two years. Examples of goods/services to be procured jointly during 2009/2010 include: telecommunications (mobile services for headquarters and field offices); external printing; re-mailing services; electricity supply services; global supply of personal computers (laptops/desktops). This joint procurement is expected to bring about reductions in transaction costs, more savings due to better pricing made possible by economies of scale, and efficiency savings by avoiding duplication or triplication of the same processes.

14. As regards the harmonization of the contractual terms and conditions of the three agencies, it has been decided that, for the time being, the agency leading the joint tender from the point of view of the administrative process will enclose its terms and conditions with the tender documents; those terms and conditions will then form the basis upon which the final contract is issued. However, the terms and conditions set out in the respective regulations and rules of the three organizations need to be further aligned.

C. Facilities Management

15. With the objective of benefiting from economies of scale and eliminating duplication of tendering procedures, since 2006, the Rome-based agencies have conducted joint tenders for electrical energy supply on the liberalized market. The decision to enter the liberalized electricity market has produced tangible financial results in the past (-10.35 percent in 2006; -14.20 percent in 2007; -9.04 percent in 2008). The three agencies are also supporting research in the field of renewable energy production, having decided to purchase an increasing number of green tags or renewable energy certificates (RECs) (25 percent RECs in 2008; 100 percent RECs in 2009).

16. The three agencies are also planning to launch a joint tender for gas supply on the liberalized market in the last quarter of 2009. The expected savings are difficult to quantify at this stage because of the volatile energy market.

17. Where possible, the Rome-based agencies promote initiatives to tender jointly for facilities management contracts or share existing contracts. For example, FAO has decided to piggyback on the WFP contract for construction works in 2009. FAO and WFP also plan to launch a joint tender in the last quarter of 2009 for this activity. IFAD may join the contract in 2011. The expected savings resulting from the joint tender are in the region of 1-2 percent additional discount over the existing contract.

D. Mail and Distribution

18.   The following initiatives have been already implemented.

19.   **Re-mailing service.** The Rome-based agencies have recently agreed to extend the FAO Mail Distribution re-mailing contract to WFP and IFAD. The expected savings are approximately 25 percent for IFAD and 30 per cent for WFP. FAO would benefit from this arrangement, obtaining an extension of the present rates for one additional year.

20.   **Pouch service.** This is a service FAO has provided for many years to the other two Rome-based agencies, allowing them to benefit from an efficient service at competitive rates. FAO would gain from the arrangement by sharing administrative costs with IFAD.

21.   **International courier.** The service is presently provided to all three agencies by the same contractor, as a result of a joint tender conducted in 2009. The average estimated saving for FAO is about 10 percent.

E. Information Technology and Knowledge Management

22.   Collaboration proposals relating to three areas have been submitted to, and endorsed by, the Inter-Institutional Coordination Committee. Proposals include the sharing of current IT contract information and knowledge of best practices in contracts specification and evaluation and usage of the sites of the other two agencies as cost-free off-site storage of backup data to constitute a disaster recovery capability.

23.   The three Rome-based agencies continue to explore and expand areas for collaboration in IT goods and services, and at the same time increase capacity for assessing the opportunities and limitations of shared initiatives. Recent joint activities include:

   a)   In the knowledge exchange area, FAO developed the platform for the Knowledge Share Fair website. The three-day Share Fair was organized by the Rome-based agencies in January 2009 to enable their staff to find ways to share and improve access to knowledge. In addition, a collaboration project with IFAD was launched at the beginning of this year for the design and implementation of a web-based knowledge-sharing platform for the exchange of documents, photos and news, and for discussions through an electronic forum. An analysis of user requirements and the overall design of the platform have been completed; development is ongoing.

   b)   Common-system procurement of a VSAT (very small aperture terminal) service (led technically by WFP, although the system contract is conducted through the United Nations Development Programme): FAO is in the process of adopting the tender results. WFP made the transition to the new inter-agency contract in December 2008.

   c)   A joint FAO-WFP tender for IT non-staff human resources to work on site. Thirty-nine skills profiles were identified by FAO, which led the tender, while WFP provided a further six profiles. (IFAD could not participate at the time the tender was issued because of conflicting workload demands in the period leading up to its headquarters relocation. However, it indicated recently that it may adopt some parts of the outcome.) The lead agency for each profile is managing the evaluation of that profile and the results will be adopted by the other. Four resulting contracts have been led by FAO, and two more are to follow; WFP contract arrangements are also under way.

F. Finance

24.   The cross-participation of the heads of the three Treasuries in the investment committees of each agency, which began in 2007, has been fully institutionalized and has proved very effective for knowledge-sharing and coordination, especially as the global financial market has entered an unprecedented liquidity and credit crisis. This cross-participation has been complemented with joint training courses, seminars and other capacity-building initiatives addressing technical subjects such as asset allocation, long-term asset/liability planning and modelling, risk budgeting, portfolio investment style, and risk and performance monitoring.

25.   A joint tender for global custodian services was initiated in the second quarter of 2008 with the three agencies collaborating on the identification of potential candidates, the preparation of all documentation, and technical scoring factors. Because other urgent matters had to be attended to, the process was rescheduled to 2009.

26.   In the area of payroll, FAO processes and reports on monthly payments of medical insurance plans, and manages advances and reimbursement of United States Federal and State income taxes for the staff members concerned of all three agencies.

27.   Collaboration between FAO and WFP is regular and ongoing in the context of the Rome Focus Group supporting the United Nations System-wide implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). (IFAD, as an international financial institution, applies the International Financial Reporting Standards.) In addition, informal collaboration between the FAO and WFP IPSAS implementation teams is ongoing.

G. Travel

28.   Since April 2008, the three Rome-based agencies have been served by the same travel agent, Carlson Wagonlit. In addition to using a sole travel agent, the three agencies undertook an initiative to reduce travel costs by negotiating jointly with the major airlines and the travel agent for corporate rates, and achieved substantial savings as a result. Given the joint purchasing power thus galvanized, it has been possible to secure corporate rates from most of the major carriers for the most commonly used routes. This allows the travel agent to select the most cost-effective airline at the time of booking. Furthermore, using the International Civil Aviation Authority standards, and the system of the travel agent, the three agencies are now able to determine the carbon footprint of individual travellers, and report on this on a quarterly and annual basis.

29.   To optimize the benefits derived from the joint negotiations with the airlines, the Rome-based agencies are working together on the development of an organizational airline policy, to channel the volume of travel to a limited number of airlines offering the best price and value added services, with a view to achieving further savings. These efforts are aligned with the latest mergers and purchases of major airlines.

30.   IFAD manages the Rome section of the United Nations worldwide hotel database website and acts as the Rome focal point by negotiating special discounted rates for United Nations staff, visitors, etc. attending official meetings or undertaking job assignments with the three agencies in Rome. All relevant information is posted on the database website, which is used by the entire United Nations System. A study is to be conducted to look into the possibility of identifying green hotels for staff use; a preferred list of airlines will also be drawn up on the basis of their emissions ratings.

H. Conference, Protocol, and Privileges and Immunities

31.   In the Conference and Protocol area, a rolling calendar of FAO/IFAD/WFP main meetings is the result of negotiations among the various governing body secretariats; and Finance Committee sessions are convened as required to discuss WFP matters. FAO also manages the annual election of six members to the WFP Executive Board and can assist in running a WFP Executive Board ballot when required. Information is exchanged regularly on matters such as temporary meeting staff, digital sound recordings, meeting records and correspondence with Board members. FAO also handles the issuing of identity cards and visas for WFP and the renewal of laissez-passers for IFAD and WFP. WFP uses FAO interpreters whenever available and reimburses the applicable costs. The Terminology Unit of FAO liaises regularly with IFAD and WFP in order to maintain a common approach to translation. FAO also provides support to WFP staff in matters such as the importation of vehicles, registration of national/CD plates, petrol coupons, driving licences, and import licences for shipment of household goods and personal effects.

I. Library

32.   Library collaboration among the Rome-based agencies is ongoing in the form of information exchange and interlibrary loans of publications required by their staff. This collaboration ensures quick access to useful information/documentation required by officers for the work of their individual agencies.

33.   The libraries of the three agencies also work together in participating in the United Nations System Electronic Information Acquisitions Consortium (UNSEIAC), whereby substantial savings are achieved in the acquisition of electronic information, widely used by staff both at headquarters and in the decentralized offices. A memorandum of agreement has been signed with the United Nations Dag Hammarskjöld Library, which is the lead agency of UNSEIAC. This system-wide libraries initiative, which includes the Rome-based agencies, has been cited at high-level meetings within the United Nations System as a tangible example of effective collaboration, generating considerable savings for participating agencies.

J. Security

34.   Collaboration on security matters is extensive and is well coordinated through monthly meetings of the security focal points to discuss security-related issues. Current collaboration includes training and exchange of security personnel, elaboration of a common security plan, and exchange of information on technology and know-how related to security access systems.

K. Climate Neutrality

35. The three agencies are actively pursuing and supporting the Secretary-General's initiative to lead the United Nations System in adopting better practices with a view to becoming more climate-neutral. Recently, the three agencies jointly hosted a training workshop on sustainable procurement in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme and the procurement network of the High-Level Committee on Management. The workshop was aimed at identifying the challenges the United Nations faces in relation to sustainable development and climate neutrality; understanding what sustainable procurement is, and finding ways to incorporate sustainability considerations into procurement processes and into their respective procurement regulations, rules and practices.

36. In addition, the three agencies collaborate closely in implementing activities related to climate neutrality and zero carbon imprint for travel and facilities.

IV. AREAS OF ONGOING AND FUTURE COLLABORATION

37. There are many other activities ongoing and collaborative efforts planned in the administrative and business processes. These are detailed in two annexes: Annex I lists anticipated joint tenders in procurement, an area that will definitely benefit from reduced transactions costs and time, decreased fixed costs, and simplified processes for all three agencies; Annex II describes initiatives for potential joint working arrangements and exploration of possibilities in human resource management, finance and treasury, IT, knowledge management, facilities management, mail and distribution, security and library. This list is not exhaustive; there are other areas that need to be explored such as change management and reform, budgets and development of costing methodologies, and conference and language services. However, the accomplishments of the past two years and the strong spirit of collaboration shared by the Rome-based agencies would indicate that the three agencies are working in the right direction towards a shared vision.

ANNEX I

Calendar of Joint Tender Activities for 2009/2010			
Activity area	**Description of service**	**Joint tender FAO, IFAD and WFP**	**Comments**
Insurance	Insurance	Tender this year (third/fourth quarter [Q3/4])	
Information and computer technology (ICT)	IT desk equipment (desktop and laptop)	Tender in 2010	WFP has issued a worldwide tender.
ICT	Telecommunications (mobile services for headquarters and field offices)	Tender in 2010	FAO will align the present contracts in order to issue a joint tender in 2010.
ICT	Telecommunications (least cost routing and landline for headquarters)	Tender in 2010	
ICT	Telecommunications (internet services)	Tender in 2010	
Utilities	Electricity supply	Tender every year	
Utilities	Gas supply	Tender in 2009 (Q3) for 2010	
Printing	External printing	Tender FAO-WFP in 2009	IFAD service specifications are very different from those of FAO and WFP. IFAD will not join the FAO-WFP tender, but remains interested in collaborating to share experience.
ICT	Rental of multifunction devices (e.g. photocopy machines)	Tender 2010 (Q1)	WFP needs to align the expiry date of the present contract with that of the FAO contract. IFAD will be interested in these services from 2011 onwards.
Mail	City-wide courier service	Tender in 2009 (Q3)	There is a need to ascertain whether the total annual amount justifies a tender. For IFAD, the total is below EUR 5,000.
Treasury	Global custodian services (investments)	Tender in 2009	IFAD issued a joint tender in the second half of 2008 for these services. However, as a result of the banking crisis of last year, the tender had to be cancelled. This activity has been put on hold until the markets stabilize.
Mail	Re-mailing services	Tender in 2010	
ICT	Telecommunications (Rome-Geneva link and other telecoms services)	Tender in 2009 (Q3)	
Facility management	Ordinary maintenance and construction works	Tender in 2009 (Q3) for 2010	Joint tender FAO/WFP in 2009. IFAD may only require these services from 2011.
Audio visual	Audio visual technical services	Tender in 2010	
Petrol coupons	Petrol coupons	Tender in 2009	IFAD is trying to move from petrol coupons to petrol cards. The tender is to determine which company can provide these cards and related services. FAO could be interested in a joint arrangement.
Training	Management training	Tender in 2009	

WFP

Possible Future Joint Tenders		
Activity area	**Description of service**	**Comments**
Supplies	Office supplies (including supply of paper)	FAO should align the expiry date of its current contract (2009) with that of the WFP contract, which expires in 2011. IFAD's contract expires in 2010. (IFAD cannot use Karnak as San Marino is not an IFAD Member.) Nevertheless, IFAD is interested in a joint tender.
ICT	Fax services	FAO contract expires in March 2011 (with a two-year renewal option to 2013). IFAD has in-house infrastructure: outsourcing may be considered in 2009-2010.
ICT	Antivirus system	IFAD should align the expiry date of its contract. WFP has not provided any comments.
Supplies	Maintenance materials supplies service (hardware items)	To be further discussed.
Privileges	International shipping	FAO contract expires in March 2010 and IFAD has a contract valid until 2011 (renewable for two years). WFP has not provided any comments.
ICT	Rental of IT equipment for external conferences	IFAD has the tender in progress (evaluation stage).
Catering	Catering services	Possible joint tender between IFAD and FAO in 2013. WFP can join the tender if they align the expiry date of their current contract.
Travel	Travel agency	If WFP aligns the expiry date of the present contract, a joint tender can be issued in 2012.
Facilities management	Cleaning services	Possible joint tender in 2013.
Supplies	IT consumables	Possible joint tender in 2010/2011.
Treasury	Corporate banking services	IFAD is due to review contracts in 2010 and can extend current contracts for an additional two years. Request for proposals to be issued in 2012.

WFP

<div align="right">**ANNEX II**</div>

Overview of Initiatives for Potential Joint Working Arrangements

Human Resources

1.   Each of the three Rome-based agencies has embarked on human resources reform. In this connection, the Inter-Institution Coordination Committee has indicated the need for greater collaboration on human resources reform issues and initiatives among the three agencies.

2.   One proposal under consideration is that of setting up a pool of knowledge on human resources policies and practices, allowing all three agencies open access to the information with a view to developing policies and processes that embody best practice. The three agencies are also exploring:

   a)   Areas of staff mobility/rotation.

   b)   Joint training, the benefits of which go beyond cost savings and facilitate a common understanding that serves as a platform for future collaboration.

   c)   Management leadership programmes, designed for middle-level professional staff. (For example, FAO is hosting the CGIAR Women's Leadership and Management course in 2010.)

3.   A detailed analysis of the current arrangements is planned to assess the feasibility of consolidating all social security services for the four organizations (FAO, WFP, IFAD and ICCROM) into one independent unit, which could achieve savings through economies of scale, pooling of knowledge and elimination of redundant tasks. The feasibility study would also address issues such as:

   a)   The creation of a single staff pension committee (SPC) for the Rome-based agencies by consolidating the two current committees (the joint FAO/WFP SPC and the IFAD SPC) and their corresponding secretariats into one committee serving all three agencies. This would be similar to the approach taken by the United Nations Secretariat and its Funds and Programmes: pensions for staff members of these organizations are administered by a single SPC and secretariat situated within the United Nations headquarters, where most of those served by the committee are based.

   b)   The provision of a single insurance service, in which the three Rome-based agencies and ICCROM have already taken the lead among the United Nations organizations by consolidating their staff populations in order to obtain more favourable terms. This process of consolidation could be further extended by including other categories of personnel (such as those currently covered individually by each agency) within the same pool. The savings to be achieved from this are more difficult to quantify as they are dependent upon the size of the consolidated populations. However, a recent study calculated that the savings achieved with a 10 percent increase in the insured staff population could be in the region of US$1 million.

4.   Following the official launch of its policy on HIV/AIDS in the workplace, in 2010/11 FAO will join the UN Cares programme, which includes several other United Nations System organizations, among them WFP. IFAD has been a participant in the UN Cares

programme since 2008. The programme emphasizes training and education for staff and runs campaigns. UN Cares is an excellent opportunity for cooperation among the Rome-based agencies as it builds on WFP's extensive training experience in addressing HIV-related issues among staff and is supported by the common Medical Services Unit, which serves all three Rome-based agencies.

5.   Discussions in progress address the following:

a)   Sharing experience and knowledge (despite the different enterprise resource planning systems used by the three agencies) concerning matters such as post adjustment (e.g. education grant, exchange rate applications, etc.).

b)   Allowing WFP access to the FAO LOW portal to ascertain the status of its staff vis-à-vis outstanding advances and tax settlements in display mode.

c)   Maintaining a common roster of consultants and honorarium scale, rather than the three agencies competing with one another.

d)   Providing assistance through possible loans of conference staff among the three Rome-based agencies for major events, such as the arrangements for the FAO High-level Conference on World Food Security in 2008, which "borrowed" staff from WFP.

Finance

6.   Initial discussions have been held among the three agencies to explore the possibility of FAO and WFP sharing IFAD's SWIFT payment capability. The discussions led to the conclusion that additional in-house studies are needed to determine the cost-effectiveness and efficiencies that can be achieved through this project, particularly in view of the requirement for significant investment in interface software.

7.   A review is in progress to assess the potential for FAO-IFAD collaboration on payroll processing (i.e. for possible processing by FAO of IFAD payroll).

8.   An assessment is being conducted to identify opportunities for greater collaboration in treasury and investment activities.

Information Technology and Knowledge Management

9.   A feasibility study on the possible operation of a shared switchboard concluded that technical obstacles inherent in the current telephone systems make this impractical. It recommended that the architecture of replacement equipment should take this requirement into account from the outset, and that all three Rome-based agencies should procure compatible telephone systems in the course of their next upgrade/replacement cycle.

10.   Within the ICT Infrastructure area, a business case is currently being developed for the interconnection of the networks of the three agencies, which would then form the cornerstone for sharing services and information. It should be noted that the Delivering as One and the common ICT network initiatives are leading to more cooperation between FAO and WFP at the headquarters level, specifically in terms of country office IT infrastructure and wide area network connectivity.

11.   The Rome-based agencies are exploring the feasibility of providing, in 2009 and beyond, joint IT services such as:

a)   Combined wide area network services – leveraging shared infrastructure, the United Nations VSAT contract and the Delivering as One initiative;

b) Joint data centre initiatives, particularly in the area of disaster recovery and business continuity planning;

c) Shared helpdesk services;

d) Web 2.0, including a common analysis of Web 2.0 tools and technologies;

e) Development of a common platform as a collaborative workspace and means of knowledge exchange;

f) Website development and support, including website design, sharing of experiences, knowledge and web technologies in order to reuse structures, solutions and platforms.

Facilities Management

12. The Rome-based agencies have encountered problems finding firms on the local market that are able to carry out urgent repair work or carpentry maintenance. The possibility of sharing internal facilities is being considered as the most appropriate solution, which would be jointly financed by all three agencies. The feasibility of the three agencies sharing the FAO carpentry workshop is also being discussed.

13. The three agencies are exploring the possibility of implementing joint initiatives and sharing expertise in the field of carbon neutral practices and policies.

14. Examples of practical measures that could reduce impact on the environment include:

➤ **Air travel:** ensure that alternative means of communication or grouping of trips have been considered; introduce emissions criteria alongside economic cost in the selection of flight/mode of transport; explore the feasibility of using air miles for environmental projects.

➤ **Energy:** adjustment of air conditioning and heating expectations; enhanced awareness of the impact of leaving lights and computers switched on; assessment of alternative energy sources (roof-mounted photovoltaic panels or small wind turbines); remote or sensor-operated lighting controls.

➤ **Waste:** steps to reduce volume; improvements to differentiated collection; provision of alternatives to plastic bottled drinking water.

➤ **Water:** comparing water consumption by surface area and by person in the three Rome-based agencies with that of other organizations. Water consumption at FAO headquarters, by surface area and by person, appears to be very high compared to similar buildings/organizations; further analysis is required to identify the reasons for this.

➤ **Printing and paper:** policies to increase use of recycled paper, automate double-sided printing, minimize the need to print.

➤ **Meetings:** a checklist of green criteria includes energy, paper, drinking water.

➤ **Catering services:** replacement of plastic throwaway containers/cutlery with environmentally-friendly alternatives.

Mail and Distribution

15. The Rome-based agencies are currently conducting an analysis with a view to streamlining mail and distribution processes and thus improving their efficiency. Options being evaluated include:

➢ Amending service procedures

➢ Sharing mail, distribution and storage contracts

➢ Verifying the possibility of staff cross-training

➢ Sharing of staff

➢ Standardizing procedures

➢ Establishing reporting procedures

Security

16. The three Rome-based agencies are contemplating a common inter-agency badging system. They have agreed to look into the feasibility of establishing a link among the access control systems of their three buildings, taking advantage of the technology already adopted in the buildings of all three agencies. The project would start with a pilot, and would be conducted in two stages. The first would cover the issuance of badges to the Permanent Representatives and the second stage would cover common access for staff. The pilot is planned to begin in six months.

Library

17. Discussions are in progress among the WFP, FAO and IFAD libraries to develop a common search gateway that would facilitate access to one another's catalogues over the internet, thereby enhancing research and information sharing.

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICT	information and computer technology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
IT	information technology
REC	renewable energy certificate
SPC	staff pension committee
UNJSPF	United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund
UNSEIAC	United Nations System Electronic Information Acquisitions Consortium
VSAT	very small aperture terminal

WFP