Sharpening Rome-Based Agency Collaboration

Practical choices for reduced duplications, greater complementarity, efficiency and collective impact

September 2026

MEMBERS' REQUEST

One shared process to strengthen complementarity, reduce overlap, improve efficiency and better leverage respective comparative advantages in support of food security, rural development and poverty reduction, in line with the UN80 reform

FAO COUNCIL

181st SESSION · JUNE 2026

- Focus on FAO's mandate
- Consult IFAD and WFP
- Present clear options to eliminate overlap and duplication

WFP EXECUTIVE BOARD

ANNUAL SESSION · JUNE 2026

- Advance WFP's Strategic Plan para. 58
- Consult FAO and IFAD
- Clarify para. 58 implementation, including to eliminate overlap and duplication

SHARED REQUIREMENT

Joint RBA presentation of clear options for Members' feedback

CONSULT

Across the three RBAs

SEPTEMBER 2026

IFAD Executive Board
RBA Informal Joint Meeting

STRONG FOUNDATION

Prior recommendations and existing architecture provide key lessons for collaboration

Recommendations
What we have learned

- 2019 MOPAN Study
- 2021 Joint RBA Evaluation
- 2023 Business Operations Feasibility Study

Architecture
What we put in place

- 2023 RBA MoU
- RBA Coordination Mechanisms, incl. Senior Consultative Group and Sherpas in daily contact
- 2026 RBA Blueprint

Key Lessons

- ✓ Country needs and government priorities should drive collaboration.
- ✓ Clear roles and comparative advantages reduce duplication.
- ✓ Joint analysis and global public goods offer efficient collaboration.
- ✓ Stronger accountability is needed to track results and savings.
- ✓ In some areas, collaboration is better pursued across the wider UN system or with other MDBs/IFIs.

EXISTING RBA COLLABORATION DELIVERING AT SCALE

RBA collaboration encompasses analytical work, technical expertise, operational capacity, financing, thematic programmes, and shared services

Joint Analysis

- SOFI
- GRFC
- Hunger Hotspots
- IPC in 40+ countries
- Anticipatory Action (e.g. El Niño)

Policy Platforms

- CFS
- GAAHP
- AMIS
- GNAFC
- G7/G20
- UNFSS

Active portfolio of parallel RBA cofinancing

USD 193.6m

in total

- IFAD approx. USD 184.2m
- FAO approx. USD 5.1m
- WFP approx. USD 4.3m

FAO Investment Centre provided services to IFAD projects representing

USD 12.8bn

of total investment

in 2023-25, with **USD 4.6bn in IFAD financing**; building on longstanding institutional collaboration

Selected Evidence of Reach

52

ONGOING COLLABORATIONS
Across **15 thematic areas**, incl. environment, climate, nutrition, rural women's empowerment, etc.

SAHEL

6 COUNTRIES
Programme size of **USD 198m**; 50,000+ households reached by latest reporting period.

EFFICIENCY AREA: SYSTEMIC INTEGRATION OF COMMON SERVICES
UN Booking Hub, UN Fleet and Food Safety & Quality

RBAs are expanding practical, system-wide service integration, generating significant **operational efficiencies across the UN system**

UN Booking Hub

- **Built and operated by WFP**; highlighted in the Secretary-General's UN80 "Shifting Paradigms" report as a model of inter-agency collaboration.
- Operational since 2017, **now serving 21 UN entities** across 115 countries, including **FAO and IFAD.**
- Recognized as a **key shared-services platform** for the UN system.

Generated $18M in savings in 2025, with **projected $25M savings** if used at full scale. FAO estimates $100,000 in annual savings at current scale

UN Fleet

- Jointly **established by WFP and UNHCR** in 2022, now **joined by FAO and IFAD.**
- Transforms fragmented, agency-owned fleets into a **shared, global mobility service.**
- **Supports 29 UN entities**, improving safety, efficiency, and sustainability in vehicle management.

Generated $1.6M in 2025 in cost savings, with **projected $25M recurring savings** if used at full scale

Health Services

- FAO, IFAD, and WFP collaborate on **health services,** including joint tendering for laboratory and medical evacuation services.
- **After-Service Medical Coverage**: FAO manages processing and benefits for IFAD and ICCROM through automated systems.
- **Admin efficiencies**: FAO provides cross-functional support and payroll-linked processes.

Reported $ 308,000 in annual saving related to personnel costs

Food Safety & Quality (WFP-FAO)

Through the **SAFER** initiative:

- **Reduced demurrage and detention costs** through harmonized, context-specific standards.
- **Expanded local sourcing opportunities**, improving proximity to beneficiaries and supporting local markets.

Faster, more predictable delivery of safe, nutritious food when countries adopt WFP's specifications — **reducing lead times by 150–200%**

Other Joint Efficiency Areas

- Shared **premises** and **co-location**
- Joint **procurement, LTAs,** shared **solutions**
- **UN Online Auctions** for asset disposal
- **UN Mobility Services**
- **Aligned travel policy**
- Joint **engagement w/ airlines** ($1M/year saving for WFP and ca. 5-7% savings on fares for FAO)

Agency	Primary Comparative Advantage	Complementary Contribution
WFP	▪ Food and cash assistance operations for emergencies, livelihoods and resilience ▪ Cash and voucher delivery platforms ▪ Emergency preparedness and response, including national systems strengthening ▪ Malnutrition prevention and treatment (MAM) ▪ Logistics, procurement, supply chain, including aviation and delivery services ▪ Humanitarian data collection, operational analytics and information systems to inform emergency response ▪ School feeding operations and government capacity strengthening ▪ Shock responsive and nutrition sensitive social protection	▪ Market access for food insecure and malnourished households. ▪ Linking smallholders to demand (e.g. institutional procurement). ▪ Contributions to global food security reports (e.g. SOFI, GRFC) ▪ Facilitate partnerships that support RBA collaboration
FAO	▪ Data, research and evidence on agrifood systems, food security and nutrition, including chronic and acute food insecurity and food crises ▪ Policy advice, normative work, technical assistance and capacity development for agrifood systems ▪ Specialized technical expertise in crops, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, forestry, soils, land and water management ▪ Agricultural advisory and extension services for improved production practices and technologies ▪ Production-side risk management, anticipatory-action and resilience building ▪ Agricultural inputs (seeds, fertilizers and tools) and market-based mechanisms, including cash and vouchers, to protect production and livelihoods and strengthen resilience ▪ Emergency agricultural assistance to protect and restore food production and livelihoods ▪ Procurement and delivery of agricultural inputs and productive assets, including in emergency contexts	▪ Technical design of agricultural projects and programs financed by other agencies ▪ School feeding programmes – support to farmers, food production and supply, nutrition ▪ Facilitate partnerships that support RBA collaboration
IFAD	▪ Sovereign and non-sovereign finance for inclusive and resilient rural economies ▪ Long-term, country-led investment at the first mile, including in remote and marginalized areas ▪ Investment in smallholder productive capacity and sustainable land and water management ▪ Design, supervision and implementation support, including fiduciary oversight and ensuring delivery of results ▪ Inclusive rural finance and support to financial institutions ▪ Blended and private-sector finance for agrifood SMEs, value chains, markets and job creation ▪ Investment in climate resilience, nature and biodiversity ▪ Investment-linked policy dialogue and stronger producer organizations, institutions and country systems	▪ Scale and sustain partner-led interventions through long-term financing ▪ Support the transition from humanitarian assistance to resilient livelihoods ▪ Finance rural infrastructure, irrigation, producer organizations and markets linkages with home-grown school feeding ▪ Facilitate partnerships that support RBA collaboration

OPTIONS FOR ACTION

Six action areas for reducing overlap and improving efficiency

1. Align financing with comparative advantage

- ✓ *Keep financing aligned with RBA mandates by directing funding and requests to the agency best placed to deliver, while supporting joint resource mobilization and/or complementary contributions across the humanitarian-development continuum.*

2. Strengthen country-level planning around complementary roles

- ✓ *Clarify each RBA's comparative advantage and complementary support role, and align country planning with government priorities and UNSDCF processes to reduce duplication and competition for resources.*

3. Expand the Blueprint approach beyond fragile settings

- ✓ *Selectively apply the Blueprint alignment approach in additional countries with all three RBAs, based on government demand and demonstrated results, using existing planning processes.*

4. Strengthen the use and reach of global public goods (GPGs)

- ✓ *Build on respective RBA mandates and technical expertise in developing GPGs, while strengthening joint communication, dissemination, and use.*

5. Deepen shared corporate services & common platforms

- ✓ *Identify and implement additional shared corporate services where there is a clear business case, including potentially through a Rome-based Business Operations Strategy.*

6. Strengthen monitoring & reporting on complementarity and efficiencies

- ✓ *Focus on evidence reporting and track practical KPIs of complementarity, efficiency gains, financing and reduced duplication for better oversight and accountability.*

QUESTIONS FOR MEMBERS' CONSIDERATION

01 Are the proposed six action areas the right ones? If not, what is missing and what could be eliminated? Which areas should the RBAs prioritize first?

02 How do Members wish to engage, concretely, with the RBAs beyond this IJM, to help us strengthen complementarity, eliminate overlap and improve efficiency and impact?

03 What indicators / evidence would best demonstrate RBA complementarity, efficiency and improved outcomes?

Thank you.