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IFAD
Investing in rural people



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Update on the implementation of the recommendations of the joint evaluation of the United Nations Rome-based agencies collaboration

In 2021, the evaluation offices of FAO, IFAD and WFP completed an independent joint evaluation of collaboration among the Rome-based agencies (RBAs). The evaluation assessed: the relevance and results of all forms of collaboration; the factors affecting those results; and the value added by RBA collaboration. The evaluation confirmed that RBA collaboration has been, and continues to be, largely relevant to the principles and vision that guide the strategic direction of the United Nations development system. It also recognized that the operating context for the RBAs is dynamic and that RBA collaboration is one of several ways to contribute to the agencies' shared objectives.

RBA management agreed on a coordinated response and welcomed all recommendations of the evaluation. The evaluation and coordinated response were presented to the 2021 second regular session of WFP's Executive Board, the 134th Session of IFAD's Executive Board, and the 133rd Session of the FAO Programme Committee. Management appreciated that the evaluation provided a rationale to "reset" RBA collaboration, to make it more strategic and meaningful, in particular at country level where it can have the most impact. In 2022, the RBAs set out to jointly address the recommendations. Below is a short update on the current status of the recommendations:

Recommendation 1 – Update the memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the RBAs:

The MoU will be updated by year-end to include thematic priority areas of collaboration and promotion of a food systems approach. It emphasizes that RBA collaboration is not a universally applicable principle: collaboration will only be pursued when practical and appropriate and may include work with other United Nations entities. The MoU highlights the strategies set out by FAO in its Strategic Framework 2022–2031 and Medium-Term Plan, 2022–2025; in the IFAD12 Results Management Framework 2022–2024; and by WFP in its Strategic Plan 2022–2026. Mutual engagement is structured by the United Nations development system reform, including the United Nations sustainable development cooperation framework (UNSDCF) at country level, under the leadership of the United Nations resident coordinator (UNRC). The MoU represents a framework for the strategic reset of the RBA collaborative efforts. The MoU will not provide guidance on matters such as overlap and competition, rather these will be addressed and included in joint programming guidance under development, with an aim of being finalized by the end of 2022.

Recommendation 2 – Restructure and reinforce the coordination architecture within the framework of the UNDS reform:

The UNDS reform, under the leadership of the UNRC provides the framework for RBA collaboration at the country level. The coordination functions at headquarters and support provided by regional offices support RBA collaboration and contribution to the UNCT and UNSDCF. To this end, the RBAs are appointing focal points to facilitate the RBAs' engagement in the UNSDCF. The RBAs will leverage UNINFO¹, where the system

¹ UN INFO is a system wide tool developed by United Nations Development Coordination Office for use by UNCTs to track the UNSDG's contributions to Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.



is available, to monitor and report on their operational activities for development. This will measure the overall efforts of the United Nations to achieve SDG 2. Finally, in 2023, FAO, IFAD and WFP together will assess the value of the three existing RBA country strategies (Colombia, Indonesia, Niger) in the context of the UNSDCF, in order to determine the value of this approach, and advise on any future effort.

Recommendation 3 – Further embrace the new joint programming mechanisms at the country level: The RBAs are finalizing joint, internal programming guidance to ensure coherence in UNSDCF planning processes and to harmonize their resource mobilization efforts with those of the RCs for the UNSDCF. Recommendation 3 reinforces that the RBAs, in countries where they do not all have offices, should be proactive in supporting the UNRC to strengthen collaboration within the UNCT and in coordinating with each other to promote effective action to strengthen food systems and achieve SDG 2. When appropriate and feasible, the RBAs, along with the UNRC and other members of the UNCT, will continue to engage in joint strategic advocacy to country governments about issues related to SDG 2. RBA staff have been and will continue to be encouraged to apply to the annual Resident Coordinator Assessment Centres (RCAC) and HC/RC Talent Pipeline.

Recommendation 4 – Focus administrative collaboration efforts on further embracing the United Nations efficiency agenda: The RBAs continue to integrate their administrative collaboration with the overall United Nations efficiency agenda. The RBA administrative feasibility assessment² will be completed by year-end, which is considering areas of stronger collaboration between the respective headquarters. Existing RBA collaboration at headquarters level in corporate services is already considered significant (see [Annex 1 of the 2022 Progress Report on RBA Collaboration](#)).

Recommendation 5 – In considering the development of joint projects and programmes, assess the costs and benefits of the collaboration and proceed if the benefits outweigh costs: In consultation with their respective governing bodies FAO, IFAD and WFP have each explored streamlining inter-agency administrative arrangements and charges, as well as procedures for the delegation of authority to country level, where feasible and appropriate. The RBAs are working on a United Nations Joint Programmes Self-Assessment tool, specifically designed for the RBAs, to enable RBA country teams assess the potential costs and benefits of joint programmes and projects during the design phase.

Recommendation 6 – Members should adequately reappraise and resource their position on RBA collaboration: RBA management reaffirms the importance of the evaluation's sixth recommendation, which is addressed to Members, and looks forward to continue engaging with Members in order to increase financial support to sustain RBA collaborative efforts.

² In 2022, the three agencies hired an external service provider to carry out the feasibility study for the integration of administrative services among the RBAs, which was requested by members during the 163rd Session of FAO Council held in December 2019.