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**Thematic Evaluation of Strategy A.3: Preparedness for, and effective and sustainable response to, Food and Agricultural Emergencies
(Report prepared by the Evaluation Service)**

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Acronyms

AG	Agriculture Department (FAO)
AGAH	Animal Health Service (FAO)
AGLW	Water Resources, Development and Management Service (FAO)
AGPP	Plant Protection Service (FAO)
AGPS	Seed and Plant Genetic Resources Service (FAO)
AIA	Afghan Interim Authority
ARTEMIS	Advanced Real-Time Environmental Monitoring System
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CDERA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency
CFSAM	Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission
CRC	FAO Commission for Controlling Desert Locust in the Central Region
CRS	Catholic Relief Service
EC	European Community
ECG	Emergency Coordination Group
ECU	Emergency Co-ordination Unit
EMPRES	Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases
ES	Economic and Social Department (FAO)
ESAF	Food Security and Agricultural Projects Analysis Service (FAO)
ESCG	Global Information and Early Warning Service (FAO)
ESD	Office of the Assistant Director-General, ES (FAO)
ESNP	Nutrition Programmes Service (FAO)
EWFIS	Early Warning and Food Information System
FAOR	FAO Representative
FEWS	Famine Early Warning System
FI	Fisheries Department (FAO)
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System
FO	Forestry Department (FAO)
FP	Field Programme
FSAS	Food Security Assessment Scheme
FSAU	Food Security Assessment Unit
FSSU	Food Security Surveillance Unit
GIEWS	Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture
GIS	Geographical Information System

GREP	Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme
IASC-WG	Inter-agency Standing Committee Working Group
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	international financial institution
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ISDR	Inter-Agency Task Force on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
MTP	Medium-Term Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPD	National Project Director
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	official development assistance
OSRO	Office for Sahelian Relief Operations – Office for Special Relief Operations
PAIA-REHAB	Priority Areas for Inter-disciplinary Action on Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Preparedness and Post-Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation
PBEE	Evaluation Service (FAO)
RADAR	Rapid Agricultural Disaster Assessment Routine
RADISCON	Regional Animal Disease and Surveillance Control Network for North Africa, the Middle East and the Arab Peninsula
RAP	FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
REU	FAO Regional Office for Europe
RP	Regular Programme
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SCF-UK	Save the Children Fund-United Kingdom
SD	Sustainable Development Department (FAO)
SDRN	Environment and Natural Resources Service (FAO)
TADinfo	Transboundary Animal Disease Information System
TC	Technical Cooperation Department (FAO)
TCA	Policy Assistance Division (FAO)
TCDC	Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries
TCE	Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (FAO)
TCEO	Emergency Operations Service (FAO)
TCER	Rehabilitation and Humanitarian Policies Unit (FAO)
TCES	Special Emergency Programme Service (FAO)
TCI	Investment Centre Division (FAO)
TCP	Technical Cooperation Programme
TP	Technical Project
UNCAP	United Nations Consolidated Appeal

UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive Summary

- i. The present evaluation is the first in-depth review of FAO activities contributing to a particular Strategic Objective since the FAO Strategic Framework 2000-2015 became operational. Strategic Objective A3 (“Preparedness for, and effective and sustainable response to, food and agricultural emergencies”) has its origins in the dramatic increase in recent years of natural disasters and civil conflicts that have impaired or threatened food security for millions of people. The Strategic Objective covers FAO activities in four main components: disaster preparedness and early warning; agricultural relief; transition from relief to rehabilitation and development; and strengthening of resilience. FAO has been involved in addressing the needs related to food and agricultural emergencies since the early 1970s, especially in early warning and agricultural relief operations. The latter have increased dramatically in recent years.
- ii. The evaluation, covering the period between 1996 and 2001 and conducted by the Evaluation Service with consultants’ inputs, included an examination of FAO’s normative work under the Regular Programme (RP) related to this Strategic Objective; an opinion survey of FAO’s Member Nations and external partners and donors; an evaluation of country needs and the performance of field activities in 15 countries, covering all types of disasters; and a review of coordination mechanisms, both within FAO and with partners. The evaluation’s findings and recommendations were examined by an External Peer Review Panel in June 2002 and its comments are attached in Annex 3.¹ The management response is given in Annex 4.

MAIN FINDINGS

- iii. The evaluation confirmed the overall relevance and importance of Strategic Objective A3, since natural and human-induced disasters contribute to global food insecurity and poverty, especially in rural areas. The components of the Strategic Objective are also broadly appropriate and useful in that they address all key aspects of an emergency situation, and this holistic approach plays to FAO’s unique comparative advantage of being able to provide technically based support in all these areas (see paragraphs 126-128).
- iv. The relative attention that FAO gives to each component of the strategy has varied. Early warning, including needs assessment, has been a priority area for many years, and work in this area is well appreciated by Member Nations and FAO emergency partners in the UN and non-governmental organization (NGO) community. However, the increase in emergency situations, combined with static funding, has stretched resources for this work very thinly.
- v. Extra-budgetary funding for agricultural relief operations has increased more than threefold during the period covered (1996 to 2001). On the whole, agricultural relief projects have performed satisfactorily. They have usually provided technically appropriate solutions, and the Emergency Coordinators provided by FAO in major emergencies have been effective and much appreciated by other partners. FAO’s ability to exploit its advantages in this area is constrained by several factors, both internal and external, which impinge on the speedy delivery of inputs. An important factor that FAO needs to address is its administrative and financial procedures to ensure the timely procurement and delivery of relief inputs (see paragraphs 129-131).
- vi. Other strategy components have received less attention. Preparedness activities have been few and scattered, although FAO has a potentially strong capacity in many such activities. Efforts are being made to seek ways to address this, particularly through the Priority Areas for Inter-

¹ Expert Panel’s Members are: Arenas, Antonio (El Salvador), Director of National System for Territorial Studies; Aysan, Yasemin (Turkey), Acting Chief UNDP/Disaster Reduction and Recovery Programme, Geneva; Grunewald, François (France), Director of the French NGO “Urgence Réhabilitation Développement”; Holt, Julius (UK), Founder-partner of the Food Economy Group Consultant SCF-UK; Jackson, Robin (USA), Policy Adviser, WFP, Rome; and Maalim, Mahboub (Kenya), Coordinator of the Kenya Drought Emergency Response, Office of the President, Nairobi.

disciplinary Action on Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Preparedness and Post-Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation (PAIA-REHAB) mechanism. There have also not been many activities aimed at promoting an effective transition from relief to rehabilitation and development – a relatively new area for which FAO is developing a suitable approach based on its recent experience (see paragraph 132).

vii. Thus, the priority areas outlined in Strategic Objective A3 now need to be progressively delineated through the Medium-Term Plan (MTP) planning and programming process, with a view to ensuring better exploitation of FAO's strengths within the holistic approach. PAIA-REHAB provides such a planning and programming mechanism for integrating and mainstreaming all relevant activities in support of this Strategic Objective (see paragraphs 133-134).

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

viii. These cover the following:

Mainstreaming emergency work

a) Specific emergency-related outputs should be programmed by technical divisions and included in the Programme of Work and Budget, particularly in areas that have received insufficient attention thus far. Functional statements of technical units should reflect their roles in emergencies, with focal points appointed in key units with appropriate terms of reference for emergency-related work (see paragraph 135).

b) For countries that are especially prone to natural disasters, FAO should help to ensure that disaster management is a key consideration in agricultural development activities, including strengthening the capacity of FAO Representatives (FAORs) and regional teams responsible for programme development through training (see paragraph 136).

Preparedness

c) Develop an FAO Strategy and Priority Actions for Preparedness (see paragraph 139).

d) Develop a practical manual for conducting Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions (CFSAMs) (see paragraph 140).

e) In post-conflict situations, or where government institutions have collapsed, provide training in the regular collection and analysis of information (see paragraph 140).

f) Develop a consolidated database of country information to facilitate impact and needs assessment for future disasters (see paragraph 140).

g) Under FIVIMS, greater attention should be given to the disaster and crisis dimension of food insecurity and vulnerability (see paragraph 140).

Agricultural relief

h) Decentralize the procurement of inputs by carrying out a training programme for FAO representation staff where there is, or is likely to be, a considerable volume of operations and, on a case-by-case basis, raise FAOR procurement limits for agricultural relief inputs (see paragraph 142).

i) Appoint Emergency Coordinators when the volume and duration of the operation warrant, and develop a pool of qualified candidates (see paragraph 144).

j) Tie work plans for relief operations to the cropping calendar, with clear designation of responsibilities (see paragraph 144).

k) Establish criteria for beneficiary selection in projects and involve various stakeholders in the selection process, including beneficiaries (see paragraph 146).

l) Explore alternative approaches for input distribution (e.g. seed fairs and vouchers) when possible (see paragraph 148).

m) Provide technical support for interventions and ensure that the inputs distributed do not have management requirements beyond what beneficiaries can provide (see paragraph 150).

n) Relief and rehabilitation components should not be combined in small projects (see paragraph 152).

o) Make more use of evaluation in agricultural relief projects (see paragraph 154).

Oil-for-Food Programme evaluation

p) The Oil-for-Food Programme in Northern Iraq, which was not covered by this evaluation, should be subject to an in-depth evaluation in 2003-2004, focusing on the efficiency and effectiveness of the operation throughout its duration (see paragraph 156).

Assistance in transition from relief to rehabilitation and development

q) For the time being, and until more permanent institutional arrangements are made, the Assistant Director-General of the Technical Cooperation Department (ADG/TC) should designate responsibilities for programming transition activities, after the transition strategy has been prepared (see paragraph 161).

r) A full-time programme manager should be appointed in countries where FAO will provide post-emergency policy and programming assistance (see paragraph 163).

Collaboration with partners

s) FAO should review its emergency-related activities with a view to developing joint programmes at the field level with other UN agencies and NGOs. Negotiations on formal Memoranda of Understanding should be brought to a successful conclusion (see paragraph 165).

Funding

t) A Rapid Response Fund (US\$1.5 million) should be created, and financed from the accumulated balance on the Direct Operating Cost account for Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) projects or (with donor consent) from unspent project funds (see paragraph 168).

u) Similar to the Rapid Response Fund, another fund should be created for establishing rehabilitation advisers during the post-conflict transition phase and financing the programming of transition activities (see paragraph 170).

v) FAO should engage donors in an attempt to raise additional funds for non-relief emergency-related activities, emphasizing its areas of comparative advantage and the benefits of mitigating disasters (see paragraph 172).

Chapter I: Introduction and Background

1. FAO's Strategic Framework 2000-2015 was approved by the 30th Session of the FAO Conference in November 1999. Formulated after a consultative process among FAO Member Nations, development partners and the FAO Secretariat, it defines a set of strategies that are interdisciplinary and based on partnership. The strategies are intended to give clearer focus to the Organization's work so as to concentrate on areas in which FAO has comparative advantages. The Strategic Framework for 2000-2015 includes 12 Strategic Objectives, one of which is Strategic Objective A3 "Preparedness for, and effective and sustainable response to, food and agricultural emergencies".
2. An expressed interest of the FAO Governing Bodies is that FAO's evaluation work should become more strategically focused. The adoption of the Strategic Framework thus provides an opportunity to review implementation results more broadly in terms of the Organization's priorities and strategies, to assess the strong and weak areas, and to propose reorientation for the future.
3. The present evaluation is the first such exercise. While this is a welcome opportunity, it should be kept in mind that the evaluation comes very early in the "life" of the Strategic Framework. Much effort went into its creation; FAO is still at a fairly early stage in developing mechanisms to increase interdisciplinarity and partnerships in the implementation of the Strategic Framework. This evaluation comes in the third year of a 15-year strategy. For that reason, it is a formative evaluation rather than a definitive assessment of the Organization's achievements regarding the Strategic Objective in question. In keeping with past practice for programme evaluations, this one examines three biennia of work. Two of these biennia were prior to adoption of the Strategic Framework.
4. Nevertheless, Strategic Objective A3 was a good choice for the first such exercise. Emergency-related work has been going on in FAO for a long time, and many of the tasks being performed have not been fundamentally altered. At the same time, FAO's work in agricultural relief has increased dramatically over the past ten years, and it was felt opportune at this time to examine it, along with the whole of the Organization's work on the disaster cycle, through an in-depth evaluation.

A. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE A3: ORIGIN AND CONCEPTS

5. Strategic Objective A3 has its origins in the recent dramatic increase of natural disasters and civil conflicts, which have impaired or threatened the food security of millions of people throughout the world, often the most vulnerable. In recent years, the frequency and severity of natural disasters, in particular storms, floods and droughts, have increased, with the number of countries affected by major natural disasters rising from 10 to 18 per year between 1996 and 2001. Even more alarming is the sharp increase in the number of countries affected by civil strife, rising from an average of five per year in the 1980s to 22 in 2000.
6. As well as causing human suffering, these emergencies very often result in the disruption of agricultural and food systems. Linkages between the frequency and intensity of natural disasters, on one hand, and poverty and environmental degradation due to economic, social and population pressures, on the other, are now well recognized. Poor people in densely populated areas of developing countries are those most exposed to natural disasters. Human-induced emergencies often occur in the countryside and, for this reason, tend to have devastating effects on the rural population and agriculture.
7. Food and agriculture emergencies in the aftermath of a disaster take various forms or symptoms, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: What creates a food and agricultural emergency in the aftermath of disaster?²	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Local food shortages ➤ Loss of agricultural income ➤ Loss of assets ➤ Loss of means of livelihood ➤ Reduced food intake among vulnerable people ➤ Destruction of physical infrastructure ➤ National food shortages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Collapse of marketing and services infrastructure ➤ Degradation of natural resource base ➤ Displacement of people from homes and sources of livelihood ➤ Breakdown of social fabric ➤ Increased incidence of undernutrition, disease and death among vulnerable people

8. These symptoms represent various situations, some occurring in the very early stage of a crisis (degradation of natural resources), and others arising a long way down the destitution line (increased incidence of undernutrition). These various situations call for different types of interventions at different points in time, each of which will have a different impact on the degree of the severity of the crisis. It is recognized that early intervention further up the destitution line reduces the possibility of a situation turning into a tragedy. The broad range of symptoms associated interventions and their impact calls for a holistic approach to crisis management, both in the type of interventions and in their timing.

9. In the past, the major thrust of donor response to food and agricultural emergencies was the provision of food aid to affected populations. However, the detrimental effects of many food aid programmes on local food and agricultural systems, their high cost and often long duration, with resulting dependency on continued food aid, precipitated the development of new approaches. As a result, the supply of agricultural inputs has increasingly been recognized as an important part of humanitarian interventions. The idea is to ensure a rapid transition from food aid to early rehabilitation of local productive capacities.

10. With the increase of natural disasters and human-induced emergencies, humanitarian aid has grown steadily in the past decade. After virtually doubling from 1990 to 1991 to reach US\$4.6 billion, it peaked at US\$5.7 billion in 1994, to reach 10 percent of total official development assistance (ODA).³ In 1998, after a four-year decline, humanitarian assistance increased again to reach US\$4.5 billion.

11. Over the past decade, along with other actors in the United Nations (UN) system and the international aid community, FAO has responded to an increasing number of requests to provide humanitarian assistance to countries affected by emergencies.

12. FAO has been addressing various needs in relation to food and agricultural emergencies since the early 1970s. Agricultural relief operations started in 1973 when the Office for Sahelian Relief Operations (later renamed the Office for Special Relief Operations [OSRO]) was established to provide emergency assistance to member countries affected by the drought that hit the Sudan-Sahelian region of Africa. In 1974, the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS) was established to monitor global food supply and to provide early warning on serious food shortages. Similarly, as part of the Food Security Assistance

² FAO Technical Handbook Series, 1998.

³ Inter-agency Standing Committee Working Group (IASC-WG) 23rd Meeting – Agenda Item 3, 5 April 2000, “Humanitarian aid flow and implications for positive prospects and thrust for the CAP”. (Figures are in real terms, taking into account inflation and exchange rates.)

Scheme (FSAS), support began in 1976 for the development of regional and national Early Warning and Food Information Systems (EWFIS). GIEWS has grown into a major activity, based largely on Regular Programme (RP) resources, and assistance for national and regional EWFIS has continued, largely under field programmes (FPs). While emergency operations originally focused on the provision of agricultural inputs following natural disasters, the Organization has been increasingly involved in emergencies caused by conflict and civil strife. Today, about two-thirds of FAO's emergency assistance is in response to conflict situations.⁴

13. In the past few years, FAO has taken steps to improve the definition of its role in and approach to emergency situations. This was in recognition of the high cost of emergencies in both human and financial terms and the consequent need to pay more attention to measures aimed at preventing or mitigating the impact of disasters. In 1993, the Emergency Coordination Group (ECG) was established to harmonize various FAO activities related to emergencies under both the RP and FPs, as well as to strengthen FAO participation in the UN system-wide Consolidated Appeals Process. In 1996, a joint FAO/Netherlands Review of FAO's Special Relief Operations⁵ was carried out to examine FAO's performance in providing emergency assistance, including an assessment of the comparative strengths of FAO *vis-à-vis* other humanitarian aid providers. This review was largely positive, pointing to considerable FAO potentials in combining its support to early rehabilitation with relief assistance by drawing on its technical support capacity and its relevant experience in development work. It also proposed several measures for strengthening FAO's role along these lines, including the development of an overall FAO strategy for emergency assistance.

14. In response, in 1997, FAO issued a brochure on *FAO's emergency activities*, together with a Mission Statement on FAO's Role in Emergencies, and in 1998 it issued a Technical Handbook Series on FAO's Emergency Activities. These clarified its role and the scope of its activities in various aspects of emergency prevention, preparedness and response. These documents advocate FAO having a role at all stages of a crisis, including preventing or reducing the risk of a hazard becoming a disaster; supporting better preparedness to face an emergency, and hence making relief interventions – including agricultural relief – more effective; and enhancing rehabilitation and recovery. The ability to act in all these areas gives FAO a comparative advantage in managing crises.

15. Subsequently, FAO's role was again reviewed in light of the commitments set forth in the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action. The latter includes a commitment to prevent and be prepared for natural disasters and human-induced emergencies and to meet transitory and emergency food requirements in ways that encourage rehabilitation/recovery, development and a capacity to satisfy future needs. This was reflected in the Strategic Framework as Strategic Objective A3, which aims “to increase the resilience and capacity of countries and their populations to cope with the impacts of disasters that affect national and household food security and, when disasters do occur, to contribute to emergency operations that foster the transition from relief to recovery of the food and agricultural sectors”.

16. The Strategic Objective includes the following main components:
1. strengthening of disaster preparedness and the ability to mitigate the impact of emergencies that affect food security and the productive capacities of the rural population;
 2. forecasting and providing early warning of adverse conditions in the food and agricultural sectors and of impending food emergencies, including monitoring plant and animal pests and diseases;
 3. assessing needs and formulating and implementing programmes for agricultural relief and rehabilitation, and formulating policies and investment frameworks favouring the

⁴ Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE) estimates.

⁵ Programme Evaluation Report 1996-1997.

transition from emergency relief to reconstruction and development in food and agriculture; and

4. strengthening local capacities and coping mechanisms through guiding the choice of agricultural practices, technologies and support services in order to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience.

17. The Strategic Objective reflects approaches that were developed earlier and that are based on the fundamental beliefs that development cannot be set aside during emergencies and, conversely, that the impact of disasters is intimately linked with the pattern of development. The linking of these various components around a single strategic objective further emphasizes the necessity of having a coherent and comprehensive approach to crisis management. Within this framework, the specific role of FAO is to support measures to be taken well in advance of the emergency and to assist countries by providing, or making available, information for early warning and information that will permit the design of appropriate relief responses, as well as by formulating policies and investments that will restore the livelihoods of people who have been affected by an emergency in a way that will increase their resilience to future disasters.

Clarification on the scope of Strategic Objective A3

18. Many of the terms used to describe emergency responses can have different meanings to different individuals. For the purposes of the evaluation, there was therefore an evident need to clarify exactly what was covered under Strategic Objective A3 and, consequently, what would be examined. This was particularly the case for the terms “prevention” and “preparedness”.

19. In its Technical Handbook Series on FAO’s Emergency Activities, FAO defines *prevention* as measures designed to prevent natural or socio-political events and processes from resulting in disasters that are characterized by destruction and loss. Strategic Objective A3 does not mention the term “prevention”, although it does refer to mitigation, early warning and capacity building. The scope of Strategic Objective A3 is in line with the proposal for “Strengthening FAO’s Capacity to Prepare for and Respond to Emergencies” submitted to senior management by ECG in 1999. The paper recognizes that disaster prevention activities permeate the entire FAO programme and, therefore, it is difficult to encompass them in a distinct set of activities. Many of the Organization’s development activities address the underlying causes of natural disasters and human-induced emergencies, thereby contributing to their prevention. Although these activities (called *proactive prevention* by the ECG Ad Hoc Working Group on Prevention and Preparedness) play a crucial role in FAO’s overall work programme on emergencies, their primary objective is usually developmental, and their contribution to emergency prevention is more a logical consequence than an intended result.⁶

20. Disaster *preparedness* refers to “measures taken in advance to establish capacities and mechanisms to respond rapidly and effectively to disasters when they do occur, and thereby reduce the intensity or scale of any resultant emergency”.⁷ This definition is believed to reflect the underlining meaning of the term “preparedness” in Strategic Objective A3, and hence will be used throughout this report.

21. In keeping with the focus on Strategic Objective A3, the present evaluation covers FAO activities on preparedness, early warning, impact and needs assessment, relief and rehabilitation, but excludes all-encompassing “prevention”. However, in considering the extent to which the Organization’s activities promote reduced vulnerability and enhanced resilience, prevention will be an underlying concern (see Chapter II, Section D). The main activities covered are summarized in Table 2.

⁶ FAO. 1999. *Strengthening FAO’s capacity to prepare for and respond to emergencies*. Rome.

⁷ FAO Technical Handbook Series, 1998.

B. THE EVALUATION: SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

22. The evaluation covers both RP and FP activities under Strategic Objective A3. As a formative evaluation, it examines whether FAO's response is adequate to achieve the desired results in terms of the Strategic Objective, assesses the strengths and weaknesses of activities under the objective's four components and makes recommendations to improve the design, implementation, results and follow-up of those activities in the future. The evaluation specifically includes reviews of Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP)-funded emergency-related activities: TCP was a major source of funding, and this evaluation is combined with a thematic review of TCP projects on this subject. The evaluation covers emergency-related work that took place during the period 1996 to 2001.

23. The terms of reference (see Annex 2) require the evaluation to assess:
- the extent to which the Organization's emergency-related work has corresponded to the thrusts of Strategic Objective A3;
 - the relevance of emergency-related work to Member Nations;
 - the responsiveness and efficiency of FAO's institutional capacity for the provision of emergency assistance;
 - the quality of emergency-related work;
 - the effectiveness and impact of the work; and
 - identification of FAO's strengths and weaknesses in this area.

Methodology

24. The evaluation began with an in-house inventory of emergency-related activities to determine the scope of the work being conducted. The evaluation itself consisted of four main steps:

1. *Evaluation of FAO's normative work in relation to Strategic Objective A3*

This part consisted of collecting and reviewing materials produced by FAO and others, and included an examination of relevant literature on the subject by an external consultant. The review of written materials was complemented by interviews with technical officers of key lead units.

2. *Survey of Member Nations, implementing partners and donors*

A questionnaire was submitted to Member Nations, implementing partners and donors for emergency activities to assess developing countries' needs and the quality of FAO's response from the various points of view. The results of the questionnaires appear in Annex 1.

3. *Evaluation of country needs and performance of field assistance*

Field visits to 15 countries were made in five missions, each with an FAO Evaluation Service (PBEE) staff member and an independent external consultant, to produce an in-depth assessment, including review of individual FAO interventions, most of which were relief and early rehabilitation projects funded by TCP or Trust Fund donors.

The 15 countries were selected with the aim of achieving a balance in the types of disasters covered. Therefore, some countries (those that suffered primarily natural disasters) had relatively few interventions, mostly funded by TCP. Others (with mostly complex emergencies) had a far larger number of interventions, the majority of which were financed by bilateral donors. In each country, the entire gamut of the FAO interventions was reviewed, regardless of the sources of funding. These interventions included agricultural relief projects, crop and food supply assessment missions, other activities related to preparedness and, when applicable, transition to rehabilitation.

Regional coverage was:

- Asia⁸ – mostly on flood emergencies;
- Africa⁹ – mostly complex emergencies caused by civil conflict, some drought and plant pests;
- Near East and Europe¹⁰ – mostly on drought and pest problems;
- Latin America and the Caribbean¹¹ – mostly storm-related emergencies, but also some drought.

The evaluation also drew on other recent (2001) field evaluation experience of FAO emergency activities in Mozambique, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Tajikistan. The evaluation included a study of FAO transitional assistance in the post-relief period in Kosovo, where there was a large programme of emergency assistance.

Evaluation missions met with other UN agencies, donors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in all countries. The choice of interlocutors varied from place to place, but in all cases missions met with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). They also met with the World Food Programme (WFP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in all countries where these organizations were present. The NGOs that were met were those implementing FAO projects, carrying out similar activities with FAO, or both.

As well as interviewing people involved with the design, implementation and follow-up of project interventions in the selected countries (including intended beneficiaries, on a sample basis), missions also met with implementing partners to obtain their assessments of country needs and of the work carried out in the country.

4. *Review of the coordination of activities and the linkages among them*

The evaluation examined the ways in which an emergency is recognized and processed within FAO, as well as the coordination mechanisms within FAO and between FAO and other actors in emergency situations.

In keeping with the normal FAO procedure for major evaluation exercises, the evaluation report was submitted to an External Review Panel, which examined it, interviewed key persons within FAO and prepared a report on the evaluation, commenting on its quality as well as its findings and recommendations. The evaluation and the External Review Panel report were reviewed by FAO senior management, and their comments, along with the evaluation and panel report, are submitted to the FAO Programme Committee at its September 2002 session.

C. OVERVIEW OF FAO'S WORK CONTRIBUTING TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE A3

C.1 FAO's Regular Programme work

25. Of the four areas of Strategic Objective A3 (preparedness, early warning, needs assessment/relief and assistance in transition), FAO's RP work has been most strongly geared towards early warning. In particular, the focus has been on GIEWS, plant pests and animal diseases – particularly in the context of the Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary

⁸ Bangladesh, Cambodia, Thailand, Viet Nam.

⁹ Burundi, Eritrea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone.

¹⁰ Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mauritania.

¹¹ Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua.

Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases (EMPRES), support to national and regional early warning systems and, in the late 1980s and early 1990s (before the present review period) food security reserves. Some other technical divisions carry out emergency-related work, which is mentioned in the following sections of this report. RP work is coordinated through ECG, which now also provides the coordinating mechanism for the Priority Areas for Inter-disciplinary Action on Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Preparedness and Post-emergency Relief and Rehabilitation (PAIA-REHAB) (see paragraph 41).

26. Strategic Objective A3 is cross-cutting throughout the Organization because many of the activities that contribute to it also contribute to other strategic objectives. This, together with the changed programme structure of FAO, makes it difficult to state accurately the total amount of RP resources actually devoted to Strategic Objective A3. However, it is possible to calculate some of the major RP elements that have maintained their budgetary identity throughout the review period. These are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Major RP emergency-related activities – estimated RP resources
(US\$ thousands)

Component	Allocation 1996-1997	Allocation 1998-1999	Allocation 2000-2001
Emergency Response Operations	3 317	3 618	3 325
Food information and Early Warning systems	6 504	6 244	6 099
FIVIMS ¹²	-	880	1 221
EMPRES-Livestock	3 218 ¹³	2 340	2 334
EMPRES-Plant Pests (Desert Locust)	1 930	1 638	1 665
Migratory Pest Management	1 775	1 770	1 750
National Seed Production and Security ¹⁴	1 196	2 000	1 930
Nutrition and Household Food Security in Emergencies	-	-	759
Total	17 940	18 490	19 083

27. Table 3 does not cover some other programme activities with emergency components, for which RP resources are difficult to estimate. Chief among these is Advice and Capacity Building in Agricultural Policies. Other Technical Projects (TPs) directed towards Strategic Objective A3 include those on Sustainable Management of Natural Forests and Woodlands (work relating to forest fires) and Sustainable Development of Small-scale Fisheries (safety at sea).

28. Of the major activities listed in Table 3, Food Information and Early Warning Systems and FIVIMS are largely related to early warning, EMPRES deals with both early warning and preparedness, and Migratory Pest Management deals with preparedness and emergency response. The last two programmes are related to preparedness, and Emergency Response Operations refer to the activities of the Emergency Operations and Rehabilitation Division (TCE).

¹² The Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System (FIVIMS) is not fully related to Strategic Objective A3 insofar as it focuses on the underlying causes of structural vulnerability to food insecurity and pays limited attention to disaster aspects. The allocation figures represent one-third of the totals for each biennium.

¹³ This figure includes all the work on transboundary animal diseases carried out in 1996-1997.

¹⁴ Called Improved On-farm Seed Production and Seed Security in 1996-97.

29. While the total volume of RP resources for these activities shows an increase of some 6 percent over the review period, most of this is accounted for by new activities initiated during the period (some elements under FIVIMS and the nutrition work) rather than increases in traditional activities; among these latter, only work on seeds shows an increase over the review period. RP resources declined for most other activities. This is in sharp contrast to the increasing resources for relief and early rehabilitation activities in the FP and is explained by the fact that RP resources have contracted in real terms, with many priorities competing for shrinking resources. Thus, although emergency work has become an organizational priority, the relative importance given to it has varied among individual technical units. The RP resources estimated in Table 3 account for some 3 percent of the total RP budget for 2000-2001.

30. In terms of future programming, in preparing the Medium-Term Plan (MTP) for 2002-2007, it was estimated that 7 percent of FAO's resources would be devoted to Strategic Objective A3 over the period of the MTP.

C.2 FAO's Field Programme

31. The shape of FAO's FP (including TCP) has been dramatically altered in recent years, with a rapid increase in emergency activities' share of the total delivery under the FP (from 10 percent in 1996-1997 to some 50 percent in 2000-2001). Nearly all of this has been for relief and early rehabilitation activities operated by TCE.

32. The largest single emergency-related field operation is the Oil-for-Food Programme in Iraq, which began in 1997. FAO monitors and reports on the distribution to beneficiaries of agricultural inputs procured by the Government of Iraq in 15 central and southern Governorates and, in the case of certain items considered to be of potential dual use (e.g. agricultural helicopter spare parts), the Organization is responsible for monitoring their receipt, storage and end-use. In three northern Governorates, FAO fully implements the agricultural programme, including procurement, receipt and storage, distribution and monitoring. Cumulative allocations under the Oil-for-Food Programme (Northern Iraq) increased from US\$46 million in 1997, to US\$245 million in the biennium 1998-1999 and to US\$687 million in 2000-2001. Because the programme is so atypical of FAO emergency operations, including its size, it was decided to exclude it from the present evaluation, which is intended to focus more on strategic issues.

33. Trust Fund donors have significantly increased their contributions to emergency relief and early rehabilitation activities, from US\$31.5 million in 1996-1997, to US\$41 million in 1998-1999 and US\$103.8 million in 2000-2001. TCP funding for emergency projects also increased, from US\$22.3 million in the 1996-1997 biennium, to US\$28.9 million in 1998-1999 and US\$26.8 million in 2000-2001. On average, emergency projects were considerably larger than non-emergency TCPs. For example, in 1998-1999, emergency TCPs represented 24.5 percent (106 of the 432 projects approved) but 32.0 percent of total allocations. In 2000-2001, emergency TCPs accounted for 19.4 percent of the total (90 out of 463) and 27.3 percent of allocations.

34. During the review period of 1996 to 2001, the countries (excluding Iraq) that received the most agricultural relief and early rehabilitation assistance were:

1.	Kosovo	US\$39 290 651
2.	Burundi	US\$16 837 880
3.	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	US\$14 613 420
4.	Afghanistan	US\$14 478 656
5.	Mozambique	US\$12 898 349
6.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	US\$11 996 563
7.	Democratic Republic of the Congo	US\$11 686 412
8.	Rwanda	US\$9 837 812
9.	The Sudan	US\$9 372 263
10.	Somalia	US\$9 195 532

35. In addition to the emergency projects, some US\$10.3 million of emergency- related non-relief and early rehabilitation projects was approved in the review period. Most of this assistance was for the development of early warning systems in Africa.

C.3 Institutional mechanisms for coordination

C.3.1 Internal coordination

36. Since the vast bulk of FAO's emergency-related activity is in relief and early rehabilitation, most of the work for Strategic Objective A3 is under the responsibility of TCE. However, other units in the Organization are also involved in the implementation of Strategic Objective A3, and the most important aspects of that work are mentioned in Chapter II: Assessment of implementation results. In FAO, two mechanisms have been created for achieving institutional coordination in emergency-related work.

37. One of these, ECG, has the task of ensuring that FAO responds to particular country emergency situations in a coordinated manner. Since its creation, ECG's mandate has been changed twice. In 1996, its composition and terms of reference were amended to reflect the restructuring of FAO, which had led to the reallocation of functions related to emergency assistance. The ECG mandate was again revisited in August 1999 following the restructuring of UN inter-agency humanitarian mechanisms, which was intended to improve the coherence of UN responses to emergencies, including greater attention to actions to prevent or mitigate the effects of disasters. FAO felt particularly well placed in meeting these new challenges, and ECG's terms of reference were expanded, along with its membership, to ensure the participation of all relevant units within the Organization. ECG was also to ensure liaison with the field, as well as to give high visibility to FAO's emergency-related work in international fora. The chairperson was changed several times, and the group is now chaired by the Assistant Director-General of the Technical Cooperation Department (ADG/TC), reflecting the high profile given to ECG within the Organization.

38. ECG fosters in-house debate on FAO's role in emergencies. Most of the documents cited in Section A Strategic Objective A3: origin and concepts were produced under its aegis. The most relevant paper prepared under ECG coordination was *Strengthening FAO's capacity to prepare for and respond to emergencies*. This paper presents a review of current activities, a summary of major issues and areas for improvement relating to the internal management and coordination of FAO's work on emergencies, the conduct of FAO's normative and operational activities at all

stages of the emergency sequence, and measures to enhance FAO's response capacity, including at the country level. The proposals advanced in the paper, which were conceived within the context of the Medium-Term Plan 2002-2007, were used in the preparation of proposals for the Programme of Work and Budget 2002-2003. Many of the recommendations from that document are considered in the present evaluation.

39. However, in terms of enhancing a coordinated response by the Organization to major emergencies, ECG has been successful in only a few cases. Kosovo is an example in which it succeeded in mobilizing staff from various technical divisions for coordinated actions in the field (e.g. food security assessment missions). Overall, ECG has not been able to ensure effective collaboration between technical divisions and the operational division (TCE) in FAO's emergency responses.

40. ECG is recognized as a forum for information exchange. Periodic information notes are prepared by the ECG Secretariat, and e-mail networks have been created to enhance the exchange of information related to ECG and PAIA-REHAB (see following paragraph).

41. The other mechanism is of more recent origin, and dates from since the MTP 2002-2007 was adopted. In order to enhance multidisciplinary approaches to the implementation of the Organization's strategic objectives, FAO developed 16 Priority Areas for Inter-disciplinary Action (PAIA) which are intended to coordinate RP activities. One of these, Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Preparedness and Post-Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation (PAIA-REHAB), is aimed at Strategic Objective A3. PAIA-REHAB is still in the formative stage and it is premature to make any judgement about its effectiveness as a coordinating mechanism. However, the results of a recent consultancy, which was carried out within the framework of PAIA¹⁵ in order to develop a work plan, are promising. The paper and the sound recommendations that it contains are the results of an intensive consultative process in the house, involving all the units concerned, and lay the ground for establishing priority areas and concrete activities for inter-disciplinary collaboration. So far, PAIA is organized in five thematic working groups,¹⁶ each reporting to the chair of ECG. The present evaluation team approves of the consultancy report's proposals to reorganize the working group by planned outputs, rather than by cross-cutting themes, and to establish a PAIA-REHAB coordination group with seven to eight representatives from those divisions most heavily involved in delivering the planned outputs. The group would report to the chair of ECG and would have delegated responsibility for the limited funds that have been allocated to PAIA-REHAB.

C.3.2 External coordination

42. The main organization with which FAO cooperates in responding to emergencies is OCHA, which has offices in New York dealing with the policy and diplomatic aspects of emergencies, and in Geneva, from which operational support is coordinated. FAO contributes to OCHA objectives in several ways at both the country and the headquarters levels and through the FAO Liaison Offices in New York and Geneva. FAO participates in the Inter-agency Standing Committee and its Working Group (IASC-WG), in OCHA-led missions and Inter-agency Consolidated Appeals – where FAO has the overall responsibility for the crop, livestock and other food security components – and (together with WFP) in emergency food aid needs assessment. FAO also carries out agricultural relief and rehabilitation needs assessments and prepares project profiles in this area. The Director of TCE represents FAO at IASC-WG, and TCE coordinates the preparation of FAO's contribution to UN Inter-agency Consolidated Appeals for submission to OCHA. In the past few years, FAO has actively contributed to discussions on the role of the United Nations Consolidated Appeals Process (UNCAP) as a strategic planning and programming tool. FAO has been a member of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster

¹⁵ Draft paper prepared by S. Lawry-White, Vine Management Consulting, March 2002.

¹⁶ These are: preparedness; manuals and guidelines; training policy advice and extension; information; and support from technical divisions during relief and rehabilitation.

Reduction (IATF) since the formal launch of the Inter-Agency Task Force on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) in early 2001. FAO has also actively participated in and contributed to the activities of the four working groups established as the operational mechanism of IATF.

43. WFP is FAO's main partner in many emergency-related activities, in particular crop and food supply assessments, gathering of information on vulnerability, and some aspects of agricultural relief. Other important FAO partners in emergencies include UNHCR, UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and, in particular, the Inter-agency Secretariat for Disaster Reduction within the United Nations International Programme for Disaster Reduction. Significant non-UN partners include the World Bank, the regional development banks and the International Red Cross Movement. NGOs are key partners in the field, in particular for the implementation of agricultural relief projects in countries where local government structures are weak. FAO has also been an active member of the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP), a network comprising UN agencies, bilateral donors and NGOs.

44. UNHCR, UNDP, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Bank have been funding short-term rehabilitation projects for FAO implementation. However, in line with the decline of the Organization's overall Field Programme, funding from UNDP has decreased and World Bank and IFAD-funded projects have been few.

45. There is a need for external collaboration to be strengthened further, especially at the field level and in post-emergency situations. Memoranda of Understanding with WFP and UNHCR have been discussed with those organizations, but have not been concluded. Several technical meetings have been organized between FAO and the International Committee of the Red Cross to explore the areas and modalities of cooperation in emergency situations between the two organizations. These discussions are continuing.

Chapter II: Assessment of Implementation Results

46. This chapter is organized to follow, to a large extent, the components of Strategic Objective A3:

- preparedness, including FAO activities relating to early warning and information, EMPRES and other activities that are aimed at improving response;
- agricultural relief;
- assistance in transition; and
- activities aimed at improving resilience.

47. The assessment is not fully exhaustive, but covers most of the activities carried out under the RP and the FP during the review period.

A. DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND EARLY WARNING ACTIVITIES

48. Two of the four strategy components of Strategic Objective A3 deal with strengthening disaster preparedness, and forecasting and providing early warning, respectively. These components are supported under both the RP and the FP, but are the main area for RP activities under this Strategic Objective.

A.1 FAO Global Information and Early Warning System

49. GIEWS is aimed at alerting the international donor community and governments to impending food crises. The system includes the *FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions* (CFSAMs) conducted in countries or subregions experiencing particular food supply difficulties, the *Special Reports* produced by the missions and the *Special Alerts* produced from other (non-mission) sources of information for countries or subregions where the food crop or supply situation gives rise to particular concern.¹⁷ CFSAMs are generally conducted jointly by FAO and WFP. Their objective is to assess the food supply situation over a marketing year at the national or subregional level, the level of food deficit, if any, and the amount of food aid required to meet emergency needs. From an average of about 18 missions per year in the early 1990s, about 35 missions are now conducted each year. This increase is linked to the rise in food emergencies during the 1990s and reflects the international community's interest in FAO continuing with this work.

50. The increased demand for missions has put a heavy burden on GIEWS financial and staff resources, which have not kept up with the pace of demand, despite cost-cutting measures (e.g. increased use of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries [TCDC] experts and retirees) and increased extra-budgetary funding. The expected shortfall for 2002 amounts to US\$220 000. In the past, funding problems have been partially relieved by requests for TCP funding. However, recently there has been a decline in this as the conditions for approval of TCP projects are now regarded as being too time-consuming to fulfil.

51. Great progress have been achieved on GIEWS information analysis and management capacity in the past few years thanks to further improvement of the GIEWS integrated information system, the "GIEWS workstation", use of the Advanced Real-Time Environmental Monitoring System (ARTEMIS), additional Agromet data and the expansion of the information sharing network of institutions (UN organizations, regional organizations and NGOs). However, these improvements have not necessarily been translated into higher-quality field assessments. There are two resource-related reasons for this: i) the short duration of the missions (two to three weeks) compared with the tasks to be undertaken; and ii) the lack of time and training given to consultants at headquarters for preparatory work, including use of the workstation.

¹⁷ The evaluation is concerned only with GIEWS activities relating to early warning.

52. With CFSAMs having become a key activity of GIEWS and with the increasing use of TCDC consultants, GIEWS has prepared *Guidelines for Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions* (published in January 1996) for food security evaluations in countries where there are few hard data. The guidelines present an inventory of approaches and methods and constitute a good reference document. However, their utility is decreased by the failure to provide practical step-by-step instructions that could assist experts during short field missions.

53. Both governments and the international donor community recognize FAO's assessments as valuable in raising awareness of impending food crises. Special Alerts and Special Reports contributed considerably to the mobilization of emergency food aid and other humanitarian assistance during the reporting period, e.g. the food crisis in Indonesia following the severe economic slump in mid-1997. However, the linkages between alert and response do not occur systematically. For example, in the drought that hit the Horn of Africa in 2000, in particular Ethiopia, FAO conducted a CFSAM and issued Special Reports and Special Alerts on the impending food crisis. Despite these efforts, donors' response remained limited.

54. FAO uses the results of CFSAMs in several ways. They form the basis for FAO's proposed contribution to the UNCAP, when there is one. They may also lead to, or incorporate, an agricultural needs assessment mission by TCE when crop production shortages are expected. TCE and the Global Information and Early Warning Service (ESCG) work in close collaboration, in particular in countries where an agricultural Emergency Co-ordination Unit (ECU) has been established. These units are involved in the preparatory work for the CFSAM. Reports from the CFSAM and the needs assessment missions are distinct as their respective deadlines and purposes are different. However, TCE and ESCG have now agreed that a section on emergency agricultural input requirements should be systematically integrated into the Special Reports.

55. There are some issues regarding FAO's early warning work. In a few cases, the accuracy of results has been questioned. In 2001, following an exceptionally good harvest combined with massive rice imports, a rice surplus situation in Madagascar may have been partly due to the alarming situation depicted in the CFSAM carried out that same year. In Burundi, the CFSAM that was carried out in June 2000 did not foresee the major food crisis that took place during the second half of the year in the south of the country.

56. In countries where government institutions have collapsed, statistics units have been dismantled and hard data are scarce, it is difficult to arrive at an accurate crop and food supply assessment. A two- to three-week mission by an external team can hardly be expected to compensate for this information gap.

57. An important priority for early warning is to ensure that food assistance is received by those who need it most. In this regard, there are limits to the usefulness of the information provided in Special Reports. The objective of a CFSAM is to provide a national perspective, so the information it contains is of limited use for the precise targeting of interventions in terms of area and beneficiaries. In this respect, the missions are conducting assessments increasingly at the subnational level in order to allow a better identification of population groups most susceptible to food shortages, especially through WFP's Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) units. On a few occasions, an FAO nutritionist has also been associated to the mission to focus on household food security and nutrition issues.

58. While GIEWS has been valuable within its mandate, further work is needed in early warning. Areas to be addressed include:

- the strengthening of early warning capacity as part of preparedness in disaster-prone countries (see Section A.2 below);
- at a very early stage in post-conflict situations and/or in situations where government institutions have collapsed, the provision of continuous support to the field (ECU, FAO representation) for the regular collection and analysis of information;

- development of the capacity for localized food security monitoring. In the past few years, several initiatives have been geared towards this end. WFP's VAM, vulnerability assessment methodologies developed by several international NGOs (e.g. Save the Children Fund-United Kingdom [SCF-UK], CARE) and FIVIMS are major contributions to an international effort to develop and harmonize tools for localized food security monitoring. However, the process of doing so is still in its infancy and it remains a priority and challenge for the coming years.

A.2 Support to the establishment and development of regional and early warning information systems

59. FAO has been providing technical assistance in support of early warning systems in countries and subregions since 1978, particularly through projects lasting from between 2 and 12 years. The objective has been to develop sufficient local- and/or regional-level capacity to enable national governments and subregional organizations to monitor the food supply and demand situation closely and to provide timely notice of impending food problems.

60. Towards the end of the 1980s, there was a growing realization that concern for food security should move from the aggregate level (national, sub-national) to the household level. Furthermore, the fact that large food-insecure population groups did not have access to sufficient quantities of food meant that national early warning systems should also collect information that would measure people's physical and economic access to a well-balanced diet. In the 1990s, this realization led to a drive to integrate EWFIS. FAO gave considerable support to comprehensive information systems with an early warning function, particularly in Africa. Many operational and technical manuals of high professional quality were produced. This support continued into the early part of the period covered by the evaluation, essentially through projects (e.g. the setting up of regional and national EWFIS in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, which had ended by 1997).

61. While FAO was a major actor in fostering the development of EWFIS in the past, more recently NGOs and bilateral donors have supported and developed information systems. WFP (VAM), SCF-UK (food economy analysis), CARE (livelihood approach), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Famine Early Warning System [FEWS]) and the European Community (EC), through NGOs, have become major actors in the field of food security information, particularly in emergency and post-emergency situations. While FAO's efforts were directed at creating or strengthening government EWFIS units, many NGOs and donors have developed such systems essentially for their own purposes, outside of government structures. There are several reasons for this:

- The inherent problems of national EWFIS: despite intensive support for their establishment, the effectiveness of EWFIS is low in many countries. This is owing to weaknesses in the institutions where EWFIS have been placed, particularly in emergency and post-emergency situations. In addition, the very high turnover of staff has hampered the sustainability of the systems put in place. FAO has attempted to address this by encouraging partnerships and networking among national government institutions and through direct funding and analytical support from donors and NGOs;
- The focus of FAO's methodological work was very much on data and analysis, with the objective of producing accurate and reliable information. However, from the mid-1990s, there was more concern to link early warning data with decision-making, in general, and emergency response, in particular, something that government-run systems did not do particularly well; and
- The emergencies that these agencies deal with often have a high media profile.

62. During the review period, FAO has moved towards meeting evolving needs in the field of early warning and food information. FAO hosts the secretariat of the inter-agency FIVIMS initiative. In addition to developing and harmonizing tools for localized food security monitoring, FIVIMS aims at fostering decentralization and concerted action among all the different actors in

food security, thus linking information to action. Several FAO technical divisions, mainly from the Economic and Social Department (ES), are involved in developing methodologies and materials. However, FIVIMS does not tackle the specific information problems faced in the complex situations in which FAO has to carry out much of its emergency work. As FIVIMS is meant to focus on structural aspects of vulnerability, potentially it has a key role to play in prevention and preparedness, providing that the disaster vulnerability dimension is integrated into the analysis.

63. A major normative activity during the evaluation period was the production and publication in 2000 of a *Handbook for defining and setting up a food security information and early warning system*. The handbook, prepared with input from many FAO technical divisions, promoted a low-cost approach with the “ownership” of information going to nationals (through the setting up and management of information by national teams), based on existing structures and linking information to national and subnational decision-makers. However, the handbook is not well adapted to emergency situations where national institutions have collapsed and information resources have been lost. Ownership and sustainability are more difficult to achieve in complex emergencies, where the timely production of accurate and reliable information prevails over other objectives.

64. During the review period, there were two innovative examples (Somalia and Kosovo) of FAO attempting to develop EWFIS in complex emergency situations (see Boxes 1 and 2).

65. Perhaps the most interesting example is a project that is currently under implementation. The EC-funded project GCP/RAF/360/EC (Improving Early Warning and Food Security Information in Countries Subject to Complex Emergencies) is a very relevant attempt to develop a conceptual and methodological framework that focuses on how to improve early warning and food security information in complex emergencies, with particular emphasis on the institutional roles of FAO and its partners at the national, regional and international levels. The project aims at improving the quality of, and access to, crucial information relating to the food security and nutrition of vulnerable population groups in complex and protracted emergencies. An addendum to the original project document in March 2001 introduced substantial changes to the project operational set-up and work plan with a view to its becoming a central tool for implementing collaborative arrangements under PAIA-REHAB.

Box 1: Somalia: Meeting crucial information needs in a complex emergency

For more than a decade, the people of Somalia have suffered from the effects of a protracted civil war. Today, Somalia has no central government, and the country has many diverse clan-based and regional factions with conflicting interests. In central and southern regions of Somalia, periodic drought, flood, pest infestation and crop failure, combined with continuous civil war, have undermined household food security and caused the displacement of thousands of families towards urban centres and across borders into neighbouring countries. At the same time, relative stability and the emergence of local administrations in the north of the country have created a more positive environment for economic growth and rehabilitation. In this situation of protracted conflict and chronic food security problems, the provision of timely and reliable information on the food security and nutrition situation is crucial for the planning of short- and medium-term interventions.

The project Support to the Food Security Assessment Unit (FSAU, Somalia) Phase III (OSRO/SOM/002/EC) became operational in May 2000 (budget: €4 million; duration: three years), following a four-month bridging phase funded by FAO. The purpose of the project is to provide *readily available and relevant information for better decision-making on food security interventions by a broad spectrum of information users*. This is to be achieved through the development of an efficient early warning and food security information system, providing data and information for short-term interventions, as well as for longer-term programming and improved coping strategies. A mid-term evaluation mission was mounted towards the end of the second year of the project (April 2002). The achievement of results, as assessed by the evaluation team, is reproduced in the following paragraph.

Phase III of FSAU has extended the depth and breadth of understanding of food access issues in Somalia through the use of the household food economy approach. The project in support of FSAU remains highly relevant given the protracted complex emergency context of Somalia. The FSAU field team has the capacity to monitor evolving situations on the ground, and the resulting information has contributed to improving the efficiency of the humanitarian response. The cost-effectiveness of the project is evident in terms of the savings made in avoiding unneeded food aid deliveries. Information provided by FSAU has had an impact by contributing to a reduction in the effects of transient food insecurity. To date, the use of FSAU information in the design of medium-term interventions to strengthen coping strategies is less visible. While FSAU in its current form is highly dependent on donor finance, the information that is being produced by the project will continue to remain relevant in the medium term. Moreover, the training provided to the field monitors is making a contribution to the sustainability of food security and nutrition information activities, in whatever institutional setting these may take place in the future. There will continue to be a high demand for information for early warning purposes; for the planning of short-term food and non-food emergency responses; and for the planning of medium-term interventions for strengthening livelihood strategies. The challenges for FSAU in the final year of this phase are to consolidate key activities; increase confidence in the reliability of FSAU information; ensure wider access to the wealth of information that it has collected; and build a common vision with partners for the next phase.

Box 2: Kosovo: Support to a Food Security Surveillance Unit (project OSRO/KOS/909/USA)

In Kosovo, the USAID Office for Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) financed a joint WFP/FAO project to be implemented over 12 months starting in January 2000 for a total of US\$628 425. The project objectives were to: i) provide timely, accurate and reliable information on the rapidly changing conditions of the food security situation; ii) establish up-to-date information, through regular monitoring of the food and agricultural situation, required for the formulation and execution of appropriate rehabilitation/reconstruction programmes; and iii) serve all those involved in short- and medium-term planning and programming. The project was to be managed and implemented by FAO in close cooperation with the Department of Statistics of the United Nations Interim Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), with an FAO project manager and a vulnerability assessment specialist provided by WFP. The project was one of 17 reviewed during the Joint Multi-donor Evaluation of the Kosovo Emergency Agriculture Programme, carried out in November 2000. This evaluation drew very positive conclusions about the project. The project supported the creation of a Food Security Surveillance Unit (FSSU) within the FAO ECU, with technical capacity to design and implement a food database and an agricultural information system providing updated information of the food and agricultural situation in Kosovo, including land use maps and a price monitoring system for the main commodity items of household consumption in the province. FSSU was the sole entity to have updated basic information on the food and agricultural situation of Kosovo. All the data collected and processed by FSSU were communicated to the major agencies involved in emergency assistance to Kosovo agriculture and, as such, served as a key tool for decision-making relating to interventions in the sector, including the planning of agricultural assistance campaigns. The main project features that contributed to its success were the establishment of a solid network of monitoring officers from the different implementing agencies for information feedback from the ground, and the location of FSSU within ECU, thus ensuring linkages and synergies between information functions and coordination. Networking has been established within the broader framework of FAO-WFP collaboration in the agricultural and food aid sectors in Kosovo Province. Regular weekly meetings were held. The project officers systematically integrated the feedback on food security, received from the field by different partners and local government bodies, into an analysis of the agricultural and vulnerability situation in Kosovo. FSSU also established a solid network with the main actors operating in Kosovo and participated in the main task forces and working groups organized in relevant sectors of the humanitarian intervention in Kosovo. At the institutional level, the FSSU project collaborated with the Department of Agriculture for both central- and municipal-level agricultural monitoring, the Statistical Office in Kosovo for the set-up and implementation of the price monitoring system and the Living Standard Measurement Survey (LSMS) and with the Action Against Hunger technical assistance team and the Institute for Social Policy (ISP) for the monitoring of social assistance schemes.

A.3 EMPRES and related work

66. FAO's EMPRES includes elements relating to prevention, preparedness and disaster response. It was evaluated in 2001 as part of an evaluation of the Animal Health component of Programme 2.1.3: Livestock and a separate evaluation of EMPRES-Desert Locusts (DL). These evaluations were presented to the FAO Programme Committee at its May 2002 session (documents PC 87/4 b and c). Because of the recent evaluation, EMPRES activities were not re-examined in the present exercise, although they represent some of FAO's most important emergency-related activities.

67. EMPRES-Livestock includes components for early warning, early reaction, enabling research and coordination. Under early warning, the main activity has been the development of Transboundary Animal Disease Information System (TADinfo) software, which is being used by several countries for their animal disease databases. This is considered a particularly valuable and successful activity, since FAO is responsible for updating the system. Thus, countries can adopt

TADinfo at relatively low cost. Through an FAO/IFAD partnership, the Regional Animal Disease and Surveillance Control Network for North Africa, the Middle East and the Arab Peninsula (RADISCON) has been established. For early reaction, guides to contingency planning and good emergency management practices have been prepared and workshops held. However, contingency planning was identified as a weak area that requires improvement in the future. In many developing countries, the benefits of contingency planning are not well appreciated, and it is therefore difficult for them to commit resources to contingency planning when there are so many known and pressing problems. The keystone programme of EMPRES-Livestock, the Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme (GREP), has been successful in meeting targets towards the elimination of rinderpest, although the programme for verification of worldwide freedom still lacks funding. Such funding will be necessary in order to confirm worldwide freedom by 2010.

68. EMPRES-DL aims at strengthening national and regional locust survey and effective early control capacities, as well as international cooperation. Its work originally focused on the area around the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (the Central Region of the DL area) because many locust plagues originated there in the past. In 1995, the FAO Conference decided that the EMPRES approach should be extended to countries of the Western Region of the DL area, although expansion has been constrained by lack of funds. EMPRES-DL is funded by TF donors (about 79 percent) and from the FAO RP.

69. The major achievements of EMPRES-DL are increased regional cooperation, including in the carrying out of joint surveys, the upgrading of communications networks, the development of contingency plans in some countries, and increased cooperation between EMPRES-DL and the FAO Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust in the Central Region (CRC) through joint work planning and training activities.

70. EMPRES-DL has made progress in achieving its objectives, although progress has varied among countries. The evaluation cited the Sudan and Mauritania as particularly good cases of institutional capacity development. However, donor funding has reduced in recent years, probably because there has not been a major DL outbreak for some time. This may imperil future progress and is constraining the expansion of the programme to the Western Region.

71. Besides EMPRES-DL, FAO also deals with other types of plant pests, including other types of locusts (migratory, red, brown, Moroccan, Italian), quelea birds and armyworm. Evaluation missions found that FAO had provided effective assistance to Kazakhstan in implementing a major programme to control locusts, particularly in the use of less-polluting barrier spraying. Similar assistance was also provided to Georgia.

A.4 Other activities for improving preparedness

A.4.1 Normative work under the Regular Programme

72. During the review period, work on several technical issues has been initiated, largely under the framework of PAIA-REHAB: i) the seed production and seed security scheme; ii) the promotion of participatory approaches to the inclusion of nutrition considerations in emergency preparedness, relief and rehabilitation; iii) improved disaster assessment methodologies; iv) improved preparedness for forest fires; and v) institutional and organizational aspects of preparedness for extreme cold-related disasters.

Seed production and seed security scheme

73. The TP on Strengthening National Seed Production and Security Schemes is based on the need for varieties to be adapted to farmers' biophysical and socio-economic environments and managed through low-input systems in order to be sustainable. In 1998, an international workshop on Developing Institutional Agreements and Capacity to Assist Farmers in Disaster Situations to Restore Agricultural Systems and Seed Security Activities was held in Rome under a Norwegian-

funded project¹⁸ aimed at facilitating the implementation of the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. This workshop concluded that the impacts of disasters on farmer seed systems are complex and varied, disaster responses are often deficient owing to lack of preparedness, important crop genetic resources can be lost as a result of a disaster, and disaster responses require collaborative and coherent actions to restore seed systems. It made a number of recommendations to overcome the constraints identified, several of which were directly aimed at FAO. This TP was included in the FAO RP in response to these recommendations. During the project (through 2007), FAO, *inter alia*, is expected to prepare a global strategy and materials on sustainable seed production and seed security (including regional networks to promote national application). In particular, regional and national seed security programmes and mechanisms are to include seed information and early warning systems, in order to improve the reaction capacities of countries in disaster-prone areas.

Participatory approaches for better preparedness

74. One TP, on Nutrition and Household Food Security in Emergencies, is exclusively and directly addressed to Strategic Objective A3. Aimed at including nutrition considerations in emergency preparedness, response and rehabilitation, this TP promotes a participatory approach to the inclusion of nutrition considerations in development programmes. The approach is considered to be particularly relevant in emergency relief/rehabilitation programmes, in drought-prone areas and in HIV/AIDS-affected communities. The approach has been followed in several countries during the review period (e.g. Burundi, Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Mauritania), and a manual, which could easily be adapted for other countries, has been produced for field workers in Somalia. While the approach is interesting, there have been no studies as yet on whether the methods used have been continued in countries. Follow-up of this kind would be an important issue for this TP during the rest of its implementation period (through 2007).

Improving disaster assessment

75. Through its Environment and Natural Resources Service (SDRN) in the Sustainable Development Department (SD), FAO has begun work on a Rapid Agricultural Disaster Assessment Routine (RADAR). RADAR is intended to provide fast assessments of disaster impact on agriculture in order to facilitate the planning of emergency and relief operations. The methodology uses satellite imagery and Geographical Information System (GIS) techniques. It relies on three types of geo-referenced inputs: information on the system that has suffered the impact; information on the geo-physical event that caused the impact; and a database of comparable impacts, which is used to calibrate the methodology. The methodology has been developed on the basis of the impact of Hurricane Mitch in Honduras. It is currently being written up and will be transferred to interested countries.

76. SDRN is also developing an operational routine for identifying agricultural-environmental "hotspots". Work is under way to prepare a global map of water stress (deficit and excess) on world agriculture, with a view to developing an information system showing current and future (two to five years) tension areas between agriculture and the environment.

Improving preparedness for forest fire emergencies

77. FAO's work on Sustainable Management of Natural Forests and Woodlands has included a component on forest fires. During the review period, much of this work consisted of information exchange, i.e. the publication of *Global Forest Fire Assessment 1990-2000* and *International Forest Fire News* and the establishment of an International Forest Fire Management Network. More directly relevant to Strategic Objective A3 was the work that was carried out to review and analyse 15 Emergency Response Agreements, which have been entered into by countries for

¹⁸ GCP/INT/660/NOR.

mutual assistance in combating forest fires, and support – including the preparation of guidelines – on how to enter into such agreements.

Improving preparedness for extreme cold-related disasters

78. Stimulated by the snow emergency that struck Mongolia in 1999/2000, FAO has carried out research on risk prevention measures to reduce the damage due to extreme cold in Central Asia. The research found, *inter alia*, that institutional and organizational dimensions, in particular capacity building, coordination among actors and a favourable policy and legal environment, were the key factors for sustainable pastoral development and improved risk management. While technological approaches were important, they were found to be less significant. Mongolia has requested assistance from international financial institutions (IFIs) in making livestock production more sustainable and less vulnerable to natural disasters. However, the need to develop comprehensive risk management frameworks and plans of action at the provincial level remains.

A.4.2 Field activities

79. Several activities funded by TCP were carried out in two areas with direct relevance to preparedness: i) support to the preparation of comprehensive preparedness plans at the regional and national levels; and ii) in the fisheries sector, support to community-based disaster preparedness, with emphasis on sea safety. The common features of these projects are their regional dimensions and the fact that both focused on methodological development, thus linking field experience to normative work.

Support to comprehensive regional preparedness plans

80. From 1995 to 1997, FAO supported the Intergovernmental Authority on Development's (IGAD) implementation of a project aimed at developing a detailed subregional disaster preparedness strategy.¹⁹ This project was essentially based on reports, refined over a two-year period, by national consultants from IGAD member states and resulted from an extensive consultative process, including national and international agencies. The strategy was discussed at a workshop held in Addis Ababa in January 1998. Despite difficulties encountered in the implementation of the project, it achieved some important results: i) through the consultative process, high sensitization on preparedness issues among policy decision-makers in the IGAD countries; ii) capacity building of national experts in the field of preparedness; and iii) a subregional strategy document which touches on important issues of disaster management.

81. Another case was TCP support²⁰ to the Eastern Caribbean States in developing the details of national and regional hurricane disaster preparedness and impact mitigation strategies related to the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors. The project, initially planned for 18 months, was ambitious and included hurricane vulnerability assessment and risk mapping; national disaster preparedness and hurricane impact mitigation plans; preparation of training manuals; and organization of a national and subnational workshops on hurricane disaster preparedness and impact mitigation. The project was implemented by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA).²¹ Its overall performance was poor, however. Major problems were: i) confusion among participants concerning their responsibilities with respect to project funding, execution and implementation; ii) insufficient management of national consultants' work and outputs; and iii) poor timing of international expert and technical support inputs.

¹⁹ TCP/RAF/6720 Phase II of TCP/RAF/4558: Assistance to Develop a Drought and Disaster Preparedness Strategy in the IGADD region.

²⁰ TCP/RLA/6616: Emergency Assistance for the Formulation of National Hurricane Disaster Preparedness and Impact Mitigation Plans for the Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Sectors.

²¹ CDERA is an inter-governmental regional disaster management organization established in 1991 by an Agreement of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

82. The experience of these two regional projects shows that support to the preparation of comprehensive regional preparedness plans is a complex endeavour. A regional preparedness strategy touches on issues that are sensitive (e.g. regional food reserves, food aid charter, regional collaboration for emergency response) and it therefore requires a strong consultation and sensitization process, which is difficult to achieve within TCP's relatively short time frame. Additionally, in both projects, there were technical and management difficulties with weak regional organizations.

Community-based preparedness in the fisheries sector

83. In fisheries, the most important emergency preparedness activity was carried out in a TCP project in India.²² This project was approved after the disastrous cyclone of 6 November 1996 in East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh, in which 2 560 people died – more than 55 percent of whom were fishers at sea. A post-cyclone study showed that information about the storm was not effectively transmitted or received. The project involved the installation of a shore-to-vessel communication system, the provision of life-saving equipment and a comprehensive programme for community-based disaster preparedness in fishing villages. Since 1997, when the project was implemented, there have been five cyclones that came close to shore and, on each occasion, it was possible for boats to return quickly. The Andhra Pradesh Government has followed up by establishing more shore stations and making handsets available to boat owners at subsidized prices. Building on this, FAO organized a regional workshop on Sea Safety for Artisanal and Small-scale Fishermen in October 2001, which adopted the Chennai Declaration pledging countries in the Bay of Bengal to make a series of improvements designed to enhance sea safety.

B. AGRICULTURAL RELIEF

84. FAO's work on agricultural relief has been by far the fastest-growing aspect of its field activities since the early 1990s. The evaluation missions found that, at the country level, FAO's work on agricultural relief is better known than its other emergency-related activities are. FAO has provided inputs (primarily seeds, hand tools, fertilizer, veterinary medicines and, sometimes, fish for aquaculture and small livestock), often with some amount of technical assistance. In the countries visited, only a very limited number of FAO emergency-related interventions were not for the supply of inputs.

85. Emergencies (whether natural or human-induced) generally cause large-scale displacements and insecurity, leading to increased poverty. For example, farmers may not be able to keep sufficient seed from the previous crop or buy it in the market, as the priority is normally to feed the family in the short term at the expense of investing in crop production. The aim of free agricultural input distribution is thus to secure food crop production at the first available opportunity. This would also lessen the requirements for long-term food aid.

86. Input distribution is a valid intervention when, as a result of a disaster, farmers have lost the means of production, and input supply is a means to rebuild productive capacity. The choice of agricultural inputs is critical. Considerations include the agricultural input marketing conditions in the country, local transport systems, and farmer preferences. Staple food seeds should be appropriate to local agro-ecological conditions. They should preferably be of local varieties. Most important, they should reach the beneficiaries in good condition and in time for the right cropping season. Vegetable seeds can be important for nutritional considerations and also as a cash crop, if there is surplus for sale. In many countries, vegetable cropping is primarily a women's activity, and distribution of vegetable seeds thus permits agricultural relief to be directed to this large and particularly vulnerable group. Where appropriate, fish and small livestock may also be critical for input supply activities.

²² TCP/IND/6712 – Training in Sea Safety Development Programmes.

Performance of agricultural relief activities

87. Evaluation missions awarded scores to 70 individual project interventions in terms of their relevance, quality of design, effectiveness of implementation and quality of overall results. Scoring was on a three-point system, with three being the highest score.

88. Missions assessed *relevance* against the apparent need for the project and the appropriateness of the solution at the time the project was approved. In some cases, the score for relevance at project approval was lower than it had been when the project was first proposed. *Quality of design* was assessed against standard parameters: clarity and realism of objectives; clear specification of outputs, activities and inputs; specification of target beneficiaries; and appropriateness of work plan. Scores for *implementation* reflect how well the operations were carried out compared with the plan of operations in the project document. For relief projects, the timeliness of input delivery was a large element in this score. *Quality of results* was assessed in terms of whether inputs were used as foreseen, whether the project assisted the intended beneficiaries and whether inputs led to food production and the restoration of productive capacity. The information on quality of results that was available to missions was weaker than it was for other aspects of the projects, owing largely to poor monitoring and evaluation.

89. The overall scores were:

○ Relevance	2.7
○ Quality of design	2.1
○ Implementation	2.3
○ Quality of results	2.1

90. Overall, relief interventions were found to be relevant, but the quality of project design and results were only slightly above satisfactory. Although the evidence is limited, discussions and observations during the field visits created the general impression that, on the whole, the inputs supplied were used as intended, thus contributing to food production and supply in the local communities. Implementation overall was satisfactory to good. Some of the key issues emerging from this assessment are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Timeliness

91. Nearly all of the interventions reviewed in the evaluation were characterized by a threat to food security that emerged quickly and often with little time for supplies to arrive in time to “catch the next crop”. However, performance in terms of the delivery of inputs in a timely fashion was mixed. In some countries (e.g. Viet Nam, Honduras), assistance requests were formulated and approved and implementation carried out largely on time. However, in many cases, projects suffered delays such that inputs were not available in time for the intended crop, as indicated by questionnaires to countries and implementing partners. In some cases, where farmers plant different crops in different seasons, this meant that the inputs intended to be provided by the project had to be changed (e.g. rice instead of beans in Costa Rica). In the most extreme cases seen (e.g. Cambodia), inputs were provided one year after the emergency that provoked the response.

92. The reasons for delays varied, some were within the control of FAO and others were not. Often, the most important reasons were outside FAO control. Sometimes, requests for assistance were received with little lead-time for input tendering, supply and distribution before the next cropping season. In such cases, despite the best efforts of all parties, inputs may arrive late. A second factor was donors’ late response to appeals for assistance. This was generally a less important problem when funding was through FAO-TCP. TCP funding, however, is small and can provide only limited amounts of inputs. In addition, some suppliers proved to be unreliable in their delivery schedules.

93. On the FAO side, the lack of authority delegated to the field for the purchase of emergency input supplies was clearly a contributing factor. At present, there is a US\$25 000 limit on local procurement by FAO representations. This low limit, which is less than the input supplies budget of virtually any project, means that most procurement must be done by headquarters. Delays are caused by correspondence and the need for the field office to perform certain tasks, such as identification of suppliers. Headquarters procurement also increases the chance of errors in the tendering documents, as happened in one project in Bangladesh. In some cases, procurement missions were mounted from headquarters to countries, and these usually facilitated matters. However, local tendering with an increased limit for emergency activities may be a more cost-effective answer to the problem. Local procurement generally offers better prospects for speedy purchasing, as the delivery capacity of invited bidders can be better assessed and there is less chance of protracted correspondence over substandard goods or time-consuming identification of alternative supply sources. Local tendering would require a re-examination of procedures and the training of representation staff who would eventually carry out the task. It would also have to be done as local conditions warrant.

Follow-up at the field level

94. In-country follow-up by FAO Representatives (FAORs) was identified as a key performance factor in relief projects. In the best-implemented projects, FAORs actively helped in the formulation of the request, and followed up through approval of the requests and implementation of the activity. However, in some cases there was insufficient follow-up at various stages of the project cycle, resulting in serious delays in implementation. Particularly in Central America, FAORs were absent from several countries when the projects took place, and donors and implementing partners pointed this out as a weakness. In complex emergency situations, where there was an FAO Emergency Coordinator, this was not a problem because follow-up was a key responsibility of the person filling that role.

Box 3: Emergency Coordinators

In several of the countries visited, an ECU was set up. In Rwanda, Burundi, Sierra Leone and, to a lesser extent, Eritrea, the establishment of an ECU and/or the fielding of an Emergency Coordinator was an important prerequisite for FAO to play a key role in the overall humanitarian assistance to the country. The following were the major achievements:

- *Effective coordination* was achieved in Rwanda, Burundi and Sierra Leone through the establishment of Coordination Committees, which appeared to be a unique and transparent forum in which the multiple actors exchanged information and experience.
- These committees have proved to be an *effective management* tool in fostering the harmonization of intervention strategies and operational approaches. In Burundi, management coordination became even more effective with the establishment of a joint input “pool”. This led to better coherence among interventions and avoided duplication.
- *Collaboration* was reflected in several joint initiatives, again in Rwanda and Burundi, in particular with WFP (e.g. joint distribution of food rations and seeds, joint needs assessment).
- The *technical quality* of agricultural input distribution activities was high owing to the high technical expertise present in the ECU.
- *Capacity building* of government and non-governmental institutions was achieved through the coordination of assistance and the technical management of input distribution.
- In two cases (Rwanda and Sierra Leone), *government ownership* of emergency programming in the agriculture sector was fostered.

Beneficiary identification and targeting

95. Beneficiary identification was found to be weak in nearly all interventions. The normal situation was to describe the intended target beneficiaries in project documents as the “poorest and most affected” by the emergency situation, but interpretation of what this meant had to be left to the local bodies responsible for input delivery. For example, the “most affected” in terms of the damage caused by a disaster (percentage of crop lost) may not necessarily be the people whose livelihoods are most affected. In a few countries, efforts were made to determine who the beneficiaries should be, but only rarely was there a poverty focus in the beneficiary selection process. This is not surprising since, in many cases, those responsible for compiling beneficiary lists do not have the skills or time to determine who are the most deserving recipients and, in most countries, there is no readily available information as to who the poorest are.

96. Beneficiaries were selected according to many different patterns and, in many cases, all those who were in affected areas were eligible to receive inputs. In only a few cases was an attempt made to correlate the amount of input granted with the recipient farmer’s capacity to use it. However, because projects had limited quantities of inputs, it was not common to find farmers receiving more inputs than they could use on their own farms. In fact, in many projects, local authorities decreased the quantities of inputs per farmer in order to increase the number of beneficiaries.

97. There may be trade-offs between improving the beneficiary identification process and timely input delivery. Identification of the most needy beneficiaries depends on the quality of disaster impact and needs assessment, which in turn depends on the information available and the methods used. In this regard, greater emphasis should be given to the development of pre-disaster information and rapid assessment methodologies.

98. FAO is not able to ensure directly the proper targeting of intended beneficiaries. It must rely on its partners in the field and various stakeholders, including the beneficiaries themselves. Beneficiary targeting will be better when: i) the criteria for targeting are well-established and understood by all stakeholders; ii) the selection process has been decentralized to the local level; and iii) several institutions/stakeholders have participated in the selection process, including the villagers themselves. Stakeholder participation contributes to limiting biases in the selection of beneficiaries against established criteria. These steps require time, and need to be planned in the agricultural input delivery cycle. If this is not done, the tendency is to relegate beneficiary identification to secondary importance.

Input quality

99. Most of the projects did not have detailed needs assessments at the design stage. Most commonly, a “standard package” of inputs was provided. Standard packages do not take into account the diversity of the farming situation, with different farm sizes, farming systems and management abilities among households. It must be recognized that the limited time available when carrying out major input distribution activities immediately after a crisis (e.g. massive population movement) do not facilitate the optimal allocation of inputs.

100. Overall, the quality of the inputs delivered varied. For major operations (e.g. Rwanda during the 1994-1998 period), quantity tended to prevail over quality, and imported inputs were the most common modalities for procurement. Inevitably, there were cases in which seed varieties were not adapted to local systems or were contaminated by disease. In Central America, evaluation missions also raised questions about the appropriateness of the choice of seeds and the composition of the input package. More positive examples were found in some countries in Asia, where it proved possible to obtain locally varieties that were already known and used by farmer beneficiaries.

Box 4: Seed voucher-fair scheme in Kenya

Seeds are commonly distributed to beneficiaries through tendering operations involving national or international seed companies; transportation of the procured seed by government agencies to subdistrict boundaries or centres; and collection of seeds by the designated households according to criteria established by local authorities/community representatives (usually reflecting the extent of household loss during the emergency, the level of poverty and the ability to put the planting material to good use).

In response to protracted drought in eastern and northern Kenya in 1999-2000, an alternative approach was attempted in three districts on the eastern side of Mount Kenya. Under this scheme, recipient farmers could exchange vouchers for seed of their own choice at one of 14 seed fairs arranged prior to the beginning of the rainy season. The scheme was coordinated by FAO, in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and local authorities, with US\$250 000 funding by Sweden (SIDA). The Catholic Relief Service (CRS) was contracted to distribute the vouchers and to arrange the seed fairs.

The criteria applied by the local authorities to identify the recipients of the seed vouchers were similar to those employed in conventional seed distribution schemes. The designated beneficiaries also received food aid to ensure that the seed would not be consumed and to provide the necessary impetus for them to adopt basic soil and water conservation practices on their farms.

The seed voucher-fair scheme was scheduled to serve the selected locations in a carefully worked out sequence in order to minimize administration while still offering seed in time for early planting. CRS promoted the novel concept of seed fairs among the intended beneficiaries, more than 275 (mostly female) local seed traders and commercial seed companies. Before the opening of each fair, the seeds brought by the traders were inspected for pest damage, cleanliness and purity by three farmer representatives together with the Ministry of Agriculture and CRS before determining the appropriate prices. The average mark-up agreed between the sellers and the representatives was 20 percent above the price of the corresponding food commodity quality. The vouchers –each worth K Sh 600 to 800 (approximately US\$10) and sufficient to cover most of the planting needs of an average-size farm in the area – were handed out to the selected beneficiaries at the start of the fair.

During the fairs, a total of 200 tonnes of mainly locally-produced seed were exchanged between the sellers and the voucher holders. About half of this volume was accounted for by beans, one-quarter by maize, one-quarter by traditional cereals and a small proportion by cowpeas and pigeon peas. The three participating commercial seed companies, primarily offering hybrid maize, were less successful than the local traders since the voucher holders considered their mark-ups too high. At the end of the fair, the seed sellers presented the vouchers to the CRS representative, who exchanged them for cash.

Subsequent impact evaluations established that 87 to 96 percent of the obtained seeds were planted by 8 000 households over more than 3 000 hectares in the following production season, and the balance was either consumed or kept for planting the following year.

The benefiting farmers particularly appreciated the fact that they could obtain the varieties and quantities that suited their requirements instead of being allocated seeds in uniform quantities. They also greatly appreciated the opportunity to inspect the seed and to buy from local vendors with whom they were familiar.

The voucher-fair scheme was considered to have made seed available to the recipients more rapidly than a conventional seed distribution scheme since no tendering procedure was required and prices could be set through face-to-face negotiations with the traders at the beginning of the fairs. The scheme had the additional effect of injecting cash into the local economy since the seed traders frequently used their proceeds to buy other inputs and goods. It was also observed that many traders reduced local seed prices as a result of the benchmark levels established at the fairs.

However, the evaluations also revealed that both farmers and seed traders initially found it difficult to understand the voucher-fair concept. The fair approach may also discourage distant traders from bringing in novel varieties since their costs tend to be higher than those of the local seed sellers.

Technical assistance in agricultural relief interventions

101. Generally, TCP projects provided a certain amount of technical assistance (e.g. extension support) for agricultural input distribution projects, while projects funded by bilateral donors usually did not. The quality of technical assistance in emergency projects was generally good; in several cases it was provided by FAO projects already present in the country (e.g. Bangladesh, Honduras). This proved to be an excellent and highly cost-effective method of operation.

102. Many emergency field projects have been approved under EMPRES-Livestock, nearly all of which have been funded by FAO TCP. These projects typically supply vaccines to combat outbreaks of transboundary animal diseases (e.g. rinderpest, contagious bovine pleuropneumonia, Newcastle disease, foot-and-mouth disease) or set up control programmes (e.g. African swine fever), and usually also include elements for improving surveillance (early warning) and training. The 2001 evaluation found that most of the projects achieved their objectives, with those on rinderpest being particularly successful.

103. The evaluation found that activities were more successful when they provided inputs that farmers were already using in the pre-emergency situation. A few projects distributed novel inputs and generally provided technical assistance support. However, the availability of technical assistance was not a sufficient condition to ensure success in some activities (e.g. fruit trees, duck rearing) if the management requirements were beyond what the farmers could handle.

Project design, monitoring and evaluation

104. The missions found that project documents for agricultural relief projects could be improved in at least two ways. Operational responsibilities for project implementation are generally not sufficiently clear. In particular, project documents call for the appointment of a National Project Director (NPD), but NPDs had no terms of reference and no clear responsibility or authority. Similarly, work plans could be improved by defining planned tasks and responsibility for their implementation, tied to the crop calendar. This would make the urgency of completing activities prior to scheduled planting time clearer to all parties.

105. Overall, project monitoring and evaluation was weak. Only in one of the cases reviewed by the mission (Georgia) was a monitoring report clearly used in the design of subsequent activities. However, TCE now recognizes the need for more systematic use of monitoring and evaluation, and some improvements are being made; more recent projects now have specific components for this, which is usually carried out by national consultants or NGOs.

C. TRANSITION FROM EMERGENCY RELIEF TO REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT

C.1 Definition of transition

106. Transition is the period of a disaster cycle during which primary attention begins to turn from saving lives to the rehabilitation of livelihoods.

107. This aspect (often referred to as “connectedness”) is of particular relevance to post-conflict and post-complex emergency situations where: i) the emergency has led to large-scale humanitarian assistance that has replaced or completely overshadowed development aid; and ii) government institutions have collapsed and governance is weak or non-existent.

108. Identification of the beginning and the end of the “transition phase” is not always clear. In protracted emergencies, transition has a spatial aspect (the simultaneous presence of emergency and transition phases in different areas of the country) and temporal meanings (a protracted emergency usually sways between periods of relative peace and the resumption of conflict). Eventually, the commencement of the transition phase is defined from political analysis, and is not controlled or influenced by a technical agency such as FAO.

C.2 Rehabilitation through relief projects

109. Until recently, FAO's transition-related activities have been through ongoing relief projects. The evaluation missions found many projects that attempted to diversify the emergency programme by promoting interventions aimed at more sustainable results: seed multiplication schemes, rehabilitation of veterinary clinics, rehabilitation of marshlands, etc. The field missions concluded that, in the countries visited, the scope of these activities and their impact on rehabilitation were limited and that emergency-related work does not necessarily prepare the ground for longer-term rehabilitation.

110. There are several reasons for this, relating to funding aspects and to internal management. Emergency funding is rarely adequate to accommodate more complex and time-consuming activities, first because of its time frame (usually less than a year) and second because the budget allocation for technical support, particularly in Trust Fund activities, is usually limited. Furthermore, rehabilitation activities necessitate stronger and more diversified technical support, and TCE has not always been able to mobilize other divisions' expertise and capacity. Despite the reimbursement mechanism for technical services put into place in December 2000, the contribution and technical support from technical divisions still remain low and are dependent on the interest of individuals, who are often subject to other pressing demands. Another factor is that funding that enters through TCE is necessarily controlled by TCE itself, even when it relates to transition activities. In a bureaucracy, control over financial resources is the key to stimulating involvement and participation; technical units will not work for someone else without being given a degree of control.

C.3 Formulating policies and investment frameworks favouring transition

111. In transition situations, one of the first tasks is to define the policies and investment frameworks that will trace the path for recovery and development. FAO's technical expertise in these areas, together with its neutrality, give the Organization a comparative advantage in carrying out this work. However, carrying out policy work in a transition context is a relatively new activity for FAO, having emerged in the past decade with the recognition that transition is a particular phase of emergencies and the occurrence of increased numbers of conflicts and complex emergencies.

112. As a result, over the evaluation period, there were relatively few examples of FAO taking (or attempting to take) the lead in formulating policies and investment frameworks aimed at linking relief to rehabilitation and development, although such work may increase now that it is enshrined in the Strategic Framework. Some examples include Kosovo and East Timor – where FAO attempted to take the lead – together with its more recent ongoing strategic and programming work in Afghanistan, from which some positive lessons can be drawn.

113. The evaluation identified several constraints that complicate FAO's leading role in the formulation of agriculture sector policy and the development of a sector investment framework during transition. These relate to:

1. inadequate lack of an in-country enabling environment to conduct policy work;
2. lack of recognition and acceptance of this role on the part of others;
3. inadequate funding and an inappropriate funding mechanism; and
4. weaknesses within FAO itself.

Lack of in-country enabling environment

114. The transition phase in countries that have been affected by a conflict is characterized by a gradual build-up of national government institutions, first through a period of transitory governance by a UN Mission (e.g. UNMIK in Kosovo), an interim government (e.g. East Timor Transitional Authority, Afghan Interim Administration), or both. This transitory period is

followed by an election from which a recognized government emerges, along with incipient national institutions. Policy assistance work, as traditionally conducted by FAO, is difficult when government structures are weak or temporary. The lack of strong counterparts in Kosovo is stated as one of the reasons for FAO not having been able to play a lead role in this domain.

Furthermore, the lack of a clearly defined counterpart institution has led to uncoordinated development of proposals by various agencies present, with no single leader – government or other – clearly accepted by all. On the other hand, in Afghanistan the national interim institutions seem to be driving the rehabilitation process effectively, thus greatly facilitating the policy and strategic work conducted by international organizations, including FAO (see Box 5).

Lack of recognition of FAO's role

115. FAO needs to be recognized and accepted as a lead institution in the transition phase if it is going to exercise this function. Thus, it must have the support of other important stakeholders in the transition process. These include: i) the government (if there is one); ii) other UN agencies and IFIs; and iii) donors. This has been a problem in Kosovo, where initial recognition of FAO's leadership in agriculture during the relief phase quickly eroded after the dismantling of the ECU and the consequent lack of FAO presence (see Box 6).

Funding constraints

116. Funding for rehabilitation to support the agriculture sector, including policy work, may be the most striking bottleneck during the transition phase. In post-conflict situations, there is a recognized phenomenon called “donor fatigue” after a long period of involvement in protracted emergencies. When the emergency phases out, priority for assistance turns quickly to other areas. Furthermore, donors themselves often suffer from a lack of any substantive connection between the work of their emergency and non-emergency agencies. When a donor's humanitarian branch withdraws, there is often a gap before development assistance (which usually has slower procedures and a longer political decision-making process) is fully re-established, without any fund bridging mechanism for the transition phase.

117. There are, nevertheless, cases of ongoing donor-funded development projects switching to emergency activity, then moving back to development work when the emergency has passed.²³ These are ideal examples of transition, since the emergency response is integrated with the previous development activity, and the transition back to development is carried out by the same people who dealt with the emergency. In such cases, donors have been quite flexible about moving funding back and forth between emergency and development, adding more funding to the project budget from their emergency allocations.

118. Another funding constraint during the transition phase is the tendency for donors to accord priority to non-agricultural sectors such as justice, governance, health and infrastructure (roads, bridges, ports, houses). When there is funding for the rehabilitation of agriculture and food security, it is supported by a limited number of donors (the World Bank, the European Union [EU], UNDP), and in many instances FAO has not been able to associate itself with these activities. A partial exception was in Kosovo, where the World Bank agreed to recognize FAO's capacity in rehabilitation by entrusting it with implementation of the Emergency Farm Reconstruction Project, although not on the institutional/policy side (the Capacity Building Component) in which FAO has a limited supporting role.

119. In conclusion, there is a dichotomy between fundraising mechanisms and strategies that support them within the UN system. Emergency funds are often raised through UNCAPs, which are characterized by a strict time frame and a prevalence of life-saving objectives (e.g. for food, housing, medical supplies). FAO has participated in UNCAPs, which often include project proposals for agricultural rehabilitation interventions – but these components usually receive far fewer funds than the others do. The UNDP-led United Nations Development Assistance

²³ E.g. Netherlands funding in Honduras during the Hurricane Mitch emergency, UNDP/FAO work in Afghanistan.

Framework (UNDAF) usually follows the UNCAP and is often prepared during the transition phase, laying the ground for reconstruction and development. However, reconstruction and development are more complex and require degrees of consultation and coordination among agencies that are difficult to achieve within a short time period. As a result, there is often a lack of integration and continuity between the humanitarian assistance framework and the medium- and long-term options for development. The existence of two parallel strategic documents and associated funding mechanisms creates competition for resources. A more positive recent development is the UN Plan for 2002 for the Congo (Brazzaville). The document is well prepared, and both integrates expected humanitarian needs following the possible resurgence of emergencies and lays the ground for reconstruction and development.

FAO's internal weaknesses

120. A major weakness within FAO is its lack of continued presence when emergency operations cease and ECUs are phased out. This is particularly true in countries where no FAOR was present during the emergency, including new countries emerging from conflict (e.g. Kosovo, East Timor). There is a clear need for an interim measure to ensure a strong FAO presence between the end of the emergency coordination function and the establishment of more permanent representation functions.

121. In countries where there is already FAO representation, the emergency and development assistance programmes are often run without synergy between them, partly owing to different modes of operating. This might be overcome if FAORs were given operating responsibilities for emergency activities, on the condition – of course – that the FAO representations have the necessary capacity to manage such activities. An FAOR works first and foremost with the government and its institutions. Emergency coordinators work more with the international community, including NGOs, and rather less with government institutions. During the transition phase, it is important to re-establish stronger links with the government, thus suggesting a stronger role for FAORs in this phase.

122. For FAO to take the lead in policy formulation requires the Organization to set its own vision on the future of the sector in the country concerned and to have a more proactive attitude in this respect. The strategic planning and programming approach developed in Afghanistan places FAO in a lead role in the sector (see Box 5).

123. The model currently being developed is for TCE to take on the responsibility of designing the transition strategy through its new Rehabilitation and Humanitarian Policies Unit (TCER). The logic is that TCE has already built up valuable in-country knowledge and experience, including relationships with donors, which ought to be used in designing the transition phase. In this scenario, once the rehabilitation strategy has been agreed, TCE would phase out, and programme design and implementation would be turned over to the Policy Assistance Division (TCA), the Investment Centre Division (TCI) and/or FAORs, depending on country circumstances. These arrangements are still at an early stage and the modalities of operation are not yet fully clear.

Box 5: Rehabilitation of the agriculture sector in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a good example of FAO taking a lead role in the rehabilitation of the agriculture sector. *FAO programme:* As of mid-May 2002, FAO was implementing 17 emergency projects and six longer-term projects funded by donor resources. The total donor contribution to date (received and pipeline) for FAO's programme in Afghanistan amounts to US\$44 million. In addition to donor-funded projects, FAO has also implemented three projects under TCP for about US\$700 000.

FAO's support is guided by the Early Agricultural Rehabilitation Strategy, presented by FAO to the Government Authority in Afghanistan. The strategy is a well-prepared document, which outlines a framework for addressing the key priorities for the agriculture sector in Afghanistan in the next two to three years, with a budget of US\$202 million. The Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry has approved it, and FAO is in the process of developing an action plan that will also take into account the recent draft National Development Framework prepared by the Afghan Interim Authority (AIA).

Positive factors that facilitate FAO playing a key role

➤ ***High-level profile of national stakeholders***

Afghan leaders have clearly set the tone for the rehabilitation and reconstruction process on several occasions. At the Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, held in Tokyo on 21 to 22 January 2002, the Afghan Chairperson Karzai set out strategic directions and overarching principles that would guide all interventions, the first being that Afghans must be in the driver's seat in envisioning their own future and in determining their priorities and modalities of implementation. The institutions put into place to do so – the Afghanistan Assistance Coordination Authority (AACA) and the Ministry of Reconstruction – were established immediately after the formation of AIA in December 2001. Together, they have started to play major roles in prioritizing, coordinating and managing the flow of UN humanitarian assistance and donor resources to Afghanistan. AACA has also assumed a major role in advising on the broad outlines of AIA's policies and strategies for the economy and for public administration. The head of AACA has repeatedly stressed the key role of Afghan institutions. Unlike Kosovo and East Timor, Afghanistan is not administered by the UN, and AIA is the internationally recognized repository of Afghan sovereignty. The fact of having a strong institutional counterpart on the Afghan side facilitates FAO's role by providing a clear interlocutor and framework for taking action. However, it must also be recognized that counterparts in the line ministries (Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Health and Husbandry, Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources, and Ministry of Reconstruction and Rural Development) lack a strong technical background and awareness of the most recent policy developments in their sectors, and this limits the formulation and implementation of programmes in the agriculture sector.

➤ ***Availability of donor funding***

Following the understandings reached in Tokyo and the formation of AIA, the UN launched a Common Appeal for funding of the Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme in 2002. FAO has appealed for US\$36 million to meet short- and medium-term needs. Donors' response has been highly positive.

As of mid-May, donors had already contributed more than \$12 million towards immediate emergency relief activities, and more than \$7 million towards longer-term projects. In total, donors have entrusted FAO with \$21 million. An additional \$24 million is currently in the pipeline.

➤ ***History of FAO's presence in Afghanistan and its proactive attitude***

FAO has had an on-the-ground presence in Afghanistan throughout the years of struggle and has continued to provide strong, direct support to farming communities and resource-poor farmers in Afghanistan through several projects. FAO's field programme in Afghanistan has been one of the largest in the region and has accumulated significant experience and knowledge. FAO has also been proactive in forward planning for rehabilitation activities in the fields of food production and food security. In 1996, the Organization fielded a team to prepare the Afghanistan Agricultural Strategy (AAS). Following preparation of the AAS, in 1997, FAO provided strategic planning in the agriculture sector by commissioning a Food Security Strategy. In 1999, under the UN common programming process, FAO assisted UNDP in preparing the Helmand Initiative aimed at tackling the problem of opium production in Helmand Province, the largest area of illegal opium production in the world. FAO has been proactive in many ways. At the end of 2001, UNDP, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank conducted a preliminary needs assessment for the Ministerial Meeting in Tokyo on 21

to 22 January 2002 with a view to determining the external assistance required to support Afghanistan's economic and social recovery and reconstruction over the short and medium terms. FAO's TCI contributed to the needs assessment presented at the Tokyo meeting and participated in a follow-up mission to Kabul in mid-February. The preparation of FAO's strategy for the short to medium term, which was approved by the Director-General in February 2002, was also a major step for FAO to place itself as the lead agency in the sector.

Following the Tokyo Conference, FAO fielded several missions of consultants and staff members. This mobilization certainly reflects a high degree of commitment to this particular emergency situation and to FAO's improvement of its approach to emergency and rehabilitation activities. FAO's Technical Cooperation Department (TC) perceives Afghanistan as a pilot case in the framework of TCE restructuring and its extended mandate.

Questions to be resolved

This positive picture needs to be qualified. Indeed, the Afghan case also illustrates some of FAO's internal weaknesses associated with the lack of a clear division of responsibilities, which is predominantly driven by financial resource allocation. The ambiguity over responsibilities for managing FAO's programme for Afghanistan arises from the competing roles played by the Policy Assistance Branch in the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (RAP) and TCE, as well as, to some extent, the competing roles of TCA and TCE. The longstanding support and investment from RAP in the country through the former UNDP-led PEACE programme makes RAP the logical leader for managing the current rehabilitation programme in Afghanistan. However, TCE, which is responsible for emergency operations and early rehabilitation policy and which has control over a large part of the funding for Afghanistan, is also a major stakeholder. In addition, the fact that the Director of TCE has been designated as FAO Focal Point for Afghanistan has created dissociation between mandates (as Focal Point the Director of TCE is entitled to instruct RAP and TCA on Afghanistan-related matters) and control over resources (long-term activities are still supposed to be operated by RAP). This lack of clarity in responsibilities has implications on the decision-making relating to field staff, as well as on the overall FAO strategy for the country.

With regard to field staff, FAO is currently strengthening its management structure in the field through the posting of an officer-in-charge of FAO's affairs in Afghanistan (equivalent to an FAOR), a programme developer (strategy-oriented), a programme manager and an Emergency Coordinator. While posting high-level policy/strategy and managerial staff is positive for putting into shape FAO's programme in Afghanistan, there are risks that: i) this staff receives inconsistent guidance from either headquarters or RAP depending on their respective control over resources (i.e. who receives funds and for what); and ii) insufficient attention is paid to the need for technical assistance and to the provision of technical staff required to put the strategies into practice and to implement the activities.

Conclusions

All the conditions seem to be in place for FAO to have a key role in the rehabilitation of Afghanistan's agriculture sector, aided by factors such as national context and funding availability. As such, the Afghan model has some limitations in its replicability. In addition, the magnitude of staff deployment and the use of FAO's own resources in Afghanistan also set some limitations to the replicability of such an approach. In conclusion, the internal management situation needs to be closely reviewed. An ongoing evaluation mechanism should be set up to assess the relevance and effectiveness of this approach.

Box 6: Rehabilitation in Kosovo

Until the Afghanistan crisis, Kosovo was the complex emergency for which FAO had gone the furthest towards reflecting on a strategy for transition. As Kosovo emergency activities under the Special Relief Operations Service (now TCE) were coming to an end in early 2001, it was decided to assign responsibility for management of the rehabilitation phase to TCE. TCE already had responsibility for a few longer-term (transition) projects which had begun operation late in the emergency phase. The main one of these was the World Bank-funded Emergency Farm Reconstruction Project (EFRP). While the two major components of EFRP – distribution of imported cows and tractor repair – were closely related to emergency relief, the third and much smaller Capacity Building Component (CBC) was more of a government institution-building, rehabilitation component. However, as required by the World Bank, the implementation of the CBC was sub-contracted to a consulting firm. Other projects included a seed multiplication project, projects on forest inventory and forestry institution capacity building and a farmers' group formation/income-generating activity project called Support to Agricultural Rehabilitation in Kosovo (SARK).

Under this new responsibility for rehabilitation, TCE's first activity was to fund a short exploratory mission by the Policy Assistance Branch of the Regional Office for Europe (REU) and the Investment Centre in March 2001. The mission coincided with the departure of the FAO Emergency Coordinator and the dismantling of the ECU (final closure was in June). The results of that mission were minimal, however, and provided no strategy and only two minor project proposals. TCE also provided support to a CFSAM in July 2001.

During this period, REU began to be more substantively involved in programming rehabilitation under its own RP funding, starting with participation in the Kosovo UNDAF exercise in August 2001. Following this, REU fielded identification missions for two projects in September and November and a Field Programme Development mission, also in November. It is understood that TCA was originally reluctant to work under emergency funding and direction from TCE.

At present (mid-2002, three years after the initial emergency intervention), all FAO activity in Kosovo is still based entirely on emergency funding, with TCE's operational responsibility stretched in time well into the rehabilitation phase. The remaining FAO activities are being coordinated by a TCE Coordinator located in Belgrade under a Luxembourg-funded project (Coordination of Emergency Agricultural Relief Operations in Countries Affected by the Kosovo Crisis, started in September 2000). Planning and programming of agricultural rehabilitation, however, has not progressed very far. There is a strong request from the UN in Kosovo (UNMIK, UNDAF agencies) for FAO to take the lead in the agriculture sector, but FAO still lacks non-emergency staff on the ground. However, it is understood that some funds from the Luxembourg project will soon be used to fund a policy adviser (to be backstopped by REU) in the Kosovo Ministry of Agriculture. It should be noted that the absence of a national government and the slow process of its creation have been major impediments for FAO in the transition out of emergency. The interim UNMIK Government is, by its very nature, structured for emergency assistance, while the newly elected Kosovo Government has yet to take over fully (at writing there was still no Minister of Agriculture). In this context, a weak point in FAO's transition was its difficulty in moving from a role of overall coordinator for the agriculture sector (a virtual Ministry of Agriculture) in the emergency phase to that of an agency at the service of government (FAO's usual – and mandated – role) for the rehabilitation phase.

Evolution of FAO's role in Kosovo

With regard to FAO's role in rehabilitation activities, it is striking that under the World Bank-funded EFRP, FAO-TCE was given the implementation of the two relief components, but not of the institution-building rehabilitation component – the CBC. The main reason appears to have been that the World Bank lacked confidence in FAO's capacities in the area of agricultural institution building. The implication is that FAO is recognized as being more suitable for the distribution of animals and tractor parts than for the rehabilitation of agricultural institutions. This is an example of the insufficient "connectedness" within FAO, where the emergency unit (TCE) was far more effective at offering the World Bank its own project execution capacities than the rest of FAO was.

Thus, in Kosovo, FAO is still searching for ways to be involved in transition, including the mobilization of external funding support. TCE expects to terminate its own work when the money from the UNCAP comes to an end. In Kosovo, no further activities were initiated after this point (but several activities were, and are still, ongoing with funds raised during the UNCAP). This is not a formal position, however. The implication is that donors determined the switch from emergency to development according to their funding decisions with regard to FAO; FAO could only follow the money. REU is gradually taking over programming responsibility, but the technical divisions are not yet closely involved. FAO's Yugoslavia experience indicates that the placement of a full-time policy adviser in Kosovo will be a key to this transition.

D. STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN DISASTER-PRONE COUNTRIES

124. In countries or regions with repeated natural disasters, such as storm-affected countries in Central America and the Caribbean, flood-affected countries in Asia (e.g. Bangladesh, the Mekong River delta) or drought-prone regions in the Horn of Africa, it makes little sense to talk of a transition out of emergency into development, since a non-emergency situation is actually only an inter-emergency period. In such countries, a key element of FAO's emergency response should be to strengthen people's resilience to future disasters through local capacity building and the strengthening of coping mechanisms. This is the concern addressed by the fourth strategy component of Strategic Objective A3 ("strengthening local capacities and coping mechanisms, through guiding the choice of agricultural practices, technologies and support services, to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience").

125. This issue was particularly important for the evaluation missions that visited Central America and Asia, where natural disasters are common (see Box 7). The two missions came to similar conclusions about FAO's work with respect to this part of the Strategic Objective:

- Almost all of the interventions were for input distribution, responding to immediate problems, and thus were generally not geared to bringing a sustainable and effective response to recurrent disasters.
- Some agricultural input distribution projects had impacts beyond a single growing season, and therefore increased people's resilience, at least for a certain period. For example, projects for improved seed distribution can have an impact on increased production for two to three years, until genetic purity deteriorates.
- Improving resilience to disaster requires a knowledge and understanding of people's livelihoods and their vulnerability to food insecurity and disaster. FAO has a comparative advantage in this domain because of its longstanding work in support of food information systems, including FIVIMS.
- Experiences in disaster-prone regions make the case for FAO to emphasize disaster mitigation measures, not only during the post-disaster phase – when this may be difficult because of time constraints – but also in its development programmes. All work related to agricultural production should strengthen the resilience of production systems in the face of sudden calamity. Such strengthening might be achieved through:
 - promoting diversification into more resilient production systems which include agroforestry, small livestock, varied kinds of rotations and intercrops, or other solutions;
 - introducing *technological innovations* to reduce the vulnerability of production itself: e.g. low-cost irrigation and water management, conservation agriculture, integrated pest management; and
 - creating more *varied sources of income* for farm families through, for example, small-scale processing, improved marketing knowledge and information systems, the introduction of non-farm activities to generate income.

Box 7: Improving resilience – possibilities in flood-prone countries of Asia

In the flood-prone countries visited by the evaluation mission in Asia, nearly all of the individual project interventions were for input supply – mostly seeds (rice, maize, vegetables) but also fish fingerlings, fruit tree saplings, fertilizer and, in one case, small livestock. Overall, the impact of these projects on improving people's resilience to future disasters and coping mechanisms was limited. Some seed distribution projects had *potential for increasing resilience* beyond one growing season by providing improved planting material that was well adapted but not available locally. Seed produced from this material could be multiplied, with increased production for several years. Diversification was also attempted as a resilience strategy, but the issue of how to reconcile the husbandry demands of, say, cloned fruit tree saplings with the management capabilities of the poorer households was not always effectively addressed.

The mission identified several areas in which FAO could make a contribution to increasing resilience in the face of recurrent disasters. FAO would be well-equipped to streamline and disseminate methodologies for identifying the most needy beneficiaries for agricultural relief through assessments undertaken by the community members themselves. A second potential area for future support to agricultural rehabilitation would be to develop and disseminate models of how particularly vulnerable farmers, as identified after flood emergencies, could be organized as contact points for intensified attention by the agricultural extension service during a defined post-flood period, benefiting from on-farm group-oriented visits by the extension field staff as well as from pamphlets and audiovisual material.

FAO could develop and introduce management models of how national seed security stocks for meeting the needs after emergencies could be incorporated into the regular stocks of planting material held by the various actors in the seed industry, at least for those crops that have a well-developed formal seed system. As with regular seeds, security seed stocks need to be turned over regularly to ensure that germination rates remain high. The incorporation of the management of security seed stocks into overall seed management, while not violating minimum stock level requirements, presents a particular challenge that is difficult to resolve for inexperienced actors in the seed industry.

Similarly, for livestock vaccines, the requirement to keep emergency stocks potent through phased turnover presents a challenge to the veterinary authorities and the commercial sector providing animal health services. By preparing guidelines on stock turnover and providing a management model of where and how different types of vaccines should be stored to fulfil these requirements and still be available in places where livestock disease outbreaks may occur after flood emergencies, FAO could become a valuable technical partner in improving preparedness for emergencies.

Chapter III: Conclusions and Recommendations

A. GENERAL

126. The evaluation confirms the continuing overall relevance and importance of Strategic Objective A3 as an organizational priority for FAO. Natural and human-induced disasters contribute increasingly to global food insecurity and poverty, especially in rural areas. Thus, it is entirely appropriate that increasing resilience and the capacity to cope with natural disasters should be an important focus of FAO's work.

127. The components addressed in the Strategic Objective are appropriate in that they respond to all aspects of an emergency situation, from preparedness, through early warning and needs assessment, provision of relief, and planning for the transition to rehabilitation and development, so that people's resilience in the face of future disasters is strengthened. This holistic approach also plays to FAO's unique comparative advantage (both demonstrated and potential) in having capacity in all these components and makes it possible for FAO to exploit such advantages to the assistance of those Member Nations that require it.

128. The questionnaire submitted to member countries and partners confirmed the useful role of FAO in dealing with emergencies and its assistance was generally viewed as positive (see Annex 1). While the relatively small number of replies limits the degree to which detailed inferences can be made, countries rated FAO assistance as "satisfactory" or "excellent" in all five areas of emergency work (preparedness, early warning, needs assessment, agricultural relief, and rehabilitation/recovery planning). Compared with other donors, a majority of countries found FAO to be best, or about equal to others, in needs assessment and relief operations, while other donors were found better by a majority of respondents in preparedness, early warning and rehabilitation/recovery planning.

129. In the abstract, all the strategy components are important. However, the relative attention that FAO gives to each of the components has varied considerably, and the Organization's stated comparative advantage (i.e. a broad range of technical expertise and breadth of field experience) is not well reflected in the real-world situation. Early warning is an area in which FAO has long been active and in which its work is well appreciated by member countries and the international community, as also confirmed by the questionnaire. However, sharp increases in the number of emergency situations in recent years, combined with – at best – static funding, has meant that resources for this work are stretched thin, making it difficult to maintain the same high degree of quality.

130. Funding for agricultural relief operations has increased tremendously in recent years, as the number of emergency situations has gone up and donor trust in FAO's ability in this area has increased. Within FAO, a new Division (TCE) has been set up with responsibility to implement agricultural relief operations in response to the demands for this type of assistance. On the whole, agricultural relief projects have performed satisfactorily, as indicated in the assessments of 70 operations by review missions and also as reflected in the questionnaire survey of member countries and FAO partners. FAO generally provides a more technically appropriate solution to a given problem (through Emergency Coordinators and technical assistance, particularly in TCP). FAO's provision of Emergency Coordinators is unique. These have proved to be effective and are much appreciated by other partners, raising FAO's profile in major emergency situations.

131. However, FAO's ability to exploit its comparative advantage is constrained by its weakness in making speedy delivery of agricultural inputs. This weakness is due to several factors noted in the report, including internal administrative and financial procedures that FAO itself can improve.

132. Other strategy components have received far less attention in FAO's work. Activities aimed at disaster preparedness (with the exception of support to early warning) have been rather few and scattered. However, this has been recognized and FAO is seeking ways to improve the situation, particularly through the PAIA-REHAB mechanism. Activities aimed at promoting the effective transition from relief to rehabilitation and development have also been rather few. As of yet, there are no examples in which FAO has played a decisive role in such a transition, and there are important institutional questions that should be resolved.

133. In conclusion, Strategic Objective A3 is relevant and appropriate, providing a broad guide in terms of priority areas for FAO action. Clearly, its effective implementation requires development over time – through the MTP process – of more operational planning and programming for a set of priority results to be achieved. The need for such a development is also indicated by the unevenness with which the four component areas have been addressed so far, showing a considerable scope for better exploitation of the Organization's technical expertise and capacity in support of the Strategic Objective. The following recommendations reflect these considerations.

B. MAINSTREAMING EMERGENCY WORK IN FAO

134. The evaluation points to the need for greater mainstreaming of emergency-related work, especially in the work of technical divisions. In the context of the MTP, PAIA-REHAB represents the logical mechanism for a greater mainstreaming and integration of emergency-related work by key technical units and, while a good start has been made, this effort needs to be reinforced further.

135. **Recommendation 1:** (a) *Specific emergency-related outputs should be programmed and budgeted by the concerned technical divisions, starting from the next Programme of Work and Budget (2004-2005), particularly in areas related to Strategic Objective A3 that have received insufficient attention so far (e.g. preparedness).* (b) *Functional statements of those units participating in ECG and PAIA-REHAB should be reviewed to ensure that their role in emergencies is clearly stated. In key technical divisions for emergency work, a focal point with appropriate terms of reference should be designated to deal specifically with emergency-related matters.*

136. **Recommendation 2:** *FAO should help integrate a systematic approach to deal with countries that are especially prone to natural disasters, and thus it should ensure that disaster management is a key consideration within all agricultural development activities in such countries. In particular, the FAO country office, as well as the regional Policy Assistance Branches, should be strengthened – through sensitization and training – in their capacity for incorporating this aspect into the programmes and projects that are in their control.*

C. PREPAREDNESS

137. While FAO traditionally has been, and continues to be, active in early warning through GIEWS and support to national and regional systems, only a few activities have been carried out for other components of preparedness. In terms of supporting the preparation of comprehensive preparedness plans at the regional and national levels, FAO has a mixed record from the field experiences reviewed. Clearly, TCP is not a suitable source for this kind of support, which requires strong institution-building components that are not amenable to the budgetary and time constraints of TCP.

138. FAO does have comparative advantages in key domains related to preparedness. In particular, it has strong comparative advantages in *food and agriculture information for preparedness*. However, it is important to focus on priority areas and to articulate them within the MTP context.

139. **Recommendation 3:** (a) *Building on FAO's specific strengths, priority actions for the future should be reviewed and stated in an FAO Strategy and Priority Actions for Preparedness. This work could well be carried out under the aegis of ECG and the members of PAIA-REHAB, once the latter have agreed on a work plan and further refined priority actions for FAO, particularly in the field of information. Such a document would help to clarify FAO's role vis-à-vis other organizations in this domain, facilitate needed advocacy vis-à-vis donors and FAO Member Nations in general, and enhance coordinated resource allocations among FAO units.* (b) *Clear responsibility should be given to a lead unit for each output that is defined for activities in the MTP.*

140. **Recommendation 4:** *FAO should pursue and strengthen its work on information for early warning, impact assessment, needs assessment and the design of appropriate responses in the following areas:*

Early warning

- *On the basis of the existing guidelines, develop a practical and useful manual for field staff and consultants conducting CFSAMs.*
- *In post-conflict situations and/or in situations where government institutions have collapsed, provide training on the regular collection and analysis of information, at a very early stage, to the officials responsible for emergency activities in the field (i.e. the ECU, FAO representation).*
- *In disaster-prone countries, strengthen the development of early warning systems by integrating the household food security dimension and vulnerability analysis. In this regard, the work carried out by FAO under FIVIMS should provide relevant inputs. The objective should be to develop local food security monitoring systems with low-cost approaches and methodologies, using existing structures to the extent possible. To do this, FAO will have to integrate the disaster dimension into its work under FIVIMS.*

Impact and needs assessment

- *FAO should consolidate the rich existing information into a database that would facilitate the assessment of impact and needs in future disasters. Such a consolidated database would include information on logistics, population distribution, food security, natural resources, disaster history and impact, etc. It should also take into account existing relevant initiatives, such as the FAO GeoNetwork (hazard-related agricultural environmental data), aimed at improving access to information. PAIA-REHAB should advise on the items for inclusion in the database; some additional information may have to be collected (e.g. national seed sector profiles, including the varieties actually grown by farmers). In its development, priority should be given to the most disaster-prone countries and regions.*
- *FAO's work for impact and needs assessment could be further improved by: i) disseminating, through training and in-country testing, the RADAR guidelines produced by SDRN; and ii) preparing guidelines for conducting rapid assessment in the field in countries where satellite imagery and GIS techniques are not readily available. These guidelines would be geared to practitioners (FAO staff in the field, national consultants), and training for staff and consultants could be carried out at regional and subregional offices.*

Information for designing interventions

- *Under the FIVIMS programme, greater attention should be given to the disaster and crises dimension of food insecurity and vulnerability. In this respect, the interesting experience of FSAU in Somalia should be clearly monitored in order to draw key lessons for similar situations. Furthermore, more synergies have to be built between the work currently carried out under the EC-funded project on EWFIS in complex emergencies and FIVIMS.*

D. AGRICULTURAL RELIEF

141. The evaluation found that, while some interventions were implemented on time, in many cases inputs were not made available in time for the intended cropping season. Sometimes delays were beyond the control of FAO (e.g. late request for assistance, late response from donors). However, lengthy procedures in FAO were also a contributing factor. This was a common criticism, confirmed by the questionnaire sent to the member countries and partners surveyed during the evaluation. The FAO rule that limits procurement by FAORs to US\$25 000 means that most agricultural relief procurement must be done from headquarters. Assuming FAO representations have sufficient capacity, in principle, agricultural relief procurement should be carried out by them.

Procurement

142. **Recommendation 5:** (a) *FAO should implement a training programme for the representation staff who would be carrying out local procurement. First priority should be given to those countries where there is, or is likely to be, a higher volume of agricultural relief assistance. For major operations, a pool of experienced administrative/procurement officers (including, especially, retirees under the Partnership Programme) should be established, to be mobilized rapidly to carry out procurement activities in the affected country.* (b) *On a case-by-case basis, procurement limits on FAORs for agricultural relief inputs should be raised.*

Emergency Coordinators

143. FAO Emergency Coordinators performed very well and provided good follow-up to all aspects of agricultural relief supply activities. Emergency Coordinators cannot be appointed for every emergency situation in which FAO may intervene, especially if the FAO activity is a single project or two projects over a short duration. On the other hand, some agricultural relief interventions were delayed because of inadequate follow-up and lack of assignment for performing specific tasks.

144. **Recommendation 6:** (a) *FAO should appoint an Emergency Coordinator whenever the volume and duration of the emergency operation warrants. A pool of qualified candidates to serve in this capacity should be developed.* (b) *Project documents for emergency interventions should include a work plan tied to the cropping calendar, with designation of responsibilities for implementing specific actions and deadlines for doing so. The job descriptions of NPDs, in particular, should be included in project documents.*

Beneficiary identification and targeting

145. This has been generally weak. Target beneficiaries were described in general terms and, in practice, beneficiary selection was usually left to local discretion. While recognizing that beneficiary identification takes time, enough cases of dubious input distribution were seen to warrant greater attention to this aspect in future activities.

146. **Recommendation 7:** *The process of beneficiary identification and targeting should be an integral part of project design and work planning, especially for interventions over several production seasons.* Beneficiary identification is best done when criteria for selection have been established and explained to stakeholders; the selection process has been decentralized to the lowest level; and various institutions/stakeholders are involved, including the beneficiaries themselves.

Input distribution

147. Most projects took a standard approach to agricultural input distribution. There is a need to experiment more with other approaches that may be more successful, particularly for seed distribution, for which the use of locally known varieties has many important advantages.

148. **Recommendation 8:** *Where practical, other approaches to seed distribution, such as seed fairs or seed vouchers, should be used in agricultural relief projects. Assistance in the design of such projects should be sought from the technical division (the Seed and Plant Genetic Resources Service [AGPS]).*

Technical support

149. The quality of FAO's agricultural relief interventions was enhanced by the inclusion of technical assistance components, thereby playing to one of FAO's comparative advantages. Technical assistance can be most cost-effective when it is given through existing FAO technical cooperation activities already present in the country. In all cases, however, the inputs distributed should be appropriate to the intended target beneficiaries.

150. **Recommendation 9:** (a) *Technical support for all FAO agricultural relief interventions should be assured, either within the project itself or from other available sources, such as ongoing FAO projects in the same country.* (b) *In designing projects, care should be taken to ensure that management requirements for the inputs distributed are not beyond what the recipient farmers can provide. This will particularly be the case for novel inputs.*

Relief versus rehabilitation

151. The supply of agricultural relief inputs to needy farmers is inherently different from rehabilitation or development activities, which tend to be more complex. While these two elements have been handled successfully under programme-type interventions with sufficient time for synchronizing them, attempts to do so within a single project were unsuccessful because the relatively short implementation time frame of a single project was not conducive to the planning and implementation of both components in an adequate manner.

152. **Recommendation 10:** *Relatively small, relief-oriented projects should not be designed or implemented so as to pursue both relief and rehabilitation objectives at the same time.*

Monitoring and evaluation

153. Evaluation and monitoring are essential for the systematic assessment of intervention results. However, they have rarely been included in agricultural relief projects, although this situation has improved recently. Some evaluations undertaken by national consultants or NGOs have made useful findings and recommendations, but it is not always clear that information has been used for future programming.

154. **Recommendation 11:** *In general, more use should be made of evaluation to identify successful intervention approaches and from which to draw lessons. An appropriate, simple format for evaluation reports should be established by TCE, with assistance from PBEE. All evaluation reports for agricultural relief projects should be commented on by TCE and any technical division that may also be concerned. Comments should cover the adequacy of the report, recommend actions to be taken and summarize lessons learned for future application. Lessons learned from evaluations should be shared among all relevant FAO units and partners, be made widely available and be used to identify "best practices" to guide future operations. For more independent evaluations, annual evaluation plans for emergency activities should be agreed between TCE and PBEE.*

Oil-for-Food Programme – evaluation

155. Because it is so different from any other FAO emergency operation, the Oil-for-Food Programme in Northern Iraq was not specifically reviewed for this evaluation. However, its size and importance, and the fact that it is now moving into a rehabilitation phase, would indicate that, at some point, the FAO-implemented component should be evaluated, at least for the sake of accountability. An Evaluation Unit has been established within the local management structure of the FAO component of this programme, and it should contribute to this effort.

156. **Recommendation 12:** *The FAO component of the Oil-for-Food Programme in Northern Iraq should be subject to an in-depth evaluation during 2003-2004, focusing on the effectiveness and efficiency of the operation throughout its entire duration.*

E. ASSISTANCE IN TRANSITION FROM RELIEF TO REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT

157. Looking at the “disaster cycle”, FAO has been effective in linking early warning activities to agricultural relief as there are clear institutional homes for these. In post-natural disaster situations, where FAO has had a strong presence it has generally been effective because the normal government structures are in place and functioning. Much more problematic has been the organization of assistance in the transition period following complex (conflict-related) emergencies. While some activities have taken place in such situations, these have tended to be individual projects, not part of an overall programme. Thus far, FAO has not been successful in getting rehabilitation activities included in UNCAP. Partly this is owing to the phasing out of donor funding when an emergency situation abates. Partly it is because FAO has not evolved an effective approach and has done relatively little to advocate the importance of transitional assistance, leaving the field more to other actors, particularly IFIs.

158. In FAO, as in most organizations, one unit takes primary responsibility for a task and controls the funds for carrying out that task. Responsibility for planning transitional assistance strategy has recently been assigned to TCER. However, that unit does not have sufficient staff to deal with all the countries in the transitional stage and, being a new arrangement, it is not clear in practice how effective this will be. Nor is it clear what the best permanent institutional arrangement should be for programme/project development after the strategy is developed. The apparent alternatives in this regard are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4 : Project development options – the pros and cons

Lead unit	Pros	Cons
TCER	Mandated for developing transition strategy when TCE was established; ready access to emergency funds that could be used for transition programming.	Lack of staff for performing or backstopping the work; located at headquarters; TCE considered isolated from rest of FAO.
Regional Policy Assistance Branches	General responsibility for programme development; presence and numbers of staff in all regions means quick mobilization possible; already linked to TC.	Limited experience in dealing with emergencies; not all staff are qualified to deal with transition issues; lack of access to emergency funds.
FAO Representations	Local presence and familiarity with conditions.	No capacity for performing or backstopping work.

159. At present, because of the lack of capacity and their already overstretched responsibilities, the FAO Representations are not a viable choice for leading this work. The constraints to both the other alternatives are such that neither is optimal at present.

160. Given the evolving institutional situation, it would be prudent to remain flexible in evolving a satisfactory modality for this process. Since the Assistant Director-General (ADG) of TC has oversight of all the units (including TCI) that may be involved in transition programming, it would be appropriate for him to designate overall responsibility, depending on the circumstances in the particular countries involved and the relative capacities of the organizational units.

161. **Recommendation 13:** *The ADG/TC should designate responsibilities for programming transition activities after the transition strategy has been prepared under TCER. This may involve Regional and Subregional Offices, TCI, TCA and FAORs, as appropriate to particular country circumstances. TCE's involvement should end at this point. However, for the longer term, more permanent appropriate institutional arrangements need to be decided.*

162. Regardless of which unit leads the process, an effective FAO presence in the field will be a key precondition for the Organization to play a primary role in the transition period. This has proved an important factor in major emergency operations and it should be the same for transition situations. However, the type of expertise required will be different.

163. **Recommendation 14:** *In countries where FAO will provide post-emergency transition policy and programming assistance, a full-time programme manager should be appointed, preferably soon after the emergency operation starts. This individual should be able to act in an advisory capacity to the government on post-emergency issues, assist in the development of an agricultural development strategy and design a role for FAO in the implementation of that strategy.*

F. COLLABORATION WITH PARTNERS

164. The evaluation noted that collaboration with other partners, both within UN and with the NGO community, could be enhanced. For example, FAO should work on disaster preparedness country strategies with UNDP, which has overall responsibility within the UN system for strengthening national capacities related to disaster mitigation, prevention and preparedness. Work could be done with WFP on emergency logistics, and with international NGOs on suitable cooperation in the provision of agricultural relief.

165. **Recommendation 15:** *FAO should review its emergency-related activities with a view to developing joint programmes at the field level with other UN agencies and NGOs. In this respect, the negotiations started with several partners on formal Memoranda of Understanding should be brought to a successful conclusion.*

G. ADDITIONAL FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

166. Some of the recommendations imply increased funding for emergency work. In the prevailing situation of zero-budget growth in the RP, the evaluation cannot recommend increased RP allocations. However, the following funding mechanisms could be considered, as appropriate. All involve approaches to donors.

Rapid Response Fund

167. TCE has proposed the creation of a Rapid Response Fund to finance the early phases of a relief operation, before donor funds become available. The Rapid Response Fund would be replenished by donor contributions for the emergency in question. Thus, as long as there are donors for an emergency, which is highly likely, the fund would remain at the same level, or even increase over time. The creation of the fund would help to remove one of the obstacles to timely availability of emergency agricultural relief inputs, i.e. slow donor response. It has been proposed that the initial target for the fund would be US\$1.5 million.

168. **Recommendation 16:** *The Rapid Response Fund should be created with financing from the accumulated balance on the Direct Operating Cost account for TCE projects or (with donor consent) from unspent project funds.*

Transition Fund

169. Similar to the Rapid Response Fund, a fund could be created for establishing rehabilitation advisers during the post-conflict transition phase and financing the programming of transition activities. In theory, the Transition Fund could also be replenished from donor

contributions, but these may be less forthcoming than for agricultural relief activities, unless and until advocacy activities (mentioned in paragraph 171) are successful. Because various units may undertake transition and rehabilitation activities, control over the funds should be exercised by the ADG/TC. As the Transition Fund has a more limited scope than the Rapid Response Fund, its level would be considerably lower, in the range of US\$500 000.

170. **Recommendation 17:** *The Transition Fund should be established under the authority of the ADG/TC, and financed in the same way as the Rapid Response Fund is.*

Fund raising/advocacy

171. FAO has been extremely successful in attracting funding for agricultural relief activities undertaken by TCE. It has been far less successful in fundraising for other types of emergency-related activities. FAO is following a trend as donors appear to be far more ready to provide funding for emergency operations than for development. However, donor decisions concerning funding are increasingly delegated to the field, while responsibility for fundraising within FAO remains centralized.

172. **Recommendation 18:** *FAO should engage donors in an attempt to raise additional funds for non-relief emergency-related activities, emphasizing its areas of comparative advantage and the benefits of mitigating disasters.*

Annex 1: Results of Survey of FAO Member Nations and Partners in Emergency Work

Two questionnaires were prepared for the evaluation – one to most of the developing member countries of FAO; the other to UN agencies, bilateral donors and NGOs cooperating with FAO on emergencies.

The first questionnaire was sent to 113 developing country Member Nations, to determine which were the major emergency threats, whether or not contingency and response plans existed for each threat, whether the country had received emergency-related assistance from FAO in the period 1996-2001 and a quality comparison of FAO's assistance with that of other donors.

By region, the response rate to the questionnaire was:

Region	Responses received	%	Total # of questionnaires sent	% returned
Africa	14	34.1	47	29.8
Asia/Pacific	6	14.6	26	23.1
Latin America/Caribbean	11	26.8	27	40.7
Near East, North Africa, Europe	10	24.4	13	76.9
Total	41	100.0	113	36.3

Member Nations were asked to classify the main types of emergency threats faced. The most important ones were droughts, floods and pests and diseases. Countries were also asked whether there were contingency or response plans for each type of emergency. Countries reported in surprisingly high numbers that such plans existed. However, no qualitative questions were asked about the plans. The experience of the field evaluation missions tends to support the notion that many plans may be fragmentary or would be difficult to implement.

Number of responses								
Degree of threat	Flood	Droughts	Civil conflicts	Fires	Storms	Pests/diseases	Industrial accidents	Earthquakes and volcanoes
Minor	5	3	14	9	17	5	21	13
Occasional	15	15	6	19	11	18	7	8
Major	14	15	6	4	5	11	1	5
Total	34	33	26	32	33	34	29	26
Contingency/response plans								
No	5	8	9	8	12	7	12	12
Yes	22	20	10	17	11	22	8	7
Total	27	28	19	25	23	29	20	19

Countries were asked to assess the quality of FAO assistance in five emergency-related areas (preparedness, early warning, needs assessment, relief, and rehabilitation and recovery planning). Although relatively few of the countries that replied had received assistance in early warning, this was scored the highest in terms of quality. Relief assistance was the only area in which there were more “unsatisfactory” than “excellent” replies. The main criticisms of the relief assistance were the small amount of assistance provided (covering only a small proportion of needs), the length of approval procedures and slow delivery of inputs. The country visits by the evaluation team confirmed that approval procedures and delivery times were often long. With regard to the level of assistance, it could be that some countries do not understand that assistance from FAO’s own resources, through TCP, is limited to a maximum of US\$400 000.

Assessment of assistance received from FAO	Preparedness	Early warning	Needs assessment	Relief	Rehabilitation and recovery planning
Excellent	2	4	6	6	6
Satisfactory	6	1	9	5	11
Not Satisfactory		1	4	8	2
Total	8	6	19	19	19

Member Nations were also asked to compare FAO's assistance in each emergency-related area with the assistance of other donors, in terms of both quality and quantity. With the exception of needs assessments and relief, countries received more assistance from other donors than from FAO. What was more disturbing was that FAO's assistance was found to be inferior to that of other donors in all areas except needs assessment. Those countries that commented on the reasons for their assessment cited the same factors as in the assessment of FAO's assistance overall – FAO was more bureaucratic and slow than other donors and the amount of assistance was low.

Comparison of FAO and other donors	Preparedness	Early warning	Needs assessment	Relief	Rehabilitation and recovery Planning
Volume of other donors' assistance compared with FAO's					
- More from FAO	1	2	5	8	4
- More from other donors	4	4	5	9	7
Total	5	6	10	17	11
Quality assessment of FAO assistance compared with other donors'					
-FAO assistance: best		1	4	3	3
-FAO and other donor(s): about equal	3	3	7	6	2
-FAO assistance: inferior	5	5	1	7	8
Total	8	9	12	16	13

Questionnaires (and follow-up reminders) were sent to 34 of FAO's international partner agencies in emergencies. The response rate, as shown below, was poorer for the partner agencies than for developing member countries, and poorest of all for UN agencies and bilateral donors. Because of the small number of replies received, no meaningful analysis could be done to differentiate the replies by type of agency.

Type of agency	Responses received	%	Total # of questionnaires sent	% returned
UN	2	20	10	20.0
Bilateral donors	3	30	11	27.3
NGOs	5	50	13	38.5
Total	10	100	34	29.4

Respondents were asked in which areas they knew FAO's work well and how they had worked with FAO over the past six years. The predominant area was agricultural relief, which is not surprising as this is the main activity of FAO in emergencies, particularly at the field level.

Type of activity	Know FAO's work well (# responses)	Worked with FAO (# responses)
Preparedness	2	0
Early warning	5	1
Impact and immediate needs assessment	5	1
Agricultural relief	7	8
Rehabilitation, reconstruction and sustainable recovery	5	5

Partners were asked if they were satisfied with their partnership with FAO. Nine of the ten respondents said "yes"; there was one that did not answer. To obtain more detailed information, respondents were asked to rate FAO's performance and usefulness to the partner in the various types of emergency-related activities. The partners' assessment confirmed that of the member countries, that early warning received the highest ratings. However, in contrast to the assessment by countries, agricultural relief also scored high.

Score	Preparedness		Early warning		Impact and needs assessment		Agricultural relief		Rehabilitation, recovery plan.	
	Perf.	Use.	Perf.	Use.	Perf.	Use.	Perf.	Use.	Perf.	Use.
1=very good	-	-	1	3	2	2	2	4	2	2
2	3	2	4	2	1	-	2	1	2	-
3	1	1	2	1	3	2	3	1	4	2
4	1	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	1
5=poor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Total	5	3	7	7	7	5	8	7	8	6

Partners were also asked to comment on FAO's strengths and weaknesses as a partner. The comments were largely reflected in the items scored: FAO was cited positively as an "honest broker" and good coordinator of assistance. However, FAO's limited financing capacity and need to rely on donors was mentioned several times, as were its bureaucratic procedures and consequent slow delivery. Interestingly, however, one NGO stated that FAO, although bureaucratic, was less so than other UN agencies.

The results of the questionnaires to member countries and partner agencies supported the findings of the field missions: there were no major differences in the strengths and weaknesses identified, or in the areas of comparative advantage for FAO.

Annex 2: Terms of Reference

Thematic Evaluation on Strategic Objective A3 “Preparedness for, and effective and sustainable response to, food and agricultural emergencies”

(i) Background

FAO’s evaluation programme is increasingly framed in the context of the Strategic Framework 2000-2015 and the Medium-Term Plan, as requested by the Governing Bodies. Such evaluations are intended to be formative, examining whether FAO’s response to strategic objectives is adequate to achieve the desired results and making recommendations intended to improve the design, implementation, results and follow-up of related activities. These evaluations cover both Regular and Field Programme activities. The evaluations are intended to examine questions from the point of view of member countries. Some evaluation studies, such as this one, include a component of review of TCP activities, since TCP represents a significant part of the Regular Programme of FAO and the Governing Bodies have expressed continuing interest in evaluation of the effective use of TCP.

At its September 2001 session, the Programme Committee selected Strategic Objective A3 as a topic for in-depth evaluation. The goal of this Strategic Objective is “to increase the resilience and capacity of countries and their populations to cope with the impacts of disasters that affect national and household food security and, when disasters do occur, to contribute to emergency operations that foster the transition from relief to recovery of the food and agricultural sectors”.

The components of the strategy include:

1. strengthening disaster preparedness and the ability to mitigate the impact of emergencies that affect food security and the productive capacities of the rural population;
2. forecasting and providing early warning of adverse conditions in the food and agricultural sectors and of impending food emergencies, including monitoring plant and animal pests and diseases;
3. assessing needs and formulating and implementing programmes for agricultural relief and rehabilitation, and formulating policies and investment frameworks favouring the transition from emergency relief to reconstruction and development in food and agriculture; and
4. strengthening local capacities and coping mechanisms through guiding the choice of agricultural practices, technologies and support services, to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience.

For the purpose of this study, food and agricultural emergencies are defined as the result of events related to floods; droughts; civil conflict; fires; storms; pests and diseases; industrial accidents; and earthquakes and volcanoes.

The evaluation is intended to be formative, drawing on past experiences in order to assess the validity and adequacy of the activities under the strategy, as well as the strategy itself, to the needs of member countries, and suggest changes in programme orientation if warranted.

(ii) Scope of the study

FAO has defined the emergency sequence as falling into six distinct phases.²⁴ These are:

²⁴ *FAO Emergency Activities: Technical Handbook Series* (leaflet).

- prevention;
- preparedness (measures for advance planning [information gathering] and contingency/logistical preparations);
- early warning;
- impact and immediate needs assessment;
- relief; and
- rehabilitation, reconstruction and sustainable recovery.

For the purposes of this evaluation, the study will examine FAO's role in all the steps of the sequence except prevention, although the role and impact of work on prevention will be considered with respect to other phases of the emergency sequence. Prevention is generally excluded in order to give a clear focus to the evaluation, in that a great many FAO activities could conceivably be included under "emergency prevention" but also are directed at other purposes as well.

The evaluation will cover FAO's emergency-related work over the last three biennia, i.e. 1996 to 2001.

(iii) Methodology and outputs

The evaluation has already begun with an information-gathering exercise involving technical divisions, to determine the scope of work being carried out under Strategic Objective A3.

The evaluation will include four main steps:

1. Evaluation of FAO's normative work in relation to Strategic Objective A3

This part consists in collecting and reviewing guidelines, manuals and methodological materials aiming at developing norms, standards and best practices and providing support to field assistance activities in the fields of preparedness, early warning, needs assessment and conducting relief/rehabilitation activities. This will involve a review of materials produced by FAO and others, including an examination of relevant literature on the subject. The review of written materials will be complemented by interviews with technical officers of key lead units.

2. Survey of Member Nations, implementing partners and donors

A questionnaire will be submitted to Member Nations, implementing partners and donors for emergency activities, to assess developing countries' needs and the quality of FAO's response from the various points of view.

3. Evaluation of country needs and performance of field assistance

The main work of the evaluation will be field visits to 15 countries, for an in-depth assessment, including review of individual interventions, most of which will be TCP projects. Specific field activities to be reviewed are at the end of this Annex. Regional coverage will be:

- Asia (four countries) – mostly on flood emergencies;
- Africa (four countries) – mostly complex emergencies due to civil conflict;
- Near East and Europe (three countries) – mostly on drought and pest problems;
- Latin America and Caribbean (four countries) – mostly storm-related emergencies.

In addition, the evaluation will include a study of transitional assistance in the post-relief period by FAO in Kosovo, where there was a large programme of emergency assistance.

Besides review of written material, evaluation missions (consisting of an external consultant and a PBEE officer) will conduct interviews with key informants in each country concerned with disaster preparation and response, with a view to obtaining information on country needs and capacity. Missions will also interview persons involved with the design, implementation and follow-up of project interventions in the selected countries, including intended beneficiaries on a sample basis. Missions will also meet with implementing partners to obtain their assessment of country needs and work carried out in the country. Each mission will prepare a regional report, including separate reports on each country and project intervention reviewed.

Besides the projects listed at the end of this Annex, missions will assess all relevant emergency-related activities in the selected countries, including assessment missions and use made of normative outputs.

4. *Evaluation of coordination of and linkages between activities under Strategic Objective A3*

This part will examine how an emergency is recognized and processed within FAO as well as coordination mechanisms to determine the extent to which synergies are reinforced between activities conducted along the emergency sequence, including the transition between emergency, rehabilitation and further development. In particular, this part will assess the effectiveness of existing institutional mechanisms for coordination (such as ECG) as well as strategic and technical mechanisms (such as PAIA). This will be conducted through interviews with key units contributing to these mechanisms as well as through the review of selected cases where coordination was deemed to be effective.

(iv) *Final output*

At the end of these four steps, an overall evaluation report will be prepared and vetted by an independent external peer review panel. The report, along with the comments of the review panel and a management response, will be presented to the Programme Committee at its September 2002 session. It will also comprise a chapter in the Programme Evaluation Report, to be submitted to the FAO Conference in 2003.

A separate report will be prepared on technical and operational issues arising out of the TCP projects.

(v) *Issues to be covered*

Within the established evaluation criteria accepted by the Programme Committee and Council (PC 82/4), the evaluation will in particular assess, at the country level and/or the global level, as appropriate:

- 1) Extent to which emergency-related work of the Organization has corresponded with the thrusts of Strategic Objective A3.
- 2) Relevance of emergency-related work, including the:
 - a) degree to which emergency-related assistance, including that under the Regular Programme, is focused on topics and problems assigned priority by countries;
 - b) relevance of emergency assistance provided to individual countries' demands and needs (as determined by the extent of the emergency problem), including complementarity to support provided by others;
 - c) extent to which emergency assistance represents the most appropriate response from FAO and takes advantage of FAO's comparative advantages;
 - d) extent to which real impact can be expected on the livelihoods of the affected populations.
- 3) The responsiveness and efficiency of FAO's institutional capacity for provision of emergency assistance, including the:
 - a) flexibility and speed of response;
 - b) extent to which FAO is able to draw on its areas of particular technical competence;
 - c) extent to which the Organization makes use of its multidisciplinary strengths;
 - d) ability to work and coordinate with other international and national organizations;
 - e) how the decentralized nature of the organization is conducive to all of the above.
- 4) The quality of emergency-related work, including the:
 - a) outputs in terms of such factors as technical appropriateness, relevance to the emergency situation and implementability;

- b) comprehensiveness, in particular, the extent to which key concerns including gender, environmental and poverty implications have been adequately included;
 - c) balance in FAO's assistance between ad-hoc emergency response and other aspects of emergency preparedness;
 - d) complementarity with other relevant development initiatives in the country and/or affected areas, including other FAO-assisted projects.
- 5) Effectiveness and impact, including the:
- a) speed and extent to which emergency-related assistance has ameliorated the situation for which it was intended;
 - b) extent to which emergency-related assistance has led to improved capacity in countries to respond to future emergency situations;
 - c) degree to which emergency-related assistance led to restoration of sustainable productive capacity and livelihoods in the affected areas;
 - d) degree to which there is a continuum from FAO emergency relief activities and assistance for recovery during the transition phase leading to sustainable development.
- 6) Identification of strengths and weaknesses in FAO's emergency-related work.

(vi) Timetable

1. Preparation of terms of reference for evaluation, using information from the in-house survey – November 2001.
2. Selection of countries for field visits and external consultants, including for peer review panel – November 2001.
3. Dispatch of questionnaire to countries, implementing partners and donors, on requirements and performance of projects – sent out by 10 December 2001.
4. Make arrangements for field visits of missions – November 2001-January 2002.
5. Follow-up meetings with divisions on resource use, further information on activities identified – December 2001-February 2002.
6. Carry out field visits, preparation of country and regional reports and individual TCP evaluation reports – January-April 2002.
7. Analysis of country, partner, donor questionnaires (consultant) – February-March 2002.
8. Preparation of overall evaluation report for peer review panel – May 2002.
9. Hold peer review panel, prepared management response to panel report and submit all to ODG – end June 2002.
10. Preparation of report on TCP projects – July 2002.

Project interventions to be covered by Missions

Asia (16)

OSRO/CMB/002/SWI – “Emergency Supply of Rice Seeds to Flood-Affected Households in Cambodia”

TCP/CMB/0167 – “Emergency Supply of Rice Seeds to Flood-Affected Households”

OSRO/VIE/002/NOR – “Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs to Flood-Affected Farmers in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam

OSRO/VIE/102/NOR – “Emergency Assistance to Poor and Vulnerable Fish Farmers in the Flood-Affected Province of Dong Thap”

OSRO/VIE/101/SWI – “Emergency Assistance to Poor and Vulnerable Fish Farmers in the Flood-Affected Province of Can Tho”

TCP/VIE/8925 – “Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs to the Flood-Affected Districts of Quang Tri Province”

TCP/VIE/8926 - “Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs to the Flood-Affected Districts of Binh Thuan Province”

TCP/VIE/0067 – “Emergency Supply of Rice Seeds to Flood-Affected Farm Households in Dong Thap Province”

TCP/VIE/0168 – “Emergency Assistance to Rehabilitate the Aquaculture Sector in the Flood-Affected Province of An Giang”

OSRO/VIE/001/DHA – “Emergency Supply of Rice Seeds to Flood-Affected Households in An Giang Province”

UTF/BGD/029/BGD – “Crop Yield Forecasting and Agrometeorology”

TCP/BGD/6611 – “Emergency Assistance to Tornado-Affected Families”

TCP/BGD/7825 – “Emergency Supply of Vegetable Seeds to Flood-Affected Farmers”

TCP/BGD/7827 – “Assessment of Flood Damages in Fisheries and Livestock Sectors”

TCP/BGD/0066 – “Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs to Flood-Affected Farmers In Bangladesh”

TCP/THA/0166 – “Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs to Flood-Affected Farmers in Southern Thailand”

Africa (25)

TCP/BDI/0065 – “Evaluation des Récoltes et des Besoins Alimentaires”

TCP/BDI/5612 – “Fourniture d’Urgence de Semences aux Réfugiés de Retour et aux Populations Vulnérables”

TCP/BDI/6611 - Assistance Technique aux Programmes Humanitaires pour la Réhabilitation du Secteur Agricole”

TCP/BDI/6713 – “Evaluation des Récoltes et des Approvisionnements Alimentaires (Phase II RAF/6715)”

TCP/BDI/6714 – “Fourniture d’Urgence d’Outillages Agricoles aux Réfugiés de Retour et aux Populations Vulnérables”

TCP/BDI/8927 – “Fourniture Urgente d’Intrants pour la Relance de la Production Agricole”

TCP/BDI/9067 – “Fourniture d’Intrants Agricoles aux Populations Affectées par la Sécheresse”

- OSRO/BDI/904/NET – “Emergency Integrated nutrition- agriculture intervention in western Burundi”.
- TCP/ERI/4557 – “Emergency Assistance to Desert Locust Control”
- TCP/ERI/8924 – “Urgent Provision of Cereal Seeds to Drought-Affected Farmers in the Lowlands, North-East Red Sea Region”
- OSRO/ERI/003/SWE, OSRO/ERI/001/USA – “Emergency Distribution of Vegetable Seeds and Farming Hand Tools to Assist Internally Displaced Families”
- TCP/RWA/6616 – “Assistance d’Urgence pour la Fourniture d’Intrants Agricoles aux Réfugiés de Retour”
- TCP/RWA/6617 – “Appui Technique d’Urgence pour la Campagne 1997-B”
- TCP/RWA/6618 – “Appui à la Relance et à la Réhabilitation des Productions Agricoles”
- TCP/RWA/6719 – “Evaluation et Suivi des Récoltes et des Besoins Alimentaires”
- TCP/RWA/8922 – “Assistance d’Urgence pour la Lutte contre les Chenilles Légionnaires et Mise en Place d’un Système d’Alerte Rapide”
- TCP/RWA/8926 – “Assistance d’Urgence pour la Relance des Activités Agricoles dans la Préfecture de Gisenyi”
- TCP/RWA/9066 – “Assistance d’Urgence pour la Mise en Culture de Zones de Marais”
- TCP/SIL/0065 – “Emergency Assistance to Artisanal Fisheries”
- TCP/SIL/0166 – “Emergency Agricultural Rehabilitation Assistance to ex-Combattants and Host Communities”
- TCP/SIL/6713 – “Emergency Assistance to Artisanal Fisheries”
- TCP/SIL/8821 – “Emergency Supply of Agricultural Inputs to Severely War Affected Farm Families”
- TCP/SIL/8923 – “Emergency Rehabilitation of Agricultural Food Production”
- TCP/SIL/8924 – “Urgent Provision of Seeds and Strengthening the Coordination of Agricultural Relief and Rehabilitation Programmes”
- Near East and Europe (15)***
- TCP/MAU/6612 - ‘Appui à la lutte terrestre et aérienne contre le criquet pèlerin’
- TCP/MAU/7821 - “Fourniture d’urgence d’intrants agricoles aux populations autochtones de Bassiknou”
- TCP/MAU/8924 – “Assistance d’Urgence aux Agriculteurs Victimes des Inondations”
- TCP/MAU/8925 – “Assistance d’Urgence à la Lutte contre le Criquet Pèlerin”
- OSRO/MAU/701/FRA – “Appui a la Lutte contre le Criquet Pèlerin”
- TCP/KAZ/0065 – “Emergency Programme for the Control of Locust Outbreak”
- TCP/KAZ/6711 – “Emergency Assistance to Locust Control”
- TCP/KAZ/8921 – “Medium to Long-Term Assistance to Locust Outbreak Identification Mission”
- TCP/GEO/9066 – “Assessment of Drought Impact and Emergency Supply of Wheat Seeds to Drought-Affected Farmers”
- OSRO/GEO/001/SWI, OSRO/GEO/002/USA, OSRO/GEO/004/NET – “Emergency Supply of Wheat Seeds to Drought-Affected Farmers”

OSRO/GEO/003/UK – “Emergency Supply of Seed Potatoes, Maize and Sunflower to Drought-Affected Farmers”

OSRO/GEO/005/GRE – “Emergency Supply of Seed Potatoes to Drought-Affected Farmers in the Tsalka Region”

OSRO/GEO/101/BEL – “Emergency Supply of Fertilizer to Farmers in Drought-Affected Areas of Georgia”

Latin America and Caribbean (14)

TCP/COS/0065 – “Rehabilitacion de los Sistemas de Produccion Afectados por el Huracan”

TCP/COS/6714 – “Rehabilitacion de las Areas de Produccion de Peuenos y Medianos Productores en la Region Brunca”

TCP/COS/5611 – “Rehabilitacion Agropecuaria de la Region Huetar Atlantica Costa Rica”

TCP/ELS/0165 – “Asistencia de Emergencia para Peuenos Agricultores Afectados por el Terremoto”

TCP/ELS/0166 – “Asistencia de Emergencia para Peuenos Agricultores Afectados por la Sequia”

TCP/NIC/0167 – “Asistencia de Emergenza a Peuenos Productores Afectados por la Sequia en los Departamentos de Leon y Chinandega”

TCP/NIC/7821 – “Apoyo a la Rehabilitacion de las Actividades Productivas Agropecuaria en las Zonas Afectadas por el Huracan Mitch”

TCP/NIC/8822 – “Asistencia al Gobierno de Nicaragua para la Coordinacion de las Actividaded de Emergencia del Huracan Mitch”

TCP/NIC/6611 – “Apoyo a la Rehabilitacion de las Actividades del Sector Agropecuario en las Zonas Afectadas por El Huracan Cesar”

TCP/NIC/6713 – “Apoyo a la Rehabilitacion de las Actividades Productivas del Agropecuario en las Zonas Afectadas por el "Nino"”

OSRO, Addendum to GCP/HON/018/NET “Emergency Assistance for victims of Hurricane Mitch in the area of influence of project number GCP/ HON/018/NET”

OSRO, Addendum to GCP/HON/019/NET “Emergency Assistance for victims of Hurricane Mitch in the area of influence of project number GCP/ HON/019/NET”

OSRO/HON/901/NOR - “Urgent rehabilitation of agricultural production systems”

TCP/HON/8822 – “Assistance to the Government of Honduras in the coordination of emergency activities resulting from Hurricane Mitch”

Annex 3: Thematic Evaluation on Strategic Objective A3 - Report of the External Peer Review Panel²⁵

1. The Panel met in Rome during 19-21 June 2002, during which consultations were conducted with the evaluation staff, the Assistant Director-General of the Technical Cooperation Department and the FAO staff from various departments.
2. The Panel considered the draft Evaluation Report in the context of the current Strategic Framework 2000-2015 for FAO, the Strategic Objective A3, and in the light of the priorities outlined by senior managers responsible for the FAO activities concerned.
3. The Panel recognises the increasing demands on the FAO's services in relation to disasters and considers the evaluation of Strategic Objective A3 as very timely and useful in defining the necessary institutional adjustments to meet the challenges of up-scaling its activities and services in this field of work.
4. The evaluation process adopted by FAO is regarded as exemplary by the Panel as it is participatory, transparent and involves further review of the findings by an independent, expert group.
5. The Panel recognises that the evaluation had to be undertaken in a limited time over a large geographical area which required the review of a large number of very diverse projects. The generalised conclusions were, therefore, reviewed against this background.
6. The Panel, in general, endorses the findings of the evaluation and its recommendations as useful and practical for the Organization, particularly those that focus on FAO's comparative advantages, ranging from forecasting and early warning information to technical design of emergency inputs:
 1. It is evident that FAO's long standing experience in the field of information and early warning is well appreciated by the international community, hence the Panel endorses the recommendations regarding the strengthening of FAO capacities in this sector.
 2. The intention for FAO to develop its capacity as an information source by creating, where it does not exist, and consolidating existing country-based information in a global database, is timely and strongly supported by the Panel as a useful tool for disaster assessment and programme design.
 3. Increased involvement of FAO in emergencies requires better tools and systems in place. The Panel endorses the recommendations regarding the preparation of guidelines for conducting rapid assessment, programme design and the strengthening of FIVIMs.
 4. The Panel noted the importance FAO places on relief and rehabilitation and endorses the recommendations aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of these operations, such as those related to improvement of procurement procedures and funding procedures.
 5. The current structure of FAO needs to accommodate the strategic direction as implied by A3. The Panel acknowledges the importance placed on the necessary institutional

²⁵ Expert Panel's Members are: Arenas, Antonio (El Salvador), Director of National System for Territorial Studies; Aysan, Yasemin (Turkey), Acting Chief UNDP/Disaster Reduction and Recovery Programme, Geneva; Grunewald, François (France), Director of the French NGO "Urgence Réhabilitation Développement"; Holt, Julius (UK), Founder-partner of the Food Economy Group Consultant SCF-UK; Jackson, Robin (USA), Policy Adviser, WFP, Rome; and Maalim, Mahboub (Kenya), Coordinator of the Kenya Drought Emergency Response, Office of the President, Nairobi.

changes recommended by the Evaluation Report and the commitment of management to bring about the changes in this direction.

7. The following points are offered by the Panel in a positive spirit, since the overall tenor of the Evaluation Report, and especially its generally practical orientation, is much appreciated by the Panel.

Making Strategy A3 operational

- The Report should make it clearer that under the overall Strategy “A3” the scaling up of disaster activities entails a significant shift in attitudes and organization in FAO. The Organization is currently undergoing a phase of transition which entails major and sometimes uncomfortable and even contentious adjustments in an organization historically associated with technical assistance in the sphere of development. The Panel gained the impression in discussions that while a strong commitment exists at upper management in FAO to making changes, there are problems of buy-in elsewhere in the Organization. The Report tends to give insufficient attention to the bigger picture of structural implications (including problems of cost recovery for increased technical service work), and instead to focus on smaller management arrangements, leading to some piecemeal recommendations in this respect.
- Adherence to a **broad policy** of promoting a continuum between relief, rehabilitation and development carries the danger of a loss of focus on what FAO can do best. There is a need to clarify **FAO's actual and potential capacity**.
- There is not a clear view taken in the Evaluation of the actual **time-phases implied in relief-rehabilitation-development 'continuum'** in Strategy A3. For instance, the concept of 'Early Rehabilitation' was put to the Panel as a two-to-three year phase, which challenges notions of the timescales usually associated with relief and rehabilitation interventions funded by donors.
- The Panel also notes that in some major instances of **protracted instability** (Somalia, South Sudan) **the linear concept of a continuum is not applicable**: emergency and recovery phases go back and forth. The Evaluation should take these situations into account in the recommendations.
- The Panel was concerned by the **lack of projects in which livestock assets** (protection and restocking) are addressed. This is a different subject to the EMPRES activities and needs to be promoted in FAO's emergency activities.

Comments on Recommendations

8. The Evaluation rightly looks for **FAO's comparative advantage**, but the **recommendations should push more strongly for the Organization to focus on what it does well** - which cannot be everything.

9. The **recommendations** are quite numerous, and it would be helpful if an **order of priority** were attached to them - in terms of importance and/or timing.

Issues concerning field operations

- The evaluation allots to inter alia FIVIMS the consideration of access/food security issues as opposed to the assessment of national food availability under GIEWS. But in that case there needs to be a clearer indication of what is expected of whom under the FIVIMS umbrella, particularly national FIVIMS.
- There is a claim in the evaluation concerning FAO's perceived **comparative advantage in 'Community-based preparedness.'** This **needs explanation and evidence**, since Panel members were unaware of FAO's **field experience** in this area.

Internal management

- As FAO steps up its role in emergencies there is a need to promote increased preparedness in the FAO field offices. In this respect, the evaluation is in danger of making assumptions about capacity within FAO that appear unrealistic, especially in the light of funding limitations affecting FAO ambitions in the disaster sector. These constraints should be better taken in to account in the recommendations, including the limitations of its regular budget funding.
- FAO does **not yet** have **enough emergency protocols** for its scaled-up role, but the evaluation refers to this only in relation to procurement, and not for other key areas. The recommendations need to **highlight operational modalities** and how decisions about interventions should be made.
- It is noted that **all FAO operations** have been **decentralised except TCE**. While we understand that this will be covered in a future evaluation of FAO decentralization, the evaluation should have addressed more clearly the significance of this operational mode of TCE, including its advantages and disadvantages.

FAO's relationship with the wider humanitarian community

- The analysis shows a high tendency to focus on in-house management and personnel issues, and too little reference is made to what others are doing and FAO's relation with them. This is perhaps understandable as FAO tries to find ways to deal internally with a significant up-scaling of activity in this sector; but more reflection should be given to the fact that not all problems can or should be solved by or within FAO alone and that FAO should seek complementarity with partners where feasible.
- FAO should pursue **opportunities for influencing policy or activity outside FAO** which in turn can enhance FAO's activities. A case in point might be **advocacy** for funding the improvement of government crop survey capacity in certain countries: it is upon this data that one of FAO's longest-standing and most important roles, the mounting of Crop and Food Security Assessment Missions, heavily depends.

Annex 4: Management Response to the Thematic Evaluation on Strategic Objective A3

“Preparedness for, and effective and sustainable response to, food and agricultural emergencies”

1. Senior Management commends the FAO Evaluation Service on preparing a succinct and constructive review of the Strategic Objective A3. It addresses the key issues of FAO’s role and approach to emergency from preparedness to rehabilitation. It highlights those comparative advantages on which the Organization should build the up-scaling of its emergency activities, emphasizing interactions between normative and operational activities. Senior Management welcomes this report as an important contribution to the ongoing development of interdisciplinarity and expansion of partnerships in the implementation of Strategic Objective A3.
2. Recommendations made will enable the Programme Committee to conduct a well-informed debate on the preliminary achievements of the Strategic Objective and suggested areas for improvement. As already mentioned to the External Peer Review Panel, Senior Management agrees in principle with the recommendations formulated and is committed to ensuring that appropriate actions are taken for their implementation. The following are some of the actions already undertaken:
 - lessons are being drawn from the experience of the Food Security Assessment Unit in Somalia. Increased synergies are being developed, under the project GCP/RAF/360/EC, between EWFIS in complex emergencies and FIVIMS;
 - a working group, under the aegis of the ECG, has been established to develop practical guidelines for emergency needs assessment. These guidelines will then be made available to the Emergency Coordination Units dealing with complex emergencies; and
 - an analysis of FAO’s field experience in “Community-based preparedness” is being undertaken under technical programme 212A7 “Strengthening National Seed Production and Security Systems”, which aims at mitigating the impacts of natural disasters and increasing the communities’ capacity to restore their seed systems following a disaster.
3. In addition, and based on the report’s recommendation, we would like to share views with the Programme Committee on the following three specific items.
 - A. Preparedness
4. Senior Management agrees with the findings contained in the evaluation report, that the Organization should further develop its comparative advantages in key aspects related to preparedness. As reflected in the report, two mechanisms have already been created for achieving institutional coordination:
 - the first one is the ECG, which coordinates Regular Programme work and oversees FAO’s activities at all stages of the emergency cycle, and is responsible for enhancing the capacity of the Organization to assist member countries, in particular in preparedness and early warning. Since the establishment of the ECG, its role and functions have been strengthened. Efforts in that direction will be continued;
 - the second mechanism is the PAIA-REHAB on “Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Preparedness and Post-Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation”, which is under the overall responsibility of the ECG. Even if it is premature yet to assess its effectiveness, Senior Management believes that the PAIA-REHAB mechanism can effectively help to resolve some of the difficulties underlined by the evaluation. Through increased collaboration and interaction between technical and operational units, it allows FAO to define steps to be taken to reinforce its normative activities, in particular in the field of emergency preparedness. Units/divisions involved in this process have the opportunity to allocate financial and human resources to priority areas defined at corporate level. This process is

already well advanced and a concrete proposal will be reviewed during the forthcoming ECG meeting in September 2002.

B. Agricultural relief and rehabilitation

5. During the last decade, work on agricultural relief has been by far the fastest-growing area of FAO's activities in the field. This is partly due to an increase in the number of emergencies as well as the shift, by funding sources, towards the financing of emergency rather than development-oriented projects. However, this growth is mainly due to FAO's enhanced credibility in responding to emergencies. FAO has proved that it not only delivered inputs to farmers but was also able to provide them with key technical assistance to restart production. This role has been formally and practically acknowledged by traditional and non-traditional FAO donors.

6. As underlined by the report of the External Peer Review Panel, appropriate measures are required to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of this growing emergency programme. Further to the up-scaling of TCOR into a division (TCE) and the reinforcement of the management of the "Oil-for-Food" Programme, two issues will now be addressed:

- enhancing procedures related to the implementation of emergency operations. Current administrative and financial procedures (personnel, contract, procurement, etc.) need to be revised in order to introduce increased flexibility and effectiveness in the emergency operations' process without affecting the level of integrity of FAO's activities. Senior Management suggests to review and analyse the procedures used by its main partners in the UN System (UNDP, WFP, etc.) and to identify potential improvements/amendments which could be introduced; and
- *establishing an "Emergency and Rehabilitation Fund"*. As recommended by the evaluation report, the Organization needs to develop a flexible funding mechanism to allow involvement in emergencies and rehabilitation operations at the earliest stages. It is therefore proposed to create one single "Emergency and Rehabilitation Fund" to finance early intervention, allow the rapid posting of Programme Coordinators in the field, and facilitate the early launching of rehabilitation plans. This Fund would initially amount to US\$2 million and be partially replenished by donor contributions.

C. Management of the transition phase

7. While FAO has the comparative advantage to implement the transition phase in countries affected by disasters, Senior Management recognizes that, to date, the Organization has not been able to achieve much in terms of results in that area. However, by adopting a pragmatic approach, as was the case for Kosovo and Afghanistan, FAO has recently started to improve its capacity to address the management of transition phases. The process has been pushed forward with the establishment within TCE of a new unit responsible for rehabilitation and humanitarian policies (TCER). This unit has to stimulate the rapid launching of rehabilitation programmes and plans based on FAO's relief response in the country. In close collaboration with the technical divisions concerned, it should initiate the rehabilitation phase, which requires strong and diversified technical expertise and capacity. The unit will facilitate formulation of policies and investment framework aimed at linking relief to reconstruction and development. It plays a catalytic role in enhancing support to FAO from other important stakeholder/partners in the transition process. TCER does not have operational responsibility for the rehabilitation, which will be ensured by the other responsible units/divisions.

8. This new mode of operation needs to be tested and it is proposed that it be reviewed in two years time. Based on the lessons learnt, Senior Management will be in a position to propose a final structure aiming at ensuring FAO's role in rehabilitation.