SPECIALIZED AGENCIES OF THE UN

as well as general statistics compendiums including the *Statistical Yearbook* and *World Statistics Pocketbook*. Many of its databases are available on CD-ROM, diskette, magnetic tape and the Internet.

*Website:* http://www.un.org/Depts/unsd

**UN Information Centres.** Millbank Tower, 21st Floor, London SW1P 4QH; Public Inquiries Unit, Department of Public Information, Room GA-57, United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017.

*Website:* http://www.un.org

*Website for London centre:* http://www.unitednations.org.uk

SPECIALIZED AGENCIES OF THE UN

The intergovernmental agencies related to the UN by special agreements are separate autonomous organizations which work with the UN and each other through the coordinating machinery of the Economic and Social Council. 18 of them are ‘Specialized Agencies’ within the terms of the UN Charter, and report annually to ECOSOC.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

*Origin.* In 1943 the International Conference on Food and Agriculture, at Hot Springs, Virginia, set up an Interim Commission, based in Washington, with a remit to establish an organization. Its Constitution was signed on 16 Oct. 1945 in Quebec City. Today, membership totals 183 countries. The European Union was made a member as a ‘regional economic integration organization’ in 1991.

*Aims and Activities.* The aims of FAO are to raise levels of nutrition and standards of living; to improve the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products from farms, forests and fisheries; to improve the living conditions of rural populations; and, by these means, to eliminate hunger. Its priority objectives are to encourage sustainable agriculture and rural development as part of a long-term strategy for the conservation and management of natural resources; and to ensure the availability of adequate food supplies, by maximizing stability in the flow of supplies and securing access to food by the poor.

In carrying out these aims, FAO promotes investment in agriculture, better soil and water management, improved yields of crops and livestock, agricultural research and the transfer of technology to developing countries; and encourages the conservation of natural resources and rational use of fertilizers and pesticides; the development and sustainable utilization of marine and inland fisheries; the sustainable management of forest resources and the combating of animal disease. Technical assistance is provided in all of these fields, and in nutrition, agricultural engineering, agrarian reform, development communications, remote sensing for climate and vegetation, and the prevention of post-harvest food losses. In addition, FAO works to maintain global biodiversity with the emphasis on the genetic diversity of crop plants and domesticated animals; and plays a major role in the collection, analysis and dissemination of information on agricultural production and commodities. Finally, FAO acts as a neutral forum for the discussion of issues, and advises governments on policy, through international conferences like the 1996 World Food Summit in Rome and the World Food Summit: five years later, held in Rome in 2002.

Special FAO programmes help countries prepare for, and provide relief in the event of, emergency food situations, in particular through the setting up of food reserves. The *Special Programme for Food Security*, launched in 1994, is designed to assist target countries to increase food production and productivity as rapidly as
possible, primarily through the widespread adoption by farmers of available improved production technologies, with the emphasis on high-potential areas. FAO provides support for the global co-ordination of the programme and helps attract funds. The Emergency Prevention System for Transboundary Animal and Plant Pests and Diseases (EMPRES), established in 1994, strengthens FAO’s existing contribution to the prevention, control and eradication of diseases and pests before they compromise food security, with locusts and rinderpest among its priorities. The Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) provides current information on the world food situation and identifies countries threatened by shortages to guide potential donors. The interagency Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping System initiative (FIVIMS) was established in 1997, with FAO as its secretariat. More than 60 countries have nominated national focal points to co-ordinate efforts to collect and use statistics related to food insecurity more efficiently. Together with the UN, FAO sponsors the World Food Programme (WFP).

**Finance.** The budget for the 2002–03 biennium is US$651.8m. FAO’s Regular Programme budget, financed by contributions from member governments, covers the cost of its secretariat and Technical Co-operation Programme (TCP), and part of the costs of several special programmes.

FAO continues to provide technical advice and support through its field programmes in all areas of food and agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development. In the 2000–01 biennium, expenditures in the field totalled US$687.2m., of which US$325.3m. went to FAO’s emergency assistance programme and US$361.9m. was spent on development and technical support. The programme was funded from FAO’s regular budget, trust funds and the UN Development Programme. In addition, during 2000–01, 90 projects prepared with the FAO Investment Centre’s assistance were approved for financing for total investments of US$3.7bn., including support loans from financing institutions of US$2.5bn.

**Organization.** The FAO Conference, composed of all members, meets every other year to determine policy and approve the FAO’s budget and programme. The 49-member Council, elected by the Conference, serves as FAO’s governing body between conference sessions. Much of its work is carried out by dozens of regional or specialist commissions, such as the Asia-Pacific Fishery Commission, the European Commission on Agriculture and the Commission on Plant Genetic Resources. The Director-General is elected for a renewable six-year term.

**Headquarters:** Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy.  
**Website:** http://www.fao.org  
**Director-General:** Jacques Diouf (Senegal).


**INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT (IBRD) — THE WORLD BANK**

**Origin.** Conceived at the UN Monetary and Financial Conference at Bretton Woods (New Hampshire, USA) in July 1944, the IBRD, frequently called the World Bank, began operations in June 1946, its purpose being to provide funds, policy guidance and technical assistance to facilitate economic development in its poorer member countries. The Group comprises four other organizations (see below).

**Activities.** The Bank obtains its funds from the following sources: capital paid in by member countries; sales of its own securities; sales of parts of its loans; repayments; and net earnings. A resolution of the Board of Governors of 27 April 1988 provides that the paid-in portion of the shares authorized to be subscribed under it will be 3%.