



Open Ended Working Group (OEWG)

Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW)

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CFS OEWG-MYPoW Meeting # 3

Date: 19 June 2017

Time: 14.00 – 18.00

Location: German Room, FAO

Outcomes

Third meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on the CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW)

Agenda

1. **HLPE 2019 topic**
2. **Rationale, objectives, expected outcomes and process of proposed CFS workstreams**
3. **Preliminary discussion on prioritization**
4. **CFS 44 – MYPoW Draft Decision**
5. **Conclusions and next steps**

Outcomes

The meeting was opened by the MYPoW OEWG Chair, Dr Md Mafizur Rahman (Bangladesh), who outlined the agenda and asked for its adoption. The OEWG Chair announced that an additional MYPoW meeting will take place on 19 July, from 14.00 to 17.00, in the German Room, FAO.

1. HLPE 2019 topic

The HLPE 2019 theme and scope were finalized with the following changes to paragraph 65:

- First bullet: “food price levels and fluctuations” will be replaced by “economic aspects”;
- Second bullet: “ecological footprint” will be replaced by “negative environmental impact”;
- Fifth and sixth bullets will be merged and read as follows: “possible barriers to the adoption of certain practices and ways to address them, including controversies, uncertainties, risks, and challenges associated to the development of these approaches”.

The request to the HLPE to present the report earlier in the year was highlighted as a positive factor that would allow more time for CFS stakeholders to analyze it.

There was some discussion over whether it was appropriate to commission new work from the HLPE, given its current financial situation, and before any decision is taken on overall improvements to CFS in the context of the follow-up to the CFS evaluation. It was ultimately agreed to finalise the content of the proposed HLPE report, but to include that proposal in the overall discussion on the MYPoW and the prioritization process.

2. Rationale, objectives, expected outcomes and process of proposed CFS workstreams
3. Preliminary discussion on prioritization

Agenda items 2 and 3 were discussed together.

OEWG members were reminded that the Chair's Proposal reflects the inputs received during the process. Some comments requested further elaboration of the proposals, but without specific suggestions. The meeting was reminded that the definition of the objectives, outcomes, expected value-add of the activities and process of the different workstreams and the prioritization process are in the hands of Members and Participants.

The following comments were provided.

a) Preparation of the Plan of Action of the CFS Evaluation

This was considered as one of the key priorities for the next biennium and it was noted that additional resources and sufficient number of meetings should be devoted to it. It was asked if the budget for the implementation of this workstream could be integrated in the CFS core budget.

In view of the ongoing discussion taking place in the context of the evaluation follow-up regarding future mandate and nature of their work, it was suggested that MYPoW and Monitoring be incorporated in this workstream in 2018, until the response to the evaluation was complete. This should also be the space for future discussions on CFS Rules of Procedure.

b) CFS engagement in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

It was mentioned that feedback is needed on the impact of the 2017 HLPF contribution in order to design future CFS engagement.

It was suggested that future HLPF contributions be prepared by a technical task team that would submit a draft proposal for finalization at a one-off open meeting.

CFS engagement in advancing the 2030 Agenda was considered as a key priority and it was noted that this should be a CFS cross-cutting issue. Ways should be explored on how to address and better integrate this aspect in the different CFS workstreams and ensure that they contribute to move the 2030 Agenda forward, recalling that a selection criterion for CFS activities had been added through Plenary decision on the contribution of future activities to the 2030 Agenda.

In view of the suggestions to prioritize plenary events, rather than intersessional ones, it was clarified that the reference to SDGs intersessional events was mainly referring to the organization of a CFS side-event in New York.

With regards to paragraphs 10-12 of the proposal, it was suggested to dedicate enough space to the views of groups and constituencies that are most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition.

c) CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) for 2020-2021

It was questioned if it is appropriate to expand intersessional activities by organizing multistakeholder dialogues to analyze the topics suggested in the HLPE note on critical and emerging issues. It was clarified that the proposal was an attempt to better use the note as a starting point for the MYPoW process, as indicated in the agreed guidance note on the selection of CFS activities, but needn't take place if discussing the note was not a priority for Members and Participants.

There was convergence of views on pausing the MYPoW process, at least for 2018. This would allow CFS stakeholders to focus on the follow-up of the CFS Evaluation and decide the way forward on the basis of its results.

It was noted that the MYPoW process might be merged with other internal/organisational focussed workstreams. Based on comments provided, this could be integrated into the follow-up process to the CFS Evaluation, which is expected to provide guidance concerning the duration of MYPoWs, strategic planning and links to budgeting of future programmes of work, together with monitoring.

d) Sharing experiences and good practices on the use and application of CFS recommendations

It was highlighted that monitoring functions represent a key aspect of the work of the Committee. The elements of the preparatory work of 2018 global thematic event were well received, which would be undertaken by the Secretariat under the supervision of the Bureau and in consultation with the Advisory Group, pending further discussion at the Monitoring OEWG on 26 June. Concerning the foreseen additional costs for 2019, it was clarified that these refer to the work to be done by the Secretariat in preparation of the 2020 global thematic event, as the Monitoring OEWG is proposing a two-year preparatory process.

Any decision concerning potential future roles, activities and mandates of this workstream will have to be taken only after and be based on the outcomes of the follow-up to the CFS Evaluation which is expected to touch upon this matter.

e) CFS engagement in advancing nutrition

This is considered as a key workstream for the next biennium. It was raised that it might be too long to dedicate one year to the preparation of the terms of reference and that the upcoming HLPE report should contribute to better define the scope of the workstream, but specific expectations on the work in 2018 were not provided. Discussions are also needed on the nature of the final outcome and on whether or not this should take the form of policy product.

Concerns were expressed on the budget proposal for regional consultations which should be drastically reduced. It was questioned why interpretation was suggested for this workstream but not for other OEWGs. It was noted that if the six regional consultations are organized in the context of

the FAO regional symposiums on nutrition taking place between September and December 2017, the related costs would decrease by around 90%.

The inclusion of a dedicated item in the agenda of the FAO Regional Conference on CFS (whether nutrition or other workstreams) would depend on the interaction between the regional groups and FAO, who jointly set the regional conference agendas.

f) Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security and nutrition

There were mixed views on the continuation of this workstream, with some suggested it could be dropped given the CFS workload and 'readiness' of the work, and others considering it important. Some commented on the lack of clear objectives and outcomes for the work, but did not make suggestions. It was noted that it would be more useful to discuss the future of this workstream after the Urbanization OEWG meeting taking place on 23 June where a proposal concerning the future of this workstream is expected to be defined.

g) Engaging, recruiting and retaining youth in agriculture

The relevance and importance of this topic was highlighted, but several proposed no new thematic workstreams should be included in this MYPoW until the ongoing work was concluded. The possibility to consider it as a cross-cutting issue in different workstreams, rather than a stand-alone workstream, was suggested for further exploration.

h) HLPE work and CFS follow-up activities

It was raised that the HLPE costs and the current lack of funding for its work are key issues that need to be urgently addressed within the MYPoW context.

It was suggested to move the costs related to the translation of HLPE reports to the CFS core budget but it was clarified that HLPE costs are defined per nature as extrabudgetary (as per the CFS Reform Document and HLPE Rules and Procedure) and a change to the approach should be discussed at plenary level.

OEWG members were reminded that the definition of the nature and expected outcomes of the follow-up activities to the HLPE reports is in their hands. Some suggested there need not be standalone policy recommendations resulting from the multistakeholder partnerships HLPE report, but it could be used as a resource within other activities, such as the 2020 global thematic event on RAI principles and/or the urbanization workstream, as well as in CFS contributions to the HLPF and the nutrition work.

It was mentioned that it is not clear the level of impact that CFS agreed policy recommendations resulting from the past HLPE reports had on the ground, and the reports tended to be shelved. Some commented that CFS approach to commissioning HLPE reports, treating them as a separate workstream, was not appropriate. The HLPE reports should lead to a discussion on whether or not to open a workstream on a topic.

The need to reduce the number of workstreams currently on the table, in line with existing resources, and a manageable workload for Members and Participants was identified as a key point for the development of the next MYPoW. Its integrity cannot be ensured if the current number of workstreams is kept.

Travel for the Chair and support to communication were suggested as possible budget lines where cuts might be done. It was requested to split in two the budget line concerning the CFS Chair's travels and assistant and to provide additional information regarding the PSM budget lines. It was clarified that the PSM is entirely self-funded and does not contribute to the current deficit. CSM current gap for the next biennium is presently 100% of its budget estimate.

In response to the requests to move particular budget components to the CFS core budget, it was clarified that this action would not determine any change if the core budget is not entirely funded, as is presently the case.

OEWG members were reminded that the staff costs included in the core budget are sufficient to ensure basic activities and that additional staff costs are foreseen to provide additional technical support to core workstreams, based on the way they were presently defined in the MYPoW proposal. It was noted that possible merging of workstreams could result in less meetings and less work for CFS stakeholders, but not necessarily in less work for the CFS Secretariat which will have to ensure that mandate and tasks foreseen in the MYPoW are fulfilled. The example was provided of the Global Thematic Event on the VGGTs, which had no involvement of an OEWG, but had 3 Secretariat staff working on it.

Finally, it was requested that an estimate of the number of meetings, length of documents and days of negotiations for each workstream be presented for consideration by the OEWG to help assess whether the workload would be manageable.

4. CFS 44 – MYPoW Draft Decision

There was no time to discuss this agenda item. OEWG were invited to provide written inputs concerning the CFS 44 MYPoW draft decision by Friday 23 June.

A revised version of the draft decision, incorporating the inputs received, will then be circulated and presented for finalization at the next OEWG meeting on 19 July 2017.

5. Conclusions and next steps

A draft MYPoW, incorporating the outcomes of this meeting, will be circulated and presented for approval at the next OEWG meeting on 19 July. The proposal will reflect the following elements:

- Plan of Action to be considered as a central workstream for the next biennium

- SDGs – one-off open meeting to finalize the HLPF contribution, and continue to ensure that this is a cross-cutting issues across different workstreams in line with the CFS 43 plenary decision
- MYPoW to be paused, at least for 2018, and integrated in the follow-up to the CFS Evaluation
- Sharing experiences and good practices – The preparatory work of 2018 global thematic event would be undertaken by the Secretariat under the supervision of the Bureau and in consultation with the Advisory Group, pending further discussion at the Monitoring OEWG on 26 June. Possible future activities to be defined in the context of the follow-up to the CFS Evaluation
- Nutrition - budget to be drastically reduced and process outcomes for 2018 to be clarified
- Urbanization and Rural Transformation - any decision should be taken by the MYPoW after the Urbanization and Rural Transformation OEWG meeting on 23 June, anticipating additional information on the purpose, objectives and expected outcomes of the work
- Youth should be considered as a cross-cutting issue rather than a stand-alone workstream
- HLPE – 2019 agreed content of the proposal will be integrated in the MYPoW proposal for discussion at the July meeting.