Committee on World Food Security

Forty-third Session
"Making a Difference in Food Security and Nutrition"

Rome, Italy, 17-21 October 2016

CFS Engagement in Advancing Nutrition
(Including Draft Decision)

Matters to be Brought to the Attention of the Committee

The Committee considered the document CFS 2016/43/9 "Proposal for CFS engagement in advancing nutrition", presented by Mr. Khaled El-Taweel (Egypt), Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Nutrition.

The Committee:

a) Expresses its appreciation for the work of the OEWG on Nutrition.

b) Endorses the document (CFS 2016/43/9) that proposes a framework for CFS to step up its contribution to the global fight against malnutrition in all its forms. The document was prepared in accordance with the CFS decision at CFS 42 (CFS 2015/42 Final Report) to identify opportunities arising from the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action adopted at ICN2, relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to provide a clear vision for the CFS role on nutrition with a workplan leading to concrete outcomes for 2017 and beyond.

c) Invites the OEWG on Nutrition to continue its work in 2016-2017 to support the activities foreseen for the intersessional period leading up to CFS 44, specifically:

   o Discuss the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) zero draft report on Nutrition and Food Systems; comments will be submitted to the HLPE on an individual and voluntary basis by OEWG participants;
Discuss the work programme of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016 to 2025), identify CFS potential contributions in line with its mandate and submit to CFS 44 Plenary.

d) Requests the CFS Secretariat, subject to available resources, to organize several events to develop a common understanding of issues and lay the basis for informed CFS policy convergence and coordination work.

1. This paper proposes a framework for CFS to step up its contribution to the global fight against malnutrition in all its forms, consistent with its mandate.

I. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2. The increased recognition of the paramount importance of nutrition to human beings and the profound changes in the nutrition situation recently, as a result of rapidly evolving social, cultural, economic and political factors, have contributed to nutrition moving up on both the global political and development agendas. Nutrition is now considered as a powerful driver of sustainable development, essential for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda.

3. Malnutrition in all its forms, including undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and overweight and obesity, impacts not only on individual life opportunities by affecting people’s health and wellbeing but has also social and economic negative consequences for communities and countries. The causes associated with malnutrition are complex and multidimensional, including poverty, underdevelopment and low socio-economic status, which often underlie the lack of stable access to healthy, balanced and diversified food and safe drinking water, inadequate infant and young child caring and feeding practices, poor sanitation and hygiene, insufficient access to education and health services.

4. Momentum for tackling malnutrition has grown among a great number and variety of actors, in different sectors and at all levels. In November 2014, FAO and WHO members committed to end hunger and malnutrition in all its forms at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), “reaffirming the right to everyone to have access to safe, sufficient, and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger”. They also agreed on a set of voluntary policy options and strategies for consideration by governments, in cooperation with other stakeholders, to implement ICN2 commitments.

5. The nutrition dimension is integral to the concept of food security and to the work of CFS and CFS is committed to further supporting on-going efforts of governments and other stakeholders to

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1 Undernutrition continues to decline but remains at unacceptably high levels, while other forms of malnutrition especially overweight, obesity and diet related non communicable diseases are steadily rising: the latest estimates available indicate that about 800 million people were chronically undernourished in 2014-16 (FAO, State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2015); over 2 billion people were suffering from micronutrient deficiencies; and 1.9 billion adults were overweight, of which 600 million were obese (WHO, 2015).

2 Nutrition is explicitly addressed in the Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG 2) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture”, which includes an ambitious target of ending malnutrition in all its forms. Nutrition has also a fundamental role to play in achieving other goals of the 2030 Agenda, in particular the goals related to poverty, health, education, gender, work, growth, inequality and climate change.

3 Malnutrition in this document always refers to “malnutrition in all its forms, including undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and overweight and obesity”.

4 ICN2, Conference Outcome Document: Rome Declaration on Nutrition, November 2014

address malnutrition, including in the context of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025),
which was proclaimed by the UN General Assembly on 1 April 2016\(^6\) and endorsed ICN2 outcomes\(^7\).

6. Considering its mandate and as a global and multistakeholder forum, CFS is in a position to
make a unique contribution by improving policy coherence at global level and promoting coordinated
action of a large range of actors, thus contributing to the collective achievement of nutritional well-
being for all through a truly integrated approach. Country efforts will require coordinated support from
the UN agencies and bodies with a mandate in nutrition\(^8\) and broad multisectoral partnerships between
different actors, including civil society and the private sector, at all levels\(^9\).

II. VISION

7. CFS recognizes the need for a holistic, interdisciplinary and inclusive approach to nutrition
that bridges all relevant sectors - in particular the food/agriculture\(^10\) and health sectors – in the context
of the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security.
Consistent with the overall vision of CFS\(^11\), the vision for CFS work in advancing nutrition is:

**A world free from malnutrition in all its forms, where all people at all stages of life and at all
times have access to adequate food and enjoy diversified, balanced and healthy diets for an
active and healthy life.**

8. CFS will contribute by promoting effective evidence-based policies for reducing malnutrition,
through inclusive multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral processes.

III. EARLY FOCUS ON FOOD SYSTEMS

9. The CFS mandate and multistakeholder nature lend themselves to addressing food systems\(^12\)
as an early priority, which can be extended to other areas at a later stage as part of the long term

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\(^6\) UNGA Resolution, A/70/L.42

\(^7\) UNGA called upon FAO and WHO to lead its implementation, in collaboration with WFP, IFAD and
UNICEF, and to develop a work programme, using coordination mechanisms such as UNSCN and multi-
stakeholder platforms such as CFS. Governments and other relevant stakeholders, including international and
regional organizations, civil society, the private sector and academia, were invited to actively support the
implementation of the Decade of Action on Nutrition.

\(^8\) As a UN dedicated platform, UNSCN plays an important role in coordinating UN policy, in line with its four
strategic objectives: maximize UN policy coherence and advocacy on nutrition; support consistent and
accountable delivery by the UN System; explore new and emerging nutrition-related issues; and promote
knowledge sharing across the UN System (UNSCN Strategic Plan for 2016-20).

\(^9\) ICN2 Rome Declaration, paragraph 14 o) “the United Nations system, including the Committee on World Food
Security, and international and regional financial institutions should work more effectively together to support
national and regional efforts, as appropriate, and enhance international cooperation and development assistance
to accelerate progress in addressing malnutrition”.

\(^10\) The term “agriculture” includes crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture.

\(^11\) Since its reform in 2009, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) aims to be “the foremost inclusive
international and intergovernmental platform for a broad range of committed stakeholders to work together in a
coordinated manner and in support of country-led processes towards the elimination of hunger and ensuring
food security and nutrition for all human beings. CFS will strive for a world free from hunger where countries
implement the voluntary guidelines for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of
national food security” (Reform Document CFS:2009/2 Rev.2 para.4). In “Integrating the Right to Adequate
Food in National Food and Nutrition Security - Practical Approaches to Policy and Programme Analysis”,
FAO, 2014, “adequate” is defined as: “(i) sufficient in quantity and content for good nutrition linked to an active
and health life; (ii) free from harmful substances; and (iii) culturally acceptable to the consumer”.

\(^12\) Food system is defined in the HLPE Report on “Food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food
systems” as follows: “A food system gathers all the elements (environment, people, inputs, processes,
infrastructures, institutions, etc.) and activities that relate to the production, processing, distribution,
vision, based on approval by CFS. By committing initially to food systems and food value chains, CFS will build on its previous work in a number of relevant areas, including work of the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE). It will draw on the technical expertise from the three Rome-based agencies, WHO and other UN bodies with a mandate in nutrition, and on the relationship between food systems and nutrition, an area that is of global interest and significance.

10. Food systems play an essential role in determining adequate food and healthy diets. Food systems are influenced by political, environmental, cultural and socio-economic factors such as poverty, inequality, livelihoods, climate change and natural resource management and shaped by the objectives and actions of many actors, with the private sector playing an important role, among others. Improved health and nutrition is only one of the objectives of the many actors that are involved in food systems, from small scale producers and processors to large companies that operate at multinational level, with possible tensions between sometimes conflicting objectives such as nutrition and profitability.

11. The importance of sustainable food systems for nutrition and the current challenges for food systems to provide safe and adequate food and contribute to diversified, balanced and healthy diets was emphasized in the ICN2 Rome Declaration on Nutrition13. A number of factors contribute to making current food systems globally unsustainable, including the high proportion of food losses and waste, with often dramatic negative consequences reaching beyond public health concerns, with economic, social and political implications.

12. CFS will build on existing work to connect nutrition and food systems. It will add value by providing opportunities to a wide-range of food security and nutrition stakeholders, including small scale food producers and those affected by food insecurity and malnutrition, to work together on policy issues of global concern and agree on recommendations, coordinating their work. HLPE reports, including the forthcoming report on Nutrition and Food Systems, will play a key role by providing independent evidence-based information based on existing high quality research, data, technical studies and experiential knowledge.

IV. FUNCTIONS OF CFS WORK ON NUTRITION

13. In line with the CFS role as defined in the CFS Reform Document (CFS:2009/2 Rev.2) of providing a platform for discussion and coordination at global level to strengthen collaborative action among food security and nutrition stakeholders14, CFS work on nutrition will be carried out through three interconnected and mutually reinforcing functions: policy convergence; lessons and good practice sharing; and using the CFS platform for tracking progress (see chart below).

14. CFS policy convergence work will provide countries with policy guidance within and across the main relevant sectors. It will capitalize on the work carried out under the two other functions, ensuring that policy guidance is effective and relevant to countries - considering political, institutional, technical and capacity dimensions - and results in policies that positively impact on nutrition. Tracking progress will inform CFS of achievements in addressing malnutrition and implementing national commitments, highlighting policies associated with success and failure, gaps and inconsistencies.

preparation and consumption of food, and the outputs of these activities, including socio-economic and environmental outcomes.”

13 “Acknowledge that current food systems are being increasingly challenged to provide adequate, safe and diversified and nutrient rich food for all that contribute to healthy diets due to, inter alia, constraints posed by resource scarcity and environmental degradation, as well as by unsustainable production and consumption patterns, food losses and waste, and unbalanced distribution”, ICN2 Rome Declaration on Nutrition.
14 Food security and nutrition stakeholders include “governments, regional organizations, international organizations and agencies, NGOs, CSOs, food producers’ organizations, private sector organizations, philanthropic organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, in a manner that is in alignment with each country’s specific context and needs” (CFS Reform Document CFS:2009 Rev.2).
15. The functions and activities developed in the following sections for CFS work on nutrition will, within the CFS mandate, contribute to FAO and WHO led efforts, in collaboration with WFP, IFAD and UNICEF, to implement a work programme for the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025),

A. Policy convergence

16. Policy convergence work will be central to CFS engagement in advancing nutrition. It will aim to improve the coordination and coherence of policies within a cross-sectoral approach that includes inter alia agriculture, health and sanitation, social protection, trade and education. It will build on independent evidence-based knowledge and policy work. It may lead to the formulation of policy recommendations, international strategies, voluntary guidelines, principles or other policy frameworks as appropriate. It will benefit from inputs from the national and regional levels, expert advice and opinions from the whole range of CFS stakeholders.

17. CFS policy convergence work will, in its early focus on food systems, identify policy changes needed for reshaping food systems to improve nutrition and enable healthy diets, building on and contributing to the operationalization, among others, of the ICN2 policy recommendations, with robust safeguards against abuse and conflicts of interest. It is expected to address the key causes of vulnerability to all forms of malnutrition in different types of food systems in both rural and urban areas, across the life cycle and according to socio-economic determinants, with special attention to the poorest and most vulnerable groups.

18. Gender equality and women’s empowerment are essential to achieve nutrition goals. CFS policy convergence work will recognize the essential roles of women in the nutrition and health of their families, including through their important contribution to food production, processing, marketing, retailing, preparation, consumption and other food systems activities. It will promote an enabling environment for both men and women to actively participate and contribute to better nutrition at household and individual level. This will imply giving special attention, in the design and targeting

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15 Different elements of the food systems are addressed in the set of “Recommended actions for sustainable food systems promoting healthy diets” for policy and programme options in the ICN2 Framework for Action (recommendations 8-16) and in other relevant sections of the document such as the section on “Recommended actions for nutrition education and information”.

16 ICN2 Framework for Action, para. 4, Recommendation 3
of policies that shape both supply- and demand-oriented food systems interventions for good nutrition, to:

i) Promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment throughout sustainable food systems;
ii) Safeguarding and increasing women’s access to, and control over, incomes, natural resources and agricultural inputs;
iii) Recognizing the importance of mother and child nutrition, with a special focus on undernutrition;
iv) Promoting effective interventions that take into account the actual roles of men and women, including nutrition education.

19. The priorities for future policy convergence work on nutrition and food systems and the nature of policy outcomes (recommendations, guidelines, principles, etc.) will be identified based inter alia on the evidence in the HLPE forthcoming report on Nutrition and Food Systems that will be issued in October 2017. The priorities will also take into account actual experiences and approaches in implementing successful public policies and tracking of progress in achieving nutrition (based on UN reporting on SDGs - reshaped SOFI - and ICN2 implementation), both of which could start in Plenary in October 2017. The OEWG proposal on CFS work in nutrition will be reflected in the CFS Multi-Year Program of Work for 2018-19.

Table 1: CFS activities on nutrition - policy convergence

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>When</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Prepare an HLPE report on Nutrition and Food Systems to set the basis for a multistakeholder consensus-driven process</td>
<td>HLPE</td>
<td>Report to be launched during CFS 44 in October 2017</td>
<td>Information base and evidence to determine priorities and nature of policy outcomes</td>
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<td>1.2 Organize several events to develop common understanding of issues and lay the basis for informed CFS policy convergence work(^\text{17})</td>
<td>CFS Secretariat</td>
<td>Intersessional period 2016/2017</td>
<td>Shared understanding of issues relevant to nutrition and food systems, as a preparatory step to policy convergence work</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.3 Discuss the HLPE zero draft report on Nutrition and Food Systems</td>
<td>OEWG on nutrition</td>
<td>Intersessional period 2016/2017</td>
<td>Comments submitted to HLPE on an individual and voluntary basis by OEWG participants</td>
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\(^{17}\) These events may be based on technical and discussion briefs of UNSCN that potentially include issues related to investments for a healthy food system, global nutrition narrative and architecture, and climate change and nutrition.
1.4 Discuss the work programme of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition and identify CFS potential contribution in line with its mandate

| OEWG on nutrition | Intersessional period 2016/2017 with approval at CFS 44 in October 2017 | Contribution to the implementation of the Decade of Action on Nutrition agreed by Plenary |

1.5 Identify priorities and policy convergence outcomes for policy convergence work based on the HLPE report on nutrition and food systems, lessons and good practices, and progress in achieving nutrition outcomes

| OEWG on nutrition | Intersessional period 2017/2018 with approval at CFS 45 in October 2018 | Terms of Reference agreed by Plenary (with scope, timeframe and resourcing requirements) |

1.6 Develop policy products in priority areas

| OEWG on nutrition | Commencing after CFS 45 in October 2018 | Global consensus at Plenary on policy guidance, leading to increased policy convergence and coordinated action |

B. LESSONS AND GOOD PRACTICE SHARING

20. Sharing successful lessons and practices about efforts to improve the nutrition outcomes in the context of CFS work is a powerful way to stimulate CFS stakeholders to adopt, adapt and scale up proven and effective practices that are country- and context- specific. This provides a better understanding of actual constraints and successful ways to address them. The aim is to involve all countries, regardless of their level of income, the nature of malnutrition problems and the characteristics of their food systems. The results will feed into CFS policy convergence work, ensuring that this work is aligned to country needs.

21. Lessons and good practices will be shared by all relevant actors in countries on a voluntary basis on selected themes, including through south-south and triangular exchanges, through events organized during intersessional periods and during Plenary week starting in October 2017. It will be led by countries and focused on country-led experiences on specific themes, which will allow to more systematically identify what works and what does not and knowledge gaps.

22. The good practices will be consistent with the values promoted by CFS, indicated in the TORs developed by the OEWG on monitoring for sharing experiences and good practices. Lessons learned and good practices will be synthesized in CFS outcome document and made available to CFS stakeholders.

| Table 2: CFS activities on nutrition - policy convergence |

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18 The values referred to in the “Terms of Reference to share experiences and good practices in applying CFS decisions and recommendations through organizing events at national, regional and global levels” are: inclusiveness and participation; evidence-based analysis; environmental, economic and social sustainability; gender equality; focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized groups; multisectoral approach; and resilience of livelihoods.
2.1 Countries to share their lessons and good practices on selected themes, including through south-south and triangular exchanges

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Countries to share their lessons and good practices on selected themes, including through south-south and triangular exchanges</td>
<td>Countries, in collaboration with existing initiatives and platforms</td>
<td>Exchanges during intersessional periods and during Plenary week starting at CFS 44 in October 2017, at CFS 45 in October 2018 and then every two years</td>
<td>Improved understanding of what works at country level, to stimulate action and coordination, and guide scope and nature of policy convergence work</td>
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### C. CFS PLATFORM FOR TRACKING PROGRESS

23. Under this function, CFS will provide a platform to highlight policies, approaches and interventions associated with successes and failures, gaps and inconsistencies, and promote a CFS coordinated response among all actors at global, regional and national levels to improve nutrition.

24. Regarding ICN2, CFS will invite FAO and WHO to share during CFS Plenary the joint report on the overall progress towards the implementation of the ICN2 on a biennial basis.

25. Communication will be established between CFS and WHO/FAO, with the CFS Chair providing updates to the governing bodies of both UN agencies (WHO World Health Assembly; FAO Conference) on the progress of CFS work on nutrition, as a contribution to ICN2 follow-up work. This will demonstrate active engagement into multisectoral collaboration on nutrition, by bringing agriculture, food security and health together for achieving improved nutritional outcomes. It will give a strong signal to countries and support their efforts of working across sectors for improved nutrition and health for all. CFS work on tracking progress in nutrition is also expected to be part of the CFS contribution to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF)\(^{20}\).

Table 3: CFS activities on nutrition - platform for tracking progress

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<tr>
<td>3.1 Provide space and setting to forthcoming progress tracking mechanisms to discuss progress in implementing policies and actions that are relevant to CFS work in nutrition</td>
<td>WHO/FAO on ICN2 Reshaped SOFI on SDGs</td>
<td>ICN2 reporting starting at CFS 44 Plenary in October 2017 and then every two years during the Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025), alternately with the lessons and good practice SOFI annual reporting starting in</td>
<td>CFS is informed of progress in reducing malnutrition and actions associated with successes and failures, gaps and inconsistencies, which feeds policy convergence work and promotes coordination</td>
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19 Including, but not limited to, the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement (SUN). Including, but not limited to, the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement (SUN).

20 See the Proposal on CFS engagement to advance 2030 Agenda which will be presented for endorsement at CFS 43.
| Brief governing bodies on CFS work on nutrition as a contribution to ICN2 follow-up (based on CFS plenary reports) | CFS Chair | FAO Conference and WHO World Health Assembly every two years, starting in 2017 | Improved multisectoral coordination with key intergovernmental bodies |
| Provide inputs to the HLPF on progress in nutrition as part of CFS work on SDGs | Secretariat, Bureau/AG, Plenary | To be determined, according to HLPF calendar | CFS contribution on nutrition to the global thematic review under HLPF |