

## 2.15. Data collection and analysis tools

### a) Proponents

United States of America, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, MEMBER STATE FROM DIFFERENT REGION

### b) Outputs associated with the proposed thematic workstream

The CFS work stream is intended to contribute to both output 1.1 (inclusive discussions) and output 2.1 (global policy guidance).

Its primary expected result is increased stakeholder ownership of, and commitment to, improving the capacity of developing countries and their donors/supporters to achieve agreed upon data collection, analysis, and use objectives to improve critical ag policy and investment decision-making.

### c) Rationale for including the proposed thematic workstream, based on the prioritization criteria and building on CFS main comparative advantages, as described in Annex B of the CFS Evaluation Implementation Report

There is no efficient path to achieving SDG2 –ending hunger, achieving food security and nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture– without evidence-based decisions informed by accurate, timely agricultural, food security, and nutrition data. Currently, \$239B is invested annually –and critical policy decisions made– in agriculture in low and middle-income countries (L/MICs) without good and recent data. The data gaps in agriculture are widespread, affecting 800 million, or 78% of the world’s poorest. SDG2 and Agenda 2030 provides ongoing rallying cries to examine and resolve the data problem for ag.

More effective interventions, improved national policies, effective business decisions, and increased resources for the sector all hinge on having and using improved data to inform policy and investment decisions and measure progress towards shared goals. Ministries of Agriculture and other relevant ministries especially need accurate and timely data to make sound program and policy choices. The private sector must use data to inform investment strategies and mitigate risks. Development partners must have and apply sound data to optimize their investments and understand the impacts of their interventions.

In recent years, several efforts have begun to fill the data gaps for agriculture and food security. The Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics at FAO (GSARS), the World Bank’s Living Standard Measurement Study’s Integrated Surveys on Agriculture (LSMS-ISA), FAO’s AGRISurvey programme, and the new 50x2030 Initiative to Close Agricultural Data Gaps are four such programs that are dramatically reducing the agricultural and food security data gaps.

These efforts are providing countries with some of the first tools they need to produce national agricultural production, productivity, sustainability, and food security and nutrition data. At the same time, they are also enabling the development community to track progress on key food security and agricultural objectives under international and regional initiatives, such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme.

Producing accurate and timely data to fill the data gaps is the first step toward the evidence-based decision-making needed for SDG2. Yet, beyond that first step, we must take a few more steps within the

data cycle to arrive at its final outcome –improved decision making across a diverse and differently motivated set of public, social, and private sector actors.

After data are produced, they must be made available to a variety of users, they must be analyzed to create information or evidence, and that information and evidence must be used to make decisions that will yield maximum impact. While several studies have examined the gaps across the data cycle, there is still insufficient consensus on the highest priority areas for investment, and insufficient coordination even when we do agree. A CFS-led HLPE research effort followed by a CFS-led policy convergence process could more definitively identify the largest gaps, the best possible data investments, and the policy changes necessary to realize the sector’s most pressing data-for-decision-making opportunities. Doing so is core to CFS’s mission, as food security will be impossible without sound, agriculture data-based decision making and policies.

The CFS is well positioned to take on this effort and sponsor its needed HLPE report given its position as a central coordinating body, as well as the alignment of these data challenges with CFS’s own mission. CFS cannot make progress “on activities that identify and address the root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition” if it and other actors lack even the most basic, regular, and reliable information on the state of the world’s small-scale producers.

d) Expected results and how they will contribute to the achievements of the CFS MYPoW Strategic Objectives and FSN-relevant targets of the 2030 Agenda

The primary expected result is increased stakeholder ownership of, and commitment to, improving the capacity of developing countries and their donors/supporters to achieve agreed upon data collection, analysis, and use objectives to improve critical ag policy and investment decision-making.

This will be achieved primarily through a policy convergence process informed by a preceding HLPE providing insights on:

1. A clear mapping of donor, multilateral org, and country efforts and policies across data and statistical support activities including where those efforts are coordinated, complimentary, or competitive.
2. Identification of the greatest barriers impeding data production, analysis, and use in decision-making related to agriculture and food security across public, private, civil society, and academic sectors;
3. Identification of specific high priority gaps in data production and analysis not covered by GSARS, 50x2030, etc., (e.g. the lack of accurate information about developing country capacities and how to improve them)
4. A greater and more precise understanding of the benefits of using data and the opportunity costs of not using data for decisions;
5. A better understanding of what policies, tactics, and programs have encouraged evidence-based decisions in agriculture and food security across the public, private, and academic sectors as well as approaches that have not worked;
6. Insights into how to ensure data-related efforts give voice to the people most affected by policies and recommendations coming from agricultural data, including country decision makers and farmers

Good data informs decisions that will increase the efficacy of food security interventions and spur the sustainable agricultural growth needed to achieve SDG2. Country governments will have better, more strategic policies and programs that target populations with the highest need, bolster sustainable agricultural growth, and attract investment from the private sector. At the same time, having and using more timely and better data will improve private sector organizations and businesses – including local, national, and multi-national – business and investment decisions, potentially improving agricultural growth, sustainability, creating job opportunities, and making food more widely available and affordable. Multilateral and bilateral development organizations will be able to optimize their interventions with better targeting of populations in greatest need and with the greatest potential for program uptake and an increased understanding of the intervention impacts.

e) Potential activities that could be considered after the adoption of the CFS policy product to promote its use and application

The findings from this analysis can be presented in an HLPE report. The report should articulate not just insights but also actionable recommendations to increase evidence-based decision-making and address remaining gaps in data production and analysis that will contribute to the achievement of SDG2.

This HLPE report is intended to provide a fundamental understanding of the barriers, capacity gaps, successful practices, and value of producing, analyzing, and using data for evidence-based decision-making for food security and agriculture. CFS stakeholders could use this analysis as a basis for future discussions. Evidence-based decision-making is a common need across all food security and nutrition topics, and may help stakeholders better design future programs.

The CFS could discuss this report in Plenary. Based on the content from the report, CFS stakeholders will also seek to increase the understanding of data needs in food security and agriculture how the use of those data can better contribute to increased levels of food security.

An example of a specific activities that could be included after this report are: (i) Co-investment and policy alignment by donors to increase support to developing countries' domestic capacity to produce and analyze the data most relevant to their own decision-making in pursuit of SDG 2, or (ii) Policy and investment changes in the way donors invest in data analyses and reports based off the HLPE's findings on what types of products, tools, and/or incentives most encourage data use by different audiences in the public, social, private, and academic sectors, and across donor, multilateral, and country actors.

f) Budget estimate, human resources and timeline

Timeline: a) HLPE report; b) HLPE report conclusions to be discussed at CFS plenary.

Costs: a) HLPE report; b) translation.

g) Indications on whether the preparation of a HLPE report is foreseen and its potential contribution to the proposed CFS thematic workstream

Yes, an HLPE report is foreseen. Please see above.