



Plan of Action of the CFS Evaluation

Background document for the meeting of 27 November 2017

Objective of the meeting: Prepare the response to Evaluation Recommendations 10, 13 and 14. The Recommendations will be discussed on 27 November (AM). The responses will then be drafted based on the discussions on 27 November, and presented in a successive meeting for discussion.

Recommendation 10: Developing an overarching monitoring framework

Recommendation 10

“CFS should develop an overarching framework that spells out its role in various activities that it has grouped together as monitoring. A great deal of confusion has been created by the generic use of the term to cover different but interrelated functions. CFS should align its terminology and approach with that of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The following approach is recommended for CFS role in promoting accountability and sharing good practices at all levels:

- (i) The function of the CFS is to follow up and review progress made with the implementation of the main CFS policy convergence products and policy recommendations from the policy workstreams. These are periodic reviews and there should be a schedule for the reviews taking place during the biennium.*
- (ii) The function of the CFS is to convene special events to share experiences and good practices. These events can be informed by intelligence gathered through the periodic reviews.*
- (iii) Detailed monitoring of policies, programmes and plans are the responsibility of national governments. CFS should consider conducting a voluntary survey every two years to obtain information on use and application of CFS products and policy recommendations.*
- (iv) CFS should commission independent evaluations when required, on major aspects of its work.*
- (v) It is essential that the process decisions and recommendations of CFS are monitored and reported on. The CFS Secretariat should improve the current system of tracking the process decisions and recommendations. The system should at a minimum identify the decision, the action taken, and the reasons for deviation or non-completion of the action.”*

[Extract: Final report of the evaluation of the CFS, Recommendation 10, paragraph 293]

Background

The Evaluation noted that the use of “monitoring” to cover different functions has caused a lot of confusion. Monitoring in the context of CFS has been used to refer to:

- Stock-taking (equivalent to “follow-up and review progress” in the report)
- Sharing experience and good practices

The Global Thematic Events serve the purpose of stock-taking and sharing good practices. The Evaluation underlined the fact that while these events contribute to monitoring, they are not a substitute for monitoring.

Comparison between the approach recommended by the CFS Evaluation and what CFS has agreed to do or is already doing

Approach recommended by the CFS Evaluation for CFS role in promoting accountability and sharing good practices at all levels	What CFS has agreed/is doing
Follow-up and review progress	
CFS to conduct periodic reviews of the implementation of the main CFS policy products and policy recommendations with a schedule established for the biennium (Point (i) of Recom 10)	[CFS 44] Approach to monitoring the implementation of CFS main policy products and CFS other policy recommendations with reviews carried out every two years for CFS main products to prepare for Global Thematic Events and when required for CFS’s other policy recommendations
CFS to conduct a voluntary survey every two years to obtain information on use and application of CFS products and policy recommendations (Point (iii) of Recom 10)	[CFS 40] Periodic assessments of the CFS effectiveness in improving policy framework with a baseline survey to set the basis for assessing progress [CFS 41] Baseline assessment of CFS effectiveness beginning with an opinion survey of CFS stakeholders
Share experience and good practices	
CFS to convene special events to share experiences and good practices. These events can be informed by intelligence gathered through the periodic reviews (Point (ii) of Recom 10)	[CFS 41] Sharing of best practices at all levels – including at CFS plenary and inter-sessional events
	[CFS 43] Terms of Reference to share experiences and good practices in applying CFS decisions and recommendations through organizing events at national, regional and global levels
	[CFS 44] Approach to monitoring the implementation of CFS main policy products and CFS other policy recommendations with Global Thematic Events organized every two years for main CFS products and on an ad hoc basis for CFS’s other policy recommendations
	[CFS 43 and 44] Lesson sharing events on SDGs and nutrition [CFS 41 and 42] Coordination and linkages sessions to strengthen linkages

Approach recommended by the CFS Evaluation for CFS role in promoting accountability and sharing good practices at all levels	What CFS has agreed/is doing
	and encourage dialogue between CFS and stakeholders at the global, regional and national level
Other elements of the approach recommended by the Evaluation	
CFS to commission independent evaluations when required, on major aspects of its work(Point (iv) of Recom 10)	[CFS 44] Report of Independent Evaluation of CFS
The CFS Secretariat to improve the current system of tracking the process decisions and recommendations. The system should at a minimum identify the decision, the action taken, and the reasons for deviation or non-completion of the action (Point (v) of Recom 10).	[CFS 42] Plenary document on Following Progress on decisions and recommendations of CFS [CFS 43 onwards] CFS Annual Progress Reports
Other elements provided by the Evaluation relevant to monitoring	
<p>Detailed monitoring of policies, programmes and plans are the responsibility of national governments. (Point (ii) of Recom 10)</p> <p><i>“The technical expertise for advice and support on national and regional plans of action on food security and nutrition resides in the Rome-Based Agencies, in other entities of the United Nations system involved in food security and nutrition, in non-state research and policy institutions ..., The role of the Committee in facilitating advice and support in the development, implementation, and monitoring of nationally and regionally owned plans needs to be clarified. The Committee’s potential role in the follow-up and review of the SDGs provides an opportunity for a more relevant and impactful role in facilitating support to countries.”</i> (para. 95 of the Final Evaluation Report)</p>	<p>[CFS 41] Implement in-depth country level assessments on a voluntary basis in a selected sample of countries (Note: no assessment has been undertaken as no country has volunteered, nor have resources been available to do so)</p> <p><i>“... The CFS should help countries and regions, as appropriate, address the questions of whether objectives are being achieved and how food insecurity and malnutrition can be reduced more quickly and effectively. This will entail developing an innovative mechanism, including the definition of common indicators, to monitor progress towards these agreed upon objectives and actions taking into account lessons learned from previous CFS and other monitoring attempts...”</i> (CFS: 2009/2 Rev.2, paragraph 6 ii)</p>

1. Extracts from the CFS Reform Document

One of the 6 roles of CFS in the Reform Document was to promote accountability and share best practices at all levels:

“Promote accountability and share best practices at all levels. One of the main functions of the CFS has been to “monitor actively the implementation of the 1996 World Food Summit Plan of Action” (WFS-

PoA). Although countries are taking measures to address food insecurity, the specific programmes as they are presented do not necessarily help to report quantitatively on progress towards realizing the WFS-PoA objectives. The CFS should help countries and regions, as appropriate, address the questions of whether objectives are being achieved and how food insecurity and malnutrition can be reduced more quickly and effectively. This will entail developing an innovative mechanism, including the definition of common indicators, to monitor progress towards these agreed upon objectives and actions taking into account lessons learned from previous CFS and other monitoring attempts. Comments by all CFS stakeholders will have to be taken into account and new mechanisms will build on existing structures.”
[Extract: CFS Reform Document, para 6(ii)]

2. Plenary decisions

A framework for monitoring CFS decisions and recommendations¹ was endorsed by the Committee at its 41st session in 2014. The Annex contains the methodological proposal for the framework.

Previous decisions taken by the Committee on monitoring include:

CFS 44 in October 2017²

The Committee considered the document CFS 2017/44/11 "Monitoring the Implementation of CFS main Policy Products and other CFS Policy Recommendations", presented by the CFS Chair on behalf of Mr. Robert Sabiiti (Uganda), Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Monitoring. 34.

The Committee:

- b) Endorsed the document (CFS 2017/44/11) that outlines the approach to monitoring the implementation of CFS main policy products, in accordance with CFS 43 decisions (CFS 2016/43 Final Report and CFS 2016/43/7), and CFS other policy recommendations, as follows:
 - CFS main policy products through holding a Global Thematic Event in Plenary every two years; and
 - Other CFS policy recommendations through holding events on an ad hoc basis, considering the relevance and potential contribution of monitoring these recommendations to the global food security and nutrition agenda and resource availability. The events will be organized during the plenary week or the intersessional period depending inter alia on specific objectives and the timeframe for contributing to the global agenda;
- c) Agreed to hold the next three Global Thematic Events during CFS 45, CFS 47 and CFS 49, respectively to share experiences and take stock of the use and application of the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security in 2018, the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crisis in 2020, and the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems in 2022;
- e) Recognized the importance of following up on previous decisions of CFS on monitoring in the context of the CFS evaluation Plan of Action, subject to resource availability; and

¹ CFS 2014/41/11, Towards a framework for monitoring CFS decisions and recommendations, <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ml074e.pdf>

² CFS 2017/44 Final Report.

CFS 43 in October 2016³

The Committee:

- a) Endorsed the document (CFS 2016/43/7) that provides guidance to food security and nutrition stakeholders on sharing their experiences and good practices in implementing CFS decisions and recommendations, as a contribution to the incremental development of an innovative monitoring mechanism. The document also serves as a framework for food security and nutrition stakeholders to contribute to global thematic events that are planned to be organized on a regular basis, subject to available resources, within CFS Plenary Sessions for taking stock of the use and application of CFS decisions and recommendations, starting with CFS major, strategic and catalytic products. The document was prepared in accordance with the CFS decision at CFS 42 (CFS 2015/42 Final Report);
- b) As endorsed at CFS 41, CFS encouraged stakeholders to continue to share their experiences and best practices on a voluntary basis through organizing events at global, regional and national levels, applying the recommended approach in document CFS 2016/43/07, subject to available resources;
- c) Recommended that the OEWG on Monitoring continues its work in 2017 to agree on how to continue monitoring the implementation of CFS products on a regular basis, drawing lessons from the Global Thematic Event at CFS 43.

CFS 42 in October 2015⁴:

The Committee:

- e) Recalled the decisions on CFS monitoring taken at CFS 41 to continue developing an innovative mechanism built on existing structures as recommended in paragraph 43 b (v) of the CFS 41 Final Report and, subject to available resources, invited volunteer member countries to pilot the implementation of voluntary in-depth country level assessments of CFS effectiveness, with support from the CFS Secretariat, and to discuss the results with the OEWG on Monitoring. These pilots would test the methodological approach outlined in the document CFS 2014/41/11 in collaboration with those countries and stakeholders that express their interest to volunteer, and learn lessons before applying the model more broadly;
- f) As endorsed at CFS 41, encouraged CFS stakeholders to continue to share their experiences and best practices and requested the CFS Secretariat, in collaboration with the OEWG on Monitoring for the monitoring aspects, to explore and promote ways to achieve this, including within CFS sessions and through organizing events at global, regional and national levels, subject to available resources;
- g) Agreed that the OEWG on Monitoring should, as part of its work, take into consideration the implementation of the CFS work streams as outlined in CFS MYPoWs in order to develop best practices for future monitoring activities;
- h) Moreover, the Committee agreed, with respect to the events mentioned in paragraph f), that the OEWG shall develop basic terms of reference in 2016, to be approved by the Bureau and adopted by the CFS Plenary, to ensure participation, inclusiveness and regional representation in these events. In this sense, the Committee also agreed to hold a global thematic event during the CFS 43 Plenary to share experiences and take stock of the use and application of the VGGT.

CFS 41 in October 2014⁵:

³ CFS 2016/43 Final Report.

⁴ CFS 2015/42 Final Report.

⁵ CFS 2014/41 Final Report.

The Committee:

- b) acknowledged document CFS 2014/41/11 “Towards a framework for monitoring CFS decisions and recommendations”. In particular, the Committee:
- i) endorsed the Methodological Proposal in Annex 1 recognizing that it represented a first step towards the development of a framework for monitoring CFS decisions and recommendations, including the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems, as well as taking into account previous work of the Committee;
 - ii) requested that the CFS Secretariat, in collaboration with the Open-Ended Working Group on Monitoring, conduct a baseline assessment of CFS effectiveness beginning with the implementation of an opinion survey of CFS stakeholders, as indicated in the Methodological Proposal in Annex 1, and provide an update including a report of the baseline survey results to CFS 42;
 - iii) requested the CFS Secretariat, in collaboration with the Open-Ended Working Group on Monitoring, to complement the opinion survey of CFS stakeholders with the implementation of in-depth country level assessments on a voluntary basis, as described in the Methodological Proposal in Annex 1, subject to available resources;
 - iv) encouraged CFS stakeholders to continue to share their experiences and best practices, and requested the Secretariat to explore and promote ways to organize events as indicated in paragraph 5 of the document (CFS 2014/41/11), subject to available resources; and
 - v) recommended that the OEWG continue its work building on the outcome of the baseline assessments, towards helping countries and regions, as appropriate, address the questions of whether objectives are being achieved and how food insecurity and malnutrition can be reduced more quickly and effectively. This would entail developing an innovative mechanism, including the definition of common indicators, to monitor progress towards these agreed upon objectives and actions taking into account lessons learned from previous CFS and other monitoring attempts. Comments by all CFS stakeholders would have to be taken into account and new mechanisms would need to build on existing structures (CFS: 2009/2 Rev.2, paragraph 6 ii).

CFS 40 in October 2013⁶

The Committee:

- e) endorsed the proposal for a plan of action to disseminate the CFS decisions in the context of the CFS Communication Strategy;
- f) endorsed the proposal to focus the CFS monitoring on the Committee's major, strategic and catalytic products;
- g) endorsed the conduct of periodic assessments of the CFS effectiveness in improving policy frameworks especially at country level and in promoting participation of and coherence among stakeholders on food security and nutrition. Specifically, it recommended carrying out a baseline survey to assess the current situation as the base of assessing progress;
- h) highlighted the need that CFS monitoring mechanisms should build on existing mechanisms at global, regional and national level;
- i) requested/recommended that the OEWG on Monitoring continue its work in 2014 and report back to CFS at its 41st Session, subject to available resources;

⁶ CFS 2013/40 Final Report.

- j) underlined the need to use monitoring and evaluation to improve the work of CFS and the formulation of future CFS recommendations bearing in mind that they should be simple, precise, concise, actionable, and time-bound.

CFS 39 in October 2012⁷

The Committee:

- a) acknowledged document CFS 2012/39/8;
- b) endorsed the findings and recommendations contained in CFS 2012/39/9 related to the further development and clarification of CFS monitoring work, especially:
- that CFS recommendations be actionable and targeted at specific stakeholders;
 - the need for CFS to respond to the CFS reform document's call for an "innovative mechanism" to help countries and regions, as appropriate, to address the question of whether food security and nutrition objectives are being achieved;
 - that the OEWG on Monitoring continue its work in 2013 as outlined in Para. 9 and report back to CFS at its 40th Session in October 2013.

3. Relevant paragraphs in the CFS Evaluation Report

"The Committee is functioning and has managed to generate a high level of outputs since the 2009 reform. It could be more effective and efficient; its performance of its six roles is uneven, and there are gaps and issues that it needs to address to be fully effective and efficient.

As a platform for coordination at the global level, the Committee has managed to bring a wide range of stakeholders around the table to dialogue on food security and nutrition issues. However, it is too early to conclude whether this has translated into strengthening collaborative action among stakeholders at the country level. The Committee has been able to produce policy convergence products, and there is evidence of use of one of its major products. The roles that the Committee has not been effective in executing are:

- *Support and advice to countries and regions.*
- *Coordination at national and regional levels.*
- *Promoting accountability and sharing best practices.*

There is a lack of clarity and agreement about how the Committee should proceed with these roles. In the case of support and advice to countries and regions, the Committee at best can only facilitate support and advice to countries and regions. The Committee is an intergovernmental policy body, and not an implementing body. The Rome-Based Agencies and others in the United Nations system are better placed to provide support and advice to countries and regions.

With regard to the Committee's role in promoting accountability and sharing experiences and good practices, it has made a good start with convening global events for sharing experiences and good practices. There were, however, differing views in the Committee about its role in monitoring and what, exactly, it should be monitoring. It is not feasible, nor is it desirable for the Committee to attempt in-depth monitoring of the implementation of the numerous policy recommendations, and policy products at the country level. Periodic stock-takes and evaluation may be more appropriate."

[Extract: Final report of the evaluation of the CFS⁸, conclusion 4, paragraphs 257-260]

⁷ CFS 2012/39 Final Report.

⁸ Final report of the Evaluation of the Committee on World Food Security:

http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs1617/Evaluation/CFS_Evaluation_Final_Report_14_April_2017.pdf

“Role: Support and advice to countries and regions. The Reform Document envisaged that the Committee would facilitate support and/or advice to countries and/or regions on request. The areas of support and advice to be provided include the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of nationally and regionally owned plans of action to achieve food security and eliminate hunger. The provision of support and advice on the practical application of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food are also included.⁹

From all accounts, including the CFS Effectiveness Survey, the Committee has not received any requests from countries and regions for support and advice. The absence of requests was noted at the CFS 36th Plenary. The then Committee Chairperson proposed that in future, the agenda item should be used as an opportunity for countries to present their current and planned activities for the development of partnerships on food security and nutrition.¹⁰ There is nothing in the Report of the Thirty-Sixth Session of the Committee that indicates that the reasons for the absence of requests for assistance had been discussed. Chairpersons of the Committee have presented reports on the Committee’s Plenary Sessions to the various FAO Regional Conferences, but these have not generated requests from countries or regional bodies for advice and support from the Committee.

The Reform Document is not explicit about the details of the facilitative role that it expected the Committee to perform, and whether or not there would be room for the Committee to provide advice and support directly. On reading the vision of the reformed Committee as “...an intergovernmental Committee in FAO....and the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform.....”, it seems unlikely that the reform intended the Committee to provide advice directly to countries or regions.

For countries and regions to request the Committee to facilitate support and advice, they need to be aware of the Committee’s role in this regard, and what procedures they should follow to request assistance. The evaluation did not find any evidence from the Committee indicating that it could facilitate advice and support, and how countries and regions could request this.

The technical expertise for advice and support on national and regional plans of action on food security and nutrition resides in the Rome-Based Agencies, in other entities of the United Nations system involved in food security and nutrition, in non-state research and policy institutions, and in regional and international development agencies. Countries, as Members of FAO, WFP and IFAD, are free to approach these bodies directly if they require assistance. Similarly, countries are free to approach other entities in the United Nations system and other organizations with technical expertise. It is not clear what value the Committee can add in playing a facilitative role. The role of the Committee in facilitating advice and support in the development, implementation, and monitoring of nationally and regionally owned plans needs to be clarified. The Committee’s potential role in the follow-up and review of the SDGs provides an opportunity for a more relevant and impactful role in facilitating support to countries.

Mapping. There was an initiative on Mapping Food Security and Nutrition Actions at country level endorsed by the Committee at its 36th Plenary Session. This initiative aimed to develop a tool that would provide improved capacity for governments as well as other users, to make informed decisions on how best to design policies, strategies and programmes, as well as allocate resources to achieve food security

⁹ CFS, Reform of the Committee on World Food Security, Thirty-Fifth Session, Rome, October 2009, CFS:2009/2 Rev.2, paragraph 5, p.2.

¹⁰ CFS, Report on the Thirty-Sixth Session of the World Committee on Food Security, Rome, October 2010.

and nutrition outcomes.¹¹ The task team reported progress at subsequent Plenary Sessions (37th and 39th Sessions), but no further work on this has been reported to the Committee after 2012. FAO has since developed the Food Security Commitment and Capacity Profile (FSCCP) drawing on the experiences of the mapping initiative. The tool is designed to assess and track how national authorities are meeting their commitments and the capacity they have and need to act on food security and malnutrition. There are no documents explaining why the mapping initiative no longer forms part of the Committee's work. It may be that there is no longer a demand for the mapping tool, and it would be useful if the Committee established if there is still an interest in the mapping tool."

[Extracts: Final report of the evaluation of the CFS, paragraphs 91 - 96]

"Role: Promote accountability and share best practices at all levels. The Committee was mandated to monitor the implementation of the 1996 World Food Summit Plan of Action. The reform mandated the Committee to assist countries and regions, as appropriate, in determining whether their objectives were being achieved and how the reduction in food insecurity and malnutrition could be accelerated. It envisaged that the Committee would develop an innovative mechanism for doing so.⁵³ 98. The Committee endorsed recommendations under the umbrella of 'monitoring' at the CFS 40th Plenary Session, and further reinforced these at subsequent Plenary Sessions. In summary, the recommendations endorsed in Plenarities 40 to 42 include:

- monitoring the Committee's decisions and recommendations, focusing on the major, strategic and catalytic products, for example, the VGGT, and the outcomes of major workstreams in the MYPOW;
- conducting periodic assessments of the Committee's effectiveness in improving policy frameworks (every 4-5 years), and carrying out a baseline survey for this purpose; and
- encouraging the sharing of experiences and good practices.

Monitoring major decisions and recommendations. In 2016, the Committee conducted a stock-taking of the use and application of the VGGT, collecting case studies from governments, civil society and the private sector at global, regional and national levels. The information served as the basis for a global thematic event at the CFS 43rd Plenary Session, for stakeholders to share experiences and good practices in the use and application of the VGGT. The global thematic event, serving the purpose of stock-taking and sharing good practices, is seen as a means of contributing to monitoring progress on the Committee's major products.

The stock-take was complemented by a report prepared by the Civil Society Mechanism, documenting civil society's experiences in the use and application of the VGGT. The global thematic event was viewed positively by participants, and the Open-Ended Working Group has noted areas for improvement, for example, more quantitative data, longer lead-time for preparation, and a more participatory approach to the preparation of events.⁵⁵ The Committee's 43rd Plenary endorsed the Terms of Reference to Share Experiences and Good Practices in Applying CFS Decisions and Recommendations through Organizing Events and National, Regional and Global Levels. These events provide the opportunity to take stock and to share experiences. While they contribute to monitoring, they are not a substitute for monitoring.

The outcome documents of the Open-Ended Working Group and the interviews reveal differing views on monitoring, what should be monitored, and who should be doing the monitoring. This stems in part from confusion in terminology. 'Monitoring' ordinarily refers to the routine, continuous examination of

¹¹ CFS, Mapping food security actions at country level, document presented to the Committee on World Food Security, Thirty-sixth session, October 2010. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/019/k8952e.pdf>

progress in implementing a particular undertaking (programme, project) to track compliance and then take decisions to improve performance. It is best done at the level where implementation occurs, and in the case of the Committee, monitoring the implementation of policy products would be best done at the country level by countries. The Committee can play a facilitative role in providing guidance on monitoring the implementation of its products. Monitoring the use and application of the Committee's products is necessary for promoting accountability as envisaged in the Reform Document. It also provides the empirical basis for the follow-up and review (stock-take) and sharing of experiences and good practices. The challenge for the Committee is to design a monitoring framework that is sufficiently robust to provide it with the information it needs, and sufficiently flexible for different country contexts and keeps faith with the principles of monitoring and accountability set out in the Global Strategic Framework.

The CFS Plenary endorsed the recommendation that recommendations from policy round tables should not be the focus of the Committee's monitoring efforts. These policy recommendations are numerous and in many instances, they are not sufficiently specific to enable meaningful monitoring. This, however, should not deter the Committee from conducting periodic stock-taking exercises of the policy recommendations including those based on the HLPE reports.

Assessing the effectiveness of the reforms. The Committee endorsed the recommendation to carry out periodic assessments of its effectiveness, including carrying out a survey to serve as a baseline against which progress can be assessed. The CFS Effectiveness Survey was completed in 2015 under the supervision of the Open-Ended Working Group on Monitoring. The survey provides a useful baseline of stakeholder perceptions of the Committee and its work, and can be improved to address its limitations.

Sharing best practices at all levels. The Committee, at its Plenary Sessions, has provided a platform for sharing information on global, regional and national initiatives, and lessons learned from these. This takes place in the formal Plenary Session and in the side events. The side events are conducive for sharing best practices and lessons, as they are relatively informal and smaller in size. The global thematic event on the VGGT is another example of the Committee promoting the sharing of good practices. The Committee endorsed terms of reference to serve as a guide for countries and regions to prepare and convene events at national, regional and global levels.

Assisting countries and regions to monitor. The reform mandated the Committee to assist countries and regions to assess whether they are achieving their food security and nutrition objectives. This matter is on the agenda of the Open-Ended Working Group on Monitoring, but has not progressed as priority has been given to the major products of the Committee. The Open-Ended Working Group has identified key elements and characteristics for monitoring, notably, that monitoring mechanisms should be owned by countries or regions as part of their institutional frameworks and mechanisms.

SOFI. The Committee provides the platform for the discussion and endorsement of the State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI) report that monitors progress made in reducing food insecurity and malnutrition globally. The report is prepared by the Rome-Based Agencies and presented at the Committee's Plenary Sessions. The document serves as the authoritative source of information on global trends in food insecurity. As of 2017, the Rome-Based Agencies will commence publication of a newly conceptualized report to replace the former State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI), focusing on monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This new publication will support the Committee in reviewing progress towards the SDGs related to food security and nutrition and will provide a basis for its policy recommendations and actions. For 2016, a stand-alone report was produced to table the issues and challenges posed by monitoring the SDG2 (Zero Hunger) indicators. The report was organized

around three chapters focusing on: 1) an overview of the global trends for indicators relating to food security and nutrition; 2) analysis of information gaps and measurement challenges regarding the proposed indicators; and 3) the linkages between targets and goals.”

[Extracts: Final report of the evaluation of the CFS, paragraphs 97 - 105]

Recommendation 13: Updates on HLPE work to the Bureau & Advisory Group

Recommendation 13

“The Chairperson of the HLPE Steering Committee should interact with the Bureau and Advisory Group to keep the latter abreast of developments with the work of the HLPE. This informational briefing does not pose a threat to the independence of the HLPE, and can serve to encourage Bureau and Advisory Group members to promote the work of the HLPE. Similar discussions should take place between the two secretariats, so that there is a mutual appreciation of the work of the secretariats.”

[Extract: Final report of the evaluation of the CFS, Recommendation 13, paragraph 296]

Background

1. Relevant paragraphs in the CFS Evaluation Report

“The promotion of HLPE reports is left largely to the Steering Committee, with the support of the HLPE Secretariat, and members of the Steering Committee have expressed concern about the limited resources to promote HLPE reports widely, especially at country level. Members of the Advisory Group are required to promote all CFS products, including those of the HLPE. A scan of the annual feedback reports of Advisory Group members shows that there was little or no reference to promoting HLPE reports. The exception was the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food who made reference to the use of HLPE reports in her report to the General Assembly. Although the HLPE is an important structure of the reformed Committee, it does not participate in the Bureau-Advisory Group meetings, presumably because it wishes to protect its independence. This, however, puts the HLPE ‘out of mind’ until it is time to discuss the HLPE report. There is a need for closer engagement between the HLPE Steering Committee and the Bureau-Advisory Group, and this can be done without compromising the independence of the HLPE.” [Extract: Final report of the evaluation of the CFS, paragraph 175]

Recommendation 14: Review HLPE process on calling for experts

Recommendation 14:

“The HLPE Steering Committee should address the concerns raised by interviewees, and misunderstandings regarding the processes for calling for project experts. This entails reviewing the existing communication processes for calling for experts to identify improvements. The Committee should also take steps to improve the accessibility of HLPE reports to non-technical readers.” [Extract: Final Report of the CFS Evaluation, Recommendation 14, paragraph 297]

Background

1. Extracts from the CFS Reform Document

“E. COMPOSITION / SELECTION OF THE HLPE

The CFS Bureau, in close cooperation with FAO management and drawing from applicable FAO legal texts, will solicit nominations for the HLPE Steering Committee.

- i) The Steering Committee should reflect an assortment of technical disciplines, regional expertise and representation. Ideal candidates will have relevant experience working with cross-disciplinary expert processes.*
- ii) Members of the Steering Committee will participate in their individual capacities, and not as representatives of their respective governments, institutions or organizations.*
- iii) Members of the Steering Committee will serve for a 2-year period, renewable once.*

The CFS Bureau will designate an ad hoc technical selection committee comprised of representatives from among the Rome-based food/agriculture agencies (FAO, WFP, IFAD, CGIAR/Bioversity, a CSO/NGO rep) to choose the Steering Committee members. The ad hoc technical selection committee will submit its recommendations to the CFS Bureau for approval.

Early in 2010, the first 10 members of the HLPE Steering Committee will be selected. The HLPE Steering Committee will then designate its Chair and Co-Chair to begin its work in anticipation of the CFS October 2010 Session, based on explicit instructions from the CFS Bureau. Additional members could be chosen shortly after October 2010 Plenary.

Members of the HLPE ad-hoc project teams will be chosen by the HLPE Steering Committee notably drawn from a database of experts to which CFS stakeholders can nominate experts at any time.”
[Extract: CFS Reform Document, Section E, paragraphs 43-46]

“The Steering Committee shall consist of between ten and fifteen highly reputable, internationally-recognized experts on food security and nutrition-related fields, appointed in their personal capacity for a term of office of two years, renewable consecutively only once. The Steering Committee should reflect an assortment of technical disciplines, balance of regional expertise as well as consideration of gender representation. Ideal candidates will have relevant experience working with cross-disciplinary expert processes. They should have a broad vision and substantial experience in cross-disciplinary expert processes. They should be experienced professionals, holding an advanced university degree, proven record of publications and/or solid background in field/research project management in the area of food security and nutrition. Most importantly they should have strong experience in managing groups or

networks of experts, extensive communication and inter-personal skills, leadership skills, and, drawing from their international recognition by peers, the capacity to attract and draw expert networks. The members of the Steering Committee shall be appointed by the Bureau of the Committee on the basis of a recommendation of an ad hoc technical selection committee consisting of representatives of FAO, the World Food Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, Bioversity International and a representative of civil society organizations. The Steering Committee shall normally hold two sessions every year, unless otherwise decided by the Committee itself in extraordinary circumstances.

Members of the Steering Committee will participate in their individual capacities, and not as representatives of their respective governments, institutions or organizations.

There shall be a database of experts on all relevant fields related to food security and nutrition who may be nominated by Members of the Committee or any other interested party participating in the proceedings of the Committee. Drawing from this database, the Steering Committee shall constitute ad hoc Project Teams to analyse and report on such issues as may be referred by the Steering Committee to the team. The Project Teams shall be constituted for pre-determined periods of time and shall be responsible for drafting studies and analysis under the general direction and oversight of the Steering Committee.

The Rules of Procedure of the High-Level Panel and the selection process of its Steering Committee are approved by the Bureau and published on the website of the Committee. Any amendment to the Rules of Procedure of the High-Level Panel, or to the Selection process of its Steering Committee is subject to the approval of the Bureau.”

[\[Extract: Rules of Procedure of the Committee on World Food Security paragraphs 3-7\]](#)

2. Relevant paragraphs from the CFS Evaluation Report

“There were themes that emerged from the interview data pointing to concerns that stakeholders have about the HLPE:

a) Concerns were raised about the timeliness of calls for project experts, and there was criticism from countries that believed that their nominees were suitable but were not given the opportunity to participate. They called for greater transparency in the selection process. There was a lack of understanding at the country level about the processes involved in the selection of project experts. The selection process is set out clearly in the HLPE Rules of Procedure and is available on the HLPE website. With the increasing number of applications to serve on project teams, the selection processes are likely to come under scrutiny as not all who apply can be accepted. It will be essential that the HLPE ensure that the processes are communicated clearly to prospective applicants.

b) HLPE reports are technical documents and follow a rigorous process of review prior to approval and publication. There were criticisms about the length of the reports and their technical language, which present challenges for non-technical readers in understanding the reports. These concerns were raised mainly by government officials, who are the primary audience for the reports. The HLPE produces short summaries of the reports, setting out key observations and recommendations. However, these are extracts from the original report and do not address the problem for non-technical readers. The evaluation does not propose that HLPE reports should be ‘dumbed-down’ as this would greatly detract

from the value of the report. Complementary media forms could be explored to make the technical information comprehensible to non-technical readers.

c) Concerns were raised about the timelines for HLPE reports. The selection and approval of topics take a year, the preparation of the report takes up to two years, and the discussions on HLPE reports take about three months. It therefore takes more than three years from start to the endorsement of policy recommendations informed by HLPE reports. The length of the process is necessary for the consultative, inclusive approach that forms a critical element of the HLPE's methodology. It is also necessary for ensuring the quality of the final product. The concern of interviewees is that the topic might not be of interest three years down the line. There were suggestions that the HLPE should prepare briefs or shorter reports that take less time to prepare. The evaluation team is not persuaded that shorter reports will take significantly less time. Preparing short briefs on demand in addition to the HLPE report may be an option for the HLPE to provide advice to the Bureau, but this would require additional resources."

[\[Extract: Final Report of the CFS Evaluation, paragraph 174\]](#)