

Date: 19 January 2018

Time: 09:30-12:30

Location: Red Room, FAO HQ (Building A, 1st Floor)

PROPOSED RESPONSE TO EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS 7, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14

Recommendation 7

1. The Committee on World Food Security is an intergovernmental committee within the United Nations system, and it is the CFS Members who ultimately bear the duty of ensuring that the Committee delivers on its mandate. In this regard, there are a number of actions that CFS Members can take to improve the functioning of the CFS:

- (i) CFS Members should review the flow of information to and from their capitals and address gaps to ensure that, among other things, CFS products and recommendations reach the relevant ministries.
- (ii) CFS Members should advocate for the use and application of CFS products and recommendations in their respective countries, according to their needs and priorities.
- (iii) CFS Members should, where feasible, contribute in cash or in kind to the resources of the Committee.

Recommendation is accepted

2. CFS Members have primary responsibility for promoting CFS and the use and application of CFS policy products and recommendations, but support is needed from all stakeholders as part of a collective effort, as underlined in the response to Recommendation 11. A number of activities are being implemented in countries, led by governments, Rome-based agencies (RBAs), CSM, PSM and other stakeholders, but there is no consolidated overview of these activities.

3. The following elements were suggested to facilitate communication and awareness:

- Nomination by CFS members of a CFS focal point at country-level in the most relevant ministry to promote the dissemination and use and application of CFS policy outcomes and report/monitor on CFS-related activities in countries.
- Involvement of ministries and experts from capital from the beginning in policy convergence processes to increase ownership of policy convergence outputs at country level.
- Increased collaboration and engagement with, and renewed commitment from RBAs to: (i) facilitate the use and application of CFS policy convergence work in countries, including through partnership agreements with countries and (ii) support the development of communication and outreach materials.
- Packaging CFS outputs in a simpler and concise way, tailoring them to different audiences (e.g. toolkits, checklists, briefs, key messages, tools), subject to resource availability.

- Establishing or leveraging on existing food security and nutrition multi-stakeholder platforms and structures at country-level.
- Inviting member countries to make voluntary commitments on the use and application of CFS products, and presenting the results of their efforts at Plenary.

Point (iii) of the recommendation is addressed under Actions A3.1 and A3.2 of the Consultation Report for the preparation of the response to the CFS evaluation¹, endorsed at CFS 44.

Actions to be taken	Implementing body	Timeframe	Further funding required (Y or N)
A7.1. Prepare a proposal for actions to be taken by Members to improve the functioning of CFS, including promoting the dissemination, use and application of CFS policy outcomes.	Bureau, in consultation with the Advisory Group	By June 2018	N

¹ Consultation Report for the preparation of the response to the CFS Evaluation with draft decision, CFS 2017/44/12 Rev.1.

Recommendation 10

4. 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.

Recommendation is partially accepted

5. Monitoring is a core function of CFS. CFS recognizes the importance for stakeholders to have a common understanding of the CFS monitoring function, which is not presently the case. The five elements of the approach recommended by the evaluation team do not cover all monitoring activities that were previously endorsed by CFS, specifically country in-depth voluntary assessments and the incremental development of an innovative monitoring mechanism for CFS, and are therefore not considered sufficient to form the basis of an overarching framework for monitoring. The implementation of Recommendations 1 and 2, which are expected to clarify how CFS intends to achieve its vision, might influence what to monitor, how and by whom.

6. The approach to monitoring should consider resource availability, cost-effectiveness and CFS added value in monitoring. The approach should take advantage of and not duplicate existing monitoring mechanisms, in particular within RBAs.

7. CFS agrees with Points (i) and (ii) of the recommendation (i.e. conduct of periodic reviews to take stock of progress in implementing main CFS policy products and recommendations and the convening of events to share experiences and good practices), which are part of the monitoring approach endorsed by CFS 44². Global events are expected to contribute to raising awareness and understanding of

² “*Monitoring the implementation of CFS main policy products and other CFS policy recommendations – with draft decision*”, (CFS 2017/44/11).

CFS and CFS products, issues addressed in the response to Recommendations 7 and 11. Independent evaluations, mentioned under Point (iv), may be useful providing the scope of such evaluations is carefully defined as CFS products are implemented on a voluntary basis, and evaluations are subject to resource availability. Point (v) has been addressed in the 2017 Annual Report where detailed progress is monitored on implementing the decisions and recommendations of CFS 43 through the OEWDs and the Bureau and Advisory Group and Bureau meetings.

8. The regular conduct of a voluntary survey (Point (iii) of the recommendation) is considered cost-effective, bringing important information at low cost, and is part of the monitoring approach endorsed at CFS 41. It is important to provide precise guidelines to stakeholders to help them answer questions meaningfully. The role of CFS in conducting voluntary in-depth country assessments and in helping countries and regions monitor progress towards agreed food security and nutrition objectives through the development of an innovative monitoring mechanism³ should be further discussed, considering:

- The conclusions of the Evaluation (detailed monitoring of policies, programmes and plans are the responsibility of national governments).
- The fact that no country in-depth assessment has been undertaken since the decision was made at CFS 41, as no country has volunteered and no resources have been made available.
- Monitoring of trends and progress in achieving the food security and nutrition targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is already carried out under “*The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World*” (SOFI) and the Regional Panoramas on Food Security and Nutrition. The Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) on progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, report on the implementation of national policies, programmes and plans related to food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture in the context of SDGs, and CFS has been providing space to discuss and learn about country progress through the VNRs since CFS 43.

Actions to be taken	Implementing body	Timeframe	Further funding required (Y or N)
A10.1. Review the framework for monitoring CFS decisions and recommendations, clarifying the role of CFS in national level monitoring.	Bureau, after consultation with the Advisory Group	By June 2018	N

³ “... *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...*” (CFS Reform Document, CFS: 2009/2 Rev.2, paragraph 6 ii)

Recommendation 11

9. CFS should adopt the principle that communication about CFS is the responsibility of all CFS Members and Participants, supported by the communication function in the CFS Secretariat. Consideration should be given to having Bureau Members facilitate an outreach activity in the respective regions. This will spread the responsibility of communicating and profiling CFS at regional levels. Non-Bureau members should be requested to facilitate an outreach activity in their respective countries. The CFS Secretariat can assist by developing short information briefs, including a standardized presentation on CFS. These information briefs can be used by members of the Advisory Group in their outreach activities, should they need the assistance. The Rome-Based Agencies have a critical role to play in the dissemination and application of CFS policy products and recommendations at country level, and the Committee through the Bureau should request them to intensify their communication efforts.

Recommendation is partially accepted

10. Communication is the responsibility of all CFS Members and participants, including RBAs and other UN bodies, CGIAR, CSM, PSM and philanthropic and financial institutions. Communication refers to two distinct sets of activities: (i) activities aiming at raising awareness of CFS and its work and (ii) activities towards the use and application of CFS products and recommendations at country level for which member countries have primary responsibility, as mentioned in the response to Recommendation 7. These two sets of activities are distinct but can be mutually reinforcing to promote uptake of CFS policy guidelines and recommendations.

11. The CFS Secretariat should continue to focus on raising awareness of CFS and its work through the CFS website, reporting to global bodies such as UN ECOSOC, and supporting, subject to available resources, outreach efforts of the CFS Chair and Vice Chair in consultation with the Bureau.

12. Rome-based agencies have a key role to play in facilitating the use and application of CFS products and recommendations at country level. They provide advice and technical support on specific topics, at the request of the countries, drawing upon various resources including CFS products. It therefore depends on the countries' priorities to determine what RBAs promote in countries. The RBAs country offices should continue to leverage on interactions with national authorities and stakeholders to actively promote CFS and mainstream its products into policies and programmes, where relevant to their priorities.

13. The CFS communication strategy⁴ endorsed by the Committee at its 40th session in 2013 will be reviewed to promote CFS and its work and the use and application of CFS policy products and recommendations at country level. The strategy will include activities, specific roles and responsibilities and a timeline for implementation.

14. The implementation of the communication and outreach strategy will be subject to resource availability.

Actions to be taken	Implementing body	Timeframe	Further funding required (Y or N)

⁴ Communication Strategy for the Committee on World Food Security, CFS 2013/40/4.

A11.1. Review the CFS communication and outreach strategy to promote CFS and the dissemination, use and application of CFS policy products and recommendations.	Bureau, after consultation with the Advisory Group	By June 2018	N
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Recommendation 12

15. Member countries are encouraged to disseminate the HLPE reports to the relevant ministries at country level. The RBAs should consider the HLPE reports in their programme of work.

Recommendation is rejected

16. HLPE is fundamental to CFS work. HLPE is commissioned by CFS to develop independent, scientific, evidence-based reports to support stakeholders in making informed decisions in the policy convergence process. HLPE reports are freely available on CFS website in all UN languages.

17. HLPE reports are intermediate products for CFS. They are used as a basis for the Committee to reach agreement on policy convergence through an inclusive process. CFS policy recommendations are then presented to Plenary for endorsement. CFS stakeholders, including member countries and RBAs, should be encouraged to disseminate and use CFS-endorsed policy recommendations while they have no formal role to play in the dissemination of HLPE reports.

18. CFS recognizes that more time should be dedicated to engaging and discussing the findings and substance of the HLPE reports before embarking on the policy convergence process. HLPE reports could include both convergent and divergent views as these could be innovative and useful to discuss. More focus should be placed on the proper and better use of these reports on furthering the work of CFS plenary and the Bureau. This would entail timely translation, subject to availability of resources. Issues regarding the use of HLPE reports and their timely translation will be addressed in the implementation of Action A2.1⁵.

⁵ Consultation Report for the preparation of the Response of the CFS Evaluation with draft decisions, CFS 2017/44/12 Rev1.

Recommendation 13

19. 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

Recommendation is accepted

20. The HLPE Steering Committee, through the Chair of the Steering Committee, has on various occasions, interacted with the Bureau and Advisory Group and presented its work at Bureau and Advisory Group meetings and intervened at the OEWG meetings, including through teleconference.

21. The collective nature of HLPE work will benefit from interaction between the Bureau and Advisory Group and the HLPE Steering Committee as a whole. More regular and sustained interaction between the HLPE Steering Committee and the Bureau and Advisory Group, in particular on substantive issues, is important for CFS to maximise the value it receives from the HLPE in supporting CFS policy convergence work. Interaction should be focused on substantive issues, with requests for HLPE input sent to the HLPE Steering Committee in advance of the meetings. Such interaction could continue to be in the form of a joint informal meeting between the whole Steering Committee and the Bureau and Advisory Group, scheduled to be held after each renewal of the Steering Committee, plus through additional engagement with the Chair and/or Project team leaders at particular points. Regular interaction between the Chairs (CFS and HLPE Steering Committee) would also be useful to build stronger mutual understanding of the work of CFS and the role of the HLPE in supporting it.

22. Regular procedural and budget updates regarding HLPE work are given at each meeting of the Bureau and Advisory Group as part of CFS workstream updates. The HLPE coordinator based in Rome attends these meetings and answers procedural queries related to the work of the HLPE, or can assist in conveying these to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is also ready to prepare focused interventions on specific issues upon request by CFS made in advance.

23. CFS agrees that greater interaction between the HLPE and the Bureau and Advisory Group does not pose a threat to the independence of the HLPE and could result in better use of the work of the HLPE in CFS. Consistent with the response to recommendation 12, the Bureau and Advisory Group members have no formal role to play in promoting the work of the HLPE.

24. The HLPE Coordinator formerly attended the CFS Secretariat’s weekly meetings to keep each other updated of their work and coordinate, for example in resource mobilisation and reporting. This practice should be reinstated and coordination and collaboration could be further intensified beyond the CFS Secretariat’s weekly meetings to maximise efficiency and effective use of resources.

Actions to be taken	Implementing body	Timeframe	Further funding required (Y or N)

<p>A13.1. Propose how and when to lift engagement with the HLPE Steering Committee to discuss substantive issues in order to improve the use of HLPE outputs in CFS.</p>	<p>CFS Bureau, after consultation with the Advisory Group</p>	<p>June 2018</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>A13.2. Propose how to improve coordination and engagement between the CFS and HLPE Secretariats to maximise efficiency and effectiveness and inform the Bureau.</p>	<p>CFS Secretary and HLPE Coordinator</p>	<p>June 2018</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>A13.3. Provide advice and focused interventions on substantive issues at the request of CFS, as a complement to the main HLPE products (typically substantive reports).</p>	<p>HLPE Steering Committee based on Bureau request, subject to HLPE resources</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>N</p>

Recommendation 14

25. 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.

Recommendation is accepted

26. CFS acknowledges the HLPE's efforts in ensuring the transparency of the selection process of the HLPE project team members, as well as the timing and dissemination of the call for nominations for the project team members. CFS emphasizes the importance of ensuring scientific and technical relevance as well as gender balance and regional representation in the selection process.

27. Transparency of the selection process and the call for nominations of project team members will be improved through:

- Providing more detailed information to the candidates in future calls for nominations on the selection process, selection criteria and the time commitment expected from each project team member, as well as feedback to candidates once the process is completed. The calls will include a link to the "*Internal procedures and methodological guidelines for the work of the HLPE*".
- Ensuring a wider diffusion of the calls for project team members. The calls will be sent to CFS stakeholders, including the Bureau and Advisory Group members; other CFS members and participants and observers; HLPE Steering Committee members; academic institutions worldwide; experts that have been involved in the HLPE in the past, including external peer reviewers; those who have contributed to HLPE open e-consultations organized by FAO's Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition.

28. HLPE has taken steps to ensure that their reports are accessible to a diverse audience, both in terms of substance and format of its reports. The HLPE will give specific attention to the format and readability of future reports and consider the following:

- Having future reports also reviewed by non-experts in order to assess their readability.
- Preparing for future reports a shorter document containing the main findings and recommendations of the report, better adapted to non-specialist readers and to their diverse expectations, subject to the HLPE workload and available resources.

29. CFS underlines the importance of translating HLPE reports to make them more accessible to stakeholders and ensure inclusiveness and participation in the policy convergence process. This implies ensuring from the beginning of the HLPE report planning process that resources are sufficient to cover translation. This will be discussed under Action A2.4⁶, as the budget for MYPoW activities is expected to be established during the MYPoW comprehensive planning phase.

Actions to be taken	Implementing body	Timeframe	Further funding required (Y or N)

⁶ Consultation report for the preparation of the response to the CFS evaluation with draft decision (CFS 2017/44/12/Rev.1.

A14.1. Provide more detailed information to the candidates on the selection process, selection criteria and the time commitment expected from each project team member for future calls for nominations.	HLPE Secretariat	On-going	N
A14.2 Ensure a wider diffusion of the calls for project team members.	HLPE Secretariat	On-going	N
A14.3. Improve the accessibility of HLPE reports, including to non-technical readers by giving specific attention to the format and readability of future reports.	HLPE Steering Committee	On-going	Y