

Social Protection for Food Security and Nutrition

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS), 39th Session, 2012, endorsed the following recommendations on Social Protection for Food Security and Nutrition.¹



The Committee:

a) Urged Member States to design and put in place, or strengthen, comprehensive, nationally owned, context-sensitive social protection systems for food security and nutrition, considering:

- inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral coordination, including the agriculture sector, to ensure that social protection is integrated with broader food security and nutrition programming;
- the progressive development of comprehensive country-led social protection portfolios and action plans that ensure active, inclusive, meaningful stakeholder participation, and are sensitive to country differences in terms of policy, institutions and financial capacity;
- appropriate national assessments, including food security and nutrition and gender assessments, to ensure the inclusion of food and nutrition insecurity-sensitive targeting, effective registration methods, gender-sensitive programming, institutional arrangements, delivery mechanisms, robust monitoring, accountability and evaluation;
- the particular challenges faced by least developed countries, fragile states and countries in protracted crises, including linkages between short-term social transfers and longer term social protection programmes, taking into account the role of international cooperation in reinforcing national actions to implement sustainable social protection programmes and systems;
- the various components of effective social protection, including non-contributory social transfers or safety nets, insurance mechanisms, and access to social services, including

recognition and strengthening of informal/traditional social protection mechanisms.

b) Called upon Member States, international organizations and other stakeholders to ensure that social protection systems embrace a “twin-track” strategy to maximize impact on resilience and food security and nutrition, through:

- provision of essential assistance in the short-term while simultaneously protecting or building productive assets and infrastructure that support livelihoods and human development in the long-term;
- fostering integrated programmes which directly support agricultural livelihoods and productivity for the poor, particularly smallholder farmers and small-scale food producers, including through production input support, weather, crop and livestock insurance, farmer organizations and co-operatives for market access, decent jobs and public works that create agricultural assets, home-grown school feeding that purchases food from local smallholder farmers, in-kind transfers (food, seeds), vouchers and cash transfers, agricultural livelihood packages and extension services;
- establishment of strong linkages amongst sectors such as education, health and agriculture to ensure decent employment and social welfare in rural and urban areas, including enhancing people’s access, especially women, to markets and financial services required for effective social protection;

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Social Protection for Food Security by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security & Nutrition

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¹ Excerpt from the CFS 39 Final Report

- ensuring the provision of technical, financial and capacity building support, and also conducting and sharing of research results on social protection, including through enhanced South-South cooperation.
- c) Urged Member States, international organizations and other stakeholders to improve the design and use of social protection interventions to address vulnerability to chronic and acute food insecurity, considering:
- the importance of providing predictable and reliable access to social protection to all those in need at any time of the year, and at particularly vulnerable stages of life;
 - that chronically vulnerable individuals, unable to participate in the workforce, might need permanent assistance, recognizing that not everyone can graduate out of poverty and food insecurity;
 - that under a life-cycle approach to nutrition, priority should be given to social protection that addresses the critical “first 1,000 days” from pregnancy to 2 years old, including policies that promote and support breastfeeding, ensuring access to social services particularly health care, ensuring adequate knowledge of all relevant aspects of child care, and access to affordable and acceptable nutritious food products through the marketplace where possible, appropriate and sustainable;
 - flexible mechanisms to monitor and adjust design features and modalities as appropriate;
 - that social protection systems should be designed in such a way that they can respond quickly to shocks such as droughts, floods and food price spikes.
- d) Reminded Member States that social protection programmes for food security and nutrition should be guided by human rights norms and standards and should be complemented as appropriate by policies, guidelines, including legislation as appropriate, to support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, and social security, as well as gender equality and empowerment through inter alia:
- the consideration of provisions recommended by the International Labour Conference on the Social Protection Floors. Social protection can be a catalyst for the fulfilment of their relevant international rights;
 - the grounding of social protection in national institutional frameworks and legislation, where appropriate, establishing targets, benchmarks, indicators and institutional responsibilities;
 - the adoption of integrated and mutually-supportive social protection and food security and nutrition strategies and policies, based on human rights standards and principles, including non-discrimination and equality (including gender), meaningful participation, transparency and accountability.
- e) Suggested that the CFS Bureau, in consultation with the Advisory Group and with the support of the Secretariat consider, given the already full agenda and limited resources, support for social protection for food security and nutrition, through inter alia:
- facilitation and convening of lesson-sharing events on social protection for food security and nutrition, including complementing existing global and regional platforms;
 - further exploration of a way forward on integrating food security and nutrition issues in social protection floors, in consultation with Rome-based Agencies and relevant organizations and entities, such as the High-Level Task Force on Food Security (HLTF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Bank;
 - the CFS Open-ended Working Group on Monitoring (OEWG-Monitoring) further clarifying the support CFS could offer to stakeholders in the monitoring, reporting and evaluation of social protection programmes for food security and nutrition, taking into account the roles of other relevant stakeholders and existing monitoring mechanisms. 

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

CFS is the foremost inclusive international and inter-governmental platform for all stakeholders to work together in a coordinated way to ensure food security and nutrition for all. CFS endorses policy recommendations on a wide range of food security and nutrition topics.

CFS WEBSITE AND CONTACT

<http://www.fao.org/cfs>
cfs@fao.org