



Dear Members and Participants,

We would like to thank you for your active participation in our 31 October Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) consultation with regards to the Enhanced Outline and Annexes for the Agenda for Action for Addressing Food Insecurity in Protracted Crisis (CFS-A4A).

This communication provides a summary of the main findings and conclusions of our second OEWG consultation. In addition, we outline the next steps in the development of the CFS-A4A and provide indicative dates for the planned consultation to review the Zero Draft and Draft One.

Our consultation highlighted a number of points and reflections, as summarized below:

1. The consultation solicited constructive and clear feedback from Members and Participants to inform the preparation of the Zero Draft. This was necessary in order to allow the Technical Support Team (TST) to move forward with elaborating the Zero Draft. Comments, concerns and clarifications were sought on the existing language of the Enhanced Outline;
2. In further clarifying for Members and Participants the nature of the CFS-A4A, we discussed the proposed use of 'Resilience' as an organizing concept for the document, and sought your thoughts as to whether this was an appropriate approach;
3. We restated the conceptual relationship between Parts I and II of the CFS-A4A. We noted that Part II, particularly Appendix A, underpins the principles presented in Part I, providing the justification for their inclusion through examples of experience, good practices and lessons learned, thus helping to illustrate how the principles can be transformed into action.
4. We discussed the inclusion of protracted crisis situation case studies in Part II, Appendix B of the CFS-A4A, examined against the principles in Part I, to help illustrate how the principles could be transformed into action. We agreed that the TST would take forward the work of selection and development of at least two studies. These will be identified based on a set of pragmatic principles, including:
 - a receptive government;
 - inclusion of at least one New Deal country; and
 - in-country capacity of partners (including the RBAs) to support this work.

We confirmed that we would share the recommendations of the TST on selection of the case studies with Members and Participants.

5. We reviewed the proposed calendar for future meetings and consultations. Critical dates concerning CFS-A4A consultations were discussed on 18 November between the CFS Chair, CFS OEWG Co-Chairs and the CFS Secretariat. The CFS Bureau will meet on 25 November to take a final decision on the meeting calendar for the coming year. For the CFS-A4A the proposal is to hold the next OEWG in Rome on 6-7 March, 2014 to discuss the Zero Draft. A final OEWG consultation to negotiate the Draft One is proposed for 8-11 July, 2014¹;

¹ These dates are subject to final approval by the CFS Bureau on 25 November 2013.

6. We also discussed the proposed Global Consultation. The proposal is for this to be held on 22-23 April, 2014; the location is currently being finalized. A concept note outlining the Global Consultation was circulated on 15 November to the Joint CFS Bureau and Advisory Group, and comments can be submitted to CFS@fao.org before 29 November.

We would like to note that there was an understanding that the board concepts embedded in the principles as presented in the Enhanced Outline will be retained in the Zero Draft, accepting that the language will be subject to amendment in light of comments and suggestions received. In addition, proposals were made for the conflation of some principles, and inclusion of some new principles, which are being taken on board by the TST.

General comments from the Plenary discussions are presented below:

1. There was a general agreement with the Co-Chairs' proposal to start each Principle with an active verb (e.g. 'promote'), and to use formulations such as 'encourage'. This is in keeping with the voluntary nature of the document, while recognizing that we wish to ensure as great a degree of commitment to the principles espoused as possible;
2. There was agreement on the need to reduce or condense language, make it sharper and more action-oriented with the notion of providing practical experience that best supports protracted crisis-affected food insecure communities;
3. Nutrition and gender perspectives should be strengthened throughout, though it was noted that these are quite well represented in Principle E;
4. There need to be clearer statements on whom is responsible for what with relation to each Principle;
5. It was understood that 'addressing' food insecurity in protracted crises speaks to prevention as well as response, and this aspect needs to be better articulated and reflected;
6. The principles need to be framed in such a way that they address a broad range of actors, not just international development partners, governments or regional bodies but also, for example, national and community level actors;
7. To the extent possible, the CFS-A4A should take on board the results of programme and policy evaluations, in order to inform the principles and their justification for inclusion. Principles should reflect the learning and best practices derived from country and community-based experience;
8. Language should generally reflect a more people-centred and -focused approach;
9. The issue of prioritising the principles was flagged; there was also a recommendation that the TST consider merging language from Principles C and D and also perhaps A and D;
10. There is a standing question over whether or not to include specific references to non-CFS frameworks (e.g. on aid effectiveness) as these have not been agreed by all; it was proposed that this could be resolved through reference in the body text to specific concepts contained in these frameworks, with a citation of the source in Appendix C;
11. Resilience as an overarching concept met with a good degree of support, but a number of caveats were expressed. These are varying positions are summarised below:
 - a. The concept was welcomed by some as it speaks to critical issues, including linkage of short- and long-term, is people-centred, brings coherence and acknowledges existing capacities, building on what exists etc.;
 - b. Concern was noted if the term resilience did not include the need to deal with the underlying causes of food insecurity and preventative action;
 - c. Caution was expressed by some on using resilience as an overarching concept given that there is as yet no common understanding on the nature and scope of resilience in the context of protracted crisis situations;

- d. The definition presented did not go far enough and should incorporate concepts of post-shock upwards trajectories and bouncing back, and a broader definition would be preferable;
 - e. Use of the adjective 'resilient' (as in 'resilient livelihoods') may be preferable to the noun 'resilience', and could be a useful way forward.
12. In particular, it was noted that Principle F should incorporate language on remittances, the use of crop or risk insurance and local procurement as innovative approaches;
13. Some additional concepts were presented by members and participants for possible inclusion in existing, or new, principles. These included anti-corruption; accountability; capacity building; how principles are integrated with national plans and planning processes; promoting coherence with existing international humanitarian and human rights obligations and CFS policy guidance; and integration of prevention, early intervention strategies, resilience building and social protection into development policies, plans and programmes.

The Technical Support Team is working to finalise a Zero Draft for circulation in mid-February 2014 in all official languages, taking on board the comments and proposals made during the OEWG and in written submissions received afterwards. This will provide Members and Participants between two and three weeks for review and preparation. We trust that the next OEWG will provide a continued opportunity for Members and Participants to voice their ongoing support and provide further inputs to the elaboration of the CFS-A4A, one which you will all be able to endorse at CFS 41 in October 2014.

This will be the last formal communication from us in 2013. As CFS-A4A Co-Chairs, we would like to extend our warmest wishes for a wonderful holiday season, with good health and productivity for the New Year.