

Outcomes of the extended Bureau & Advisory Group meeting on the follow-up to the CFS Evaluation, 7 June 2017

The objective of the meeting was to discuss action-oriented suggestions for improvements to CFS that respond to evaluation recommendations 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 to feed into the extended Bureau Retreat on 8 June 2017.

Recommendation 1: Development of a Strategic Framework/Plan

Participants agreed on the need for more strategic planning to guide CFS work but were divided on how to move forward. Two options were suggested:

1. Develop a strategic plan as per the recommendation
2. Incorporate missing strategic elements into MYPoW, and expanding the content and duration of MYPoW

Proponents of Option 1 felt that a strategic framework was necessary to ensure that MYPoW would not deviate from its intended objectives. A strategic framework was viewed differently from MYPoW, which was deemed as a means to realize the strategic framework. The need to clarify both short and long term goals was highlighted.

Proponents of Option 2 felt that there was no need for an overarching strategic framework as CFS was not an organization or programme but a committee and platform for dialogue on food security and nutrition. Developing a strategic framework would be a lengthy process and missing strategic elements should instead be integrated into an expanded strategic MYPoW of two to three biennia. This expanded MYPoW should include concrete objectives, connecting to the reality on the ground, and be aligned with the Agenda 2030 and the CFS budget. The CFS vision should be retained and the six roles set out in the Reform document should be clarified, especially the two roles (i.e. advice to countries and coordination at regional/national level) that have not produced results. It was noted that these roles are directly linked to the dissemination of CFS products.

Participants felt that the process of developing the strategic elements should be as inclusive as possible and the experience that RBAs have in developing planning tools would be useful.

Recommendation 2: Revising the MYPoW process and structure

Participants felt that recommendations 1 (Strategic framework/plan) 2 (MYPoW) and 3 (sustainable funding) were intertwined and should be discussed together. There was consensus that MYPoW should be more strategic, longer term with sufficient time for planning process (one year suggested), linked to the CFS budget, and aligned to Agenda 2030 and strategic objectives of the RBAs. MYPoW should be more relevant, forward-looking, attractive, concrete, value for money and ensure impact on the ground. A demand-driven approach was recommended. There was a call for more discipline and for refraining from commissioning work before funds are available.

Recommendation 3: Securing a sustainable CFS budget

There was consensus on the importance of securing a sustainable budget to implement MYPoW activities. The CFS budget should be predictable, realistic and looked at in totality (CFS plenary and workstreams, HLPE and mechanisms). Participants called for feedback from RBAs on the request for increased funding and formalization of support, with clarity on their contribution in cash and in kind. There was broad agreement that the donor base should be expanded and requests to develop robust safeguards to avoid potential conflicts of interest for funding from the private sector and philanthropic foundations. Additional funding would be required for the recommended resource mobilization officer.

Recommendation 5: Making Plenary more vibrant and Recommendation 6: Streamlining OEWGs

There was insufficient time to discuss recommendations 5 and 6 but Advisory Group members were encouraged to send written comments, which would be shared at the retreat.

Follow-up

Advisory Group members were encouraged to provide written concrete suggestions on the Plan of Action before the meetings of 11 and 14 July, to the extent feasible using the matrix envisaged in the roadmap.