



Open Ended Working Group (OEWG)

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Document CFS OEWG-SDGs/2017/07/24/01

CFS contribution to the 2018 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development global review

“Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”

In depth-review of SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, 17

The Committee on World Food Security

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS)’s vision is to be the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for a broad range of committed stakeholders to work together in a coordinated manner in support of country led processes towards the elimination of hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition for all human beings. The CFS will strive for a world free from hunger where countries implement the Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security. The unique features of the reformed CFS include expanded participation rules and a specific science-policy interface. CFS’ inclusive policy making processes ensure that the voices of all relevant stakeholders, particularly those most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition, are heard in the food and agriculture¹ policy dialogue. The High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) on Food Security and Nutrition provides independent evidence-based reports to inform and support policy discussions.

¹The term “agriculture” includes crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture.

Key messages

[Food Security and Nutrition trends]

The pursuit of food security and nutrition (SDG2) is undermined by alarming gaps in access to natural resources such as land and forests (SDG15), water and sanitation (SDG6) and energy (SDG7), while conversely, food secure and well-nourished communities are essential pillars of sustainable food systems (SDG12) and resilient societies (SDG11). The use and application at country level of CFS integrated policy instruments is critical to make progress on these issues in the context of Agenda 2030.

- 1. Lack of access to land, water, sanitation and energy, and limited economic opportunities in rural areas exacerbate tensions within societies, undermine global food security, and therefore stability, sustainability and resilience, and contribute to the underlying causes of protracted crises.**
Enhancing access is essential, with a specific focus on social groups tending to be left behind : rural and farming communities, women, youth and indigenous peoples.
- 2. Sustainable management of natural resources – including terrestrial biodiversity and water – is central to building resilience, adapting to the effects and mitigating the drivers of climate change.**
Groups such as smallholder farmers, pastoralists and indigenous peoples manage a significant share of these resources globally, while being among those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss. An enabling institutional environment is needed for these actors to support their livelihoods. This will enhance the broader sustainability of societies.
- 3. Investing in sustainable food systems should be at the heart of rural and urban transformation.**
Political commitment to ensure healthy and sustainable diets for all, through responsible consumption in urbanizing societies and mutually beneficial links with rural areas, can trigger the positive transformation needed towards sustainable societies.

(a) Are we on track toward sustainable and resilient societies in 2030, in which no one is left behind?

[To be updated with relevant global food security and nutrition reports]

Until recently, there has been gradual global progress in reducing the numbers of the poor and hungry. However, the global economic growth that contributed to this progress has not been evenly distributed and was not always accompanied by similar gains in the other two dimensions of sustainable development, with social and environmental progress too often lagging behind. Loss and degradation of natural resources has continued, creating tensions around increasing competition for scarce resources – including, but not limited to, water. The continued exclusion of many social groups – for example, small-scale food producers, urban slum dwellers, informal workers and unemployed youth – from the benefits of growth and from political processes in general has contributed to their increased vulnerability and limited their ability to continue investing in strengthening the resilience of their livelihoods. This failure to achieve a balance between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development – specially called for under Agenda 2030 – has created the conditions for the instability and conflicts which today risk reversing recent improvements in FSN globally.

The latest Global Report on Food Crises states that globally, 108 million people in 2016 were reported to be facing crisis level food insecurity or worse (IPC Phase 3 and above), representing a 35 percent increase compared to 2015 when the figure was almost 80 million. The short-term outlook, indicates worsening conditions in areas impacted by droughts and conflicts.

(b) Concrete recommendations arising from CFS

CFS calls for better policy integration, inclusive governance and policy processes, supported by effective partnerships. CFS has developed a number of policy guidelines and recommendations aimed at fostering integrated approaches to food security and nutrition, based on independent evidence and expertise, and designed with the participation of a range of relevant actors (see annex 1 for a full list). **The urgency is now for government policy-makers and stakeholders to use these to support national efforts and policy making.** Guidance is needed from the HLPF to draw governments' attention on the urgent need for country-level uptake of CFS policy products, as befits their national context.



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Key Message 1: Enhanced access by vulnerable groups to natural resources will contribute to food security, [improved nutrition](#), stability and resilience

- Inadequate and insecure **tenure rights** increase vulnerability, hunger, [malnutrition](#) and poverty, and can lead to conflict and environmental degradation when competing users fight for control of these resources.

Responsible governance of tenure conversely promotes sustainable social and economic development that can help eradicate poverty and food insecurity, and encourages responsible investment. The Voluntary Guidelines for the tenure of land, forestry, fishery and other natural resources (VGGTs), endorsed by the CFS in 2012, seek to improve governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests. They seek to do so for the benefit of all, with an emphasis on vulnerable and marginalized people, with the goals of food security and progressive realization of the right to adequate food, poverty eradication, sustainable livelihoods, social stability, housing security, rural development, environmental protection and sustainable social and economic development.

- **Empower women and achieve gender equality**

[To be updated with the outcomes and background document from the 'Forum on Women's Empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition](#)

A world with zero hunger [and malnutrition in all its forms](#) can only be achieved when everyone has equal opportunities, equal access to resources, and equal voice in the decisions that shape their own lives [and that of their families](#), households, communities and societies. Whether policies and programmes involve mainstreaming gender or targeting gender equality, they must address [equally](#) the strategic interests of women and men, [through the five domains of women's empowerment including equal access to resources, increased production, income, leadership and conflicting demands on women's time. \(Ref -IFPRI. 2012. Women's empowerment in agriculture index\).](#) ~~(and girls and boys, as applicable) — not solely their practical needs—~~ so that gender relations shift towards equality and all persons can enjoy food security and nutrition. The 2011 CFS *"Gender, Food Security and Nutrition"* policy recommendations aim to enhance gender equality, to improve the nutritional status of women, adolescent girls, and children in particular; and require systemic action across policies, plans and programmes, from emergency to development contexts.

- **Achieving both food security and energy security** can be an opportunity as well as a challenge, and addressing the interlinkage between SDG 7 "Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all" and SDG2 calls for considering possible competition between biofuel crops and food crops.



To address possible trade-offs towards sustainable development, all relevant stakeholders in biofuel development should ensure that food security and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security are priority concerns, with a special focus on women and smallholder producers given their vulnerability. The CFS policy recommendations “Biofuels and food security and nutrition” offer a number of recommendations to Members and stakeholders to guide priority setting and integrated policy programming.

- **Conflict and protracted crises** call for specially designed and targeted assistance, combining immediate actions to alleviate hunger and suffering with medium to long-term actions to build resilient livelihoods and food systems, avoid impoverishment, and address the underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition.

The CFS Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA) was endorsed by CFS member countries and stakeholders in 2015, and provides guidance to governments and stakeholders on how to improve food security and nutrition in protracted crises while addressing the underlying causes, towards sustainable and resilient societies by 2030.

- Spread **social protection systems** linked to local food purchases.

About 70% of the world’s population still lack access to some form of social security. Designing and putting in place comprehensive nationally owned social protections systems that seek to address structural poverty and food insecurity is central to achieving the SDGs. CFS policy recommendations on “Social protection for food security and nutrition”, endorsed in 2012, call for social protection systems to pursue a ‘twin-track’ strategy to maximize their positive impacts on food security and improved nutrition, by providing essential assistance in the short-term and supporting livelihoods in the long-term.

Key Message 2: Sustainable management of natural resources is central to building resilience and addressing climate change effects.

- Accelerate efforts for **sustainable agricultural development, including livestock systems**

The policy recommendations on “Sustainable Agricultural Development for Food Security and Nutrition: What role for livestock?” (CFS 43, 2016) recognize the livelihoods and environmental challenges confronted by different agricultural production systems, with special emphasis on the livestock sector, and calls for their sustainable transformation. They particularly recognize pastoral systems and call for their protection and support, the enhancement of the role of grazing systems, leveraging the potential

of livestock as a means for sustainable livelihoods for smallholders, and promoting the sustainability of intensive systems.

- Support agriculture and food system's potential to **adapt and mitigate climate change**.

Emphasizing adaptation to climate change as a major concern and objective for all farmers and food producers, CFS endorsed [policy recommendations on “food security and climate change”](#), in which it invites Member States and other stakeholders to integrate climate change concerns in food security and nutrition policies and to increase the resilience of vulnerable groups and food systems to climate change. The development of agricultural strategies that encourage farmer mitigation practices and increase international cooperation and public and private investment for research on climate change adaptation and mitigation should be encouraged.

- **Water** availability will become an increasing challenge for global food security and nutrition, as irrigated agriculture is the largest user globally, totalling up to 70 percent global use (with significant difference between countries), some from non-renewable sources². However, ecosystems and landscapes sustain water resources, and forests play a major role in the water cycle, ensuring quantity, quality and stability of water for human use.

Promoting sustainable management and conservation of ecosystems for the continued availability, quality and reliability of water for food security and nutrition is essential. [The CFS Policy recommendations Water for food security and nutrition](#) endorsed in 2015 offer members and stakeholders guidance on how policies can successfully address the water-food security and nutrition nexus.

- Forestry (upcoming)

Key Message 3: “Investing in sustainable food systems should be at the heart of rural and urban transformation”

- **Investing responsibly in agriculture and food systems** can produce multiplier effects for complementary sectors, such as service or manufacturing industries, thus further contributing to food security and nutrition and overall economic development.

[The Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems \(CFS-RAI\)](#), endorsed in 2014, provide elements for increasing investments in agriculture in a sustainable manner. They recognize that

² HLPE, 2015. Water for Food Security and nutrition. A report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, Rome 2015.

States play a unique role in fostering an enabling environment for responsible investment in agriculture and food systems in promoting an enabling policy, legal, regulatory, and institutional environment, as well as recognize the vital role of smallholders, [including women](#), providing the bulk of investment. To strengthen and secure smallholders' own investment, the Principles recognized that it is also necessary to engage with and promote responsible investment by other stakeholders. States have a key role in enabling, supporting, and complementing investments by smallholders and empowering them to invest responsibly.

- Promote integrated, mutually beneficial **rural transformation and urbanization processes**

A strong gap in the policy architecture relates to the need for policies and research that address inter-sectoral and inter-spatial linkages, to analyse interacting systems and the implications for rural and urban areas. The need for integrated policies will grow in the near future considering the greater dynamism, connectivity and interdependencies across rural and urban areas, in particular among the related agri-food sectors but also in the growing non-farm sectors. Such policies must be stepped up, and will be most effective if they include provisions related to multi-level institutions and governance, such as integrated approaches addressing inter-sector and inter-spatial linkages; institutions and capacity development; nutrition education and consumer awareness; inclusion and the creation of opportunities, especially for marginalized/vulnerable groups; innovation at technological as well as social levels; infrastructure to enhance connectivity; and information and policy decision support systems. Supported by its inclusive and evidence-based processes, CFS will continue working in 2018 on identifying issues calling for greater policy convergence and integration, towards transformations of food systems that link rural and urban areas for their mutual economic, social and environmental benefits.

- **Sustainable food systems for healthy nutrition, healthy nutrition for sustainable food systems**

The effects of economic growth, urbanization, and changes in relative prices of food influence changes in diets and food systems, and lead to an acceleration of the nutritional transition. Because the causes and factors leading to malnutrition in all its forms are complex and multidimensional, and require collective action [across sectors and](#) by a broad range of stakeholders, CFS decided to step up its contribution to global efforts under the framework of the UN Decade for Action on Nutrition 2016-2025 [and the outcomes of the ICN2](#), and is undertaking work to explore the multiple interactions between nutrition and food systems connecting producers and consumers, towards more sustainable and healthy diets for all, underpinned by sustainable food systems. CFS will continue working on the issue in 2018-2019 towards concrete policy recommendations.

- **Strengthen policies and investments targeting smallholders**

The CFS policy recommendations on “Investing in smallholder agriculture for food security” (CFS 40: 2013) and “Connecting Smallholders to markets” (CFS 43, 2016) recognize that smallholders supply 70% of overall food production and therefore play an essential role in ensuring food security and nutrition today and in the future. These recommendations call for strengthening targeted policies and investments that address smallholders’ specific constraints and maximize potential for their beneficial access to reliable and remunerative markets. They also call for greater policy attention on local and domestic food markets where 80% of smallholders operate, as these markets, while performing multiple functions beyond commodity exchange, are often overlooked in policy making.

- **Reduce food loss and waste**, towards sustainable food systems

Food Losses and Waste (FLW) impact the sustainability and resilience of agricultural and food systems and their ability to ensure food security and nutrition for all for this generation and for future generations. States and other stakeholders have differentiated roles, and should encourage sustainable patterns of production and consumption, in accordance with national and international human and animal health regulations. CFS policy recommendations on “Food loss and waste in the context of sustainable food systems”, endorsed in 2014, call on all concerned stakeholders to develop effective strategies and innovations, and take effective steps to reduce food loss and waste.

- Increase resilience to **food price spikes and volatility**, strengthening early warning systems locally and globally.

Price volatility has an immediate impact on food security because it affects household incomes and purchasing power, and can create further uncertainty throughout food systems, thus discouraging longer-term investments that can increase productivity and promote trade³. In 2011, CFS endorsed policy recommendations “Price volatility and food security” which called for the development or review of comprehensive national food security strategies, and establish policy coherence in respective sectors, including national economic policies, to address food price volatility.

- Create opportunities for **young people**

In many countries and regions with higher rates of poverty and hunger, more than half of the population is currently under 25, with the majority of these young people living in rural areas and settlements, even as migration to cities expands. Access to new technologies, the provision of adequate skills and training (agricultural, financial, and entrepreneurial), complemented by the transmission of ICTs for development can empower youth to drive solutions to poverty eradication and promote stable, sustainable and resilient societies in the long-term.

³ HLPE, 2011. Price volatility and food security. A report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, Rome 2011.