

Outcomes of the global discussion on the follow-up to the Evaluation on 24 January 2018

The objective of the meeting was to discuss the implementation of response to evaluation recommendations 1 and 2. Time was made available at the end of the meeting to finalize the draft response to Evaluation Recommendations 10, 13 and 14 that was prepared following the discussions on 23 and 27 November 2017.

Participants shared their expectations on completing the process for implementing the response to the evaluation recommendations by June 2018.

1. Implementation of response to Recommendation 1

Clarification of what CFS seeks to achieve, how and by whom

The co-facilitators reminded participants that CFS decision to strengthen the strategic content of the CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) implied reinforcing a results-based approach where activities are selected, defined and implemented to optimize results. The CFS MYPoW includes planned collective activities and outputs of CFS as a Committee based in Rome, with an associated budget. The CFS results chain (presented during the meeting – see Background Document) connects the activities of CFS as a committee to what CFS seeks to achieve in terms of outputs, outcomes at global, regional and national levels, and impact.

Participants were asked to discuss how the six CFS roles (which were associated with the expected results in the results chain), in particular roles 3, 4 and 5 contributed to CFS vision and how and by whom they should be performed. The co-facilitators reminded participants that the objective was not to change the roles but to clarify them.

Participants underlined the importance of all six roles to achieve CFS vision (to strive for a world free from hunger where countries implement the voluntary guidelines for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security). It was acknowledged that these roles were interconnected and required different actors and approaches to deliver on them.

Participants agreed that it was necessary to clarify the six roles to ensure that energy and resources are channeled to where CFS can add more value, also considering the evolving global architecture on food security and nutrition, e.g. the agenda 2030 and its zero hunger goal. Some participants stressed the need to take budget constraints into account in this discussion while others prioritized focusing on where CFS can add value.

It was agreed that the convening power of CFS should be leveraged as much as possible for inclusive exchange in particular on critical and emerging issues. Participants recognized the importance of engaging with regional organizations and identifying synergies and opportunities for collaboration. They stressed the role that CFS could play in promoting coordination (distinct from actual coordination) at national and regional levels. CFS as a committee has no direct coordination mandate at regional and country levels and not enough expertise at country level. It was noted that the strength of consensus reached in CFS at global level influences the impact at regional and national levels.

The co-facilitators concluded that for the next MYPoW, CFS should focus its time and resources as a committee on performing Roles 1, 2 in a more demand-driven way and with greater efficiency and effectiveness. Role 6 and the lessons sharing part of Role 5 remain important, and also contribute to roles 1 and 2. Roles 3, 4 and 5 (accountability part) are beyond the direct control of CFS as a committee but rely on Members and stakeholders taking action on CFS outputs. Consequently, they require collaboration by CFS members and participants with stakeholders (e.g. through strengthened partnerships), and strong support from RBAs.

The importance of considering the full description of each role, especially the verbs used in the definition of the roles (“facilitate...”, “promote...”), was highlighted to better understand expectations of CFS. Specific suggestions by participants to clarify each of the six roles include the following:

Role 1

CFS’ role was clarified as providing a platform, harnessing the convening power of CFS, to discuss food security and nutrition issues in an inclusive setting. CFS is not the only venue for discussing FSN and therefore needs to be selective in prioritizing issues where CFS has a genuine comparative advantage. Where appropriate, it can foster collaborative action amongst its stakeholders. This role is linked to the implementation of the response to evaluation recommendation 5 (vibrant plenary).

Role 2

CFS role is to promote greater policy convergence, coherence and coordination. Selection of topics should be demand-driven with an expected benefit for the food insecure. This role is linked to the implementation of the response to evaluation recommendations 1, 2 and 5.

Role 3

This role is to facilitate support and/or advice at country and/or region request. This role is partly delivered through CFS generating consensus on policy products that can provide support to countries. It should mainly be performed through partnerships such as demand-led support from RBAs and cooperation with other relevant stakeholders at regional and country levels, as CFS as a Committee does not have a direct implementation mandate for coordinating actions at national or regional levels. Roles 3 and 4 are closely connected and were discussed together.

Role 4

CFS’ role is to serve as a platform to promote greater coordination and alignment of actions in the field, encourage more efficient use of resources and identify resource gaps. To deliver on this role at country level CFS needs action to be taken through partnerships at regional and national level, such as building on and strengthening existing structures and linkages with key partners at all levels.

Role 5

This role has 2 different elements:

- (i) promoting a culture of accountability, making clear where engagement should be taken (i.e. Agenda 2030, ICN2 etc.), and
- (ii) sharing best practices.

Regarding (i) it is important to establish and promote a “culture of accountability” versus assuring or overseeing accountability, considering the voluntary nature of CFS products. This encompasses a suite of activities at the global level such as learning from global progress reviews (e.g. for Agenda 2030, ICN2), lessons sharing on food security, monitoring the use and application of CFS products, follow up actions

on decisions taken by CFS, as well as sharing of best practices. The role of CFS in monitoring actions at country level was not seen by many countries as in the mandate of CFS and needs to be clarified in the scope of recommendation 10. It should not duplicate other monitoring mechanisms and activities by other UN bodies or fora. For (ii), sharing best practices is an important role that CFS should continue to perform in connection with Roles 1 and 2.

Role 6

The role to establish a Global Strategic Framework has been delivered as a living output of CFS that, if used, contributes to delivering on the other roles. It has been developed and updated alongside developments in the global food security and nutrition fora and decisions made by CFS. The Global Strategic Framework is a useful reference tool that contributes to policy convergence. It should be flexible, made known and used more widely.

The co-facilitators undertook to reflect more on the individual challenges of each role and strategies to overcome those challenges.

Proposed strategic objectives

The co-facilitators explained that the proposed strategic objectives are only meant to guide CFS during the next MyPoW 2020-2023.

It was agreed that the proposed strategic objectives should be further refined. Suggestions were made to shorten the text. The possibility remains to remove current proposed objectives and/or propose new ones for discussion. Participants were invited to provide written comments to the co-facilitators and CFS Secretariat by 5 February 2018.

Suggestions on the proposed strategic objectives spanned a wide range with some participants preferring aspirational strategic objectives to reflect the ambition of CFS whilst others preferred more specific results-oriented strategic objectives taking into account CFS' constraints.

SO1 Platform

Examples of text suggested:

- "Continue to be the leading platform for food security and nutrition in the world"
- "Inclusive and effective platform for advancing the process of CFS policy identification and formulation in response to emerging global challenges"
- "Contribution to the progressive realization of the right to adequate food and to the elimination of hunger"
- "Strengthening food security and nutrition at regional and national levels"

Other elements to consider included whether CFS should aim at responding to urgent issues (the role of CFS in crisis response versus tackling root causes) and controversial issues; the added value of CFS (for example: fostering more knowledge, building trust and forging consensus); and whether CFS should focus on being a solution-oriented platform. The strength of CFS – which should be reflected in SO1 – lies in its ability to reach consensus.

SO2 Policy

Examples of text suggested:

- “CFS being widely acknowledged that the policy guidance we are giving is relevant, of quality and useful”
- “Prioritization of CFS policies on outstanding FSN issues for cost-effective implementation and high impact generation, taking into consideration the work of other major stakeholders”
- “Promote/improve policy coordination, convergence and coherence”

Other elements to consider included the need to capture the fact that CFS can foster more inter-sectoral linkages, ensure gender-responsive policies and other cross-cutting issues; strong linkages with global developments such as Agenda 2030, Paris Agreement, emerging critical issues; and inclusiveness of CFS.

SO3 Uptake

Examples of text suggested:

- “Enhanced uptake of good practices on food security and nutrition, linking up with different actors on different experiences”
- “Increased uptake by all stakeholders, and at all levels, of CFS products, recommendations and improved practices, using partnership as a major tool”
- “Promoting the use, application and monitoring of CFS policy outcomes”

Some participants wondered whether uptake of CFS policy products (SO3) should be a strategic objective in itself or if it was more of an operational aspect and could be linked to the strategic objective on policy and uptake; the need to consider what CFS can bring in terms of advocacy for example developing discourses and dialogues on food security and nutrition issues; the importance of not restricting uptake within RBAs’ collaboration under the UN reform and to explore partnership agreements to ensure the use and application of CFS policy products; and the need to consider the availability of resources to focus and prioritize the follow-up and promotion of key CFS policy products.

Other suggestions/comments

- The potential of CFS in implementing Agenda 2030 should be better explored by understanding the link and nexus between SDG 2 and other goals and targets and how they work and identifying synergies, for inclusion in the strategic objectives.
- A strategic objective on accountability and monitoring might be needed
- Also cross-cutting issues such as gender, climate change and the Right to Food should be included into the SOs.
- CFS should as much as possible try to support country-led implementation of Agenda 2030, in particular SDG 2 and 17, where SDG 2 should remain the primary responsibility of CFS
- The need of translating all CFS roles into strategic objectives was raised, depending on how the vision and roles are mentioned in the strategic MyPoW.
- CFS’ contribution to SDG 2 could be reflected in the strategic objectives and not just in a preamble.

2. Implementation of response to Recommendation 2

Only the Action 2.1 on the MYPoW structure and process was discussed at this meeting. Participants were invited to provide written comments to the co-facilitators and CFS Secretariat by 5 February 2018.

It was agreed to have a four-year strategic MYPoW (4Y-MyPoW). Suggestions on the MYPoW structure and process included:

- Having a new MYPoW format with an overarching objective of SDGs, supported by the strategic objectives.
- First part of MYPoW to be strategic and standing. It should include the CFS vision, elements of interpretation of what CFS is and the roles it plays, and the strategic objectives. The next section with the strategic objectives to be updated every 4 years. A rolling MYPoW has a horizon of 4 years, but the rolling section would be updated every two years.
- To consider how to contribute to SDG 2 over 3 MYPoWs (12 years, aligned with the Agenda 2030 timeframe).
- Having a parallel track for the first year of 4Y-MYPoW to discuss challenges and constraints of achieving certain roles so that strategic elements can be developed for these roles in the following MYPoW.
- To keep in mind the budget cycle and the work RBAs are doing on a regular basis – set up a timeline that matches and complements what is happening with RBAs and align with their policies.
- 4Y- MYPoW with a possibility of renewing it biannually.
- The rolling section of 4Y-MYPoW should be revised every year according to CFS’ needs.
- A calendar or timeline in 4Y-MYPoW towards 2030 to remind CFS of its eventual goal.

3. Draft response to Recommendations 10, 13 and 14

Recommendation 10

Chapeau text

The following was agreed:

- Para. 5: (i) update to reflect the important role of monitoring in improving the effectiveness of the work of CFS, not referring to monitoring as a core function of CFS, in line with what was stated in the CFS 44 final report; (ii) remove part of the sentence saying that the five elements of the approach recommended by the evaluation team were insufficient to form the basis of an overarching framework for monitoring.
- Para.6: acknowledge on-going reporting including for Agenda 2030 and ICN2.
- Para.8: explicit the fact that national governments had the responsibilities for detailed monitoring of national policies (first bullet) and that no terms of reference were agreed for the country in-depth assessment (second bullet).

Actions to be taken

It was agreed that the framework for monitoring in CFS should be reviewed taking into account previous discussions, decisions and experienced gained, and that the roles of CFS should be clarified at all levels.

Recommendation 13

Chapeau text

The following was agreed:

- Para.23: update last sentence, in line with the response to recommendation 12, removing reference to the fact that Bureau and Advisory Group members had no formal role to play in

promoting the work of HLPE, and reflecting that HLPE reports were not CFS-endorsed policy recommendations.

- Para. 24: revise with more succinct text on the intensification of coordination and collaboration between the HLPE Secretariat and CFS Secretariat.

Recommendation 14

Chapeau text

The following was agreed:

- Para. 28: update to clarify that the HLPE would prepare a shorter document for future HLPE reports, adapted to diverse, subject to the HLPE workload and available resources.
- Para. 29: update to reflect the importance of timely translation of HLPE reports and to remove reference to the need to make resources available for translation from the beginning of the planning process, which would be discussed under the implementation of Action 2.4.

Actions to be taken

It was agreed that in addition to providing more detailed information to the candidates on the selection process, selection criteria and time commitment expected from each project team members for future calls for nominations, the HLPE would also provide to the CFS Bureau more detailed statistics on the candidates (Action A14.1).

4. Follow-up

A request for inputs will be sent to all stakeholders to provide written comments on the following by 5 February:

- Succinct text and/or provide specific suggestions on how to improve the strategic objectives to strengthen the strategic content of the next MYPoW
- Propose new criteria for selecting MYPoW activities or suggest how to improve existing ones
- Inputs on the definition of MYPoW comprehensive planning phase to identify priority areas of work for MYPoW

The inputs received during the meeting will be incorporated into proposals for recommendation 1 and 2, for further discussion and finalization in forthcoming meetings scheduled from March 2018.

The revised draft response to recommendations 7, 10, 11, 12, 12 and 14 will be presented to the Bureau and Advisory Group on 31 January 2018 for discussion and for agreement by the Bureau at its meeting on the same day.