

## WHO comments on the CFS Evaluation questions regarding the Recommendations 1 and 2

Thank you for providing the documents, which we read with high interest and some concern. The Evaluation says that the Committee has little control over how its policy recommendations are used and applied at country level. This is of great concern. The concerns require a very energetic response from the Committee.

We would like to make some suggestions for consideration when formulating the response how to arrive at a strategic MYPOW. There seems to be an element that cuts across the set of the 6 functions of the CFS and that is:

### **First, the element of knowledge:**

If the expectation is that CFS has better control, it needs to have better knowledge of the uptake of its policy recommendations. This would mean having a sound system of tracking the recommendations, and the CFS having a sound policy monitoring role, which does not have to be done by the CFS per se, but could be done by all the partner agencies, and if possible within the scope of their existing national policy monitoring systems.

With this respect WHO would certainly be ready to contribute to the work that FAO is already doing in monitoring the food and agricultural policies. WHO has, for example, since some years, established a global database on the Implementation of Nutrition Actions (GINA) that is providing valuable information on the implementation of policies in nutrition. We have over 15.000 documents and over 500 programmes tracked. This could become a tool for that kind of monitoring function. Moreover, WHO does run periodic surveys and reports on nutrition policies and their uptake in countries.

### **Second, the element of voluntariness: CFS products are voluntary and not binding.**

Even if the products are of voluntary nature, this means that some countries have to volunteer to apply these in their national policy. This involves 3 elements:

- i. CFS should ask for the expression of voluntary leadership, countries to step up leading by example. CFS could ask, whenever a new policy product is approved by plenary, that one or more countries say that they are going to use the product. Although it is voluntary, the Committee should seek the expression of this commitment. This means to qualify the voluntary element with some voluntary leadership. And this has to be acknowledged, e.g. by identifying them as political champions and asking for countries' voluntary commitments.
- ii. **Accountability:** With this regard, it is important for CFS to understand what happens with regard to these voluntary recommendations. At the moment, this voluntary commitment is not expressed but also not asked for by the Committee. It is important to know why certain voluntary guidelines could not be taken up, to help the Committee better understand where the gaps are (e.g. whether there are gaps in capacities – then investments are needed in these lack of capacities; or there might be political gaps – then we have to invest more in political discussions). Leaving this unanswered is not constructive for future policy product development neither does it reflect a responsible use of resources. Countries should be asked to express whether they do or do not use the product, and the reasons. After all, the Committee is spending its resources on the development of these products and should be able to justify the use of its resources.
- iii. **Impact evaluation:** if countries step up voluntarily to use a CFS product and implement the policy recommendations, CFS should ask the countries to gather information on the impact and

share this information. If those policies are impactful and produce expected results, this should be demonstrated. This would be an incredibly powerful element for others to do it as well and invest in it for the improvement of the food security and nutrition situation of their populations. Therefore the impact evaluation element is absolutely critical. CFS could provide the platform for this learning.

In summary we would like to recommend the following elements to be considered in formulating the evaluation response and in order to arrive at a strategic MYPOW addressing the functions of the Committee, with particular focus on SO3 Uptake:

- The knowledge which is at hand
- The political champions and qualifying the voluntary nature; and ask countries to make SMART commitments after they have endorsed in plenary future voluntary guidelines
- The accountability, CFS needs to know what happens, if countries take it up or not, and the reasons for this.
- Impact evaluation: getting data about the impact evaluation.

The uptake monitoring does not have to be conducted by the Committee per se, but within the RBAs' collaboration, and here we would like to suggest to open this up to include [also the collaboration with other UN agencies as relevant](#).

With regard to SO2 policies, we would like to suggest to add also here, .....taking into account RBAs work [but not limited to this](#).

Regarding the Criteria for selecting MYPOW activities, as per Annex 5:

As CFS is called upon by the UN General Assembly to play a major role in the implementation of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition, we would like to suggest that this is adequately considered in the proposed text. For example, the aspect d) on Relevance referring to global priorities could include the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Therefore we would like to suggest that the proposed section B. MYPOW 2019-2023 makes also reference to the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition under global priorities.

We hope that these inputs are helpful.

With best regards.