

Outcomes of the global discussions on the follow-up to the Evaluation Meetings of 23 & 27 November 2017

The objectives of the meetings were to discuss the evaluation process and draft response to evaluation recommendations 7, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14.

1. Overview of the Evaluation Process

(i) Meetings to develop the response to recommendations 7, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14

The co-facilitators presented an overview of the evaluation process and it was agreed to continue to have open evaluation meetings to discuss the draft response to the remaining evaluation recommendations 7, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14. The draft response will be finalized as soon as possible (ideally by January 2018) so that efforts can be focused on the implementation of the response to all recommendations.

Three meetings have been planned to discuss and finalize the proposed draft response to recommendations 7, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14 on 23 and 27 November 2017 and 19 January 2018. The proposed draft response to these six recommendations will be presented to the Bureau and Advisory Group meetings scheduled on 31 January 2018, and agreed by the Bureau. The agreed draft response will be presented at CFS 45 for endorsement.

(ii) Meetings to implement the response to all recommendations

In line with what has been endorsed by the Committee at CFS 44, it is envisioned that the implementation of the response to all recommendations would be done through an open, participative and inclusive process. A number of meetings have been scheduled, and the co-facilitators will look at minimizing the number of meetings by having informal consultations and providing concrete actions or suggestions after these informal consultations, for discussion at the meetings. The co-facilitators welcomed informal consultations and written inputs from all stakeholders.

It was agreed to start the implementation process by focusing on the most strategic actions of the response to Recommendations 1 and 2. The first meeting to discuss these recommendations has been scheduled on 24 January 2018 (full day).

The tentative schedule for discussing the implementation of the rest of the recommendations will be firmed up and communicated to stakeholders as soon as possible.

2. Response to evaluation recommendations 7, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14

The co-facilitators introduced the recommendations, including the guiding questions circulated in advance for stakeholders' inputs.

Recommendation 7 (Actions by CFS members to improve CFS)

Participants underlined the fact that CFS Members have the primary responsibility for promoting CFS and the use and application of its products and recommendations, but support was needed from all

stakeholders as part of a collective effort. This was underlined in the response to Recommendation 11. The strong role of the Rome-based agencies towards this collective effort was emphasized. Participants mentioned a number of activities that are being implemented in countries, led by governments, RBAs, CSM, PSM and other stakeholders. There was however no consolidated overview of these activities.

It was agreed to accept this recommendation and to prepare a proposal for actions to be taken by Members to improve the functioning of CFS, including promoting the dissemination, use and application of CFS policy outcomes. Participants made several suggestions on elements to facilitate communication and awareness such as nomination by CFS members of a CFS focal point at country-level, early involvement of ministries and experts from capital in policy convergence processes to increase ownership of CFS outputs, increased collaboration and engagement with RBAs, packaging CFS outputs in a simpler and concise way, tailoring them to different audiences, establishing or taking advantage of existing platforms and structures at country-level, and inviting member countries to make voluntary commitments on the use and application of CFS products.

The recommendation on CFS members' contribution in cash or kind was expected to be addressed under Actions 3.1 and 3.2 of the response to the evaluation recommendation 3.¹

Recommendation 10 (Developing an overarching framework)

CFS recognized that monitoring was a core function of CFS and the importance of having a common understanding of the CFS monitoring function. CFS agreed to review the framework for monitoring CFS decisions and recommendations, clarifying the role of CFS in national level monitoring. The recommendation was however only partially accepted as the five elements of the approach recommended by the evaluation team did not cover all monitoring activities that were previously endorsed by CFS, i.e. in-depth voluntary assessment and the incremental development of an innovative monitoring mechanism for CFS, and were therefore not considered sufficient to form the basis of an overarching framework for monitoring.

It was underlined that the approach to monitoring should consider resource availability, cost-effectiveness and CFS added value in monitoring and build on and not duplicate existing monitoring mechanisms, in particular within RBAs.

Participants noted that points (i) and (ii) of the recommendation were already part of the monitoring approach endorsed by CFS 44². Global events were expected to contribute to raising awareness and understanding of CFS and CFS products as mentioned in the response to Recommendations 7 and 11. It was noted that independent evaluations, mentioned under Point (iv), are potentially useful if the scope is carefully defined and should be subject to resource availability. Point (v) has been addressed in the 2017 Annual Report: progress is monitored on implementing the decisions and recommendations of CFS 43 through the OEWGs and the Bureau and Advisory Group and Bureau meetings.

The regular conduct of a voluntary survey (Point (iii) of the recommendation) is part of the monitoring approach endorsed at CFS 41 and was considered cost-effective, providing useful information if guidelines are provided to respondents for meaningful answers. The role of CFS in conducting voluntary in-depth country assessments and in helping countries and regions monitor progress towards agreed

¹ CFS 2017/44/12 Rev.1

² "Monitoring the implementation of CFS main policy products and other CFS policy recommendations – with draft decision", (CFS 2017/44/11).

food security and nutrition objectives through the development of an innovative monitoring mechanism³ needs to be further discussed. It should consider (i) the conclusions of the Evaluation (detailed monitoring of policies, programmes and plans are the responsibility of national governments); (ii) the fact that no country has volunteered for an in-depth assessment and no resources have been made available since the CFS 41 decision, and; (iii) monitoring of trends and progress in achieving the food security and nutrition targets of the 2030 Agenda was already carried out under “*The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World*” (SOFI) and the Regional Panoramas on Food Security and Nutrition. CFS has been providing space to the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) which report on the implementation of national policies, programmes and plans in the context of SDG2 since CFS 43.

Recommendation 11 (Responsibilities for communication and activities)

It was agreed to partially accept the recommendation and to review CFS’ communication and outreach strategy endorsed by the Committee at its 40th session in 2013, to promote CFS and the dissemination, use and application of CFS policy products and recommendations. The strategy will define specific roles and responsibilities, as well as activities to support more effective communication and outreach efforts, and a timeline for implementation. Its implementation should be subject to resource availability.

Participants underlined that communication was the responsibility of all CFS Members and participants. Communication could either aim at raising awareness of CFS and its work or at promoting the use and application of CFS products and recommendations at country level and these objectives were distinct but could be mutually reinforcing. Member countries have primary responsibility for the latter, as already mentioned in the response to Recommendation 7. CFS Secretariat should continue to focus on raising awareness of CFS and its work and support outreach efforts of the CFS Chair and Vice Chair.

The meeting emphasized the key role of Rome-based agencies in facilitating the use and application of CFS products and recommendations at country level, providing advice and technical support on relevant topics to countries at their request, drawing upon various resources including CFS products.

Recommendation 12 (Dissemination and use of the HLPE reports)

It was agreed that HLPE was fundamental to CFS work. The recommendation was however rejected as CFS stakeholders, including member countries and RBAs, have no formal role to play in the dissemination of HLPE reports, and should be encouraged to disseminate and use CFS-endorsed policy recommendations.

It was recognized that more time should be dedicated to engaging and discussing the findings of the HLPE reports before embarking on the policy convergence process. Suggestions included inclusions in the HLPE reports of both convergent and divergent views of the HLPE project team. Participants

³ “... The CFS should help countries and regions, as appropriate, address the questions of whether objectives are being achieved and how food insecurity and malnutrition can be reduced more quickly and effectively. This will entail developing an innovative mechanism, including the definition of common indicators, to monitor progress towards these agreed upon objectives and actions taking into account lessons learned from previous CFS and other monitoring attempts...” (CFS Reform Document, CFS: 2009/2 Rev.2, paragraph 6 ii)

underlined the need for timely translation, subject to availability of resources. These issues will be addressed in the implementation of Action A2.1⁴.

Recommendation 13 (Updates on HLPE work to the Bureau & Advisory Group)

It was agreed to accept this recommendation. It was recalled that the Bureau and Advisory Group members had no formal role to play in promoting the work of the HLPE, consistent with the response to recommendation 12 of the evaluation.

It was agreed that the Bureau in consultation with the Advisory Group will propose: (i) how and when to lift engagement with the HLPE Steering Committee to discuss substantive issues in order to improve the use of HLPE outputs in CFS; and (ii) how to improve coordination and engagement between the CFS and HLPE Secretariats to maximise efficiency and effectiveness. It was also agreed that the HLPE Steering Committee will provide advice and focused interventions on substantive issues at the request of CFS, as a complement to the main HLPE products.

The meeting noted that the HLPE Steering Committee, through the Chair of the Steering Committee had, on various occasions, interacted with the Bureau and Advisory Group and intervened at the Open-Ended Working Group meetings. Regular and sustained interaction between the HLPE Steering Committee collectively and the Bureau and Advisory Group, in particular on substantive issues, was important to ensure optimal HLPE support to CFS policy convergence work. Such interaction could continue to be in the form of a joint informal meeting between the whole Steering Committee and the Bureau and Advisory Group, scheduled to be held after each renewal of the Steering Committee. It could also be through regular engagement with the Chair and/or Project team leaders at particular points. Regular interaction between the CFS Chair and HLPE Steering Committee Chair would help build stronger mutual understanding of the work of CFS and the role of the HLPE in supporting it.

The HLPE coordinator based in Rome attends Bureau and Advisory Group meetings, providing updates on HLPE work and answering queries or assisting to convey these to the Steering Committee. The participation of the HLPE Coordinator in the CFS Secretariat's weekly meetings should be continued to keep each other updated of their work and coordinate activities. Coordination and collaboration could be further intensified beyond the CFS Secretariat's weekly meetings to maximise efficiency and effective use of resources.

Recommendation 14 (Review HLPE process on calling for experts)

It was agreed to accept this recommendation. HLPE's efforts to ensure the transparency of the selection process of the HLPE Steering Committee and project team members, as well as the timing and dissemination of the call for nominations for the project team members were recognized. Participants emphasized the importance of ensuring scientific and technical relevance as well as gender balance and regional representation in the selection process. Several suggestions to improve the transparency of the selection process and the call for nominations for project team members were discussed, in line with inputs from the HLPE Steering Committee which were circulated in advance. These included providing more detailed information to the candidates in future calls for nominations on the selection process, selection criteria and the time commitment, as well as feedback to candidates once the process is completed as well as ensuring a wider diffusion of the calls for project team members.

⁴ Consultation Report for the preparation of the Response of the CFS Evaluation with draft decisions, CFS 2017/44/12 Rev1.

The meeting noted that the HLPE had taken steps to ensure that their reports were accessible to a diverse audience, both in terms of substance and format of its reports. The HLPE will consider having future reports also reviewed by non-experts in order to assess their readability and preparing shorter documents for future reports containing the main findings and recommendations, subject to the HLPE workload and available resources.

The importance of funding for translation of HLPE reports to make them more accessible to stakeholders and to ensure inclusiveness and participation in the policy convergence process was highlighted. This will be discussed under the implementation of Action 2.4, as the budget for MYPoW activities is expected to be established during the MYPoW comprehensive planning phase.

Conclusion and Follow-up

The proposed draft response to recommendations 7, 10, 11, 12, 12 and 14 will be circulated well in advance and finalized at the 19 January 2018 meeting. The result will to 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.