



منظمة الأغذية
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للأمم المتحدة

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Food
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Продовольственная и
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организация
Объединенных
Наций

Organización
de las
Naciones
Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

COUNCIL

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High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition

I. The need for expert advice on food security and nutrition

1. The soaring food price crisis over the last two years and the current financial crisis have raised global concern about their impact on food security and nutrition and provoked an animated debate over the various underlying causes, and on measures needed, at short and longer term, to address them. They have confirmed the need for an internationally coordinated mechanism that would provide the necessary expertise in support of global food security and improved nutrition.
2. The High-Level Conference on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy organized by FAO in June 2008, the G8 Summit held in Japan the following month, and the Special Session of the FAO Conference in November 2008 reiterated this need, and laid the foundation for possible reform of the governance of world food security including the establishment of a high-level international panel of experts on food security and nutrition (HLPE/FSN) as one of its important pillars.

II. Initiation of the process

3. In January 2009, to initiate the process towards the establishment of the HLPE/FSN, a draft Concept Note (Draft Zero) was prepared by the Secretariat and distributed to membership together with a covering letter from the Director-General inviting Member Governments and a selected list of relevant IGOs, NGOs and CSOs, including academic and research institutions and the CGIAR centres, to nominate experts for the HLPE/FSN. A letter has also been sent to members of the High-Level Task Force (HLTF) on the Global Food Security Crisis, as well as to relevant members of the CEB, inviting them to nominate experts. The draft Concept Note was meant to serve as a starting point to facilitate discussion among Membership and help them reach an agreement on such issues as the terms of reference, the governance, the structure and the operation of the HLPE/FSN.

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4. This draft Concept Note was presented, at their request, to several political Groups (G-77; Asia Group) and Governing Bodies (CFS Bureau; CFS Contact Group), and their comments as well as comments received in writing from Membership were taken into consideration to produce Draft One, which was distributed to all Permanent Representations for their review.

5. Following presentation and discussion of Draft One with members of the CFS Bureau and of the Contact Group of the CFS, Members made several comments and suggested changes to the text, leading to the production of the Draft Two of the Concept Note (see Appendix). In the ensuing discussion, it was agreed that the consultation process on the development of the Terms of Reference of the HLPE/FSN should be integrated in the on-going discussion concerning the reform of the CFS, and that a Working Group of the CFS Contact Group would be formed specifically to carry on this task. Therefore, the subsequent version of the Concept Note will be prepared based on the guidance of the CFS Bureau.

III. Action required from the Council:

6. The Council is requested to:

- Take note of initial action taken by the Secretariat to engage Membership in the development of the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition;
- Support the decision of the CFS Bureau to include the establishment of the HLPE/FSN as part of the CFS reform process, and to continue a dialogue among membership on its proposed terms of reference, structure and composition.

APPENDIX I

HIGH LEVEL PANEL OF EXPERTS ON FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION**1. BACKGROUND**

The High-Level Conference on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy organized by FAO in June 2008 and the G8 Summit held in Japan the following month have laid the foundation for possible reform of the governance of world food security. They have proposed, in particular, the establishment of an international panel of experts which could be an important support to the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in its analysis of world food security, its causes and consequences.

The Special Session of the FAO Conference of November 2008 “welcomed the proposal made by the Director-General in his statement to establish a High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security (HLPE) and requested the Secretariat to prepare terms of reference, in consultation with Member Nations, for the HLPE with a view to its establishment in 2009.”

Following the Madrid High-Level Meeting on Food Security for All, held in January 2009, the scope of the proposed Expert Panel was extended to cover also nutrition.

FAO has a long standing history of working with expert bodies, groups and panels that provide advice for normative, policy and standard setting work in the various disciplines of food and agriculture, including fisheries and forestry. Several expert bodies and panels have been operating without interruption for many decades. FAO has also an established legal framework (Article 6 of the FAO Constitution) and detailed procedures that govern the convening of expert panels/groups and meetings.

2. PURPOSE OF THE HIGH LEVEL PANEL OF EXPERTS ON FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

The main purpose of the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE/FSN) will be to provide Member States and Organizations of the CFS as well as other interested parties with expert advice on policy, technical and scientific issues with a view to improve food security and nutrition at the global, national and local level. It will constitute a platform for the analysis and synthesis of scientific knowledge on food security for use by decision makers in developing policies, strategies and programmes to address food insecurity and undernutrition.

The overall objective will be to provide, on a regular basis, governments and other actors concerned with food security and nutrition (Civil society, NGOs, local communities, private sector, etc.) with reliable peer-reviewed scientific information on the analysis of prevailing and prospective food security and nutrition situation.

The specific objectives of the HLPE/FSN will be to provide information, analyses and reviews of the state of World Food Security and its underlying causes. It would also present the controversial issues on which there is no consensus so as to guide decision in case of uncertainty. It would also undertake objective and consensual analyses on past or planned actions and measures that impact on food security and nutrition. It would finally play a role of systemic alert on the evolution of World Food Security through the identification of risks in the medium and long term.

3. BASIC PRINCIPLES

- The legitimacy and credibility of the HLPE/FSN in the field of analysis and prospective studies in the area of food security and nutrition must be constructed through the reliance on a network of highly qualified and reputed experts, recognised by the international scientific community in the different disciplines (nutrition, economics, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, sociology, natural resources, environment, etc.).
- The expertise included in the network must take into account the agro-ecological diversity of the World, and the socio-economic specificities of developing and developed countries. It should also take into account, within each group of experts, the representation of different schools of thoughts as well different related disciplines;
- The method for conducting analyses must enable the interaction between scientific and professional experts while remaining independent of the interests of decision makers and users of these analyses;
- The information, analyses and reviews which will be produced by the HLPE/FSN must be transparent (sources, method, results) so as to affirm the factual and scientific authority of the analysts who produced them, and inform the prospective users of the original authors. A particular effort would be needed to make these products accessible and understandable by non expert readers (public).

4. FUNCTIONS

The High Level Panel will have four main functions:

- Assess and characterize world food security and nutrition on a comprehensive, objective, open, harmonized and transparent basis using the latest scientific, technical and socio-economic literature produced worldwide relevant to the understanding of the extent of food insecurity and undernutrition in the world. This function aims at linking relevant information sources and systems, improving and harmonizing existing methodologies for the assessment of food security situation so as to enable a regular diagnosis of the global situation, based on regional results.
- Analyze the underlying causes of food insecurity in the world, including national and international policies that impact directly or indirectly on food security and nutrition. This analysis would guide on the choice of policies, strategies or interventions that need to be taken to eliminate or reduce the impact of the underlying causes on food insecurity and malnutrition.
- Assess the impact of past or planned measures on food security and nutrition. This function aims at evaluating the impact, in terms of food security and nutrition, of measures taken in the past or envisaged, and which may or may not aim at food security and/or nutrition (e.g. agricultural, economic, financial, fiscal, trade, energy policies, etc) but could have an impact on food security and/or nutrition.
- Identify and provide the necessary warning on systemic risks of food crises. This function aims at providing prospective analyses on possible evolution of global food security and nutrition, the specific risks that may affect them, the possible consequences of adapting certain intervention strategies, etc. so as to complement the analyses of prevailing conditions at global, regional and national levels with a long term vision.

Documents issued by the HLPE/FSN should be of high scientific and technical standards, and aim to reflect a range of views, expertise and wide geographical coverage.

The HLPE/FSN would not carry out research. It bases its assessments and analyses on peer reviewed data, studies and research results available in the open scientific and technical literature

as well as on work carried out by specialized institutions, academic and research bodies, the CGIAR centers and other research institutions in different parts of the world.

The HLPE/FSN is composed of two main structures:

- THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION (REFERRED TO AS SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE): composed of 25-30 high level international experts covering various disciplines directly or indirectly related to food security (e.g. agricultural economics, population dynamics, nutrition assessment, crop production, animal, fisheries and forestry production, agri-business, wildlife management, food trade, etc. See indicative list of subjects in Annex. 1). This Scientific Committee will be responsible primarily for ensuring the scientific and technical underpinning of the documentation prepared for discussion by the CFS, including the annual world food security assessment reports, studies on emerging issues, etc. The Scientific Committee also undertakes critical reviews of specific food security-related issues that may be identified by the CFS. Members of the Scientific Committee are selected among well known experts, scholars, eminent personalities and senior staff from relevant organizations, including international research institutions such as the CGIAR. They are designated by the CFS for a four-year term, renewable only once, on proposal by the Director-General of FAO, after consultation with concerned countries and in accordance with procedures outlined in paragraph 5 below. The Chair and Vice-Chairs (number to be determined) of the Scientific Committee could be either nominated by the CFS or elected by Members of the Scientific Committee.

Members of the Scientific Committee participate in their individual capacity and not as representatives of their governments, institutions or organizations. The selection of the members of the Scientific Committee takes into account the complementarity of their respective areas of expertise to cover all food security related subjects, geographical distribution, gender and other relevant factors. The Scientific Committee is assisted in its task by a network of experts covering all areas of relevance to world food security and nutrition (see below).

The Scientific Committee will interact closely with the CFS Bureau and Secretariat to guide the preparation/review of the food security and nutrition assessment report(s) and other documents to be discussed at the CFS. It also identifies specific technical and scientific issues that require the input of specialised expert groups from the Network of Experts (see below).

More detailed Draft Terms of Reference of the Scientific Committee are included in Annex 1.

- NETWORK OF EXPERTS ON FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION (BRIEFLY REFERRED TO AS THE NETWORK OF EXPERTS): composed of 400 to 500 national and international experts working in different disciplines related to food security and nutrition. These experts come from governmental and non-governmental institutions as well as academia, private sector, UN organizations and other stakeholders, and are known nationally and internationally for their scientific and technical work on food security-related issues. The Network of Experts forms the main roster from which selected experts and expert groups are designated by the Scientific Committee to prepare specific papers or generate supporting data or scientific information needed for the preparation of the assessment reports or other materials for the CFS. The Network includes experts nominated by FAO Member countries, international, intergovernmental or non-governmental organizations and covers all regions of the world and all relevant disciplines. The selection is carried out by a panel under the authority of the Chair of the Scientific Committee. Members of the Network of experts may be invited in their own right to contribute to the work of the CFS, Working Groups or Task Forces. The Network of Experts may include staff from relevant technical units in agencies, funds and programmes of the UN, as well as other relevant organizations.

5. PROCEDURES

- FOR THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE: The 25-30 members of the Scientific Committee will be selected and designated by the CFS, in accordance with relevant FAO legal framework (Article 6 of the Constitution) and procedures. These include: an open call for experts; selection of the experts by a panel taking into consideration their respective competencies; representation of different schools of thoughts on the subjects to be examined; geographical representation of the entire group; independence; etc. A “Declaration of Interest” is signed by each selected expert and kept on file. The list of experts, members of the Scientific Committee is maintained by the Secretariat and posted on the CFS website.

- FOR THE NETWORK OF EXPERTS : Members of the Network of Experts are selected and appointed by CFS in accordance with FAO procedures and after consultation with concerned governments, in response to the request sent by FAO to governments, civil society organizations, NGOs, UN organizations, academia and relevant international institutions, including those of the CGIAR system.. The decision to include individual experts in the Network is taken by the Director-General on recommendation by the selection panel and endorsement by the Chair, Scientific Committee. Criteria for the selection of experts would be established and applied by the selection panel. The Network of Experts is maintained by the Secretariat and published on the CFS Website.

Expert Groups/Task Forces may be established to address specific technical subjects. These Groups would normally meet virtually, coordinated by the Group Chair designated by the Chair of the Scientific Committee and facilitated by the Secretariat.

6. SECRETARIAT

A dedicated secretariat or a dedicated group of an expanded CFS Secretariat will be established to assist the HLPE/FSN in its work, including:

- the establishment and maintenance of the roster of experts;
- correspondence with the members of the Scientific Committee and of the Network of Experts;
- the organization of meetings of the Scientific Committee as well as Working Groups, Task Forces and others as required;
- the periodical meetings between the Scientific Committee and the CFS Bureau;
- the commissioning of work and the dissemination of information, including through internet;
- the development and maintenance of the HLPE/FSN website;
- the mobilization of necessary resources for the functioning of the 2 structures of the High Level Panel.

The secretariat will include a minimum of two professionals and one GS staff with the appropriate qualifications and experience in the management of expert bodies/groups. It could be strengthened with seconded staff following approval by the Director-General and the Chairperson of the CFS. The secretariat will be functionally accountable to the Chair of the Scientific Committee, under the general coordination of the Secretary of the CFS. It will be hosted by FAO.

ANNEX 1

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE**HIGH LEVEL PANEL OF EXPERTS ON FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION**

The main purpose of the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE/FSN) is to provide Member States and Organizations of the CFS as well as other interested parties with expert advice on policy, technical and scientific issues with a view to improve food security and nutrition at the global, national and local level.

It constitutes a platform for the analysis and review of scientific knowledge on food security for use by decision makers in developing strategies and programmes to address food insecurity and undernutrition.

MAIN FUNCTIONS:

- assessment and characterization of world food security and nutrition on a comprehensive, objective, open, harmonized and transparent basis using the latest scientific, technical and socio-economic literature produced worldwide relevant to the understanding of the extent of food insecurity and undernutrition in the world. This would be achieved through:
 - linking information sources and systems relevant to food security and nutrition to enable a comprehensive analysis of the situation and a global geographical coverage;
 - improving and harmonizing existing methodologies for the assessment of food security situation so as to enable a regular diagnosis of the global situation, based on regional results.
- analysis of the underlying causes of food insecurity in the world, including national and international policies that impact directly or indirectly on food security and nutrition.
- providing advice on the choice of strategies, policies or interventions that need to be taken to eliminate or reduce the impact of the underlying causes on food insecurity and malnutrition.
- assessment of the impact of past or planned measures on food security and nutrition and evaluation of the impact, in terms of food security and nutrition, of measures taken in the past or envisaged, and which may or may not aim at food security and/or nutrition (e.g. agricultural policy, commercial policy, energy policy, etc...) but could impact on food security and/or nutrition.
- Identification and provision of the necessary warning on systemic risks of food crises, through conducting prospective analyses on possible evolution of global food security and nutrition, the specific risks that may affect them, the possible consequences of adapting certain intervention strategies, etc.
- provision of guidance to the CFS to enable it to formulate appropriate policies, strategies and programmes to improve food security and nutrition at all levels (local, national, regional and global).