

ACTION PLAN TO STRENGTHEN THE UPTAKE OF CFS POLICY PRODUCTS

INTRODUCTION

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) was reformed to constitute “*the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for a broad range of committed stakeholders to work together in a coordinated manner and in support of country-led processes towards the elimination of hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition for all human beings*”¹. The Committee strives “*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*”².

Using a multistakeholder and evidence-based approach, CFS develops and endorses policy products³ on a wide range of food security and nutrition-related topics. In order to strengthen its impact, it is essential to increase awareness, ownership, use and usefulness of CFS policy products at local, national, regional and global levels.

This Action Plan is intended to present a roadmap with actions for different CFS stakeholders that are responsible and accountable for **promoting the uptake**⁴ of CFS policy products at all levels towards the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.

While uptake efforts are already being undertaken by CFS stakeholders, this exercise is based on the recognition that strengthening the usefulness, ownership, awareness and use of CFS policy products is a collective responsibility that requires **joint efforts** as well as **close collaboration** between relevant stakeholders. While **Member States have the primary responsibility** for promoting the CFS and the use and application of its policy products, this needs to be the result of a **collaboration with and strong engagement and participation by the different CFS stakeholders**, such as the UN Rome-based Agencies

¹ CFS Reform Document (CFS2009/2/Rev.2). 2009

² Ibidem

³ For the purpose of this Action Plan, the reference to “*policy products*” is in line with the description of CFS policy function provided in Annex A to the agreed Implementation of the Response to the CFS Evaluation (CFS2018/45/3): “*voluntary [non-binding] global policy guidance for policy convergence and coherence to achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote the progressive realization of the right to adequate food*” which is developed through “*inclusive, evidence and consensus-based processes*”, such as CFS Voluntary Guidelines and CFS Policy Recommendations.

⁴ For the purpose of this Action Plan, promoting uptake refers to increasing the “*usefulness*”, “*use*”, “*awareness*” and “*ownership*” of CFS policy processes and products. To have a common understanding, the following description of these terms are proposed, without representing a precedent for other CFS workstreams or for future CFS negotiated policy products:

- a) Usefulness: the more a CFS policy product responds to the needs of CFS stakeholders, the more useful it can be. The degree of usefulness depends on what happens prior to the endorsement of a policy product, and it is influenced by factors concerning the prioritization of topics for CFS policy workstreams, the process that leads to the development of a CFS policy product, and the concreteness and applicability of the agreed recommendations.
- b) Use: the use of a CFS policy product happens after its endorsement when strategies, programmes and policies are designed and developed, based on the CFS product. Usefulness and use are intrinsically linked to each other: the more useful a policy product in terms of the topic and the actionability, the higher the likelihood that this product is used.
- c) Awareness is a necessary prerequisite for the use of a policy product by CFS stakeholders. The more stakeholders are aware of a policy product, the higher the likelihood that it is used.
- d) Ownership is the level of identification of CFS stakeholders with a policy product, or parts of it, and it impacts its use by the relevant stakeholders. It can vary across and within stakeholder categories. Ownership and usefulness are interlinked (the more a policy product ensures broad ownership, the more it is perceived as useful, and vice versa).

(RBA), that play a key role in supporting their use, on a demand-driven basis, and other UN and international bodies, financial, research and philanthropic institutions, civil society and the private sector. This collaborative effort requires coordination, which is intended to be promoted in the framework of this CFS workstream dedicated to strengthening the uptake of CFS policy products.

The Action Plan is structured around **three main sections** that include tiered actions to be addressed by different CFS stakeholders, with proposed activities to be undertaken, **based on the availability of the required budgetary and extrabudgetary resources**, to strengthen the usefulness and ownership of CFS policy products, promote awareness and their use among intended users, and to advance cross-cutting areas that refer to the ability to raise resources, monitor and evaluate activities and provide a platform for discussions for interested stakeholders. A table with indications on stakeholders responsible for the implementation of specific actions, tentative timeline for their completion as well as budget requirements, is annexed at the end of the Action Plan.

This Action Plan represents ongoing discussions among CFS stakeholders about how to dynamically and over time seek to constantly improve the uptake of CFS products. This will reflect the reality that identifying best practices and implementing them is an ongoing process. As such, this Action Plan is meant to represent a guide and the starting point for a living process that draws on different experiences, practices and actions.

PART 1 – ACTIONS TO STRENGTHEN THE USEFULNESS AND OWNERSHIP OF CFS POLICY PRODUCTS

A. Promote an effective prioritization of topics for CFS policy convergence processes

1.A.1 - **CFS Members and Participants**⁵, in line with the prioritization criteria outlined in [Annex B of the CFS Implementation Report](#), will foster an effective and streamlined prioritization of topics for CFS policy convergence processes during the development of each **CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW)**. A strategy for promoting awareness and use, including resource requirements, will be linked to each policy convergence process and included in each CFS MYPoW.

1.A.2 - The **RBAs, other UN bodies and international organizations** should contribute their technical expertise and capacities to ensure that CFS policy products add value to relevant policy work.

B. Promote the development of concrete and actionable CFS policy products, their ownership and visibility, through inclusive CFS policy convergence processes

1.B.1 - **CFS Members and Participants** will ensure that CFS policy products are **concrete, concise, understandable, user-friendly and actionable** in terms of structure and language. In this regard, CFS policy products will focus on potential users and implementers at national and local levels, being guided by the CFS vision and the needs of the people most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition and

⁵ In line with paragraph 11 of the CFS Reform Document, CFS Participants include representatives of UN agencies and bodies with a specific mandate in the field of food security and nutrition, civil society and non-governmental organizations, international agricultural research systems, international and regional financial institutions, and representatives of private sector associations and private philanthropic foundations.

anchored to realities on the ground. Sufficient time for the provision of inputs and discussions, as well as negotiations, and where possible, informal sessions to discuss controversial topics will be provided.

1.B.2 - **CFS Members and Participants** will apply **inclusive CFS policy convergence processes**, in line with the CFS Reform Document and its Rules of Procedure. **Meaningful participation** of relevant stakeholders from different sectors, including representatives from all relevant ministries (including experts from capitals) as well as from other constituencies is expected, to help increase policy convergence as well as ownership of the final output at local, national and regional levels.

1.B.3 - The **RBAs, other UN bodies and international organizations** should provide **technical inputs** to the development of CFS policy products and promote collaboration with existing UN initiatives and processes, in the context of ongoing CFS policy convergence processes, as a way of increasing future ownership, visibility and use of CFS policy products.

PART 2 – ACTIONS TO PROMOTE AWARENESS AND USE OF CFS POLICY PRODUCTS

A. Develop uptake strategies and activities, and provide technical support

2.A.1 - The **CFS Secretariat**, in collaboration with technical units of the **RBAs**, and with the involvement of relevant stakeholders, **will develop a toolkit** that various stakeholders can use to promote awareness and use and to enhance the understanding of CFS policy products at all levels. This toolkit should include indications of how different stakeholders can support the integration of CFS policy products into policies, programmes and legal frameworks as a way to ensure a more coordinated and impactful implementation⁶. This toolkit should include **an analysis based on the experiences** from the uptake of CFS main policy products that draws lessons learned, successful cases, challenges faced, main barriers and enablers for success. The analysis is intended to identify different patterns as well as key drivers and factors that led to the use or to the lack of use of CFS policy products.

2.A.2 - The **CFS Secretariat** will develop an **action-oriented communication strategy** for consistent and coherent dissemination and promotion of CFS policy products to relevant target audiences. This communication strategy will make strategic use of different media platforms, look at strengthening collaboration with different media outlets, explore innovative approaches to showcase the impact of CFS policy products, and promote the development of easy-to-understand materials that give visibility to CFS policy products, particularly those which require enhanced communication efforts due to their recent adoption.

2.A.3 – **CFS Members** should **use and apply CFS policy products** in national strategies, legislation, policies and programmes, adapting their implementation to national priorities and realities, targeting activities to relevant groups and stakeholders, and developing inclusive decision-making processes, with engagement of relevant stakeholders, while prioritizing the voices of the most affected by food insecurity.

⁶ Examples of activities and tools that can be developed to promote the use of CFS policy products include, but are not limited to, handbooks, technical guides, e-learning and capacity building exercises, and policy dialogues.

2.A.4 - **CFS Members, the RBAs, other UN bodies and international organizations** should use the content of **CFS policy products as a reference for the preparation of their projects** and programmes to ensure their alignment to CFS policy guidance.

2.A.5 - **Civil Society and non-governmental organizations and their networks**⁷ should continue to develop **training, advocacy and capacity building activities** for local and national practitioners engaged in the use of CFS policy products, supported by the RBAs as feasible.

2.A.6 - **Private sector organizations** should continue to support and encourage **companies to integrate** the principles and objectives of **CFS policy products into their corporate social responsibility, programmes, projects, and investments.**

2.A.7 - **Philanthropic foundations** should support and encourage the **integration of CFS policy products into programmes** dealing with food security and nutrition and disseminate them across their networks of donors.

2.A.8 - **The RBAs, other UN bodies and international organizations**, in coordination with UN Resident Coordinators and UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) National Convenors, should, in a coordinated way and on a demand-driven basis, promote the integration and adaptation of CFS policy products into national and regional legislations, technical programmes and policy frameworks, through their **technical, capacity building and institutional support** activities to governments and national authorities as well as regional institutions.

2.A.9 - The **RBAs, other UN bodies and international organizations**, in particular **International Financial Institutions**, should explore **opportunities for joint programming and resource mobilization** to support the implementation of CFS policy products, leveraging their comparative advantages and expertise.

2.A.10 – The **CFS Chairperson** will **advocate for use of CFS policy products** by decision and policy makers and collaborate with CFS Members, RBAs and other relevant stakeholders to find opportunities to disseminate and raise awareness about them.

2.A.11 - **All CFS stakeholders** should promote **the translation of CFS policy products into national and local languages** in order to make them available to and usable by a wider audience.

B. Creating an enabling environment at national level with empowered stakeholders, inclusive institutions and enhanced policy and legal frameworks

2.B.1 - The **CFS Secretariat**, in collaboration with technical units of the **RBAs**, and with the involvement of relevant stakeholders, will carry out a **mapping exercise of existing national and regional multistakeholder platforms** in the field on food security and nutrition with a view to strengthening linkages and fostering cross-sectoral dialogues to facilitate the use of CFS policy products.

2.B.2 - **CFS Members** should establish or strengthen and use **national multistakeholder and cross-sectoral structures and mechanisms** in the field of food security and nutrition to elevate the platform for the promotion of the use of CFS policy products and to discuss how these can be implemented and adapted to national contexts as well as how they can foster dialogue and collaboration between different

⁷ See CFS Reform Document, paragraph 11 ii).

stakeholders, while following a human rights-based approach to food security and giving priority representation to organizations of those sectors of the population most affected by food insecurity and those most capable of taking action on food security and nutrition. Furthermore, these platforms could play a key role in informing the development of national negotiating positions in the context of CFS policy convergence processes.

2.B.3 - **CFS Members** should identify a **CFS focal point** at country level in the most relevant ministries or multistakeholder platforms that could be actively and regularly engaged in promoting the dissemination, use and application of CFS policy products as a way for countries to optimize information sharing and collaboration on CFS-related matters.

C. Mainstreaming CFS policy products and strengthening linkages with international strategies and fora

2.C.1 - **CFS Members** should advocate, with the support of CFS participants, for active engagement and a **role for CFS in relevant international fora** and for the inclusion of CFS policy products in multilateral negotiations.

2.C.2 - The **RBA**s, **other UN bodies and international organizations** should organize regular **awareness raising, capacity building and sharing of best practices sessions** with their staff at Headquarters and at regional and national levels, including with their national representatives and Resident Coordinators, to inform them about CFS policy products, discuss how they can inform their work at all levels and create synergies with ongoing initiatives, including, but not limited to, the Rio Conventions, UNFSS National Pathways and G20.

2.C.3 - The **RBA**s, **other UN bodies and international organizations** should strengthen the **presence of CFS** and include **regular agenda items on CFS** in the context of global and regional meetings of their governing bodies and strengthen linkages between CFS and their technical committees in order to raise awareness about CFS policy products, generate discussions on how they could inform the development of their programmes of work and identify potential synergies and ways of collaboration.

PART 3 – CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF STRENGTHENED UPTAKE OF CFS POLICY PRODUCTS

3.1 – The **CFS** will strengthen its **strategy for monitoring and evaluating the use of its policy products**, based upon the existing monitoring framework that was endorsed in 2018. In particular, a consolidated overview of uptake activities should be provided by adding to the CFS webpage a **digital repository** that includes information on the use of CFS policy products at global, regional, national and local levels. The preparation of the CFS repository should be carried out by the CFS Secretariat, in close collaboration with technical units of the **RBA**s that are involved in CFS uptake activities, and with the involvement of relevant stakeholders. This exercise should also be informed by the outcomes of the different CFS Global Thematic Events organized throughout the years. There should also be a space where CFS stakeholders can at any time comment on the current relevance of a specific policy product.

3.2 – **Dedicated regular agenda** items will be held **during CFS plenaries to discuss progress, challenges and ways to improve the use of CFS policy products** at all levels. These dialogues could be an

opportunity to share and discuss lessons learned from CFS uptake experiences, particularly in pilot countries that uptake CFS products on a voluntary basis, with a view to informing future strategies for the promotion of the use of CFS policy products and feeding the preparation of the future CFS programmes of work by identifying best practices.

3.3 – The **CFS Bureau and Advisory Group** will **track the implementation of the present Action Plan**. Furthermore, the **CFS Secretariat** will periodically organize **informal intersessional dialogues** to provide a space for CFS stakeholders to report on the activities carried out in response to the Action Plan, analyse CFS funding requirements and ways of mobilizing resources, to raise awareness about the time required for effective policy change as well as to identify ways to link the CFS monitoring mechanism with other existing initiatives and mechanisms. Furthermore, discussions could focus on ways to improve data collection of use of CFS policy products, including through questionnaires to countries, and collaboration with reporting systems existing at country level. CFS plenary sessions will involve a dedicated agenda item on tracking the implementation of the Action Plan by the Bureau and Advisory Group, based also on these informal dialogues and deliberations.

3.4 - The **High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE-FSN)** will prepare a **compilation of key elements** from CFS policy products to help relevant stakeholders identify gaps in CFS policy products as well as guide action towards the progressive realization of the right to adequate food and the transformation of agriculture and food systems.

3.5 - **CFS Members and all relevant stakeholders** should engage in **mobilization** of voluntary financial and non-financial, public and private **contributions** to support the development of activities aimed at promoting the usefulness, ownership, awareness and use of CFS policy products.

ANNEX A – TABLE OUTLINING ACTIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES, TENTATIVE TIMELINE AND BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

The table below is intended to provide an overview of the tentative timeline and budget estimate (where possible) for each of the recommended actions included in this document. The first group of actions are clustered given their relevance and impact on the CFS MYPoW 2024-2027 while the second group includes all the remaining actions.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS THAT HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE ROLLING SECTION OF THE CFS MYPoW 2024-2027			
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE STAKEHOLDERS	TENTATIVE TIMELINE⁸	BUDGET ESTIMATE (USD)
2.A.1 – Development of the uptake toolkit	CFS Secretariat in collaboration with technical units of the RBAs and the involvement of relevant stakeholders	12 months	70.000
2.A.2 – Development of the CFS communication strategy	CFS Secretariat	6 months	20.000
2.A.10 – Outreach by the CFS Chairperson	CFS Chairperson	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs ⁹
2.B.1 Mapping of existing national and regional multistakeholder platforms	CFS Secretariat in collaboration with technical units of the RBAs and the involvement of relevant stakeholders	12 months	80.000
3.1 – Development of a digital repository on the use of CFS policy products	CFS Secretariat	12 months	100.000
3.2 - Organization of dedicated items in CFS plenaries	Bureau and Advisory Group and CFS Secretariat	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
3.3 – Track of the implementation of the Action Plan and organization of regular informal intersessional uptake dialogues	Bureau and Advisory Group (tracking) and CFS Secretariat (dialogues)	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs

⁸ The implementation of the actions recommended in the first group will start after the required extra-budgetary resources are made available.

⁹ “Scalable according to needs” does not mean that the implementation of the foreseen activities would not bear any cost. Instead, this means that it is not possible to quantify it either because this would be under the responsibility of another institution or actor or because at the moment, we do not have enough information to establish the cost equivalent of that specific exercise. For example, the indicative amount of resources required to cover the costs of the CFS Chairperson’s outreach activities – which would mainly refer to travels and logistical support – could be defined only after an outreach plan is developed.

3.4 – Compilation of key elements from CFS policy products	HLPE-FSN	6-8 months	60.000
ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED ACTIONS TO CFS STAKEHOLDERS			
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE STAKEHOLDERS	TENTATIVE TIMELINE	BUDGET ESTIMATE
1.A.1 - Effective and streamlined prioritization of topics for CFS policy convergence processes	CFS Members and Participants	During the preparation of each CFS MYPoW	Scalable according to needs
1.A.2 - Bringing technical expertise to ensure added value of CFS policy products	RBAs, other UN bodies and other international organizations	During the preparation of each CFS MYPoW	Scalable according to needs
1.B.1 – Development of concrete, understandable, user-friendly and actionable CFS policy products	CFS Members and Participants	During CFS policy convergence processes	Scalable according to needs
1.B.2 – Development of inclusive CFS policy convergence processes	CFS Members and Participants	During CFS policy convergence processes	Scalable according to needs
1.B.3 – Provision of technical inputs and collaboration with UN initiatives during CFS policy convergence processes	RBAs, other UN bodies and other international organizations	During CFS policy convergence processes	Scalable according to needs
2.A.3 - Use and application of CFS policy products in national strategies, policies and programmes	CFS Members	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
2.A.4 - Use of content of CFS policy products as a reference for the preparation of projects	RBAs, other UN bodies and other international organizations and CFS Members	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
2.A.5 - Develop training, advocacy and capacity building activities for local and national practitioners	Civil society, non-governmental organizations and their networks	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
2.A.6 – Support to companies in integrating CFS policy products into corporate social responsibility, programmes, projects and investments	Private sector organizations	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
2.A.7 – Support integration of CFS policy products into FSN programmes and disseminate	Philanthropic foundations	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs

them across their networks of donors			
2.A.8 – Provision of technical, capacity building and institutional support to governments, national authorities and regional institutions	RBAs, other UN bodies and other international organizations, in coordination with UN Resident Coordinators and UNFSS National Convenors	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
2.A.9 – Exploring opportunities for joint programming and resource mobilization	RBAs, other UN bodies and other international organizations and International financial institutions	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
2.A.11 – Promotion of the translation of CFS policy products into national and local languages	All CFS stakeholders	Continuous exercise	5.000-10.000 per language
2.B.2 - Use of national multistakeholder and cross-sectoral structures and mechanisms in the field of food security and nutrition	CFS Members	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
2.B.3 – Identification of CFS focal points at country level	CFS Members	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
2.C.1 - Advocating for an active role for CFS in relevant fora and for the inclusion of CFS policy products in multilateral negotiations	CFS Members	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
2.C.2 – Organization of regular awareness raising, capacity building and best practices sessions	RBAs, other UN bodies and other international organizations	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
2.C.3 - Inclusion of regular agenda items on CFS in meetings of governing bodies and technical committees	RBAs, other UN bodies and other international organizations	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs
3.5 - Engagement in mobilization of contributions to promote the use of CFS policy products	CFS Members and all relevant stakeholders	Continuous exercise	Scalable according to needs