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Food and Agriculture
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Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
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FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA

Thirtieth Session

Khartoum, the Sudan, 19-23 February 2018

**Outcomes of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and
follow-up actions at regional and country level**

Executive Summary

CFS held two plenary sessions since the last Regional Conference. In line with its role in global policy convergence, CFS endorsed Policy Recommendations for Connecting Smallholders to Markets. CFS also made progress in the preparation of policy recommendations to advance nutrition and in the development of common understanding of issues among CFS stakeholders related to urbanization and rural transformation, to establish the feasibility of informed CFS policy convergence and coordination work. Policy recommendations were developed on the basis of the two reports produced by the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE): Sustainable Agricultural Development for Food Security and Nutrition: What Roles for Livestock? and Sustainable forestry for Food Security and Nutrition. The Committee organized a Forum on Women's Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition in 2017 the results of which were presented to CFS Plenary, drawing attention to the need for governments to stand behind their commitments by translating those commitments into national policies, programmes, investments and adequate human and financial resources.

CFS endorsed its Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) for the biennium 2018-2019.

Matters to be brought to the attention of the Regional Conference

CFS invites the Regional Conference to:

- (i) take note of the CFS outcomes and planned activities;

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(ii) consider the CFS MYPOW and encourage the active participation of all stakeholders in the activities to be carried out by the Committee in 2018-2019, particularly to contribute to the development of terms of reference toward a global policy instrument on nutrition and food systems;

(iii) CFS calls for the conference's input to provide a context-specific substantive contribution on nutrition also in light of the regional symposia. CFS intends to build upon regional and national experiences on how to improve on current food and future food systems to deliver healthy, safe and nutritionally balanced diet for populations, as well as lessons learned and identified gaps stemming from such experiences.

I. Introduction

1. The purpose of this document is to provide an update to the FAO Regional Conference on the main outcomes of the CFS since the Regional Conference last met in 2016, as well as on the main activities to be carried out by the Committee in 2018-2019.
2. Since the reform of CFS in 2009, the key features and outcomes of the Plenary Sessions of CFS were presented at the last four FAO Regional Conferences in 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016.

II. Policy convergence

A. Connecting Smallholders to Markets: Policy Recommendations

3. Following the High-Level Forum on Connecting Smallholders to Markets held in 2015, CFS developed and endorsed policy recommendations in 2016 (CFS 2016/43/5) and encouraged all stakeholders to disseminate and make use of them, supporting their application when formulating relevant strategies, policies and programmes.
4. CFS, with the key financial contribution provided by the multilateral Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) and the support of the FAO, organized two fora to discuss how to support food security and nutrition in Africa by increasing smallholders' access to markets. In order to ensure inclusive participation, information on participation was distributed widely through CFS channels. The first event took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 13 September 2017 with a national perspective and the second event was held on 20 September 2017 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, and had a regional perspective.

B. Nutrition

5. CFS work on nutrition in 2016-2017 was guided by the Strategy on CFS engagement in advancing nutrition (CFS 2016/43/9) endorsed in October 2016. The strategy called for CFS to accelerate its efforts and proposed a framework to step up its contribution to the global fight against malnutrition in all its forms, consistent with its mandate, also in the context of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025) and of the implementation of the ICN2 Framework for Action. The strategy foresees CFS work to advance global nutrition efforts along three interconnected and mutually reinforcing functions: policy convergence; lessons and good practice sharing; and tracking progress.
6. In accordance with the strategy, CFS is expected to start substantive discussions in 2018-2019 to develop Terms of Reference (ToRs) for endorsement at CFS 45 in 2018 to guide future policy convergence work on nutrition and food systems. The ToRs will inter alia identify the main thematic area(s) warranting specific attention from CFS in line with its mandate and added value, and without duplication and interference with other fora. The ToRs will also identify the type of policy instrument that would be developed, with provisions included on expected results, primary users, modalities for dissemination and use by CFS members and stakeholders in the context of the Nutrition Decade Work Programme, and facilitate potential partnerships in the application.
7. As part of CFS' contribution to the Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025), the preparation of the ToRs will benefit from the findings of the report of the HLPE on Nutrition and Food Systems that was launched at CFS 44 in October 2017; the outcomes of the 2017 intersessional events (on investment for healthy food systems; impact assessment of policies to support healthy food environments and healthy diets; and on achieving by 2025 the Global Target on Stunting) held to develop a common understanding of some of the most prominent issues around nutrition; the lesson-sharing and progress reporting activities held at CFS 44, to take stock of progress, identify challenges and specific experiences worth sharing; and the Regional Symposia on Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy Diets co-organized by FAO and WHO in 2017 in all FAO regions.

8. Once approved, these ToRs would form a substantive part of the eventual agreed outcome and lead to policy guidance presented to Plenary for endorsement tentatively in October 2020.

C. Urbanization and rural transformation

9. As a follow-up to the Forum on Urbanization, Rural Transformation and Implications for Food Security and Nutrition organized at CFS 43 in October 2016 and the adoption of the New Urban Agenda, CFS issued a document: Addressing food security and nutrition in the context of changing rural-urban dynamics: experiences and effective policy approaches (CFS 2017/44/6), based on inputs provided by CFS members and participants, to help develop a common understanding of issues among CFS stakeholders and possibly lay the basis for informed CFS policy convergence and coordination work. In 2017, CFS compiled experiences and good practices related to urbanization and rural transformation, which identified key messages and policy implications that were discussed at CFS 44 in October 2017.

10. The objective of CFS in 2018 is to carry out further exploratory work in order to assess the feasibility of and, if feasible, work towards policy convergence to support governments and other stakeholders at the national and local level in addressing food security and nutrition within the context of changing rural-urban dynamics.

11. Taking into consideration the interest expressed by CFS stakeholders in continuing to explore both general and specific issues pertaining to the broad topic of urbanization and rural transformation in relation to food security and nutrition, two intersessional events will be organized in 2018 on: (i) The food security and nutrition impacts of urbanization and rural transformation on lower income groups (smallholders, landless, net food buyers, informal sector traders, low income urban consumers) and how to address them and their root causes; and ii) Promoting youth and women engagement and employment in food systems across the rural-urban continuum, including linking producers to markets.

D. Policy recommendations based on the reports of the HLPE

12. In 2016 and 2017, CFS endorsed the policy recommendations resulting from the negotiations carried out by CFS Members and other stakeholders, based on the reports prepared by the HLPE commissioned by CFS, namely:

- 1) Sustainable Agricultural Development for Food Security and Nutrition: What Roles for Livestock in 2016?; and
- 2) Sustainable Forestry for Food Security and Nutrition in 2017.

13. In addition, the HLPE produced a note on Critical and Emerging Issues for Food Security and Nutrition in 2017, which was used to inform the preparation of the CFS MYPOW for the biennium 2018-2019.

14. All HLPE reports, as well as the policy recommendations resulting from the discussions held at each Plenary session and endorsed by the Committee, can be accessed on the following dedicated page of the CFS website: <http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-hlpe/en/>. These recommendations constitute important policy guidance for further action by a wide range of stakeholders.

15. In the next biennium, the HLPE will produce the following reports:

- 1) Multistakeholder Partnerships to Finance and Improve Food Security and Nutrition in the Framework of the 2030 Agenda (2018)
- 2) Agro-ecological Approaches and other Innovations for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems that Enhance Food Security and Nutrition (2019)

E. Forum on Women's Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition

16. A Forum on Women's Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition was organized in 2017 with the aim to promote a shared understanding of how issues related women's economic empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition are evolving (CFS 2017/44/7). It was framed as a contribution to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment for the attainment of all Sustainable Development Goals and strengthening synergies among these goals in policy and programme frameworks for countries.

III. CFS workstreams and Activities

A. MYPOW 2018-19

17. In October 2017, CFS adopted the MYPOW for the biennium 2018-2019, agreeing on the following activities:

- finalization of the Plan of Action (2018) and implementation of the responses to the CFS Evaluation (2018-2019);
- CFS engagement in advancing nutrition (2018-2019);
- urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security and nutrition (2018-2019);
- CFS engagement in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2018-2019);
- monitoring the use and application of CFS policy recommendations (2018-2019).

B. Monitoring CFS decisions and recommendations

18. CFS has provided guidance to food security and nutrition stakeholders on sharing their experiences and good practices in implementing CFS products and recommendations in a document endorsed in 2016 (CFS 2016/43/7). The document also serves as a framework for those stakeholders to contribute to global thematic events.

19. CFS held a first global thematic event to share experiences and good practices of the use and application of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) in 2016. An overview of the results is provided in document CFS 2016/43/8. The contributions received confirm that the VGGT have been used and applied in many countries since they were endorsed by CFS in 2012.

20. Based on this first experience of a global thematic event, CFS endorsed a document in October 2017: Monitoring the Implementation of CFS main Policy Products and other CFS Policy Recommendations (CFS 2017/44/11). CFS decided to hold a global thematic event every two years to monitor CFS main policy products and to organize events on an ad hoc basis to monitor other CFS policy recommendations, considering their relevance and potential contribution to the global food security and nutrition agenda.

21. CFS agreed to devote the three next global thematic events in 2018, 2020 and 2022 to share experiences and take stock of the use and application respectively of:

- the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security in 2018;
- the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crisis in 2020; and
- the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems in 2022.

C. Evaluation of CFS Effectiveness

22. The final report of the CFS Evaluation was issued in April 2017 and circulated to all CFS stakeholders. The report highlighted 14 recommendations for CFS' consideration. A series of meetings were held in June-September 2017 to prepare the response to more than half of these recommendations. The response was endorsed at CFS 44 in October 2017. The preparation of the response to the remaining recommendations and its implementation are planned to happen during the 2017-2018 intersessional period and will be reported to Plenary in October 2018.

23. CFS supported the Bureau's leadership for the implementation of the response, noting the process should be as open, participative and inclusive as possible, providing the following guidance for the Bureau's consideration in its work during the 2017-2018 intersessional period:

- CFS should be connected to the broader political agenda, with special regard to the 2030 Agenda, and ensure synergies with initiatives that have similar or complementary objectives in policy convergence;
- CFS needs a longer-term and more strategic approach that adds value to food security and nutrition, optimizing the benefits of its investments in workstreams based on the expected results;
- there should be a comprehensive planning phase for selecting CFS work with clear application of criteria and connection with resourcing; the selection of topics should take into account their relevance to CFS mandate and vision;
- it is important to give attention to the evaluation finding that CFS products may be unknown at the country level; this requires identifying ways to ensure involvement and commitment of all stakeholders, including Rome-based Agencies, in promoting CFS products and strengthening the role of CFS as a central platform for food security and nutrition and stimulating vibrant and substantive plenaries;
- the selection process of HLPE team members should be transparent;
- it is important to revisit the composition of the Advisory Group to fulfil its substantive role, remaining open to all relevant actors within existing parameters in the CFS reform document (CFS 2009/2 Rev.2).

IV. Matters to be brought to the attention of the Regional Conference

24. CFS invites the Regional Conference to take note of the CFS main outcomes since the previous Regional Conference in 2016. In particular, the Regional Conference is asked to consider the CFS MYPOW and to encourage the active participation of all stakeholders in the activities to be carried out by the Committee in 2018-2019. The Regional Conference is further invited to encourage the implementation of CFS policy products.