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Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council a note by the Chair of the Committee on World Food Security on the reform of the Committee and on progress made towards its implementation.

* A/66/50.

** E/2011/100.



Reform of the Committee on World Food Security and on progress made towards its implementation

Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/178, in which the Assembly invited the Chair of the Committee on World Food Security to report, as part of the Committee's report to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the reform of, and on progress made towards achieving the vision of, the Committee (para. 36).

2. As noted in its previous report,¹ at its thirty-fifth session the Committee on World Food Security considered and approved the document entitled, "Reform of the Committee on World Food Security",² which was subsequently approved by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Conference at its thirty-sixth session in November 2009. The reform sets out the new vision and roles of the Committee, namely to create the most inclusive international and multi-stakeholder platform for key actors to work together to ensure food security and nutrition for all. It will work in a coordinated manner in support of country-led processes that lead to food security.

3. The roles of the reformed Committee include the following:

- Coordinating a global approach to food security
- Promoting policy convergence and coherence
- Supporting and advising countries and regions
- Coordinating action at national and regional levels
- Promoting accountability and sharing best practices
- Developing a global strategic framework for food security and nutrition

4. The reform is guided by the following principles: inclusiveness; strong linkages to the field to ensure the process is based on a realistic situation on the ground; and flexibility in implementation so that the Committee can respond to a changing external environment and membership needs. The key features of the reform are as follows:

- Expanded participation in the Committee to ensure that the voices of all relevant stakeholders are heard in the policy debate on food and agriculture
- Increased focus on intersessional activities
- Strengthening of linkages at regional, national and local levels
- Inclusion of structured expertise through the creation of a high-level panel of experts on food security and nutrition

¹ A/65/73-E/2010/51. Available from http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs0910/ECOSOC/K7909E_ECOSOC_Report_on_Committee_on_World_Food_Security_35th_Session_01.pdf.

² Committee on World Food Security: 2009/2 Rev.2.

5. The document on the reform of the Committee also highlights the linkages between the Committee and the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council, indicating that the results of the Committee on World Food Security Plenary should be reported to the FAO Conference and to the Assembly through the Council. It states that the Chair of the Committee should consult with the Council and take all necessary actions so that modalities for meaningful reporting could be established and implemented.³

6. The present report provides a brief update on progress made since October 2010, and contains the final report of the thirty-sixth session of the Committee, which was held in Rome from 11 to 14 and on 16 October 2010 (see annex).

Updates since the thirty-sixth session of the Committee on World Food Security

Addressing food price volatility

7. The Committee, through its Bureau and its Advisory Group, is maintaining price volatility high on its agenda. The Bureau of the Committee will monitor events affecting food price volatility and help to coordinate and disseminate information on what major players are doing to address this. To assist those efforts, the Committee secretariat has developed a web portal with prominent links to information on food price volatility and organized a seminar to inform the permanent representations in Rome and other stakeholders of actions and tools to address food price volatility that are recommended by international organizations. Finally, the Bureau will use the available inputs to formulate specific recommendations concerning food price volatility to be considered by the next session of the Committee in October 2011.

Land tenure and international investment in agriculture

8. The Committee encouraged the continuation of the inclusive process for the development of the voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resources, building on existing regional processes with a view to submitting the guidelines for the consideration of the next session of the Committee in October 2011. A zero draft of the voluntary guidelines has been submitted for electronic consultation during April and May, and final negotiations on a first draft are expected to take place from 25 to 29 July 2011.

9. Taking note of the ongoing development of principles for responsible agricultural investments that respect rights, livelihoods and resources, and, in line with its role, the Committee has started an inclusive process to consider the principles within the Committee to further develop, refine and adjust them, to increase awareness and ownership of them and to increase their legitimacy.

Development of a global strategic framework on food security and nutrition

10. Under the reform, the Committee also agreed to develop a global strategic framework for food security and nutrition in order to improve coordination and guide synchronized action by a wide range of stakeholders. The framework will be flexible so that it can be adjusted as priorities change and will build upon existing

³ See A/65/73-E/2010/51, annex, para. 21.

frameworks. A two-year process for the elaboration of the first version of the framework has begun, focusing on agreement about its purposes, basic principles and structure. Following an inclusive consultation process, the framework will be submitted with a view to approval by the thirty-eighth session of the Committee in 2012.

Update on the work of the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition

11. As recommended at the thirty-sixth session, the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition would undertake studies on land tenure and international investments in agriculture and on price volatility for discussion at the thirty-seventh session of the Committee. Studies on social safety nets and climate change will be presented at the thirty-eighth session in October 2012. The Panel will also provide inputs on priority issues identified by the Committee, such as the global strategic framework for food security and nutrition, and the elaboration of the draft voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resources.

Mapping food security actions at the country level

12. Over the last few years, renewed political attention to world food security and nutrition has resulted in pledges to increase resources to address the multiple factors that contribute to hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. That renewed commitment also brings into focus the need for a comprehensive understanding of food security and nutrition policies, plans, actions and needs at the national and subnational levels. To improve mapping of food security and nutrition actions at the country level, a technical consultative workshop will be held with concerned stakeholders in May 2011 to share experiences and opinions on existing systems, tools and practices, with a view to identifying a way forward. It is anticipated that the outcome of the workshop will contribute to informing the thirty-seventh session of the Committee in October 2011 regarding lessons learned and the way forward, including country experiences, to be presented to the Committee.

Increased engagement of the private sector in activities of the Committee

13. A strategy for enhanced private sector participation in the Committee has been developed, with a view to attracting a strong engagement of the private sector in Committee deliberations and processes. In addition, the Committee Chair will have an adviser devoted to attracting private sector participation during the course of the year. The adviser will prepare a strategy and workplan to reach out and partner with key private sector foundations and private sector platforms and associations in consultation with the Chair, the Bureau of the Committee and the Advisory Group. Activities could include the organization of seminars with key private sector foundations and global/regional platforms and associations. A principal objective would be the creation of private sector consultative methods or mechanisms in relation to the Committee and the sharing of information on best practices in public-private partnerships, with emphasis on the national level.

Round table on hunger estimates

14. During the deliberations of the thirty-sixth session of the Committee, it was agreed that a round table would be organized to review methods of hunger measurement. In addition to improving the timeliness and accuracy of the FAO traditional hunger measure, there is a need to address the fact that malnutrition is more than a mere food calorie deficit. Hunger, as a complex phenomenon, requires a multifaceted concept for its measurement and a whole suite of indicators that can capture the multiple symptoms and consequences of malnutrition. More work is also required to identify and analyse the exact root causes of malnutrition, in particular the role of income growth, income distribution and large swings in food prices (price volatility). The round table is intended to bring together hunger and poverty experts from member countries to discuss state-of-the-art methods in analysing and quantifying food insecurity, seeking an agreement on future directions for research and policy analysis.

Annex

Report of the thirty-sixth session of the Committee on World Food Security^a

I. Organizational matters

1. The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) held its thirty-sixth session from 11 to 14 and on 16 October 2010 at the headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome. The session was attended by delegates from 126 States members of the Committee; by participants from 11 United Nations agencies and programmes; by 47 international non-governmental organizations; and by observers from 15 intergovernmental organizations and other international non-governmental organizations.
2. Participants in the meeting were provided with, inter alia, the agenda of the session; a list of the membership of the Committee; a list of the countries and organizations represented at the session; and the list of documents, which were annexed to the report.^b
3. The session was opened by Noel De Luna as Chair.
4. The Committee appointed a drafting committee composed of Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Indonesia, Japan, Paraguay and the United States of America, under the chairmanship of Ibrahim Abu Atileh (Jordan).
5. The Committee was informed that the European Union was participating in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of article II of the FAO Constitution.

II. Setting the stage for the thirty-sixth session of CFS

6. Jacques Diouf, Director-General of FAO; Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP); Yukiko Omura, Vice-President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), on behalf of Kanayo F. Nwanze, President of IFAD; David Nabarro, Coordinator of the High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Crisis, on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations; and Monkombu Sambasivan Swaminathan, Chair of the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, delivered opening statements.^c
7. The CFS Chair made a presentation on the implementation of the CFS reform process carried out through 2009-2010.

^a CFS: 2010/Final report. Available from <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/020/k9551e.pdf>.

^b Ibid., appendices A, B, C and D.

^c Ibid., appendices E, F, G, H and I.

III. The state of food insecurity

8. The Committee considered a presentation by Hafez Ghanem, Assistant Director-General, Economic and Social Development Department, FAO entitled “An overview of food insecurity in the world”.^d

9. The Committee agreed that:

- The reduction in world hunger is welcome but global hunger is still unacceptably high
- Projected hunger reduction in 2010 is the result of the reversal of high food prices and global economic crises but structural hunger is increasing
- Recent developments related to extreme weather events in different parts of the world may jeopardize further progress
- The level of hunger and food insecurity is of particular concern for low-income food-deficit countries
- A round table to review methods used to estimate the number of hungry would be arranged during 2011 by the CFS Bureau assisted by the secretariat

IV. Global developments relevant to food security and nutrition

10. The Chairperson noted that the purpose of this session was to share information and explore how existing global initiatives could maximize synergies among each other and with CFS with a view to promoting greater coherence and impact.

11. The Committee welcomed presentations of five initiatives:

(a) Overview of the Millennium Development Goals Summit by Annika Söder, Assistant Director-General, Office of Corporate Communication and External Relations, FAO;

(b) Update on L’Aquila Food Security Initiative, including tracking commitments and mapping country activities, by Christopher MacLennan, Director-General, Thematic and Sectoral Policy Directorate, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA);

(c) Update on the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme, the High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis and Comprehensive Framework for Action, by David Nabarro, Coordinator;

(d) Update on the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), especially the recent reform, by Carlos Perez Del Castillo, Chair of the CGIAR Consortium Board;

(e) Update on the Standing Committee on Nutrition and the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative, by Alexander Muller, Chair of the Standing Committee.

^d See also World Food Programme and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World — 2010* (FAO, Rome, 2010).

12. The Committee decided to:
 - Include the Standing Committee on Nutrition in the Advisory Group of CFS in addition to the present Advisory Group members, taking into account the Standing Committee's special nature as a United Nations coordination mechanism and platform in its own right, with its own stakeholder consultation mechanisms
 - Entrust the CFS Bureau with looking into ways to invite and include the Standing Committee or one of its member organizations in the Joint Secretariat of CFS
 - Suggest that the Standing Committee work in coordination with CFS to establish synergy and close coordination between their respective processes, mechanisms and proposals
13. The Committee decided to invite the submission of progress reports on these and other key initiatives to future sessions of CFS.

V. Regional initiatives for food security and nutrition

14. The Chair noted that the purpose of this session was for the Committee to build, strengthen and maintain linkages with relevant actors at all levels and to ensure that its work is based on the reality on the ground.
15. The Committee welcomed presentations of nine regional initiatives and forums: the FAO Regional Conference for Africa (ARC); the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP); the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific (APRC); the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) initiative on food security; the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Ministerial Meeting on Food Security; the Pacific Food Summit on behalf of the Food Secure Pacific Working Group; the hunger-free Latin America and the Caribbean initiative 2025; the Specialized Meeting on Family Farming of MERCOSUR (REAF); and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) initiative for food security.
16. The Committee recognized the importance of the following points that emerged from the discussion:
 - (a) Food security and nutrition are cross-cutting issues which require a multidisciplinary and multi-stakeholder framework at the national and the regional level;
 - (b) Regional initiatives add value and support national efforts in addressing food insecurity and malnutrition;
 - (c) Regional and interregional cooperation provides a valid tool for sharing knowledge and best practices as well as enhancing South-South cooperation;
 - (d) Mobilization of required resources to operationalize regional frameworks is a key prerequisite.
17. The Committee decided to build, strengthen and maintain linkages with such initiatives and forums in the intersessional period.

18. The Committee welcomed the offers from the regional initiatives to support communication with CFS over the intersessional period, including the hunger-free Latin American and the Caribbean Initiative 2025, and through the Chairmanship of FAO Africa and the Latin America and Caribbean regional conferences as well as the FAO Regional Conference for Asia and the Pacific and the ASEAN secretariat.

VI. Overview by the Chair of country requests to the Committee

19. The Chair noted that no country requests had been submitted to his attention. He also proposed that for the thirty-seventh session of the Committee, this agenda item could be used to offer countries the chance to present their current and planned activities for development partnerships in the area of food security and nutrition. Opportunities for South-South and triangular cooperation could also be explored under this agenda item.

VII. National initiatives for food security and nutrition — case studies

20. The Committee welcomed the presentation of four country case studies to enable countries to identify (a) common themes and best practices to improve food security, and (b) ways for the reformed CFS to strengthen its support to those food security and nutrition initiatives. The topics and presenting countries included the following, entitled: “A comprehensive approach to food security: the national food policy plan of action” (Bangladesh); “CAADP from the perspective of a country” (Rwanda); “Achieving food security in protracted crisis” (Haiti); and “Best practices in safety nets, nutrition and their links to supporting local production” (Jordan).

21. All four case studies clearly referred to CFS as the platform capable of bringing to light country-level needs in the areas of technical cooperation, capacity-building and resource mobilization. Common features regarding national approaches to addressing food security and nutrition arising from the four case studies included:

- (a) A comprehensive approach to food security and nutrition;
- (b) Strong coordination, cooperation and joint planning among ministries;
- (c) Constructing and financing viable safety nets;
- (d) Capacity-building and training;
- (e) Gender mainstreaming;
- (f) South-South cooperation.

22. The Committee requested the secretariat to elaborate a document to be forwarded to the next session of CFS that would include a consolidation and analysis of lessons learned and suggestions with respect to further case studies that could complement these lessons.

VIII. Policy round tables

23. The Committee welcomed the outcomes from three policy round tables on the following topics: (a) addressing food insecurity in protracted crises: issues and challenges; (b) land tenure and international investment in agriculture; and (c) managing vulnerability and risk to promote better food security and nutrition. The following sections provide details on the outcomes of the Committee's deliberations.

Addressing food insecurity in protracted crises

24. Bearing in mind that issues related to conflict resolution go beyond the CFS mandate, the Committee endorsed the spirit of the three recommendations contained in the background document:

(a) Support further analysis and deeper understanding of people's livelihoods and coping mechanisms in protracted crises in order to strengthen their resilience and enhance the effectiveness of assistance programmes;

(b) Support the protection, promotion and rebuilding of livelihoods, and the institutions that support and enable livelihoods, in countries in protracted crisis;

(c) Examine the procedures for external assistance to countries in protracted crisis to match the needs, challenges and institutional constraints on the ground, taking into consideration best practices.

25. More specifically, the Committee recommended:

(a) Adopting a comprehensive approach to food security in protracted crises, encompassing both emergency response and support to sustainable livelihoods;

(b) That the United Nations system promote better coordinated multi-stakeholder participation in the development and implementation of country-led, comprehensive plans of action in a small number of countries affected by protracted crises;

(c) Developing mechanisms to engage local organizations in strengthening key institutions (i.e., markets, social kinships);

(d) Establishing mechanisms for stronger partnerships and collaboration with regional institutions;

(e) Supporting mechanisms for consultation and policy dialogue to increase understanding and collaborative efforts to deal with food and nutrition security in protracted crises. In that regard the Bureau, in consultation with the Advisory Group, will explore the possibility of organizing a high-level expert forum on protracted crises no later than 2012 with a view to discussing the elaboration of a new agenda for action for food security in countries in protracted crises in collaboration with other specialized agencies and humanitarian partners;

(f) That an addendum to the *State of Food Insecurity in the World — 2010* be published with a revised table 2 to include all countries and territories in protracted crises, and that the list be expanded to include the Palestinian Territories and the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Land tenure and international investment in agriculture

26. The Committee:

(a) Encouraged the continuation of the inclusive process for the development of the voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resources, building on existing regional processes, with a view to submitting the guidelines for the consideration of the thirty-seventh session of the Committee, and decided to establish an open-ended working group of CFS to review the first draft of the voluntary guidelines;

(b) Taking note of the ongoing process of developing principles for responsible agricultural investments that respect rights, livelihoods and resources, and, in line with its role, decided to start an inclusive process of consideration of the principles within CFS;

(c) Urged Governments and other stakeholders involved in the drafting process of both the voluntary guidelines and the principles to ensure consistency and complementarity between the two processes;

(d) Requested the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition to undertake studies, to be presented at the thirty-seventh session of the Committee, on the following important issues, in accordance with the CFS reform document agreed in 2009, and the rules and procedures for the work of the Panel:

- The respective roles of large-scale plantations and of small-scale farming, including economic, social, gender and environmental impacts
- Review of the existing tools allowing the mapping of available land
- Comparative analysis of tools to align large-scale investments with country food security strategies

(e) Encouraged member State support for capacity-building towards effectively addressing land governance.

Managing vulnerability and risk to promote better food security and nutrition

27. The Committee requested the High-Level Panel of Experts to undertake studies, to be presented at the thirty-seventh session of the Committee, on the following important issues, in accordance with the CFS reform document agreed in 2009 and the rules and procedures for the work of the Panel:

(a) *Price volatility.* All of its causes and consequences, including market distorting practices and links to financial markets, and appropriate and coherent policies, actions, tools and institutions to manage the risks linked to excessive price volatility in agriculture. This should include prevention and mitigation for vulnerable producers, and consumers, particularly the poor, women and children, that are appropriate to different levels (local, national, regional and international) and are based on a review of existing studies. The study should consider how vulnerable nations and populations can ensure access to food when volatility causes market disruptions;

(b) *Social protection.* Ways to lessen vulnerability through social and productive safety nets, programmes and policies with respect to food and nutritional security, taking into consideration differing conditions across countries and regions. This should include a review of the impact of existing policies for the improvement of living conditions and resilience of vulnerable populations, especially small-scale rural producers, urban and rural poor as well as women and children. It should also take into account benefits for improving local production and livelihoods and promoting better nutrition;

(c) *Climate change.* Review existing assessments and initiatives on the effects of climate change on food security and nutrition, with a focus on the most affected and vulnerable regions and populations and the interface between climate change and agricultural productivity, including the challenges and opportunities of adaptation and mitigation policies and actions for food security and nutrition.

28. The Bureau of the Committee, in consultation with the Advisory Group and secretariat, shall determine how best to take forward the process of developing recommendations or options for the thirty-seventh session of the Committee.

IX. Global coordination for food security and nutrition in support of national processes

A. Development of a global strategic framework

29. The secretariat introduced a document entitled “Global strategic framework for food security and nutrition — a concept note”.^e The Committee agreed to launch a consultative and inclusive process to be conducted by the CFS Bureau with the assistance of the Joint Secretariat and in close collaboration with the Advisory Group and with the involvement of all stakeholders, with the aim to develop the first version of the global strategic framework for food security and nutrition by October 2012, which would be subject to regular updates reflecting the outcomes and recommendations of CFS. The first step of this inclusive consultation process would be to find agreement on the purposes, basic principles and structure of the global strategic framework, taking into account existing frameworks. During the process, the High-Level Panel of Experts may provide input on priority issues identified by CFS.

B. Mapping food security actions at country level

30. The secretariat introduced a document entitled “Mapping food security actions at country level”.^f The Committee agreed to:

- Endorse the proposed development and implementation plan contained in this document
- Encourage interested stakeholders to participate in the further development of the initiative at country level

^e CFS: 2010/2.

^f CFS: 2010/3.

- Request the secretariat to continue facilitating, and with the support of stakeholders in the CFS Advisory Group, the development and implementation plan contained in this document as one of the core activities of the Committee's work programme for 2010-2011 with a view to providing an update of the process, including experiences from countries, at the CFS session in 2011
- Recommend that four to six national Governments present the results of mapping at the CFS session in 2011 and inform discussions on national actions and investments, lessons learned, good practice and the benefits thereof, and the need for international assistance

31. The Committee underlined that the mapping initiative should also consider actions related to nutrition.

C. The way forward for CFS — the implementation of the reform

32. The Committee acknowledged the document entitled "Proposal for an international food security and nutrition civil society mechanism for relations with CFS",^g and encouraged other stakeholders to proceed along the same lines.

33. The Committee endorsed the recommendation, contained in the document entitled "Revised CFS rules of procedure",^h that at the end of 2010 and throughout 2011, a Bureau working group continue to review and revise the Committee's rules of procedure, rule XXXIII of the general rules of the organization and the FAO Constitution, in the light of the reform document (CFS: 2009/2 Rev.2) and according to the process and timetable proposed in section III of the revised CFS rules of procedure.

34. In addition, the Committee agreed that in the transitional period until October 2011, the existing rules of procedure and article XXXIII of the general rules of the organization could be applied only insofar as those rules were in full conformity with the text and spirit of the CFS reform document.ⁱ

35. The secretariat introduced a document entitled "Programme of work and budget for CFS: 2010-2013".^j The Committee:

- Endorsed the programme of work and budget for 2010-2011
- Recommended that the proposed programme of work and budget for 2012-2013 be further reviewed by the Bureau
- Decided to submit them to the consideration of FAO, IFAD and WFP in accordance with their respective financial rules and regulations
- Endorsed the proposal to develop a results-based framework for the Committee that is consistent with the organizational priorities of the Rome-based agencies (and others) in the shape of a detailed multi-year programme of work, preferably to be presented at the thirty-seventh session of CFS in 2011

^g CFS: 2010/9.

^h CFS: 2010/4.

ⁱ The Committee took note of the position of the representative of the Legal Counsel of FAO reflected in paras. 5 and 6 of the revised CFS rules of procedure with respect to article XXXIII of the general rules of the organization.

^j CFS: 2010/5.