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**Main decisions and policy recommendations of the
Committee on World Food Security**

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit a report on the main decisions and policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security.**

* [A/74/50](#).

** The report is being issued without formal editing.



Report on the main decisions and policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English
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Introduction

1. This report responds to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) decision 2011/217, in which the Council invited the Chair of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to transmit to ECOSOC every year a report on the main decisions, policy recommendations, and the results achieved by the Committee in the area of food security and nutrition, in accordance with its roles and vision. More information regarding the roles and vision of the Committee can be found in documents [A/66/76-E/2011/102](#) and [A/65/73-E/2010/51](#). This report describes the main outcomes and decisions taken by the Forty-fifth Session of CFS held in October 2018 and, where relevant, provides updates on follow-up action. The Final Report of the Session is available at http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/CFS45/draft-final-report/MY266_CFS_2018_45_REPORT_en.pdf.
2. The Forty-sixth Session of CFS will take place on 14–18 October 2019.

Main decisions, recommendations and results

State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World

3. The Committee expressed its deepest concern about the rising number of food insecure people in the world and the negative trends in hunger and malnutrition, as highlighted in the 2018 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI)¹ report, and called on all stakeholders to take the necessary actions to reverse the trends.
4. The Report emphasizes that new evidence continues to signal a rise in world hunger, where the number of chronically undernourished people in the world has increased, up to 821 million from 804 million.
5. It was noted that although chronic child malnutrition (stunting) continues to fall, the rate of decline is slowing and levels are still high, at the same time that adult obesity and anaemia in women of reproductive age are increasing.
6. It is evident that with these new trends the world is not on track to achieve SDG 2 and other targets of the 2030 Agenda related to food security and nutrition, unless bolder actions are taken and the underlying drivers are addressed.
7. It was stressed that in addition to conflict – which was highlighted in CFS 44 – climate variability and exposure to more complex, frequent and intense climate extremes are also key forces challenging food security and nutrition in many parts of the world.
8. The Committee called on all stakeholders, including governments and the UN system, to urgently scale up and accelerate integrated actions across sectors to strengthen the resilience of livelihoods and food systems to anticipate and adapt to the effects of climate variability and extremes. In this respect, governments and all stakeholders are encouraged to use and apply CFS policy products, and in particular

¹ Available at www.fao.org/3/I9553EN/i9553en.pdf.

the CFS Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA)², and the policy recommendations on Food Security and Climate Change.³

Policy Guidance on Food Systems and Nutrition

9. The Committee endorsed the Terms of Reference for the preparation of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition which will be submitted for endorsement by CFS at its 47th Session in 2020. The Voluntary Guidelines will support the implementation of the Plan of Action of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025) and the Framework for Action of the Second International Conference on Nutrition.

10. The Committee recognized the importance of holding an inclusive process leading to the adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines, open to all interested stakeholders, and emphasized the crucial importance of the planned consultation phases for the ownership and success of the process and invited all relevant Committee stakeholders to actively participate in the preparation of the Voluntary Guidelines.

11. A session on good practices and lessons sharing on food systems and nutrition provided an opportunity to share experiences of multi-sectoral policies and programmes integrating nutrition concerns into relevant interventions as well as concrete instruments to build policy coherence between and across sectoral policies. This lessons-sharing session represented an opportunity to look at potential entry points and interlinkages between nutrition with specific SDGs, in particular 6, 7, 11, 12 and 15.

CFS and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

12. Three countries, namely the Dominican Republic, Spain and the Sudan, which were among the 46 Voluntary National Reviews in HLPF 2018, presented their national experiences at CFS towards achieving the SDGs related to food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture.

13. The session provided an opportunity for countries to share their experiences and lessons learned in integrating food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture into policies to achieve zero hunger and sustainable development. The presentations highlighted encouraging steps that countries have taken to reform policies, improve the overall sustainability of food systems and ensure national food security and nutrition through diverse, holistic approaches. However, they also underscored important challenges, such as addressing simultaneously all forms of malnutrition; supporting small-scale food producers to overcome poverty and adopt more productive and sustainable practices; improving the overall economic, social and environmental sustainability of food systems; and addressing regional and/or rural-urban inequalities and the lack of rural infrastructure.

14. The discussion stressed the importance of political leadership, multi-stakeholder processes and effective partnerships, the importance of collecting and analysing disaggregated data, monitoring, and capacity-building.

15. The Committee renewed its call to all countries to apply integrated policy frameworks and make use of relevant CFS policy guidance to achieve the SDGs.

² Available at www.fao.org/3/a-bc852e.pdf.

³ Available at www.fao.org/3/a-av035e.pdf.

The High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) Report on Multistakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) to Finance and Improve Food Security and Nutrition in the Framework of the 2030 Agenda

16. The CFS HLPE presented its independent, evidence-based report on Multistakeholder Partnerships to Finance and Improve Food Security and Nutrition in the Framework of the 2030 Agenda.⁴ The findings and recommendations of the report were discussed at length.

17. Food security and nutrition is a complex and multidimensional issue that needs to be addressed through comprehensive, holistic and cross-sectoral approaches at different scales and with many different stakeholders, including public and private sectors and civil society. MSPs can potentially be an important way to assist in this endeavour; however, they should be considered as a means rather than as a goal.

18. MSPs can contribute to: building trust and mutual understanding among partners; pooling together complementary resources from different stakeholders (knowledge, skills and expertise, human, material and financial resources); and sharing risks and responsibilities. Therefore, by fostering synergies among partners, MSPs can potentially enable stakeholders to tackle issues that they could not have addressed separately and to generate in the long run positive results for food security and nutrition and sustainable development.

19. However, MSPs can also be a place of power struggle. To effectively contribute to financing and improving food security and nutrition, MSPs have to overcome tensions and mistrust among partners, power asymmetries and conflicts of interest. They will also have to cope with the transaction costs inherently associated with multi-stakeholder processes with the view to transforming these costs into long-term investments, generating positive results.

20. The HLPE report identifies increased transparency and accountability, improved data collection and information-sharing as key conditions for MSPs to better contribute to financing and improving food security and nutrition and to effectively strive for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.

21. The Committee suggested using this HLPE report, including the questionnaire annexed to it, as the starting point of a follow-up process focusing on knowledge and lesson-sharing on effective multi-stakeholder partnerships at different scales and it encouraged the widest dissemination and use of the report.

Global Thematic Event on the Right to Food Guidelines

22. The Global Thematic Event was an opportunity to share experiences and take stock of the use and application of the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security (the Guidelines),⁵ as a contribution to monitoring progress towards the implementation of the Guidelines.

23. The Committee took note of the overview provided in document “Experiences and Good Practices in the Use and Application of the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security – Summary and Key Elements”.

24. The session discussed some of the challenges and good practices towards the use and application of the Guidelines. Some of the challenges identified were: 1) institutional and legal frameworks not conducive to guaranteeing the right to food;

⁴ Available at www.fao.org/3/CA0156EN/CA0156en.pdf.

⁵ Available at www.fao.org/3/a-y7937e.pdf.

2) lack of political will and commitment to end hunger and malnutrition, and insufficient dedicated public budget and funding to implement the Guidelines; 3) a general lack of awareness, capacity and technical expertise on the right to adequate food; 4) discrimination (gender, race, ethnicity, religion and class) as well as inequality and poverty; and 5) lack of accountability and/or recourse mechanisms.

25. Some of the good practices were: 1) empowerment of stakeholders through increased awareness of their right to food and capacity development; 2) development of participatory mechanisms where stakeholders, including those most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition, take part in the dialogue and decision-making processes in an equal, collaborative and transparent way; 3) establishment of partnerships with key institutions capable of supporting capacity development and providing technical support on the right to food, such as FAO and other specialized UN agencies supporting right to food policy making and implementation.

State of Food and Agriculture 2018

26. The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) 2018⁶ report highlights the relationship between migration, agriculture and rural development. The focus of the report is on rural migration, the many forms it takes and the important role it plays in both developing and developed countries.

27. The report investigates drivers and impacts of rural migration and calls for a more realistic debate about migration by acknowledging the challenges and costs associated with migration; stressing its importance for development; highlighting the role played by rural areas; and providing policy priorities based on country contexts.

Critical and Emerging Issues in Food Security and Nutrition – Towards a Strategic Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) 2020–2023

28. The Committee was presented with the second HLPE Note on Critical and Emerging Issues for Food Security and Nutrition.⁷

29. The Note identifies nine main critical and/or emerging issues for food security and nutrition that will deserve further attention in order to make those fundamental changes in agriculture and food systems that are needed to address FSN and, more generally, sustainable development.

30. The nine issues highlighted in the Note are: 1) the inter-connected future of Urbanization and Rural Transformation; 2) conflicts and migrations; 3) inequalities and vulnerability of marginalized groups; 4) trade; 5) agroecology in a context of uncertainty and change; 6) agrobiodiversity, genetic resources and modern breeding; 7) food safety and diseases; 8) knowledge and technology development; and 9) the Governance of food systems.

31. The Committee took note of the issues raised and will consider them in the upcoming discussions on the preparation of the next CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW). The CFS MYPoW 2020–2023, which is currently being prepared, will be submitted for consideration and endorsement at CFS 46 in October.

32. The Committee also requested the HLPE to undertake a study on “Food Security and Nutrition: Building a Global Narrative towards 2030”, to be presented by the first semester of 2020. This study will take stock of what CFS has done, since its reform

⁶ Available at www.fao.org/3/I9549EN/i9549en.pdf.

⁷ Available at www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/hlpe/hlpe_documents/Critical-Emerging-Issues-2016/HLPE_Note-to-CFS_Critical-and-Emerging-Issues-2nd-Edition_27-April-2017_.pdf.

in 2009, and it will assess how past CFS policy recommendations have contributed or could further contribute to FSN and to the 2030 Agenda.

Promoting Accountability and Sharing of Best Practices

33. The Committee considered the document “Promoting accountability and sharing best practices”, and requested the Bureau, in consultation with the Advisory Group, to: a) oversee the preparation of Global Thematic Events (GTEs) to be held every two years in plenary; b) oversee the preparation of other events organized for fostering the uptake, follow-up and review, and sharing of experiences and good practices on the use and application of other CFS policy recommendations at all levels; c) oversee the preparation of the event to be held at CFS 46 in October 2019 for monitoring CFS policy recommendations on (i) Investing in Smallholder Agriculture;⁸ (ii) Connecting Smallholders to Markets;⁹ and (iii) Sustainable Agricultural Development Including Livestock.¹⁰

CFS Evaluation – Implementation of the Response

34. The Committee considered documents CFS 2018/45/2 “CFS Evaluation: Plan of Action – with Draft Decision” and CFS 2018/45/3 “CFS Evaluation – Implementation of the Response to the Evaluation”.

35. The Committee: a) Expressed its appreciation to the co-facilitators for facilitating the finalization of the Plan of Action, and the implementation of the response to the evaluation. b) Endorsed the “CFS Evaluation: Plan of Action – with Draft Decision” (CFS 2018/45/2). c) Endorsed the “CFS Evaluation – Implementation of the Response to the Evaluation” (CFS 2018/45/3), acknowledging that the 2009 Reform Document remains the cornerstone of CFS work.

36. Through the response to the Evaluation, the Committee re-affirmed its important role as a key organ in addressing the issues of global FSN¹¹ and an integral component of the governance of world food security. CFS reiterated its commitment to make full use of its unique composition and roles to prioritize and focus on FSN issues where it has comparative advantage. CFS stakeholders confirmed their renewed commitment to long-term support for CFS vision, activities and policy convergence and coherence work among stakeholders, across sectors and across global, regional and national levels.

37. The implementation of the Plan of Action, as endorsed by the Plenary at CFS 45, will strengthen the Committee to ensure its ability to address future challenges in a world where food insecurity and malnutrition are on the rise again. The evaluation process and implementation of the response show the determination of CFS stakeholders to tackle present problems and inefficiencies in order to ensure CFS full relevance within the UN system and the governance of world food security.

A. Other intersessional activities

Urbanization and Rural Transformation

38. In the intersessional period, the Committee continued exploring the theme of “Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security and nutrition” by focusing on two areas: i) the food security and nutrition impact of urbanization and rural transformation on lower income groups; and ii) promoting youth and

⁸ Available at www.fao.org/3/a-av034e.pdf.

⁹ Available at www.fao.org/3/a-bq853e.pdf.

¹⁰ Available at www.fao.org/3/a-bq854e.pdf.

¹¹ General Assembly resolution [70/223](#), 22 December 2015, para. 30.

women's engagement and employment in food systems across the rural-urban continuum.

39. To this end, two thematic intersessional events took place in November 2018 and February 2019 with a view to assess the feasibility of working 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.

40. The two thematic events built on the outcomes of the work carried out by CFS in 2016 through the Forum on Urbanization, Rural Transformation and Implications for Food Security and Nutrition,¹² and the work of the OEWG in 2017 to compile experiences and effective policy approaches in addressing food security and nutrition in the context of changing rural-urban dynamics.¹³

41. During the events a wide variety of experiences related to the changing dynamics of urbanization and rural transformation were presented and discussed by CFS Members and Participants. Overall, these highlighted policy gaps and a call for action in terms of seeing global frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda translated into effective policies at the national and subnational level. The experiences and approaches shared during the events also highlighted the need for adaptation and mitigation strategies that will smoothen the ongoing transitions and ensure, in line with Agenda 2030, that no one is left behind.

Agroecology

42. A report on *Agroecological approaches and other innovations for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition* will be presented on July 3rd 2019. Thereafter, the report will be available in all official languages and it will be the basis for a process of policy convergence that will start in 2020.

Report of the Forty-fifth Session of the Committee on World Food Security (Rome, 15 – 19 October 2018)

43. The full Final Report of the Forty-fifth Session of the Committee on World Food Security, which was held at FAO Headquarters in Rome, from 15 to 19 October 2018, can be found at the following link: <https://bit.ly/2Jf6dIf>.

¹² Available at www.fao.org/3/a-mr205e.pdf.

¹³ Available at www.fao.org/3/a-mu135e.pdf.