



CFS Bulletin

A Briefing Note of the 2nd Meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

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SECOND MEETING OF THE OEWG ON SDGS OF THE CFS: 24 FEBRUARY 2016

The second meeting of the Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) was held on 24 February 2016, at the headquarters of the World Food Programme (WFP), in Rome, Italy. Member countries and multi-stakeholder participants heard a presentation on the UN Secretary-General's report on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at global level (UN Doc A/70/684); discussed an outline of a proposal on CFS engagement to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda); and addressed a preliminary mapping of CFS products for the 2030 Agenda and next steps.

The OEWG on SDGs was established by CFS at its 42nd Plenary session. The objective of this informal working group, which is open to all CFS Stakeholders, is to agree on a proposal on how CFS as a global, multi-stakeholder committee, will support progress reaching the SDGs related to sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition, and in advancing the parts of the 2030 Agenda which fall within its mandate. Discussions focused on CFS' role to provide a platform for identifying and sharing achievements and challenges related to SDG implementation; address policy gaps that may impede SDG implementation; and identify opportunities for accelerating progress on particular themes. A proposal will be submitted to the CFS 43rd Plenary session (October 2016).

At its first meeting, the OEWG heard presentations on the 2030 Agenda; addressed the OEWG workplan for the year, including its objectives, expected outcomes and activities; and started discussion on possible CFS work in support of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and achievement of the SDGs.

This report summarizes the proceedings of the second meeting of the OEWG.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

Jim Harvey, WFP Chief of Staff, welcomed participants and highlighted support to CFS as an example of successful collaboration between the Rome-based agencies. Noting that the UN Secretary-General identified CFS as a prime example of a multi-stakeholder platform, he drew attention to CFS' critical role in advancing implementation of the 2030 Agenda and nutrition-related issues.

OEWG Chair Willem Olthof, Senior Development Adviser, EU Delegation, provided an overview of the meeting's agenda and background documents.

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT ON CRITICAL MILESTONES TOWARDS FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW

Gabriel Ferrero, Senior Policy Advisor to the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Food Security and Nutrition and Special Adviser on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development David Nabarro, presented on the Secretary-General's report on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at global level.

Ferrero said the report contains the Secretary-General's analysis and proposals, including on the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) operations, institutional responsibilities, contribution of all intergovernmental platforms to the 2030 Agenda, and arrangements for State-led reviews, and will be addressed in intergovernmental negotiations under the UN General Assembly (GA). He said the review system should be country-led, people-centered, gender-sensitive, participatory, and useful to countries and people; and underscored the need for inclusiveness, support to national implementation, and coherency with existing institutions. He provided an overview of the HLPF operations under the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and UNGA; and noted that thematic reviews of progress will be aligned with ECOSOC sessions and supported by ECOSOC functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies, such as CFS.

Ferrero outlined core inputs to HLPF sessions, including voluntary national reviews and inputs by intergovernmental thematic forums, and clarified that intergovernmental forums, such as CFS, are under no reporting obligation but have the flexibility to decide their own approach and contribution to the HLPF. He said the report proposes three steps to enable such forums to support the HLPF: reflection on the implications of the 2030 Agenda; examination of their working methods; and reflection on their ability to engage critical actors. He presented options for defining the HLPF annual theme and the sequence of thematic reviews, including an illustrative example of a possible four-year cycle.

In the ensuing discussion, participants discussed the illustrative example on the sequence of the reviews, noting that it proposes that the HLPF addresses food security in 2017. Some said that an additional year would allow for more advanced contribution by CFS. Others suggested that CFS is considered ready to contribute with regards to its already endorsed policy products. Ferrero noted that the sequence of reviews can change, and further explained that CFS is recognized as ready to undertake inclusive reviews. He urged Member States to send a message to New York processes that

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CFS can offer a sound, inclusive process if given time to function. Participants also addressed the multiple reporting duties of specialized agencies, both to their governing bodies and the HLPF.

CFS ENGAGEMENT TO ADVANCE THE 2030 AGENDA

Chair Olthof introduced an annotated outline of a zero-draft proposal on CFS engagement in advancing the 2030 Agenda (CFS OEWG-SDGs/2016/02/24/04), which includes an introduction containing the background to SDGs and CFS, and sections on: points of departure, covering what CFS should and should not do; means of engagement, including support to countries in implementation, contributing to the global thematic review, and CFS agenda setting; and implications for the organization of CFS work. Participants commended the approach and structure of the outline as an excellent starting point, and made both general and specific comments.

Afghanistan, with Brazil, called for a section on expected outcomes, including a mapping of CFS initiatives in support of SDG 2 (ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture) and other related SDGs; monitoring the result of CFS inputs in the implementation of SDGs of relevance to food security and nutrition; and reporting the results of CFS contribution to the SDGs to CFS Plenary and other relevant forums. Italy noted that monitoring implementation of CFS policy products would contribute to monitoring food security and nutrition as a whole. Argentina stressed the national ownership of the monitoring and review process at country level.

Participants briefly addressed whether to refer to “principles” rather than “points of departure.” The Private Sector Mechanism (PSM) called for reference to the “five Ps” of sustainable development (people, planet, peace, partnership, prosperity). The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), with FAO, suggested focus on partnerships, noting that CFS products do not target only governments. Many stressed that CFS reaches those affected by hunger and malnutrition and smallholder farmers. The World Health Organization (WHO) welcomed the focus on food security and nutrition and stressed interlinkages between all targets of SDG 2. The Gates Foundation and WFP called for demonstrating the linkages between SDG 2 and other SDGs.

Ferrero identified CFS contribution to advance both food security and nutrition, and the 2030 Agenda review process as a whole. IFAD suggested that CFS focus on SDG 2 in the thematic review process to bring in specialized knowledge, while its contribution to implementation would cover interlinkages among all SDGs.

Afghanistan, Switzerland and France requested referencing sustainable agriculture. Norway, IFAD, France, Brazil and the Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) suggested reaffirming the centrality of the human rights framework, particularly the right to food, and the EU Delegation added gender equality, climate change and governance.

On means of engagement, the PSM stressed that CFS should provide input to the HLPF to the maximum extent possible. Switzerland suggested exploring the relationship between CFS and HLPF. IFAD and France highlighted

CFS’ role in promoting multi-stakeholder dialogue. Italy, Brazil and the CSM proposed stressing the effects of policy convergence and coordination. The CSM suggested the Global Strategic Framework is an important contribution to the global thematic review. Pakistan noted the need to go beyond dissemination of CFS products, possibly incorporating them in country-level projects.

On implications for CFS work, many agreed on the need to increase visibility and presence in New York and to draw attention to CFS as a reference for a multi-stakeholder forum. Ferrero noted the process is global and multi-level, not happening only in New York. Regarding collaboration with other organizations, Germany and France suggested specific reference to organizations of relevance, such as WHO, FAO and the International Labour Organization. Many questioned the need to reassess existing CFS products, calling for aligning future products with the SDGs instead. The Netherlands suggested exploring the contribution which reports of the CFS High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) could make, to support the identification of policy gaps and challenges, and emerging issues. Afghanistan, with IFAD and France, called for clarifying the proposed gap/challenge analysis of SDG implementation, and for taking into consideration available resources, and Chair Olthof agreed on the need to examine the feasibility of proposed actions. The Secretariat stressed the need to examine the feasibility of commissioning reports on gap/challenge analysis of SDG implementation to the HLPE, whose role is to provide state of the art science reports on specific topics related to food security and nutrition.

Chair Olthof said the Secretariat, assisted by the technical task team, will draft a full proposal, to be considered at the third meeting of the OEWG, scheduled for 3 May 2016. Italy noted the OEWG meeting clashes with the CFS multi-stakeholder dialogue, to be held in conjunction with the FAO Regional Conference for Europe, in Antalya, Turkey, and requested revising the schedule.

CFS PRODUCTS FOR THE 2030 AGENDA: PRELIMINARY MAPPING

The Secretariat requested participants’ views on a mapping of SDG targets in relation to CFS scope and policy products (Information Note CFS OEWG-SDGs/2016/02/24/05). Participants noted the document is useful. France said it is a technical document and should not be negotiated. Pakistan and Italy suggested focus on targets identified as falling widely in the scope of CFS. Italy, Brazil and the EU Delegation suggested that target 12.3 on food loss and waste falls in the scope of CFS. The CSM stressed the role of the Global Strategic Framework for the achievement of many SDGs.

Chair Olthof agreed the document is a technical one, and encouraged the Secretariat to refine it for further discussion.

NEXT STEPS

The Secretariat said possibilities will be explored for an intersessional event before the third meeting of the OEWG, to address technical matters. Chair Olthof thanked participants for their inputs and closed the meeting at 5:40 pm.