



CFS Bulletin

A Briefing Note of the 1st Meeting of the Committee on World Food Security Open Ended Working Group on Nutrition
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FIRST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY OPEN ENDED WORKING GROUP ON NUTRITION: 14 JANUARY 2016

The first meeting of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Open Ended Working Group on nutrition (OEWG) took place on Thursday, 14 January 2016 in Rome, Italy at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) headquarters.

The meeting, which brought together members of the CFS Bureau, Advisory Group and other CFS stakeholders, addressed: the role of the OEWG on nutrition as foreseen in the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW); a proposal by the Technical Task Team (TTT) on the area of focus of the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) report on Nutrition and Food Systems to be launched as CFS plenary in 2017; a proposal by the TTT for CFS' further involvement of the Committee in nutrition; and the workplan of the OEWG on nutrition.

The TTT, that was established in November 2015 to assist the Secretariat to prepare two proposals, includes the FAO, the International Fund for Agriculture and Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN), the UN Secretary General's High Level Task Force on Global Food and Nutrition Security (HLTF), the CFS Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) and the CFS Private Sector Mechanism (PSM).

Following this meeting, a revised version of the proposals will be circulated to meeting participants. Electronic comments will be accepted on new draft proposals. The final version on the area of focus of the HLPE report will be presented beginning of February to the CFS Bureau which, following discussion with the Advisory Group, will submit the request for a report to the HLPE. The revised version of the proposal for CFS further involvement in nutrition will be shared in advance of the next OEWG meeting, scheduled to convene on 25 February 2016.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

Chair Khaled El-Taweel, Egypt, opened the meeting on Thursday afternoon.

Deborah Fulton, CFS Secretariat, referencing the global momentum on nutrition issues, cited efforts of the UN SCN, WHO Global Action Plan on Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD Action Plan), Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems, the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), and listed examples of recent progress, including the invitation of WHO and UNICEF to contribute as *ad hoc* bodies to the Advisory Group and emphasis on nutrition expertise during the selection for candidates to the HLPE Steering Committee. She concluded that the objective of the OEWG in 2016 is to establish a clear vision for CFS on nutrition.

AREAS OF FOCUS OF THE HLPE REPORT

Chair El-Taweel then invited discussion on areas of focus of the HLPE report, proposing limiting meeting discussion to: interlinkages, and building on other processes including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and ICN2

outcomes; and potential areas of expansion of the HLPE report. Participants then discussed a draft proposal on this item prepared by the TTT.

Francesco Branca, Director of Nutrition for Health and Development, WHO, emphasized that healthy diets should be put at the center of the food system, which aligns with the SDGs and ICN2. He highlighted the utility of economic modeling tools that indicate economic feasibility at the regional level for limiting dietary sugar and fat, and further noted that the NCD Action Plan, which looks at effectiveness of policies to shape consumer choices, could contribute to the HLPE report.

Afghanistan noted the proposal discusses outcomes rather than areas of focus.

France supported a food systems approach, noting this aligned with ICN2. She raised concerns that the proposal goes beyond defining focal areas, and defines outcomes. She stressed that the report should: not produce new research; lay out policy implications for other members of CFS than national governments; and include emerging issues, e.g. equality, food prices, and cultural aspects. She further emphasized a focus on local food production could bring gains towards nutrition and climate change goals and stressed the importance of addressing the climate change-nutrition nexus.

Germany praised the proposal for addressing both supply and demand. Saying the "healthy choice should be the easy choice," he stressed empowerment of consumers and nutrition education as important elements. He said the report should add value and build on existing work, such as SCN policy briefs.

Anna Lartey, Director of the FAO Nutrition and Food Systems Division, speaking as a member of SCN, reported on the SCN's work, saying SCN focuses on all forms of malnutrition, is UN and globally focused, works intersectorally, and supports the work of CFS. Speaking for FAO, she pointed to "broken food systems" as cause for global malnutrition, and supported a broad approach by the HLPE. She highlighted including climate change, social protection, trade and investment, and creating a food environment that supports healthy diets. She said the FAO endorsed the proposed role of CFS on policy convergence. On sharing good practices, she stated a need for guidance to countries on what to report. She confirmed that FAO would report on progress on the ICN2 recommendations at CFS plenary in collaboration with the WHO.

The United Kingdom (UK) said the HLPE should build on existing work in consultation with key actors, including the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems. Stating the electronic consultation process was "too passive," he encouraged the HLPE to reach out to global experts. He called for the report to take a stronger gender lens, and emphasized the higher nutrition burden of urban households.

EU called for clarification on how extensively the HLPE report would guide the CFS work, and whether it would be the sole basis for guiding recommendations. He underlined that the CFS perspective should be distinct, and that the CFS "lens" of a food security approach be maintained.

Chair El-Taweel clarified that both electronic consultations and discussion at the first OEWG meeting will feed into the HLPE report, and that the report will be a foundation for CFS work on nutrition, but not the sole guidance. CFS Secretariat

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further clarified that OEWG should supply input as to what members think is most important to address when requesting an HLPE report, and said electronic consultations provided a head start to the HLPE.

Brazil supported the food systems approach. She suggested the HLPE report should: reflect ICN2 outcomes; provide information on challenges to obtaining good nutrition; reference equalities, transportation and a stronger emphasis on gender.

The US stressed the need to avoid duplication, and enhance collaboration. He emphasized the need for the HLPE to draw on economists as much as nutritionists, and said there was room for a much stronger private sector component.

Argentina underlined the relationship between food systems and nutrition, and called for a reference to sustainable development.

The Russian Federation stated the HLPE report should focus on the link between food security and nutrition, emphasizing the importance of nutrition education and social protection. He said the report should be linked to the Rome Declaration on Nutrition.

Mihoko Tamamura, Rome-based Agencies and the Committee on World Food Security Unit, WFP, emphasized that CFS contributions should be made in light of ICN2 and SDGs and should complement existing work such as that of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement (SUN). She underlined the need to address the most vulnerable and supported reference to social protections, calling nutrition “an objective and outcome of the SDGs.”

CSM called for: focusing on a comprehensive nutrition framework; recognizing links; and ensuring no conflict of interest in selections of the HLPE report team.

Canada supported focusing on: existing initiatives; importance of nutrition data and measurement; effective partnerships; and national government accountability.

PSM highlighted the need for CFS to: add value; address the needs of the most vulnerable; and link closely to SDG 2 (end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture) and 2.4 (ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters, and that progressively improve land and soil quality) and to the Rome Declaration on Nutrition. She called for case studies to reflect state and non-state actors.

CSM referred to nutrition as a “fragmented” issue, and emphasized the importance of culture, indigenous people, small-scale producers, and families in food production, and of a rights based approach.

Chair El-Taweel summarized the discussion, noting participants views on: strong support for interlinkages between food security and nutrition; building on existing work and interlinkages with ICN2; using case studies; referencing nutrition education, social protection, culture and a rights based approach, gender, and climate change; and building relationships with the private sector. He noted that these inputs would be reflected in a new draft proposal to be made available to participants for comments preceding the second OEWG.

The Russian Federation cautioned against an emphasis on rights.

Venezuela emphasized South-South cooperation and more consultation for member states on the ICN2 Framework for Action.

Participants then discussed rules of procedure, including on the role of OEWG in advising the HLPE versus the HLPE advising the OEWG, and on the role of electronic consultations and OEWG discussion in this process. A number of participants called for clarity. CFS Secretariat referenced text of the MYPoW that sets forth procedure for the OEWG to provide input to the HLPE as part of the request for a report, further emphasizing the need for broad support, since the nutrition report will be foundational. Participants then agreed that a new draft, reflecting inputs, would be compiled by the Secretariat and made available for comments prior to submission to the Bureau and Advisory Group.

POTENTIAL AREAS FOR CFS' FURTHER INVOLVEMENT IN NUTRITION

Chair El-Taweel then introduced initial discussions on the TTT proposal on potential areas for CFS further involvement in nutrition, requesting that discussion focus on the relationship between food systems and nutrition and on CFS functions and activities.

On policy convergence, WHO said the work should be in view to operationalize ICN2, and noted that the FAO and WHO are currently working on metrics to measure commitments. She welcomed the CFS' participation in the World Health Assembly (WHA), recalling the May 2015 WHA resolution calling for collaboration with CFS. On mainstreaming, she noted the SCN is developing nutrition impact analyses policies.

Italy highlighted CFS' role in policy convergence, sharing lessons, and reporting, noting the need to enhance country-level work on these, and to have strong linkages to the SDG framework and the 2030 Agenda. Pointing to “heavy” discussion post ICN2 on the role of the SCN and CFS, he called for further clarification of roles.

The Russian Federation underlined the need to address the triple burden of malnutrition in the context of food systems. He said the WHO should be more prominently represented in the Advisory Group.

Ecuador said CFS work must take a human rights based approach, and must address the cultural aspect. He stressed avoiding repeating negotiations.

Afghanistan said that a focus on policy convergence should occur in the first half of 2017 or earlier and that a decision box should be made for agreement at CFS plenary. He emphasized a multistakeholder process for sharing best practices, and that CFS should provide space for reporting progress, and supported CFS reporting to other governing bodies.

France noted that policy convergence is a true added value of CFS, and said gains would be made if convergence is focused on food security and nutrition.

Germany supported stronger emphasis on the right to adequate food. He expressed concern with overall follow up to ICN2, particularly on reporting on ICN2 recommendations, which is not the work of CFS. He stressed: that CFS should not replace existing platforms, such as SCN; building on existing policy guidelines; the role of women and household members; and effectiveness and feasibility of country reporting.

The US said the proposal reflects existing work, suggested revisiting definitions of food systems and sustainable food systems, and noted that the SDG process includes reporting.

Switzerland agreed to a focus on food system and food value chains, supported the right to food, and stressed avoiding replication of other platforms and bodies.

CSM: stressed CFS is the only body with mandate to address malnutrition in all its forms; suggested that mapping the nutrition landscape may assist CFS to make a more coherent plan of work; and noted CFS role in protecting the right to food. Recognizing industry's impact on shaping evidence-based knowledge in ways that influence policy recommendations, she underlined the need for safeguards.

The EU called for mapping the nutrition constellation in order to better inform the CFS vision. He supported focusing on maternal health and child stunting.

Brazil welcomed the food systems approach and supported the human rights perspective. On sharing of lessons and good practices, she said CFS is a good platform to keep track of implementation of ICN2 – saying no one is the “father” or “mother” of it.

CFS Secretariat then summarized major discussion points, *inter alia* the: right to food; role of WHO/FAO in reporting as stated in ICN2 outcomes; links between sharing lessons and policy convergence; defining forms of reporting on ICN2; and use of definitions. Chair El-Taweel noted that a draft proposal would be made available for comments preceding the second OEWG.

WORKPLAN OF THE OEWG ON NUTRITION

Chair El-Taweel asked participants to endorse the workplan. After brief discussion, participants then agreed to accept the workplan as a living document, noting that intersessional events would be subject to resources and proposals.

The OEWG concluded at 6:04 pm.