

Concept Note

“Bringing home the results from Rome”

Strengthening the use and application of CFS Policy Outcomes

9.30 - 12.30, Sheikh Zayed Centre, FAO HQs

6 April 2017



Background and rationale

Since its reform in 2009, the Committee for World Food Security (CFS) has become the foremost inclusive intergovernmental and international platform to promote policy convergence, coherence, and coordination for food security and nutrition. In response to the food price crisis of 2007/8, **the CFS reform established a new vision for global governance on food security and nutrition**, with a strong mandate to foster the progressive realization of the human right to adequate food.

All relevant sectors can participate in the CFS today, in accordance with their roles, especially governments as members and participants from UN and other intergovernmental institutions, civil society, research institutions and private sector. The CFS is **unique in the UN System particularly regarding civil society participation**, as organizations of the small-scale food producers, family farmers, fisher folks, indigenous peoples, food and agricultural workers, pastoralists, landless, women, youth, consumers, the urban food insecure and NGOs are able to actively and collectively participate through their own mechanism, the CSM.

In 2016/17, an independent **evaluation of the CFS** is being conducted. One of the main questions coming from the evaluation is **the challenge for a better use and application of the CFS policy outcomes**. In that sense, the event contributes to the discussions in the context of the CFS evaluation.

During the past years, the CFS members and participants developed **several policy outcomes**, discussed in the participatory and inclusive governance setting of the CFS and afterwards approved by the member governments by consensus. There are two distinct types of CFS policy outcomes:

- a. **the more comprehensive policy guidance tools** that were discussed and negotiated: the Voluntary Guidelines on the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the context of national food security (VGRtF); the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT); the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF); the Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) and the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (FFA).
- b. **the more-specific policy recommendations** that were negotiated based on recommendations of an HLPE report or another type of deliberation process. These include the recently adopted policy recommendations on connecting smallholders to markets, on sustainable agricultural development and the role of livestock, on water for food security and nutrition, and others. All these more specific recommendations were included into the Report of the CFS Annual Plenaries and afterwards included into the GSF which serves as the overarching framework for the CFS and as living reference compendium of all CFS policy outcomes.

The **distinction** between the more comprehensive and the more specific policy outcomes is technical and referring mostly to the scope and length of the documents. The challenge for a better use, application and monitoring of CFS policy outcomes is equally valid for both types of policy outcomes.

The **quality and relevance** of its outcomes are widely recognized as among the main **strengths of the reformed CFS**, considering **particularly the participatory and inclusive character of the processes** that led to these results.

However, it is also **evident that one of the weaknesses of the CFS is the limited use, application and monitoring of its outcomes**. This perception and corresponding concern have been expressed by several members and participants in CFS discussions over the past few years.

While important progress has been made during the past two years to advance the monitoring of CFS policy outcomes, a **clear need remains for conceptual and operative work to develop proposals for better use and application of CFS outcomes**. Proposals to meet these needs also could feed into the follow-up of the CFS evaluation.

The **monitoring exercise** conducted as a pilot within the CFS in 2016 on the VGGT, as prepared and presented during the first Global Thematic Event on the use and application of the VGGT, **has shown the enormous potential of impact when a CFS instrument is applied in policies and programmes**.

The VGGT monitoring exercise in 2016 provided evidence on how governments, intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations, academia and private sector groups contributed to the use and application of major CFS outcomes. It is suggested here to **draw lessons from these processes** for the improved use and application of CFS outcomes.

One important point of departure in that sense is the **use and application of CFS policy outcomes in various spheres**, as documented in the VGGT exercise, including:

- a. dissemination and awareness raising;
- b. capacity building and development;
- c. creation and consolidation of policy dialogue spaces;
- d. reforms of policy and legal frameworks;
- e. effective participation of specific social groups in the operationalization process; and
- f. monitoring and evaluation.

Another point of departure is the fact, that the CFS itself is not an implementing body. It **is up to its members and participants to contribute to the use and application of the CFS policy outcomes**, in accordance with their roles and responsibilities as:

- a. governments and governmental organizations;
- b. intergovernmental organizations, particularly the RBA, other UN agencies and financial institutions;
- c. civil society;
- d. research institutions;
- e. private sector.

The development of proposals for the use and application of CFS outcomes needs to build on the specific mandate, commitment and functions of each of the members and categories of participants and will need to consider strengths, weaknesses and potentials of each of them, as well as of the cooperation among them.

The **perspective of such a process cannot be Rome centred**, it is **country driven**. Civil society organizations often have discussed this application challenge for CFS outcomes under the popular term ***“bringing home the results from Rome.”*** They are exploring how the outcomes of the CFS in Rome can be used for better policies on food security and nutrition within the country context, at home.

The use and application exercise should apply the CFS outcomes’ inherent principle to **focus on the social groups most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition**, who are at the same time the most relevant contributors to food security and nutrition worldwide. An operative principle for the use and application of the CFS outcomes, therefore, is to achieve the best impact possible for these social groups--small-scale food producers, family farmers, fisher folk, indigenous peoples, food and agricultural workers, pastoralists, landless, women, youth, consumers, the urban food insecure-- and the progressive realization of their right to adequate food.

The deliberation on an improved use and application would not only build on experiences documented and assessed within the CFS monitoring exercise. It would also ensure the effective link between use and application, on one side, and monitoring, on the other. It should **encourage CFS members and participants to promote national monitoring events, as part of effective strategies for a better use and applications of CFS policy outcomes.**

1. **Objectives**

The event organized by Germany and the CSM is intended to play a catalytic role in a participatory and inclusive discussion process toward a better use and application of CFS outcomes, which would provide conceptual clarity for practical action of all interested and committed actors, and ensure the link among the use, application and monitoring of CFS outcomes.

In this sense, the **general objective** of the event is to contribute to a better use, application and monitoring of CFS policy outcomes.

The **specific objectives** of the event are to:

- discuss key aspects and specific proposals for improving the use and application of CFS policy outcomes;
- play a catalytic role in a participatory and inclusive discussion toward a better use and application of CFS policy outcomes;
- encourage the promotion of national monitoring events as part of the efforts for a better use and application of CFS policy outcomes.

The **target group** of the event are the CFS members and participants themselves. Therefore, all members and participants of the CFS should be invited, as well as staff from the Rome-based agencies.

As mentioned above, the **event also will contribute to advance discussion on one of the major challenges** identified in the context of the independent **evaluation of the CFS.**