



**General Assembly
Economic and Social Council**

Distr.: General
6 April 2021

Original: English

**General Assembly
Seventy-sixth session**
Item 25 (a) of the preliminary list*
**Agriculture development, food security and nutrition:
agriculture development, food security and nutrition**

**Economic and Social Council
2021 session**
23 July 2020–22 July 2021
Agenda item 11
**Implementation of and follow-up to major
United Nations conferences and summits**

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

Note by the Secretary-General

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

* A/76/50.

** The report is being issued without formal editing.



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

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English,
French, Russian and Spanish]

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](#). More recently, the Committee reaffirmed its commitment to these roles and vision as described in document CFS 2018/45/3, and endorsed at CFS 45 in October 2018.

2. This report describes the main outcomes and decisions taken by the Forty-seventh Session of CFS held in February 2021 and, where relevant, provides updates on follow-up actions. The Final Report of the Session is available at CFS 47/Report.

Main decisions, recommendations and results

Food Security and Nutrition: Building a Global Narrative Towards 2030

3. The Committee expressed its deepest concerns for the livelihoods, food security and nutrition of millions, which are further jeopardized by the ongoing global pandemic, with alarming trends threatening to reverse the development gains made in previous decades.

4. The Session opened with an address by the UN Secretary-General, delivered by his Special Envoy for the Food Systems Summit, Agnes Kalibata. The UN Secretary-General called for “fundamental, systemic change to address hunger, sustainability and malnutrition, while upholding human rights, alleviating poverty and supporting inclusive and sustainable development for all.” Furthermore, he recalled that CFS “is our unique platform for multi-stakeholder engagement on SDG2, bringing together governments, civil society, private sector, scientists, finance institutions, United Nations experts and others” and reminded participants that CFS “is an important example of inclusivity that I hope can be emulated at the national level.”

5. In his opening remarks, CFS Chairperson, Mr Thanawat Tiensin, recalled the extent to which “COVID-19 has highlighted current food systems’ fragility,” underlining the need to build “far more resilient systems that offer access to affordable and nutritious food that nurtures people and sustains our planet.” He stressed the importance of the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit as an opportunity to build momentum, in this regard, and pledged the full support of CFS.

6. CFS Members and participants welcomed the latest report from the CFS High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (CFS HLPE) entitled “Food security and nutrition: building a global narrative towards 2030”, and expressed appreciation for its vision, and its conceptual framework connecting food and agricultural systems to health, environmental, economic, social and other systems. They further acknowledged the report’s emphasis on two new proposed dimensions of “agency” and “sustainability” as crucial to achieving global food security and

nutrition, grounded in the right to adequate food. The CFS HLPE report calls for four specific policy shifts: (i) recognize the need for transformation of food systems; (ii) view food security and nutrition as a system interconnected with other systems and sectors; (iii) focus on hunger and *all* forms of malnutrition; and (iv) recognize that food security and nutrition challenges are context-specific and require diverse, local solutions.

7. CFS Members and stakeholders generally welcomed the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit, recognized the relevance of this CFS HLPE report for the preparation of this Summit, and proposed organizers to fully utilize all major CFS policy convergence instruments – such as the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSYN), the Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure (CFS VGGT), the CFS Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment (CFS RAI), the CFS Framework for Action during Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA), and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Progressive Realization on the Right to Adequate Food – to ground the Summit’s preparation work.

The CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSyN)

8. The Committee endorsed CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSyN), and encouraged all CFS stakeholders to support and promote them at all levels within their constituencies, and in collaboration with other relevant initiatives and platforms. Support was also sought for their wide dissemination, use, and application to support the development, enhancement and implementation of coordinated and multi-sectoral national policies, laws, programmes, investment plans, and various regional food security and nutrition initiatives, recognizing the diversity and complexity of food systems and diets as well as national capacities and priorities.

9. The result of five-plus years of inclusive multi-stakeholder consultation and negotiation, these Guidelines represent a concrete tool to inform policy-makers and others on practical policies and interventions to address malnutrition in all its forms through a holistic ‘food systems’ approach. They aim to support the development of coordinated, multi-sectoral national policies, laws, programmes and investment plans to enable safe and healthy diets through sustainable food systems, and promote policy coherence between relevant sectors like health, agriculture, education, environment, gender, social protection, trade and employment – all of which impact food systems and nutrition. The VGFSyN recognize the importance of implementing interventions within and across food systems, and their constituent elements – food supply chains, food environments, and consumers’ behavior – to improve the likelihood of those food systems delivering healthy diets and positive outcomes among the three dimensions of sustainable development. The VGFSyN include a wide range of recommendations to promote transparent and accountable governance, sustainable food supply chains, access to healthy diets, food safety across sustainable food systems, nutrition education, gender equality, and resilient food systems in humanitarian contexts.

10. The Committee commended those countries that have voluntarily pledged to utilize the VGFSyN in their own national policy and/or legislative circumstances, in conjunction with commitments on the UN Decade of Action on the 2030 Agenda, the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025), and the UN Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028), and encouraged other countries to take similar steps to utilize this CFS product as a tool for national-level, coherent, and multi-stakeholder action to promote sustainable food systems and address malnutrition in all its forms, and

other related social, economic and environmental issues. In addition, the Committee acknowledged the essential role of the VGFSyN in assisting countries to achieve a number of SDGs directly, with particular attention to targets 2.2 and 2.4.

11. The Committee underlined the valuable input the VGFSyN will provide to the UN Food Systems Summit – both preparation and follow-up, and requested the Governing Bodies of FAO, WFP and IFAD to support their utilization at country level. Likewise, the Committee requested the United Nations General Assembly, through the UN Economic and Social Council, to consider and ensure their dissemination among relevant UN Organizations, Agencies, and Programmes.

12. The Committee encouraged all stakeholders to document lessons learned from using the VGFSyN and to share these lessons with the Committee in order to assess their continued relevance, effectiveness, and impact – in line with standard Committee monitoring practices.

Terms of Reference for the Preparation of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women’s and Girls’ Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition

13. The Committee endorsed Terms of Reference for the preparation of CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women’s and Girls’ Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition, which will be presented for endorsement by CFS plenary in October 2022.

14. The Committee acknowledged that advancing gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment is critical to achieving CFS’ vision of ending hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition for all, and for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security.

15. In undertaking this process, the Committee underscored that gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment is essential to achieving all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as ensuring food systems that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. The importance of gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment for sustainable development was acknowledged by the international community through the adoption of gender equality as a stand-alone goal in the 2030 Agenda (SDG5). Realizing gender equality and empowering women and girls will make a crucial contribution across all of the Agenda’s goals and targets. Thus, systematic mainstreaming of gender equality in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is critically important.

16. With these Guidelines, the Committee will provide concrete policy guidance based on good practices and lessons learnt on gender mainstreaming, gender transformative interventions and innovative solutions. They aim to promote gender-responsive approaches, improving legal and policy frameworks, institutional arrangements, national plans and programmes, and promoting innovative partnerships and increased investments in human and financial resources that are conducive to promoting gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment.

17. The Guidelines aim to foster greater policy coherence among gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment, and food security and nutrition agendas, and promote mutually reinforcing policy measures. Generating and disseminating evidence on the diverse situations and experiences of women and girls, men and boys and recognizing their differentiated opportunities, constraints and outcomes in the context of food security and nutrition helps to transform societal norms, raise

awareness and support appropriate responses including targeted development of policies and programs.

18. The Committee recognized the importance of an inclusive process in line with the CFS mandate, open to all interested stakeholders, leading to the adoption of the Guidelines, and emphasized the crucial importance of planned regional consultations, OEWG meetings, and an electronic consultation for the ownership and success of this process.

Multi-Year Programme of Work 2020–2023

19. The Committee commended the CFS Chairperson, Bureau and its Advisory Group, the CFS HLPE Steering Committee, and Secretariat for taking prompt action to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on global food security and nutrition, and requested continued deliberation on, and due attention to, the impacts of COVID-19 on food systems, agriculture and nutrition at all stages of the implementation of the approved MYPoW's workstreams.

20. In view of the immense challenge posed by the global pandemic for achieving Zero Hunger by 2030, the Committee updated its Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) for 2020–2023, its strategic programme of work, which includes thematic workstreams on (i) Food systems and nutrition; (ii) Agroecological and other innovative approaches; (iii) Gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition; (iv) Promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems; (v) Data collection and analysis tools; and (vi) Reducing inequalities for food security and nutrition.

CFS Framework for Action on Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises

21. The Committee organized an event to take stock of the use and application of the CFS Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises (CFS-FFA), adopted by CFS in 2015.

22. The Committee welcomed the event as a contribution to monitoring progress toward implementation of the Framework and as a useful opportunity to share experiences and good practices in the use and application of the CFS-FFA at all levels.

23. The Committee reaffirmed that protracted crisis situations require special attention, that appropriate responses for these contexts differ from those required in short-term crisis situations or in non-crisis development contexts, and underlined that the principles set forth in the CFS-FFA remain relevant.

24. The Committee recalled that the overarching values informing the CFS-FFA are respect for human rights and international humanitarian law; human dignity; non-discrimination; equality and justice; gender sensitivity and equality; holistic and sustainable approaches; consultation and participation; rule of law; transparency; and accountability, and, to avoid exacerbating manifestations, specific challenges, or the underlying causes of protracted crises; and reiterated that the overall objective of the CFS-FFA is to improve the food security and nutrition of populations affected by, or at risk of, protracted crises in a way that addresses underlying causes, thus contributing to the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security.

25. The Committee welcomed the action taken by the United Nations Security Council's President (Dominican Republic) in April of 2020 to highlight the CFS-FFA

during a Security Council Session dedicated to addressing the links between food insecurity and conflict, and encouraged Members and other stakeholders to raise awareness of the CFS-FFA in other fora.

26. The Committee recognized that the CFS-FFA – since its adoption on 13 October 2015 – has been underutilized at global, national, and local levels, with minimal, coordinated effort to ensure its dissemination and application in various international fora where the CFSFFA could be useful; and recommended to: (i) make additional efforts to promote a broader and systematic dissemination, use and application of the CFS-FFA, especially at the national level; (ii) promote transparent and open mechanisms to apply the CFS-FFA in protracted crises contexts, supported by CFS Members, the Rome-based Agencies, and other CFS constituencies, while seeking similar commitments and support from other UN agencies, towards joint and coordinated implementation plans; (iii) put in place a framework to invite regular exchange of experiences to take stock of the use of the CFS-FFA to measure progress in achieving the CFS vision; (iv) provide adequate financing for building resilience and capacities to achieve food security and nutrition in protracted crises.

Policy Guidance on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches

27. The Committee is working on a process of policy convergence on innovative approaches to bring about food system transformation. Innovations include changes in practices, norms, markets and institutional arrangements, which may foster new networks of food production, processing, distribution and consumption that may challenge the status quo.

28. CFS policy recommendations on “*Agroecological and other innovative approaches*” will be elaborated building upon the main findings of the CFS HLPE report on “*Agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable food systems that enhance food security and nutrition*”.

29. The CFS policy recommendations are expected to be endorsed at CFS 48, in June 2021, and will build upon and complement relevant guidance contained in other CFS products.

Report of the Forty-seventh Session of the Committee on World Food Security (8–11 February 2021)

30. The full Final Report of the Forty-seventh Session of the Committee on World Food Security, which was held virtually, from 8 to 11 February 2021, can be found at the following link: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/CFS47/Report/NF097_47_REPORT_en.pdf.

31. Further information on the Session and all side-events can be located at: <http://www.fao.org/cfs/plenary/cfs-47/en/>.