



Launch of HLPE Report

Multi-stakeholder partnerships to finance and improve food security and nutrition in the framework of the 2030 Agenda

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HLPE Steering Committee Chairperson

Opening statement

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr Chair, dear Mario, thank you very much for giving me the floor.

It is my privilege to open the presentation of this 13th HLPE report on as you just mentioned on “Multi-stakeholder partnerships – what I will call MSPs – to finance and improve food security and nutrition in the framework of the 2030 Agenda” as requested by the CFS during 43rd Plenary session in October 2016.

Usually the cover of the baby illustrates one of the main messages and in particular this year, I could say when looking at it: when one goes alone, one goes fast, but together we can go further. That's of course a very straight forward sentence. Let's go to introduce the report.

In 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda promoted multi-stakeholder partnerships as a way to complement the efforts of national governments and international organizations and to – I quote – “mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries and in particular in developing countries”.

Well, MSPs have actually rapidly emerged, over the past two decades, as a part of a new approach to governance for sustainable development at different scales.

Facing financial constraints, some states might consider them as a useful tool to mobilize additional resources. Some private actors consider them as a way to influence public decision-making and policy, or to improve their own reputation. Some civil society organizations might acknowledge the role of inclusive partnerships, while raising concerns about the power given to the private sector in decision-making processes.

For sure, MSPs should not be considered as a silver-bullet solution to any type of problem, as a panacea. Their emerging importance as part of a new approach to governance for food security and nutrition does not take place without controversy. Scientists are still debating on the exact definition of “stakeholders” vs. “actors” or “partnerships” vs. “platforms”. They question the potential benefits and limitations, the performance and even the relevance of MSPs as a suitable institutional mechanism to finance and improve food security and nutrition. They discuss the condition and practical ways for MSPs to strengthen their contribution to the realization of the right to adequate food.

Increased transparency and accountability have been identified in this report as key conditions for MSPs to better contribute to financing and improving food security and nutrition. In that perspective, this HLPE report aims at providing useful framework and tools for governments and non-state actors to assess and learn from MSPs by collecting and sharing information.

Well, the HLPE faced specific challenges for this report. Previous HLPE reports covered food security related issues for which significant literature and a great deal of evidence were already available. On the contrary, as illustrated in this report, multi-stakeholder partnerships have emerged quite recently as a focus of interest in the food security oriented scientific literature beyond social sciences. Available evidence and data on multi-stakeholder partnerships are still fragmented, limited in time and scope, and quickly evolving. They rely mainly on self-reported data or on partial reviews based on a limited set of partnerships. In that context, this report does not provide a comprehensive analysis of all issues at stake. It could not. But rather contributes to clarify the concepts and formulate the main questions and concern.

You all know that, as the science-policy interface of the CFS, the HLPE produces comprehensive and evidence-based independent reports, to inform CFS debates and contribute to policy convergence as you remembered, Mr Chair. The HLPE reports are the result of a continuous, transdisciplinary, inclusive and multi-stakeholder dialogue among the HLPE experts including the Steering Committee and the Project Team, as well as between the team and a wide range of stakeholders across the world. Stakeholders who hold the knowledge.

This dialogue is held in and outside Rome, at different scales building bridges across regions and countries, between scientists and policy decision-makers. It includes online open consultations allowing all stakeholders to contribute, as well as special exchange seminars who take place and allow direct interactions between the HLPE and stakeholders at national level.

As illustrated in the “Note on HLPE impacts” shared last year with the CFS Evaluation team, this dialogue also raises awareness at the national level on the work of the CFS.

Here, more than for any previous HLPE study, this multi-stakeholder dialogue that contribute to the elaboration of the HLPE reports, is an important result per se.

The final report cannot fully reflect the richness and diversity of all the contributions received of course, particularly during the two open consultations organized by the HLPE on the scope, and on the V0 draft (56 contributions, more than 40 000 words for the consultation on the scope; 69 contributions, more than 70 000 words for the consultation on the V0 draft).

This is why all this raw material which I just quoted (proceedings of the two consultations, syntheses realized by the HLPE Secretariat, as well as the preliminary V0 draft of this report), are all available on the HLPE website, has to be considered, along with the final report, as an important result of this process.

I hope that this report will provide useful elements for further policy convergence discussions in CFS, but also – and I would like to insist on that – but also at regional and national levels, and will open new avenues for future research on MSPs in order to enhance their contribution to financing and improving food security and nutrition. The HLPE stands ready to present and further discuss the findings of this report in different instances and to support CFS members in outreach and dissemination as appropriate in particular the national and regional levels.

On behalf of the Steering Committee, I would like to acknowledge the engagement of all experts who contributed to the elaboration of this report, and especially to the Project Team members. I would like also to thank the HLPE Secretariat for its precious and continuous support to our work. And finally, I would like to show my gratitude to all the resource partners who supported the work of the HLPE in an independent way, and who enabled the HLPE to release this publication.

Together as a mirror of partnerships, together with my colleagues we suggest complementary interventions to share with you our results. I just made the introduction, but Dr. Makhura, Project Team Leader from the University of Pretoria will now present the content of the report, and then Mr Muhammad Khan, the Steering Committee member in charge of the coordination of the preparation of the report, will then present the recommendations.

Thank you very much and I'm looking forward to the discussions.