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**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 a report on the main decisions, outcomes and policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security.**

* [A/75/50](#).

** 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 re-affirmed its commitment to these roles and vision in document [CFS 2018/45/3](#), endorsed at CFS 45.
2. This report describes the main outcomes and decisions taken by the Forty-sixth Session of CFS held in October 2019 and, where relevant, provides updates on follow-up actions. The Final Report of the Session is available at [CFS 46/Report](#).
3. The Session celebrated the forty-fifth anniversary of the Committee, and it focused on the theme “Accelerating progress on SDG2 to achieve all the Sustainable Development Goals”.
4. The Forty-seventh Session of CFS will take place on 12–16 October 2020.

Main decisions, recommendations and results

Review of the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World

5. The Committee expressed its deepest concern about the rising number of food insecure people in the world and the negative trends in hunger and malnutrition, as highlighted in the 2019 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI)¹ report.
6. While for decades the number of hungry people had been declining, the report emphasizes that this is not true anymore, and that the number of undernourished people in the world has been again on the rise, and is back to levels seen in 2010–2011. Today, more than 820 million people in the world do not have enough to eat.
7. The 2019 edition of the report introduced for the first time estimates of the prevalence of food insecurity combining moderate and severe levels. The combination of moderate and severe levels of food insecurity brings the estimated total prevalence of food insecurity to 26.4 percent of the world population, amounting to about 2 billion people.
8. The Committee noted that the concentration and distribution of food insecurity by severity differs greatly across the regions of the world. The situation is most alarming in Africa where, since 2015, the prevalence of undernourishment shows slight but steady increases in almost all sub-regions.

¹ Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5162en/ca5162en.pdf>.

9. The report stressed that malnutrition exists in multiple forms, and these are intertwined throughout the life cycle, with maternal and child undernutrition contributing to 45 percent of deaths in children under five globally. At the same time, it was acknowledged that no region of the world is exempt from the epidemic of overweight and obesity, particularly among school-age children and adults.

10. With these new trends, the Committee is concerned that we are not on track to achieve SDG 2 and other targets of the 2030 Agenda related to food security and nutrition, unless transformative actions are taken within our food systems, and the underlying drivers are addressed.

11. The role that economic slowdowns and downturns have played in recent food security and nutrition trends was emphasized. The uneven pace of global economic recovery raises concerns regarding prospects for ending hunger and malnutrition in all its forms. In addition, economic slowdowns and downturns also lower the resilience capacity of households to respond to other shocks – including conflicts and climate shocks.

12. The SOFI report highlighted that ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2030 is an immense challenge. However, with renewed political commitment, bolder actions and the right investments, zero hunger is still achievable. The Committee called on all stakeholders, including governments, the UN system, the private sector, academia, financial institutions and civil society, to take the necessary actions to reverse the present trends. In this respect, governments and all stakeholders are encouraged to apply CFS policy products,² as appropriate.

Multi-Year Programme of Work 2020–2023

13. In line with the Political Declaration of the SDG Summit, the Committee reaffirmed the commitment at the very heart of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind by taking more tangible steps to support people in vulnerable situations and the most vulnerable countries, and to reach the furthest behind first.

14. In view of the immense challenge posed by achieving Zero Hunger by 2030, the Committee endorsed the CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPoW) for 2020–2023. This is a strategic programme of work, which includes thematic workstreams on Food systems and nutrition; Agroecological and other innovative approaches; Gender equality and women’s empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition; Promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems; Data collection and analysis tools; and Reducing inequalities for food security and nutrition.

15. In accordance with the CFS independent evaluation, and the plan of action to implement its response, which had been agreed by the Committee, the CFS MYPoW 2020–2023, the first of its kind for CFS, has a duration of four years, with one major workstream anticipated per year, including a High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE)³ report per year (with the exception of the workstream on gender).

16. In addition, the MYPoW foresees intersessional reviews on the earlier CFS work on Water for Food Security and Nutrition, on Food Security and Climate Change, as

² List of CFS policy products available at <http://www.fao.org/cfs/home/products/en/>.

³ The HLPE is the science-policy interface of CFS and provides a structured evidence base to inform CFS policy discussions drawing on existing research and knowledge, experiences, and policies at different scales and in different contexts.

well as a global thematic event to monitor and review the application of the CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems.⁴

17. The Committee agreed that the CFS MYPoW 2020–2023 provides a comprehensive framework for accelerating progress towards meeting SDG2 targets by 2030. In particular, the HLPE report #15, titled “*Food security and nutrition: building a global narrative towards 2030*”, synthesis of all HLPE work, will offer a fresh look at what can be done to support the UN Decade of Action on SDGs (2020–2030). The report is anticipated to be released in June this year.

18. The Committee agreed to monitor the MYPOW’s “Rolling Section” each year during its annual plenary session, and to make adjustments based on the global food security and nutrition situation, funding, and priorities of the Members and other stakeholders.

19. The Committee also recognized that the MYPOW will serve as the guiding document for the Secretariat’s Resource Mobilization Strategy approved by Bureau along with an internal Action Plan developed by the Secretariat to support the full implementation of the MYPOW 2020–2023. This work will continue to be supported by the generous extra-budgetary financial contributions of the European Commission, Germany, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, France, and others.

Policy Guidance on Food Systems for Nutrition (VGFSyN)

20. The Committee heard an update on the policy convergence process to produce “*Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems for Nutrition*”. The preparation of the VGFSyN is informed by the findings and scientific evidence provided in the HLPE report on Nutrition and Food Systems.⁵ The VGFSyN will be endorsed at CFS 47 in October 2020.

21. The VGFSyN will provide science- and evidence-based guidance on effective policies, investment and institutional arrangements that will address all forms of malnutrition from a food systems perspective.

22. At CFS 46, the Committee noted the importance of leveraging technological innovation and multistakeholder action between public and private, smallholder producers and multinational food companies, procurers and consumers, to transform food systems and promote healthy and sustainable diets.

23. The Committee made a strong call for dedicated resources to implement these voluntary guidelines, after they are endorsed, to serve as a critical building block for, and input to, other global events such as the Nutrition for Growth Summit in Japan in 2020, and the UN Food Systems Summit in 2021. The Voluntary Guidelines are intended to support governments in the implementation of the Plan of Action of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025) and the Framework for Action of the Second International Conference on Nutrition.

24. Before and after CFS 46, a consultation process took place to ensure the greatest possible inclusivity of this process, with inputs received from CFS stakeholders in all of six FAO’s geographic regions during organized consultations, as well as through electronic consultations.

Policy Guidance on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches

25. The Committee started a process of policy convergence on innovative approaches to bringing about food system transformation. Innovations include

⁴ Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-au866e.pdf>.

⁵ Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7846e.pdf>.

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.

26. In plenary discussion, the Committee highlighted the critical need for structural changes to achieve sustainable agriculture and food systems, including more research and data metrics to fill knowledge gaps in terms of economic efficiency, environmental and social sustainability, and links to food security and nutrition.

27. The CFS policy recommendations on “*Agroecological and other innovative approaches*” will be elaborated building on the main findings of the HLPE report on “*Agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable food systems that enhance food security and nutrition*”.⁶

28. The CFS policy recommendations are expected to be endorsed at CFS 47, in October 2020, and they will build upon and complement relevant guidance contained in other CFS products.

International Day of Rural Women 2019

29. The Committee celebrated the International Day of Rural Women, and highlighted the importance of creating conditions to engage rural women in food security and nutrition-related strategies, policies and programmes, and of investing in strengthening their capacity to access information, credit, land, water and other natural resources.

30. This session will contribute to the upcoming CFS thematic workstream on “*Gender equality and women’s empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition*”, which will commence during 2020, and will lead to development of CFS voluntary guidelines.

UN Decade on Family Farming (2019–2028); Monitoring CFS policy products on smallholders

31. A session was held to mark the kick-off of the UN Decade on Family Farming (2019–2028) with a discussion on how the Decade can benefit from CFS policy guidance, and how to create more synergies between the Decade and the CFS, with the objective of promoting more application of CFS policy instruments.

32. A separate session monitored the use and application of CFS policy guidance on smallholders. The Committee referred to three sets of CFS Policy Recommendations: (i) *Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security and Nutrition*, endorsed at CFS 40 in 2013; (ii) *Connecting Smallholders to Markets*, endorsed at CFS 43 in 2016; and (iii) *Sustainable Agricultural Development for Food Security and Nutrition: What roles for Livestock?* Endorsed at CFS 43 in 2016.

33. Through this review, the Committee underlined the opportunities as well as the various challenges to supporting and institutionalizing CFS policy recommendations in support of smallholder family farmers.

CFS and the Sustainable Development Goals

34. Two countries, which were among the 47 Voluntary National Reviews during HLPF 2019, presented their experiences in trying to achieve the SDGs related to food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture.

35. The session provided an opportunity for countries, and other stakeholders to share their own experiences and lessons-learned in integrating food security, nutrition

⁶ Available at <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5602en/ca5602en.pdf>.

and sustainable agriculture into policies and actions to achieve zero hunger and sustainable development. The presentations highlighted some encouraging steps that countries have taken to reform policies, improve the overall sustainability of food systems, and ensure national food security and nutrition through diverse, holistic approaches. Stakeholders underscored important challenges, such as addressing simultaneously all forms of malnutrition; supporting small-scale food producers to overcome poverty and adopt more productive and sustainable practices; improving the overall economic, social and environmental sustainability of food systems; and addressing regional and/or rural-urban inequalities and the lack of rural infrastructure.

36. The discussion stressed the importance of political leadership, multi-stakeholder processes and effective partnerships, the importance of collecting and analyzing disaggregated data, monitoring, and capacity-building.

37. The Committee renewed its call to all countries to apply integrated policy frameworks, foster policy coherence and make use of relevant CFS policy guidance to achieve the SDGs.

The High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) Report on Multistakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) to Finance and Improve Food Security and Nutrition in the Framework of the 2030 Agenda

38. The Committee reviewed the independent, evidence-based HLPE report *“Multistakeholder Partnerships to Finance and Improve Food Security and Nutrition in the Framework of the 2030 Agenda”*,⁷ which was first presented during CFS45.

39. The discussion focused on knowledge and lesson-sharing on effective multi-stakeholder partnerships at different scales, and stressed the centrality of adequate internal governance mechanisms for those partnerships to increase their effectiveness in financing and improving food security and nutrition.

40. The Committee encouraged the widest dissemination and use of the HLPE report.

Urbanization and Rural Transformation

41. The Committee heard a summary report of two activities held during the intersessional period 2018–2019 focused on the theme of “Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security and nutrition”.

42. The Committee noted that changing rural-urban dynamics have an impact on food security and nutrition of lower income groups, and that these dynamics call for promoting youth and women’s engagement and employment in food systems across the rural-urban continuum. The Committee heard experiences and approaches shared during the events by a variety of representatives, and highlighted some of the policy gaps.

Report of the Forty-sixth Session of the Committee on World Food Security (Rome, 14–18 October 2019)

43. The full Final Report of the forty-sixth Session of the Committee on World Food Security, which was held at FAO Headquarters in Rome, from 14 to 18 October 2019, can be found at the following link: <http://bit.ly/CFS46Report>.

44. An informal Chair’s Summary of the session can be located at: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/CFS46/CFS46_Highlights_EN.pdf

⁷ Available at www.fao.org/3/CA0156EN/CA0156en.pdf.