20 April 2023

COMMENTS OF THE PHILIPPINES ON THE ZERO DRAFT OF THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY (CFS) POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON STRENGTHENING FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION (FSN) DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS TOOLS

This zero draft CFS policy recommendations are generally aligned with and supportive of the Philippines priorities as they aim to strengthen international, national and local efforts to enhance data collection and analytical tools critical in crafting well-informed and evidence-based policies and programs that will help countries realize their respective food security outcomes and targets.

It is an excellent draft drawing on the [CFS High-Level Panel of Experts- Food Security and Nutrition Report 17](#) which can help raise awareness , increase effectiveness and mobilize action to prioritize enhancing data collection methods and tools, improving the capacity of national statistical systems, promoting the use of innovative technologies and strengthening coordination and partnerships among stakeholders.

Nevertheless, the Philippines offers the following comments and suggestions to further enhance the zero draft including edits/ inputs in blue fonts enclosed in brackets on select paragraphs of the draft:

On the rationale:
1. The Philippines suggests that the definition of FSN data and the level of analysis of how its determinants will be identified at the micro, meso and macro levels be operationalized in the zero draft. It will be helpful to provide examples to provide more clarity on which FSN data these policy recommendations, for instance, the data being collected under FAO's Food Insecurity Experience Scale.

2. The Philippines also supports mainstreaming "agency" and "sustainability" as additional dimensions of food security. The importance of doing so has been substantively discussed in the [CFS High-Level Panel of Experts- Food Security and Nutrition Report 17](#) . It will be helpful for the revised draft to define "agency" and sustainability" in accordance with the internationally agreed language and to give examples why these two additional dimensions are crucial.

Therefore, on the paragraph mentioning the dimensions of FSN, the Philippines suggests the addition of " "mainstreaming" as it appears below in blue fonts and brackets...…promotes understanding of micro-, meso-, or macro-level determinants influencing these outcomes across the dimensions of FSN: availability, utilization, stability, with consideration of [mainstreaming] evolving discussions regarding agency* and sustainability

3. The Philippines can relate to the observations in para. 4 and 5 of the rationale and proposes to add the following at the end of para 4. [There is a need to regularly inventory/take stock of available data being collected by different FSN agencies across seasons (seasonal and unseasonal) and levels (national, subnational, local)

to identify fundamental gaps and most appropriate data sources for both qualitative and quantitative data.]

4. For footnote 2: "Throughout the document, international organizations refer primarily to the UN Rome-based Agencies and other inter-governmental organizations [and regional organizations such as Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)], with a mandate related to food security and nutrition."

The Philippines notes that there are other regional initiatives at the regional level like among ASEAN that are tackling food security (i.e. ASEAN Food Security Information System), hence the need for integration.

5. For Recommendation 1.b, the Philippines suggests including an additional objective for the dialogues and cooperation among stakeholders that will pertain to the identification of effective and efficient means or platforms to disseminate the FSN data. This will facilitate the stocktaking of FSN and other relevant data that policymakers can utilize. In this regard, we propose the following revision:

"…promote and facilitate dialogues and cooperation among a broad range of relevant stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels, facilitated by the aforementioned multi-sectoral FSN governing bodies, in order to 1) discuss FSN data priorities, identifying what is already available and what are the most urgent needs; 2) stimulate analysis of existing data to produce information that is relevant for FSN policies and programmes, [and 3) discuss the most effective means/platforms to disseminate the FSN data.]

6. For Recommendation 1 c): " conduct cost-benefit analyses [and risk assessment] - with the [financial, technical, administrative or in-kind] support of donors, international organizations and academia - to assist policymakers to estimate the trade-offs of making decisions using FSN data from varying sources." The reason for adding risk-assessment is that some trade-offs are difficult to value using CBA, so more flexible tools such as risk analysis/assessment may be able to guide allocation of budget for collecting data ahead of time to avoid catastrophic failure in decision-making. The edits above also indicate the type of assistance that donors, international organizations and academia are encouraged to provide.

7. For Recommendation 1.h. A description of e-learning and continuing education courses may be provided as a footnote to level off expectations. Further, these courses are proposed to be offered free of charge to encourage the participation of governments, especially countries needing these more and facing limited public resources. [The said footnote may include the following statement: "These e-learning and continuing education courses can be in the form of modules, recorded lectures, and webinars, among others, which can be uploaded and managed by CFS."]

8. For Recommendation 2 e): continue and accelerate innovation in the areas of statistics, data science, [data analytics, knowledge management] and survey-based research to address FSN questions. [Such innovation will need to incorporate an approach to mobilize local communities in data generation and analysis.]

9. For Recommendation 2.h): Establishing a Global FSN Data Trust Fund can serve as a strategic intervention to encourage governments and other stakeholders to pursue efforts to generate and benefit from FSN data. However, we propose including appropriate provisions to clarify how the Trust Fund will be financed and maintained (e.g., sourced from contributions of governments or international organizations).

Additionally, we recognize that eligible countries that can apply for financial support from the Trust Fund are those classified as Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, Small Island Development States, and countries included in the group of Food Crisis Countries covered in the Global Report on Food Crises. Notwithstanding, a set of assessment/prioritization criteria should be adopted, considering the volume of applications to be received and the availability of funds.

Proposed statement may read as follows:

"...to which governments of eligible countries and other stakeholders (including, for example, communities and organizations of Indigenous Peoples) can apply to obtain financial support to generate and benefit from FSN data. At the same time, continue to support existing FSN data collection funding initiatives, with a vision that such initiatives might be integrated into the Global FSN Data Trust Fund. [A set of criteria will also be adopted as basis in assessing the applications of eligible countries and other stakeholders, and in prioritizing the recipients of financial assistance.]

10. For Recommendation 3 b): Add [Build capacities of other data stakeholders such as farmers, fishers, traders, local government officials etc. in the analysis and interpretation of quantitative and qualitative FSN data]. This will increase greater ownership and accountability among indigenous talents in the data cycle.

11. For Recommendation 3 e): invest in further refinement, validation and application of cost-saving data allocation approaches, such as integrated survey programs, remote sensing, natural resource scanning by drones, ~~and~~ digital collections tools, [and development of budget tagging tool for better cost appropriations in relation to data collection and analysis].

12. For Recommendation 3 g): "develop, in collaboration with national and international training institutions, e-learning materials that focus on FSN data collection, quality control, analysis, interpretation and communication of results for specific types of FSN data and methodologies [, including analytical models.]" This ties in with Recommendation 3 f), and also educates users of analytical models the proper use of such models based on the capacities and limits of the methodology.

13. For Recommendation 4 a) Add: [Identify roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in data gathering and analysis. A design thinking process may be conducted among stakeholders to harmonize technologies, processes and policies and develop a joint policy for data management.]

14. On Recommendation 4 b), the Philippines would like to seek clarification if the recommendation to advocate for the inclusion of FSN data as a statistical domain

inside the UN Statistical Commission is a recommendation of the FAO technical units in charge of collecting and analyzing FSN data. If yes, it may be helpful to state this.

15. For Recommendation 5 b): "treat agriculture and FSN data [acquired using public funds] as a public good and [following a model of] 'open by default', as [being developed and] recently endorsed by the UN Statistical Commission". The reason for the insertion is to allow for incentives for investing in data collection and processing on the part of the private sector (i.e. do not compel them to place data in the public domain at once). Moreover, the 'open by default' model is still being developed as there are numerous data privacy, access, and intellectual property issues that need to be resolved.

16. For Recommendation 5 c): "ensure that FSN data comply with existing open-accessprinciples for data and analysis tools (such as FAIR principles - findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable10), ensuring access to and reproducibility of relevant research results, while at the same time protecting data privacy, [maintaining source accountability], and promoting fairness, inclusion and equitable distribution of benefits when it comes to the collection, processing, dissemination, use and management of FSN data; continually adapt to enhance data access, as open-access principles and guidance evolve." Source accountability refers to the accountability of the source of data to the integrity of its data and its collection process. Source accountability is the flipside of Recommendation 4 f) on coordinated release of datasets and knowledge products and avoid publication of competing datasets and reports. –

17. On Promotion, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation – The Philippines suggests that this paragraph include guidance/best practices on how these policy recommendations may be promoted/disseminated at ground level for better implementation.

18. The Philippines also suggests that definitions for "donors" and "re-purposing" funding (in recommendation 2f)" be provided to foster a common understanding of these terms.

19. Nationally, the Philippines is working on developing and maintaining a one-stop shop platform on food security. We propose something similar at the international level which these policy recommendations can call for to identify and fill the data gaps and consequently provide a basis for policymakers in formulating policies and programs. Can the FAO be the custodian for this one-stop shop platform?

This idea can perhaps be connected with Recommendation 2d in which international organization are called upon to form an inclusive task team of UN agencies and other stakeholders under FAO and WHO leadership, responsible for producing guidelines outlining a minimum set of core FSN data that countries should strive to collect, with recommended methodologies and indicators to be produced.

20. The Philippines also suggests among other capacity building areas, the estimation and analysis of food supply and demand from data collected, including improvement of approaches for forecasting future values for better decision making.

21. On Promotion, Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation, this should also provide a platform for the governments and other relevant stakeholders to share best practices in promoting, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating FSN data and statistics. In addition, this will encourage harmony among member states and other data source entities. Hence, we suggest adding a statement at the end of the paragraph, to wit: ["Such cooperation may provide a platform for the governments and other relevant stakeholders to share best practices in promoting, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating FSN data and statistics."]

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