

CFS – Global Strategic Framework for Food and Nutrition Security

Annotated outline

Introduction

1. Background to decision to prepare a GSF:

Quotation from the CFS Reform Document: “Develop a Global Strategic Framework for food security and nutrition in order to improve coordination and guide synchronized action by a wide range of stakeholders. The Global Strategic Framework will be flexible so that it can be adjusted as priorities change. It will build upon existing frameworks such as the UN's Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), and the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security.”

Quotation from the decision of the 36th CFS Plenary on the GSF: “The Committee agreed to launch a consultative and inclusive process to be conducted by the CFS Bureau with the assistance of the Joint Secretariat and in close collaboration with the Advisory Group and involvement of all stakeholders, with the aim to develop the first version of the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF) by October 2012, which will be subject to regular updates reflecting the outcomes and recommendations of the CFS.”

2. The principles that will guide the development, formulation and implementation of the GSF will include:
 - The GSF will be aligned where appropriate with the Five Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security;
 - Preparation of the GSF will involve a broad, democratic, inclusive and participatory process that will strive to ensure the voices of all relevant stakeholders – particularly those most affected by food insecurity – are heard ;
 - The GSF will not replace, but rather add value to other international frameworks for food security, each one of which has been created in response to a specific aim and context, by providing an inclusive, global, holistic perspective;
 - The GSF will be designed to be a high profile, living document to be updated periodically by the CFS Plenary taking into account the most relevant emerging issues affecting food and nutrition security, and drawing on the advice and expertise of the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE);
 - The GSF will be approved by CFS member states and may be endorsed by all stakeholders. Neither approval nor endorsement will be legally binding, but will rather constitute an acknowledgement that the document is a sound framework to improve convergence and synchronized action in food and nutrition security governance;
3. The Annotated Outline for the GSF will be prepared by a Task Team composed of the CFS Secretariat and members of the Advisory Group representing all stakeholder groups and will benefit from comments by the Steering Committee of the HLPE.

Outline

1. **Statement of purpose and function.**

The preliminary definition of the purpose of the GSF as approved by the CFS Bureau states:

“The overall purpose of the GSF is to provide a dynamic instrument to enhance the role of the CFS and promote its vision as a platform to improve coordination and guide synchronized action

by a wide range of stakeholders in support of global, regional and country-led actions to prevent future food crises, eliminate hunger and ensure food and nutrition security for all human beings.”

Further to this, GSF may: Identify: key challenges and opportunities for food and nutrition security; priorities for action in a number of areas and contexts related to food and nutrition security; policy options and recommendations about a range of issues related to food and nutrition security;

- Promote convergence and international credibility for specific kinds of strategies, policies and programmes related to food and nutrition security; describe core elements of strategies, action plans and commitments that could be adopted by stakeholders at different levels
- Highlight key differences in policy and practice in areas related to food and nutrition security that could benefit from future consensus building and convergence; foster coordination for reducing duplication of work and response gaps, including their financial aspects;
- Encourage the adoption of national strategies combining short and long-term objectives and identify ways and identify ways by which the international community can support States to invest in the transition from short term to long term;
- Describe principles and options for governance mechanisms and systems for the development and implementation of food and nutrition security strategies;
- Consolidate macro-level warnings and recommendations about present and upcoming challenges, difficulties and bottlenecks for food and nutrition security.

2. Short and Long term Challenges to Food and Nutrition Security

Systematic and broad analysis is required to identify and prioritize short and longer term challenges affecting the realization of food and nutrition security for all at all levels.

Currently, price volatility has been identified as a key obstacle in making progress towards food security for all. High food prices contribute to the civil unrest and political instability. Recent experience shows that the food and nutrition security of the poor rural and urban populations can severely deteriorate following food price spikes given the large share of income poor households spend on food. Also, high food prices and experiences of poor performance of international food markets have created increased incentives for agricultural investment including cross-border capital movements. Such investments are not always beneficial to the recipient countries and poor populations. Unstable energy prices, have contributed to food price volatility, and lack of infrastructure for market access create a context in which farmers find it difficult to operate profitably and meet their own food and nutrition needs.

In the longer term a major challenge will be to meet increased global demand for food (a result of population, income growth and changes in diets) in the face of decreasing availability and quality of natural resources. Meeting the challenge calls for yield increases and overall productivity gains in food and agricultural production in the context of a “green agriculture”. The current declining yield growth rates will have to be reversed. The impact of climate change on agricultural production and on food systems will increase the risks of food insecurity especially for those living and producing in marginal environments and for smallholder households.

Those unable to access land or employment are at greatest risk and should be prioritized for protection, especially during times of crisis.

A number of issues affecting long-term trends in agriculture and food security have to be examined and analyzed and receive priority attention in the GSF, such as:

- Demographic changes: population growth, urbanization and rural-urban migration;
- Changing patterns of food consumption and its production and nutritional implication;
- Pressure on natural resources: land and soil, water, biodiversity, forests and mountains;

- Climate change: including natural disasters;
- Trade in food and agricultural commodities and the implications for food and nutrition security;
- Technology development.

3. Priority issues to be addressed:

Analysis of existing frameworks points to a list of priority issues requiring a response at the global, regional and national levels that might be addressed by the GSF, including the following:

- **Structural factors affecting food security:** In the last two decades some countries have been more successful than others both in reducing hunger and malnutrition. Countries also vary in their performance to in withstanding the impact of successive shocks. Addressing structural factors underpinning such differences will generate a wealth of lessons and will point to necessary action.
- **Price volatility:** Poorer people are particularly affected by fluctuations in the price of food, as well as costs of inputs and transport. Price volatility also poses social and political challenges to national authorities. Responses to such challenges often involve ad-hoc and uncoordinated interventions in food and agriculture markets which may exacerbate price volatility and the global market situation.
- **Vulnerability:** The food price and the financial and economic crises of 2007-2008 revealed that different groups of poor people are particularly vulnerable to situations. In many instances, acute hunger as a result of shocks can turn into chronic food and nutrition insecurity. Addressing the reasons underlying vulnerability and strengthening resilience to economic and other shocks will not only save lives and livelihoods but will significantly contribute to long-run food and nutrition security.
- **Small holder producers:** In many developing countries, small holder farmers produce the bulk of food while at the same time being the main victims of poverty. The challenge is to improve the productivity of small holder production systems especially in the context of changes in the structure of demand for food and agricultural commodities which [tends to] favour larger holdings and more capital intensive systems.
- **Challenges faced by women:** Women make crucial contributions to the food security of developing countries, but they consistently have less access than men to the resources and opportunities for being more productive farmers. Women lack secure tenure over their land, access to inputs such as fertilizers, improved seed varieties and mechanical equipment and proper access to credit and extension services. Closing the gap between men and women in access to inputs could raise yields on women's farms by 20-30 percent, which in turn could increase production in developing countries by 2.5-4 percent and reduce the prevalence of undernourishment by 12-17 percent.
- **Environmentally sustainable food and agricultural production:** Many food production systems are at the same time lagging behind in achieving productivity and production potential while contributing to the degradation of natural resources on which agriculture depends. Others, are characterized by unsustainable increases in production and yields. The challenge is to meet future increasing food and nutrition needs through sustainable systems throughout the value chain. An additional challenge for policy makers is also to realize the potential for agriculture (as the most resource intensive productive sector) to mitigate climate change impacts.
- **Insecure tenure of land and other natural resources :** Insecure tenure of land and other natural resources can leave people marginalized, act as a disincentive for investment and alienate households from the resources to which they have access thus increasing vulnerability.

Inappropriate tenure regimes can lead to over-exploitation and discourage sustainable practices. In all such cases food and nutrition security are threatened. Promoting viable systems of tenure which promote poverty reduction and food and nutrition security is an important challenge especially in view of increasing competition for and declining availability of agricultural resources.

- **Investment in agriculture:** Insufficient investment in agriculture over decades has contributed to low productivity and stagnant production in many developing countries. The prospects of higher global food prices, and the uncertainty over recurring food crises and over the ability of global food markets to perform their function in the future, has created increased incentives for investment in agriculture including cross border. It is important to ensure that investments, especially those involving land and other resource transactions do not compromise food and nutrition security, access to resources by the poor and environmental sustainability. International investments should bring development benefits to the receiving country in terms of technology transfer, employment creation, upstream and downstream linkages.
- Improving food and nutrition security governance at all levels: Good governance for food and nutrition security requires that voices of all relevant stakeholders are heard in the policy debate and that policy coordination is improved. The challenge is how to balance multi-stakeholder interests and participation with sound and substantive decisions and strategic directions which are translated into tangible food security outcomes through policies, programmes and the mobilization of resources.

4. Policy options

It is proposed that the twin track approach launched by the “Anti-Hunger Programme “ and advocated by the CFA and several other prominent frameworks be the overarching framework for the GSF. It combines actions which contribute to the immediate needs of vulnerable people (including actions during crises situations) with policies, programmes and resource mobilization to improve longer term productivity and sustainability of agriculture and to strengthen the resilience of production systems and poor households to shocks. At the same time, the GSF should be grounded on the fundamental considerations and principles of the “Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security” including equality and non-discrimination, participation and inclusion, secure access to resources and assets, good governance and rule of law, and focus on individuals and groups particularly vulnerable to food insecurity.

Policy responses to the priority issues identified that may be examined in the GSF could include the following:

- **Agriculture as an engine for development:** Food security is closely connected with economic growth and social progress. The food security agenda should focus on agriculture which constitutes the basis of most poor peoples’ livelihoods and the backbone of rural economies in most developing countries.
- **Smallholder farming,:** There is a need to support small holder adaptation to changes in food demand and the challenges posed by evolving technology and sustainability requirements. This will be achieved through improved access to markets, the adaptation and adoption of appropriate technologies, institutional innovations and improved access to natural, financial, social and human capital.
- **Safety nets, social protection and nutrition:** More attention to the immediate needs of those who lack the necessary purchasing power to meet their food and nutrition requirements. Various forms of social protection and safety nets to reduce vulnerability do not only meet immediate

needs but contribute to reducing uncertainty and improve agricultural productivity. Social protection and safety nets are particularly important for people with very limited access to resources.

- **Strengthened multilateral trading systems:** Open trade flows and efficient markets have a positive role in strengthening food and nutrition security. Enhanced market opportunities — by way of reductions in trade barriers and elimination of trade-distorting support to agriculture — should be pursued through multi-lateral trade negotiations.
- **Promoting better nutrition:** Increased attention should be given to specific actions to improve nutrition security, including investment in development strategies that will contribute to better nutrition for all members of society. Nutritional concerns should be addressed by direct interventions but also through integration of nutrition in policies and programmes for agriculture, food security, rural development and overall development. **Ensuring that women are at the centre of action for food and nutrition security:** Governments, donors and civil society can make a difference by eliminating discrimination against women under the law and ensuring that all policies, programmes and projects take account of the different roles and responsibilities of men and women and the constraints they face in agriculture and rural employment. Greater and more effective involvement of women and use of their knowledge, skills and experience will advance progress towards sustainability and development goals.
- **A rights-based approach:** The global food security crisis has revealed the extent to which people are unable to enjoy their right to food. Lessons learned from an increasing number of countries which use the right to food as a framework for the design, implementation and evaluation of national laws, policies and programmes should be effectively used. Introducing Right to Food Principles in the design and implementation of food security strategies, policies and programmes is an important step in this direction.
- **Agrarian reform:** Agrarian reform is necessary in areas with strong social disparities, poverty and food insecurity, as a means to broaden sustainable access to and control over land and related resources. This should be achieved through a programme based on coherent, ethical, participatory and integrated policies.
- **Land tenure:** A system of Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Land Tenure and other Natural Resources intended to provide a framework for responsible tenure governance that supports food security, poverty alleviation, sustainable resource use and environmental protection is necessary. The CFS is currently leading a process to review, finalize and adopt such a system.

Investment in agriculture: Benefits from international investments in agriculture are not automatic. Therefore, care must be taken in the formulation of investment contracts and selection of business models to apply/use, supported by appropriate legislative and policy frameworks. CFS is considering a broad and inclusive consultation process to further develop and raise awareness and ownership of principles for responsible agricultural investment (RAI) that respect rights, livelihoods and resources.

6. Monitoring progress towards objectives

The CFS reform document states that CFS “should help countries and regions, as appropriate, address the questions of whether objectives are being achieved and how food insecurity and malnutrition can be reduced more quickly and effectively. This will entail developing an innovative mechanism, including the definition of common indicators, to monitor progress towards these agreed-upon objectives and actions taking into account lessons learned from the CFS process itself and other monitoring attempts.”

The GSF should provide guidance to countries in monitoring and (should) outline principles and options for effective governance of food and nutrition security at the national level, which is a critical element in the global strategy. This will facilitate the sharing of good practice and successful experiences to improve the understanding of what works well and what works less well on the ground.

The GSF should also provide guidance to assist countries to integrate such programmes within their national and local food and nutrition security priorities and strengthen the alignment with available resources. CFS is currently looking into approaches to map food security actions at country level to assist countries to better align national food and nutrition security objectives with policies, strategies and programmes and available resources. The GSF may provide guidance on measurement criteria and common performance indicators to be adopted.