

**Rules of procedure for the work of the
High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition
(Agreed by the CFS Bureau, 27 January 2010)**

Introduction – scope

1. This document defines the rules of procedure governing the work of the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE-FSN), drawing from the principles and terms of reference described in the approved reform document of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS 2009/2 - Rev.1, paragraphs 36 to 48) agreed on 17 October 2009.

2. In line with efforts to revitalize the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), members called for regular inclusion of structured food security and nutrition-related expertise to better inform CFS sessions. This effort should help create synergies between world class academic/scientific knowledge, field experience, knowledge from social actors and practical application in various settings. Given the multidisciplinary nature and the complexity of food security issues, the effort is aimed at improving communication and information-sharing among the different stakeholders in food security and nutrition. Products of this expertise process shall focus on better understanding current food insecurity situations and shall also look forward toward emerging issues. The High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition, through the CFS Plenary and the Bureau, aims to support CFS members and other stakeholders in designing strategies and programs for addressing food insecurity.

Key functions of the HLPE

3. As directed by the CFS Plenary and Bureau, the HLPE will:

- (i) Assess and analyze the current state of food security and nutrition and its underlying causes.
- (ii) Provide scientific and knowledge-based analysis and advice on specific policy-relevant issues, utilizing existing high quality research, data and technical studies.
- (iii) Identify emerging issues, and help members prioritize future actions and attentions on key focal areas.

Structure of the HLPE: Steering Committee and Project Teams

4. The HLPE has two main components:

- (i) **A Steering Committee** composed of at least 10 and not exceeding 15 internationally recognized experts in a variety of food security and nutrition-related fields.
- (ii) **Project Teams** acting on a project-specific basis, selected and managed by the Steering Committee to analyze/report on specific issues.

HLPE Steering Committee (StC)

5. The Steering Committee is led by a Chair and a Vice-Chair, who will be responsible for the proper execution of the mandate given to the HLPE by the CFS.

6. By request of the CFS Plenary or Bureau, the HLPE Steering Committee has the responsibility to provide scientifically sound, comprehensive, clear and concise written reports/analyses on specific subjects for consideration at CFS Plenary sessions or inter-session meetings or activities.

7. The HLPE is not mandated to conduct new research. To fulfill its mandate, the HLPE uses and synthesizes available world class academic and research knowledge, field project works, and practical applications and analyses. This knowledge will be drawn from among the various agencies, organizations, academic and research institutions, and among any other stakeholders involved in food security issues.

8. The CFS Bureau, with the support of the Steering Committee and in consultation with the Advisory Group, shall precisely formulate the nature of the expertise and advice requested by CFS. It shall also include a provisional budget and indicative deadlines for report submission and for CFS plenary discussion, duly considering time required for draft report review, final report translation and organizational matters ahead of CFS sessions.

Working language of the HLPE

9. Working language will be decided by the Steering Committee. Drafting language for HLPE reports will be in a UN Language to be decided by project teams. Final documents for CFS Sessions will be made available in the Official UN Languages.

Principles for selection of the Steering Committee members, its Chair and Vice-chair

10. The following principles shall apply with respect to the members of the HLPE Steering Committee:

- (i) They should be internationally recognized experts in their field related to food security and nutrition, and have broad vision and substantial experience in cross-disciplinary expert processes. They should be experienced professionals, holding an advanced university degree, proven record of publications and/or solid background in field/research project management in the area of food security. Most importantly they should have strong experience in managing groups or networks of experts, extensive communication and inter-personal skills, leadership skills, and, drawing from their inter-national recognition by peers, the capacity to attract and draw expert networks.
- (ii) They participate in their individual capacities, and not as representatives of their respective governments, institutions or organizations.
- (iii) The composition of the Steering Committee shall reflect a balance of technical disciplines, regional expertise and representation.

11. All members of the Steering Committee serve for a 2-year period, renewable once. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Steering Committee are elected by the Steering Committee among its members, for a 2-year period.

Procedures for selection of Steering Committee members, its Chair and Vice-chair

12. The selection of members of the Steering Committee shall be carried out by an ad-hoc selection committee designated by the CFS Bureau and made up of representatives from FAO, WFP, IFAD, CGIAR/Bioversity and from a CSO/NGO. The ad-hoc selection committee shall examine the nominations received by the Secretariat, and submit its recommendations to the CFS Bureau for approval, in accordance with the principles described above.

13. At its first meeting, the newly selected Steering Committee shall proceed to the election, among its members, of its Chair and Vice-Chair.

14. If, within its two year term, the Chair of the Steering Committee resigns or is unable to fulfill its mandate, the Vice-Chair shall serve as acting Chair until a new election is organized.

HLPE Project Teams

15. To perform assigned tasks, the HLPE Steering Committee shall bring together appropriate, time-bound expert project teams, called **Project Teams**, led by a **Team Leader**.

HLPE Project Teams' appointment

16. The Steering Committee shall appoint Team Leaders, who can be either a member of the Steering Committee, or an expert external to the Steering Committee.

17. Team Leaders, if necessary and as appropriate, can submit additional names of contributing authors to participate to the Project Teams. In that case, they submit their proposal to the Steering Committee for approval and to the CFS Secretariat for information.

18. To assist the Steering Committee in selecting the project teams, the CFS Secretariat shall set-up and maintain an online roster of experts, located within the CFS website, and to which CFS stakeholders can nominate experts at any time. The roster shall be accessible to the Steering Committee and Team Leaders.

19. Project Teams selected by the Steering Committee shall reflect the general principles of scientific and technical relevance, regional expertise and balanced geographic representation, as appropriate.

20. The composition of any Project Team shall be given at the earliest opportunity for information to the CFS Bureau and made public under the CFS website.

HLPE Project teams' mandate

21. Within the rules of procedure defined in this document, the Steering Committee has full responsibility and flexibility in terms of establishing and managing the Project Teams, their working methodologies, and work plan. The Steering Committee shall give clearly defined mandates and work plans to the Project Teams, with due consideration for calendar issues and constraints.

22. The preparation of the *draft report* is done by the HLPE Project Teams, under the responsibility of their Team Leader and under Steering Committee oversight. To prepare specific sections of the report for which he/she was appointed, the Team Leader, jointly with the Steering Committee, can decide to assign **Lead Authors**, chosen among the members of the HLPE Project Team.

HLPE reports

23. HLPE reports will normally be composed of two sections as follows: a short summary for policymakers and a main report. If necessary, supplementary material or annexes might be added to the report.

24. A report is a critical, objective, policy-relevant evaluation and analysis of information, including social knowledge, designed to support decision-making. It applies the judgment of experts to existing knowledge to provide answers to policy-relevant questions, quantifying the level of confidence where possible, and document controversies as appropriate.

25. Sources of technical content, contributing documentation, data and assumptions used in the report should be properly referenced. Non published sources, reporting of field projects, or other non peer-reviewed sources are accepted as relevant information sources, as far as their content is accessible to the HLPE and their quality is reviewed by the project team before incorporation in the HLPE report.

Report review process

26. The *draft report* of a Project Team shall be submitted for external review to experts not involved in the preparation of the report. To do so, the Steering Committee shall designate, with Secretariat assistance, two Review Editors external to the panel, who will submit the draft report for review to a set of individual experts (reviewers) with significant expertise in the area covered by the report.

27. The list of report reviewers shall be decided by the Review Editors, in consultation with the Steering Committee and the Team Leader, with Secretariat assistance, considering the need for a range of views, expertise, and geographical representation of reviewers. Reviewers shall execute their task in their individual capacities, and not as representatives of their respective governments, institutions or organizations.

28. Production of the revised draft report is under responsibility of the Team leader and the Review Editors, under Steering Committee oversight, taking into account reviewers' comments.

Report finalization

29. The Chair, Vice-chair, and members of the Steering Committee shall interact on a regular basis, and especially in the final phase of the elaboration of a report, with Team Leaders and their team members. Steering Committee Members can also contribute, as appropriate, to the preparation of the draft report. A virtual workspace shall be made available to the Steering Committee and project teams, within the CFS web site, for the purpose of communication and working on draft documents.

30. If the Steering Committee has appointed several Project teams to write different sections of a report, it shall coordinate, with the help of Team Leaders and Review Editors, the finalization of the report, with due consideration for uniform quality standards of the report.

31. If they cannot be reconciled with a consensus, differing views or controversies on matters of a scientific, technical, or socio-economic nature shall, as appropriate and if relevant to the policy debate, be represented and recorded in the report, and appropriately documented.

Report approval and publication

32. Prior to their publication and distribution, HLPE reports shall be approved by the Steering Committee on the basis alone of conformity to the request of the CFS and observation of proper quality standards and the review process. The content of final reports do not represent at any stage official views of CFS or its members and participants. After approval by the HLPE Steering Committee, only grammatical and/or minor editorial changes can be made prior to publication.

33. Reports approved by the HLPE Steering Committee should be formally and prominently described on the front and introductory covers as “*A Report of the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition*”. Those reports will be made publicly available.

34. The final report should give credit to the Team Leader, to all Lead Authors, and to Review Editors. Contributing Author credits should also be given to other project team members provided they have effectively contributed to the report.

HLPE Steering Committee meetings, HLPE forums, and HLPE reporting to CFS Plenary

35. The Steering Committee shall normally meet two times per year in Rome and possibly more in extraordinary circumstances to review work methodologies, prepare work plans and finalize products/reports. Extraordinary meetings will have to be approved by the CFS Bureau.

36. Special open-ended **HLPE forums**, where progress on specific ongoing works of the HLPE could be presented to interested parties and CFS stakeholders, could take place, if funding permits, and with assistance of the CFS Secretariat, possibly back to back to CFS plenary sessions. Forum discussions and outcomes would feedback to the HLPE for finalization of its specific work and final report(s).

37. HLPE reports approved by its Steering Committee shall be transmitted within due deadlines by the Chair of the Steering Committee to the Chair of the CFS, and to the CFS Secretariat to handle related organizational matters ahead of CFS plenary sessions.

38. Following its introduction as an item on the agenda by the Bureau and according to the nature and purpose of a project, a report, its conclusions and recommendations could be introduced in CFS Plenary by the Chair of the HLPE Steering Committee, possibly in conjunction with the Team Leader and/or Lead Authors of the specific project team.

HLPE-FSN Secretariat

39. The joint HLPE/CFS Secretariat, located within FAO, shall assist the work of the HLPE-FSN Steering Committee and its Chair. Its functions include, though are not limited to:

- i) assist with the preparation of working budget and establishment of trust funds,
- ii) maintain a roster of experts,
- iii) organize meetings of the HLPE-FSN Steering Committee and assist Project Teams, as needed,
- iv) assist with the preparation of other support documentation,
- v) liaise as appropriate between the CFS Bureau and the HLPE-FSN Steering Committee,
- vi) maintain a system of communications, including posting of relevant reports and analyses.

40. The Secretariat comprises, among others, a senior staff, coordinator of the HLPE-FSN, responsible for day-to-day management and oversight of the project.

41. CFS Member States and participants are encouraged to designate focal points to the HLPE/CFS Secretariat for communication purposes.

Financial support to HLPE-FSN work

42. Budget of the HLPE-FSN covers Secretariat Staff, Secretariat functioning costs, Steering Committee meeting travel costs, report translation costs and document printing costs.

43. HLPE-FSN funding shall be channeled through a multidonor voluntary trust fund hosted at FAO, to which Member States and other CFS participants are encouraged to contribute.

44. Requests made by CFS to the HLPE-FSN should take into due consideration budgetary limitations or additional financing proposals.