

Proposal for a Philanthropic Foundations Mechanism for relations with the Committee on World Food Security

**Prepared by the Agroecology Fund, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the
Global Alliance for the Future of Food**

December 2021

Context

Since 2009 Reform of the CFS, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) has served on the Advisory Group of the Committee on World Food Security. In 2018, BMGF broadened this representation to include additional foundations. More recently, there is growing interest from philanthropic organizations to engage with the CFS.

In the past months, the Agroecology Fund (AEF), BMGF and the Global Alliance for the Future of Food (GA) have worked together on a proposal to establish a Philanthropic Foundations Mechanism (PFM), with the purpose of coordinating the participation of philanthropic organizations in the work of the CFS, including input to negotiation, input to consultations, contributions to the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) process and contributions to decision-making.

This Proposal describes the main structures and modalities for this Mechanism, including its role and functions, organizing principles, governance and structure, communications, accountability, and evaluation.

The AEF, BMGF, and GA presents this Proposal for consideration of CFS Members.

PROPOSAL FOR A PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS MECHANISM FOR RELATIONS WITH CFS

This document has been prepared by the Agroecology Fund, Bill and Melinda

Gates Foundation, and the Global Alliance for the Future of Food. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the CFS, its Bureau or Secretariat.

Table of Contents

		Paragraphs
I.	BACKGROUND	1-3
II	THE PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS MECHANISM - PFM	
	A. Role and Functions	4-6
	B. Organizing Principles	7-9
	C. Governance and Structure	10-13
	D. Communications	14-15
	E. Accountability and Evaluation	16-17

I. BACKGROUND

1. As was requested by the CFS: “*Private sector associations, **private philanthropic organizations** and other CFS stakeholders active in areas related to food security, nutrition, and the right to food are encouraged to **autonomously establish and maintain a permanent coordination mechanism for participation in the CFS** and for actions derived from that participation at global, regional and national levels. They are invited to communicate a proposal to that effect to the CFS Bureau*”. (CFS: 2009/2 Rev. 2, para 17).

2. The CFS is comprised of the Bureau (Chairperson and twelve members, two coming from each of the following geographic regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Near East, and one from both North America and South-West Pacific) and the Advisory Group composed of representatives of the UN system and the global monetary system plus:

- 1 seat for private sector
- **1 seat for foundations**
- 4 seats for civil society
- 1 seat for international agricultural research

3. The modalities described in this document represent an arrangement of three private philanthropic

organizations - the Agroecology Fund, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Global Alliance for the Future of Food - to establish an autonomous mechanism for participation in CFS activities, discussion, negotiation, and decision-making, including representation at the reserved seat dedicated to foundations in the Bureau.

II. THE PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS MECHANISM - PFM A.

Role and Functions

4. The essential role of the Philanthropic Foundations Mechanism (PFM) is to coordinate the participation of philanthropic organizations in the work of the CFS, including input to negotiation, input to consultations, contributions to the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) process and contributions to decision-making.

5. In order to fulfil its coordination role, the PFM will perform a series of functions, including, *inter alia*, i) exchanging of CFS information, analysis and experience; ii) developing common positions as appropriate; iii) communicating to the CFS and, as appropriate, its Bureau through representatives designated by its Coordination Committee (see para. 11); iv) convening a philanthropic organizations forum and/or other events before and in conjunction with CFS sessions.

6. The PFM will participate in both inter-sessional activities and the CFS Annual Plenary. **B.**

Organizing Principles

7. The three organizations constituting this PFM remain committed to maintain this Mechanism open to additional membership. Philanthropic foundations working on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) that are not part of their respective networks are welcomed to join the mechanism in annual periodical reviews, conducted during the fourth quarter of the year to discuss progress and review membership.

8. The PFM will develop an outreach strategy to actively communicate its constitution to networks of funders and private philanthropic organizations.

9. Statement and submissions shall represent the maximum consensus possible, be respectful, and constructive. Where consensus is not possible, the PFM might either express a range of different positions from its constituencies in issues where common positions are not achieved, or remain silent

on the issue.

C. Governance and Structure

10. The PFM is composed of one Coordination Committee with representatives from each of the philanthropic organizations.

11. One of the philanthropic organizations will lead the Coordination Committee in a rotating period of 1 year. This Lead Philanthropy of the Coordination Committee will be responsible for chairing the Committee periodical meetings, its annual meeting and philanthropic organizations forum, and for recruiting a shared Consultant, which will serve as a tripartite focal point for all Bureau meetings.

12. The Consultant will support the Coordination Committee by, among other duties, drafting meeting agendas and minutes, attending CFS' Advisory Group and Bureau meetings, taking notes when the Lead is not available, and tracking key processes and decisions that require Advisory Group input and, or, input from the Coordination Committee. The Consultant will also be responsible for communicating relevant information to all parties of the PFM.

13. The Consultant will be selected in a hiring process inclusive of all organizations members of the PFM. The Lead Philanthropy will organize the recruitment process.

D. Communications

14. The Lead Philanthropy is responsible for maintaining an official PFM website and mailing list, where all relevant documentation, such as report of meetings, statements, inputs to consultation, side event proposals, etc are openly accessible for transparency and accountability (see Section II.E). Any interested philanthropic organizations and parties will be able to sign up and receive communication.

15. The PFM will develop an outreach communication strategy for announcing its constitution to all CFS participants (Bureau, Members, CSM, PSM, other participants and observers) and to the general public.

E. Accountability and Evaluation

16. Elements of accountability:

- The Coordination Committee will be accountable for all philanthropic organizations member of the PFM on to one hand, and to the CFS on the other;

- The website and other communications pieces circulated by PFM will facilitate and encourage transparency and accountability of PFM actions. It will contain information on, among other:
 - (i) Contact information from the current Consultant and Lead Philanthropy;
 - (ii) Contact information from the Coordination Committee and all philanthropic organizations;
 - (iii) Relevant dates, agendas, and consultations;
 - (iv) Statements, inputs, contributions, and recommendations to CFS structures, including the HLPE;
 - (v) Dates of periodical meetings, annual philanthropic organizations forum, and means of participation.

17. The Lead Philanthropy of the current year, in collaboration with the Coordination Committee, will be responsible for organizing an Annual Review and Evaluation of the PFM in the fourth quarter of the year where members of the PFM will assess its performance, achievements, and points of improvement. On this occasion, a new Lead Philanthropy will be chosen and admission of new members will be assessed, if any.