

Call for inputs

First draft (V1) of CFS Policy Recommendations on Reducing Inequalities for Food Security and Nutrition

Contribution of the Philanthropic Foundations Mechanism (PFM)

The below comments represent the collective inputs from the Philanthropic Foundations Mechanism (PFM).

General comments

1. The PFM recommends, in the framing of the policy recommendations and embedded throughout, greater reference to the current food and soil health and fertilizer crisis caused by the conflict in the Middle East. The impacts on food security currently experienced are concerning, and a prime example of **the need for longer term resilience-building policies** combined with short-term emergency assistance.
2. The PFM finds the checklist approach used in the policy recommendations to be very clear. However, within this approach to the recommendations, there could be greater elaboration of differentiated roles for different actors in building resilient food systems, particularly **differentiating between the obligations of both state and non-state actors**. In the context of resilience building, philanthropic foundations do not substitute state obligations but may complement public policymaking by providing catalytic, complementary, and risk-tolerant financing, supporting early-stage innovation, funding locally-led resilience initiatives, and strengthening participation of underrepresented actors in governance.

Comments by Section

Rationale

- i. Recommend referring in the Rationale to ongoing food and fuel crisis as a clear example of the interlinked shocks and stresses facing food systems due to unnecessary dependence on external inputs. Natural farming approaches increase resiliency and should be even more strongly emphasized throughout the document, especially in the framing of the crises we face. Recent food, fuel and fertilizer price crises have further **exposed structural vulnerabilities in highly input-dependent food systems**, demonstrating how dependence on fossil fuels, concentrated supply chains and external inputs can rapidly undermine affordability, production stability and food security, particularly in

import-dependent countries. There has never been such an urgent need to address the structural vulnerabilities highlighted in the HLPE-FSN *Building Resilient Food Systems* report.

III. Production, Markets and Trade

1. Promote diversified and sustainable production systems:
 - (1d) The current food and fertilizer price crises as a result of disruptions to highly concentrated markets and trade routes are a clear sign for the need for **diversification and localization in food systems** to ensure long-term resilience. Policy recommendations should take stronger note of solutions that promote sustainable, resilient alternatives production and distribution systems, particularly agroecology and territorial markets.
 - (1g) Given the HLPE report's focus on differential vulnerabilities, the policy recommendations overall could be strengthened with **more frequent, specific and practical recommendations on how to address differential vulnerabilities in policy-making**. In particular, this should be **grounded in the principle of intersectionality**, reinforcing the crucial importance of intersectional policymaking to just, resilient, sustainable transformation of food systems. In doing so, the policy recommendations should make reference to previously agreed text from the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women and Girls' Empowerment.

IV. Governance and Policy Coherence

- General comments: As the **Equitable Transformative Resilience (ETR) approach** forwarded by the HLPE report recognises, the cost of inaction is significantly higher than the cost of implementing resilience-building policies. In this respect, reference may be made to frameworks such as **True-Cost Accounting**, which help guide policymaking trade-offs by quantifying the cost of inaction in the longer term.
- 1. Strengthen inclusive decision-making, transparency and accountability:
 - (1a, 1b, 1c) Given the HLPE-FSN report's focus on differential vulnerabilities, the policy recommendations should **address differential vulnerabilities in policy-making**. In particular, references to particular stakeholder groups should be **grounded in the principle of intersectionality**, reinforcing the crucial importance of intersectional policymaking to just, resilient, sustainable transformation of food systems. In doing so, the policy recommendations should make reference to previously agreed text from the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women and Girls' Empowerment.
- 3. Align public finance and private investments with resilience objectives:
 - (3b) Recommendations here should **directly promote investments that are aligned with a food system transformation strategy shared by different actors**. Mission-driven investments to transform systems have been categorized by

different terminologies - e.g., systemic investing, system-level investing, transformative finance - and generally relate to aligning different types of capital (grants, concessional finance, low-market returns, etc) to transform a system towards a societal goals. This explores more deeply the **different financial sources and types of capital along the public to private spectrum**, acknowledging the need for **more aligned investments**.

- (3d) Recommendations may additionally emphasize targeting finance to frontline communities.
- (3e) Given the long-term and systemic nature of resilience-building, financing strategies could **make use of the complementary role of philanthropic actors** in providing flexible, patient and risk-tolerant capital, particularly to support frontline organizations, locally led adaptation, participatory governance processes and innovation, and in doing so can unlock structural transitions toward diversified, agroecological and socially just food systems that reduce long-term vulnerability.

V. Knowledge Systems, Data, Education and Innovation

2. Support responsible, diverse and context appropriate innovation:

- (2c) The PFM appreciates reference made in the policy recommendations to agroecology and seed sovereignty. However, noting the findings of the HLPE-FSN report - that **agroecology as a social and ecological transformation is proven to improve resilience outcomes** - the PFM advises extending the recommendations in this respect. The policy recommendations may more comprehensively cover what is needed to bring about agroecological transformations, expanding on the **investments, enabling policies, and financial support required** to scale-up agroecology.