

CSM NUTRITION TALKING POINTS

I. VISION

General Introduction

Initially, the CSM working group on nutrition would like to highlight the following points:

1. We thank the secretariat of the CFS and the TTT on Nutrition for the effort in putting together the central document which is tabled for discussion today.
2. The OEWG, however, still needs to invest some energy into it, to have a document capable of informing adequately the debate in the CFS on its engagement in advancing nutrition at global, regional and national level;
3. Nutrition is a constitutional pillar of human growth and development, without which babies, children and adolescents cannot reach their full potential, cannot interact and apprehend the social, affective and cultural wealth of their cultures and humankind. Without nutrition they are excluded and denied access to the full enjoyment of human dignity.
4. Nutrition is addressed by many policy spaces, normative spaces, programs and initiatives, at global, regional, national and local level, probably all of them needed, to one extent or the other, but fragmentation, contradictions and flagrant gaps still prevail. No governance or policy space is effectively responsible, at the present time, for guaranteeing that all relevant public policies and initiatives coherently respect, protect and fulfil the progressive realization of the human right to adequate food and nutrition, and related rights (water and sanitation, health, education, etc) for all,
5. This however, lies at the core of the vision of the CFS reform document, according to the sovereign decision of the CFS, and FAO member states;
6. This is one of the central reasons for the support the CFS has received from Civil Society and, in particular from social movements, since the reform,
7. If States start to forget their commitment to Human Rights, people have the right to question the legitimacy of States's decisions. In whose name are they taking them?
8. We call on CFS member states to uphold their commitment stated in the full CFS vision, and not a fragmented one:
 - a. "The CFS is and remains an intergovernmental Committee in FAO. The reformed CFS as a central component of the evolving Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition will constitute the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for a broad range of committed stakeholders to work together in a coordinated manner and in support of country-led processes towards the elimination of hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition for all human beings. **The CFS will strive for a world free from hunger where countries implement the voluntary guidelines for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security.**" (Vision, reform document)
9. Maintaining this vision, the CFS, as an intergovernmental body, can effectively facilitate the promotion of policy coherence with human rights, and help

overcome the fragmentation of and fill in the gaps in the approach to food and nutrition at all levels.

10. By limiting itself to explore the links between food systems and nutrition, the CFS will further contribute to the fragmentation of both governance of and of the approach to nutrition. This document needs to move beyond this focus to offer a more long-term and holistic approach to nutrition.

Holism

11. Understanding the challenge of malnutrition in all its forms requires a holistic and multidisciplinary analysis, one that combines the political and technical perspectives. Above all, it requires recognizing the need for urgency and justice, the appreciation for diversity and the values of human dignity, equity, sustainability and sovereignty. It is our common understanding that food is the expression of values, cultures, social relations and people's self-determination, and that the act of feeding oneself and others embodies our sovereignty, ownership and empowerment. When nourishing oneself and eating with one's family, friends, and community, we reaffirm our cultural identities, our ownership over our life course and our human dignity. Nutrition is foundational for personal development, growth and learning and essential for overall wellbeing and allows us to comprehend the social, emotional and physical world and become one with it. Nutrition is a capability linked to the right to food, it is not an end in itself but a means that enables us to interact fully with the world and the social environment and become a socially active human being.

II. FUNCTIONS

Policy Convergence

1.

1. Functions should reflect those in the reform document that would mean changing function #2 from “lessons and good practices sharing” to “coordination (at global, national and regional levels).
2. Activities could include dialogue and coordination across the broad spectrum of actors engaged in nutrition (governments, social movements, CSOs, international agencies), in coordination with the UNSCN. A social audit could be carried out in a meeting/conference in which civil society reflects on the challenges and successes in the implementation of policies and in progress made towards the realization of RtF.

2) Convergence: Does not discuss healthy and sustainable diets are not individual objectives but rather collective objectives that require the active normative role of the State.

3) Good practices should not be the only point of reflection but rather challenges and practices that were not successful must also be discussed.

II. VISION

1. Holism

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2) Fragmentation vs Policy Convergence & Coordination Mandate

The focus on just food systems and nutrition limits the vision that is necessary to achieve the holism mentioned above. If we take into account the CFS mandate we expect much more in this than just focusing on food systems and nutrition. The vision needs to be broader even if there is a choice to work on food systems it should be done from the holistic perspective mentioned above and then beyond the food

systems starting point we need to articulate how CFS will advance nutrition in all its dimensions not just nutrition as it relates to food systems. There is no other place in the UN system that addresses food and nutrition from an overall perspective there is no space where this is guaranteed or where governance is coherent on nutrition.

The prime legitimate intergovernmental policy spaces that have a mandate on nutrition are the FAO Conference[1] (food angle of nutrition), the World Health Assembly (health angle of nutrition)[2] and the CFS (policy coherence, across different policy domains, with the UN charter and with human rights/the right to adequate food and nutrition), in addition to the UN General Assembly (which delegates to its subsidiary bodies and specialized spaces in-depth thematic discussions). In reality, only the WHA and CODEX, and to a lesser extent the FAO Conference, played regular roles in nutrition policy making in recent years, though many agencies and programmes often transcended their implementation functions and contributed to establishing policies through their operations, despite not having a normative mandate. While this state of affairs generated significant fragmentation, it also means that there is no other legitimate body other than the CFS (unless one calls in the General Assembly) that is responsible for policy coherence (with the UN charter and the human rights framework) on nutrition. It is therefore important to “debug” the on-going narrative that suggests that the CFS needs to “find a niche and avoid duplication”. The role of the CFS should be complementary to those of the WHA and FAO Conference and remains central when it comes to policy coherence, as no other institution has been assigned a similar mandate at global level;

3) Right to Food: The CFS is firmly centred on the human rights framework, as also stated in the CFS Reform Document and recalled in the MYPOW 2016-2017. Both documents explicitly state that the “CFS strives for a world free from hunger where countries implement the voluntary guidelines for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security”. While this definition does not yet properly incorporate a holistic understanding of nutrition (from the food to the health angle), it remains understood that policy coherence means coherence with the UN charter and the human rights framework and, more particularly, with the right to adequate food and nutrition and all its related instruments. It also means that the CFS policy products are decided by Member States (as duty-bearers) in order to clearly respond to right-holders. In this respect, a challenging dimension is related to ensuring that the human rights framework have primacy over all other international and national legal frameworks, in order for the process to remain focused on responding to human rights rather than private “economic” rights (i.e. IPR, investor rights, etc.). This requires the unambiguous affirmation of a clear normative hierarchy between human rights and private economic rights; the full realization of women’s human rights is central to the pursuit of the right to adequate food and nutrition and the right to health. The provision of paid maternity benefits, the social recognition of unpaid work through social and community support mechanisms, the gendered redistribution of household tasks, the prevention of child, early and forced marriages, and the protection of women and girls against all forms of violence are all critical components of an effective strategy for tackling malnutrition in all its forms. Equally important, optimal breastfeeding must be promoted and protected, as the best alternative for mother to feed their babies, and for that women must have all legal,

public, community and family support; (discuss disconnect between realization of women's rights and how women's roles are defined in the document.