

**Draft CSM Contribution to the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meeting
3 May 2017**

Comment on the Draft Agenda:

The severe food emergency and famine situation in South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and North-East Nigeria and the worsening situation in the whole Eastern Africa region is of high concern to the CFS. The extraordinary meeting of the CFS Advisory and Bureau meeting, convened by the CFS Chair upon request of CFS members, clearly underlined the urgency and importance for the CFS to act within its mandate. CSM therefore would suggest to start the meeting today with this agenda item, and therefore move agenda item agenda item 9a to agenda item 1.

Agenda item 1: CFS Contribution to the 2017 HLPF

We would like to appreciate the final version of the CFS contribution to the HLPF global thematic review 2017, and also express our appreciation for the work done by the SDGs OEWG Chair in achieving this result.

We particularly commend the document when stating the centrality of the progressive realization of the right to adequate food as an imperative for success across the implementation of the SDGs, and when calling governments to foster the use and application at country level of the CFS integrated policy instruments as critical in national efforts to advance the 2030 Agenda.

It is very important that this message is brought to the HLPF and then disseminated at country level through our constituencies, in order to contribute to the further knowledge and application of the CFS outcomes by national Governments and actors in their efforts towards the SDGs implementation, including proper consideration of the use and application of CFS policy outcomes within the Voluntary National Reviews.

Agenda item 2: CFS Evaluation – Discussion on the recommendations and preparation of plan of action

The CSM cannot comment yet on the content of the final evaluation report on the CFS, as we are still waiting for the translations of the final report. Other delegations might be in the same situation, in order to get feedback from their capitals and constituencies.

Regarding the process towards a proposed plan of action on the recommendations of the CFS evaluation, we clearly prefer Option 1 with a specific amendment. The process towards the elaboration of an institutional response to the CFS evaluation should be as transparent, inclusive and participative as possible. The Open-Ended Working Group format is in this sense much better than a number of parallel and informal working groups.

In order to ensure transparency and efficiency, we would suggest that CFS members and participants submit their comments in written form by 24 May, which then can be posted on the CFS internal working space. This would help to prepare for an OEWG meeting which could take place on 1 June. The meeting on 1 June would aim at identifying the key elements of a draft action plan to be discussed at the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meeting on 7 June.

Agenda item 3: Forum on women's empowerment

We would like to thank the Technical Task Team for the work done so far.

Concerning the agenda and format of the Forum we welcome and appreciate the fact that the Technical Task Team agreed to have as a keynote speaker a woman leader from the grassroots women's organization, as their role in ensuring women's equality, rights and economic empowerment is crucial.

The CSM working group on women is composed by 90 international, regional and national women's organizations and platforms worldwide which are engaging with this CFS process with a high degree of commitment, expertise and knowledge on the ground.

I will voice some of their key comments and proposals to improve the outline of this background document, mainly concerning chapter 1. The comments received were numerous, and we will submit them in a detailed way as a written contribution to the Technical Task Team and CFS Secretariat. Would be good to know by when written comments need to be submitted.

Many important elements are already included in the draft outline. As time is short, I would like to flag here only key aspects that still need to be strengthened or incorporated:

We believe that Section 1.1., on "*Global trend and emerging challenges for women in the agriculture and agri-food sector*" needs to be improved on several aspects:

- There is a wide spectrum of scientific and academic evidence shows how large-scale land acquisitions and land grabbing adversely affect women's livelihoods, their employment opportunities, their access and control over natural resources and food systems, often resulting in forced migration and worsening of their life conditions. One important focus should therefore be to look at the needed support for women small-scale food producers that are practicing sustainable models of production.
- Greater emphasis on their integration into commercialization and value chains is not necessarily beneficial to them. The recent CFS policy recommendations on Connecting smallholders to markets adopted in 2016 recognize the importance of the local, national and regional markets and the fundamental role of women small-scale food producers within these territorial spaces that are providing the 70% of the food production worldwide.

- The dramatic impact of migration on women’s rights, equality and empowerment is an obvious reality we face every day. The outline should be able to mirror the complexity of this phenomenon. Women are the first persons affected during conflicts, wars, and humanitarian crises. The fleeing and migrations routes expose women to many forms of discrimination and abuse.
- Climate change, scarcity of resources and the impact of mining have often resulted in a loss of farmland and in environmental degradation, and have particularly affected women.
- Finally, conflict and violence against women are both a persisting barrier and a global trend. Is therefore very important to recognize that without effectively addressing the cultural patterns and norms that generate violence against women none of our strategies and solutions will deliver their full promises.
- The role of indigenous women’s organizations, their struggles against multiple forms of discrimination and their extraordinary contributions to food security and nutrition should be highlighted in the outline for the Forum.

As said before, we also have some other additions to the rest of the document that we will submit in written form.

Agenda item 4: Questions for the Advisory Group reporting exercise

The CSM welcomes the revised questionnaire for the Advisory Group reporting exercise and the stronger focus on questions on the use and application of CFS policy outcomes.

Agenda item 5: Workstream updates and CFS 44 preparations

The CSM had suggested during the last Joint Meeting to invite the UN Secretary General for the first day of the Plenary. The Proposal was broadly supported and agreed by the CFS Bureau. We learn from the CFS Workstream Update, that the invitation had not been sent two weeks ago. Has it been sent now? We believe that his presence would help to strengthen the CFS. Given the dramatic food emergency and famine situations now, the participation of the UN Secretary General to the CFS 44 would be even more important.

Regarding the Agenda of the first day, it would be important to know how the topic on food crises and famines will be included into the agenda of the first day of the CFS, as agreed by the Bureau on 12 April. We believe that in this session, also representatives from affected communities should be invite to address the CFS Plenary.

Regarding the draft timetable of CFS 44, we recommend to include a presentation of the new HLPE note on critical and emergencies during the first day of the CFS Plenary, as a key input to inform the CFS Plenary deliberations during the week.

Agenda item 6: Budget update and sustainable funding solutions

The proposal for a resource mobilization strategy is of high importance for the sustainability and predictability of the CFS funding. It is based on several suggestions of the Meeting on Sustainable Funding held on 9 March.

We acknowledge that now the budget shows the totality of the CFS budget, including the budgets of HLPE and CSM.

We also support the recommendation of the CFS evaluation for full transparency of the budgeting process. Transparency is equally important for the accounting of expenditures regarding CFS workstreams. The CFS evaluation acknowledges that HLPE and CSM already meet these transparency standards.

We reiterate our concern that the proposed budget, as presented now, does not include a needed amount for interpretation and translation costs. The CFS evaluation underlines the importance of these services are important to ensure inclusiveness and participation of CFS processes.

Regarding the funding proposals, we would like to remind that there was a consensus at the 9 March to increase the contributions of the Rome-based Agencies, particularly FAO. We heard that the FAO Council last week did not agree on such increased contributions to CFS. Why is it that a consensus reached in CFS was not supported by the same member states in FAO?

The proposal is not clear regarding the support that will be given to the CSM fundraising efforts. Of course, the CSM is autonomous and self-organized, and therefore fully responsible and accountable for its funding. But this does not mean that the CFS should not define the support for adequate and predictable funding for the CSM as part of its funding objectives. The text should be clarified in this sense.

CFS 43 agreed on the need to develop robust safeguards against conflict of interest. The CFS evaluation suggests that funding from private philanthropic foundations and private sector could be considered, “provided that there are no conflict of interest”. In that sense, the first step is to develop a consensus in the CFS about what are possible conflicts of interest and what are the specific standards and safeguards that would have to be put in place, before accepting funding from these sources. Such discussion can be conducted as part of the follow-up to the evaluation.

Agenda item 7: HLPE methods and programme of work

The CSM continues to be deeply concerned about the funding deficit of the HLPE in 2017. If this situation continues, there won't be translations of the two HLPE reports that will be presented in 2017.

It is fundamental that governments or RBA urgently provide the needed funds to ensure the translation of these two reports. If these reports are only available in

English, this systematically excludes many constituencies from the subsequent CFS policy convergence process. We reiterate our urgent call for extraordinary efforts to fund the translation of these two reports in 2017.

Agenda item 8: Theme of the Global Thematic Event at CFS 45 in 2018

The Vision Statement of the CFS Reform Document says that the “CFS strives for a world without hunger where the voluntary guidelines for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security are implemented”. Two of the key functions of the CFS directly refer to the support of implementation of the Right to food Guidelines. All major decisions of the CFS refer to the Right to Food Guidelines.

The Right to Food Guidelines were negotiated between 2002 and 2004 by the Intergovernmental Working Group established by the FAO Council as a subsidiary body of the CFS. This process was the first negotiation process in the CFS which was explicitly opened to other stakeholders than CFS members, and to which many organizations from civil society and academia participated.

The proposal to dedicate the next Global Thematic Event to the monitoring of the use and application of the Right to Food Guidelines is very interesting and will provide important insights for the CFS what is needed to use and apply CFS policy outcomes in an effective way, in accordance with its vision.

Given the importance of the Right to Food Guidelines in the CFS, we cannot understand how a CFS member can express a “red line” on such a fundamental part of the CFS itself. This is not acceptable. All CFS members and participants are expected to fully support the Right to Food Guidelines and the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.

Agenda item 9: Any other business

a) CFS Response to worsening of food security situation in the world

The situation in Somalia, South Sudan, Yemen and North-East Nigeria is dramatic. The severe food crises, however, goes far beyond the four countries. It is important and urgent that the CFS takes action and contributes to international efforts to prevent a huge, human and humanitarian catastrophe.

The actions agreed by the Bureau on 12 April are all important. The CSM supports these efforts. But more is needed. We know that the CFS is not an entity to operate humanitarian action. The CFS is the broadest global platform on food security and nutrition that should provide and in-depth analysis of the situation and its root causes, support comprehensive and coherent policy responses to the crises and

provide a particular space and attention to the voices and human rights of the people most affected and most at risk.

Experiences in Western Africa demonstrate that effective regional mechanisms to prevent crises situations can be very effective. The regional Network for the Prevention of Food Crises includes all actors (governments, UN institutions like FAO and WFP, regional organizations like ECOWAS, civil society and particularly small-scale food producer organizations like ROPPA.) They put special attention to the support of smallholder production at an early stage, support their access to markets, within inclusive governance models.

The CFS has produced important policy instruments in these areas, including on food security in protracted crises, on water and food security, smallholders access to markets, tenure of land, investment in smallholder agriculture etc. It is now the time to effectively use and apply them, to ensure that the humanitarian action and the human rights based action on long-term development go hand in hand.

The CSM has suggested to hold an Extraordinary Hearing of the CFS to give particular voice to the people most at risk, particularly to women affected by conflict, war, emergency and disaster situations, to hear from them their analysis of the situation and their causes, and their suggestions for comprehensive policy responses. We still believe that such approach is urgently needed, and a particular strength and added value of the CFS. We urge the CFS to consider this proposal.

b) CFS 44 VGGT event proposal

The CSM appreciates that this event on the VGGT will take place during CFS 44. However, this event should of course be seen as a follow-up of the Global Thematic event on the use and application of the VGGT that was held during CFS 43. This link is not mentioned so far, but the relation between the event last year and the event this year should be clearly stated in the concept note. The procedures for a participative preparation process should be started soon.

Finally, it would be important to clarify whether the Technical Thematic Forum on 5-6 October will also be organized within the scope of the CFS. According to the note this seems to be the case, but it would be good to confirm this. If this is the case, it would be important that also regarding this event, the CFS participation principles and procedures are applied.