USEFUL TIPS ON THE CIVIL SOCIETY MECHANISM (CSM) FOR RELATIONS WITH THE UN COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY (CFS)
inclusive: all relevant actors are involved in the decision making process, but after the CFS reform in 2009 it was decided that particular voice should be given to those who are most affected and at risk who are at the same time the most important contributors to food security and nutrition worldwide.

intergovernmental: CFS membership is opened to all member states of the UN.

The right to adequate food for all: this is the mandate of the CFS and what civil society struggles for.

THE CFS REFORM IN 2009. What changed?

1. Increase promotion of policy convergence, coherence and coordination for food security and nutrition.

2. New vision with the explicit mandate to foster the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.

3. It aspires to be connected to the field and “the reality on the ground”

4. Opens its decision making process to multiple actors. Civil Society Organizations are recognised as full participants and are an essential but autonomous part of the CFS.

5. The adoption of a Global Strategic Framework for FSN to guide national food security action plans.

6. Among CFS new functions, there is monitoring and accountability.
After the reform, civil society as the most affected and the rights holder is given priority attention!

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<tr>
<th>What</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Rights</th>
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| **Members**               | 135 member governments of the UN         | - They are the only one to have voting rights and the right to take decisions.  
                                |                           | - Intervene in plenary and break out discussions.  
                                |                           | - Submit documents and formal proposals.  
                                |                           | - Approve meeting documents and agendas |
| **Participants**          |                                         | - Advise members on the different themes according to their expertise.  
                                |                           | - Participate in the work of the CFS and contribute regularly to inter-sessional activities at all levels.  
                                |                           | - Right to intervene in plenary and can break out discussions.  
                                |                           | - Submit documents and formal proposals and contribute to preparation of meetings and agendas. |
| **Observers**            | Interested organizations invited to participate | To be able to speak, they have to be invited by the CFS chair. |

**FAO...WFP...IFAD...**  
**The Rome-Based Agencies**

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN, the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are the three key food and hunger related UN organizations also known as "the Rome-based agencies", RBAs, as their headquarters are all in Rome.

The agencies have different but complimentary mandates, and they are encouraged to collaborate on an ongoing basis at all levels.  
...The FAO develops global norms, shares knowledge and provides policy advice and technical assistance to developing countries governments.  
...The WFP is the humanitarian and emergency food aid arm of the UN system.  
...The IFAD’s role is to mobilize resources to invest in smallholders farming and rural communities.
The High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE)

One of the major innovations introduced by the reform is the HLPE. Member States decided that decisions should be informed by shared, independent and comprehensive advice. In 2010 the HLPE was established as the scientific and knowledge based pillar of the CFS. It ensures a well informed policy debate and decision-making process improving quality, effectiveness and coherence of food security and nutrition policies.

The HLPE is mandated by the CFS Plenary to gather existing information and data from the academic and scientific knowledge, as well as field experience and knowledge from social actors, including civil society and social movements, from various settings through online consultations on the different topics identified by the CFS to be relevant to Food Security and Nutrition.

It also issues periodically a Note on Critical and emerging issues for Food Security and Nutrition to guide and support the selection of priority themes to be addressed by the CFS.

In its second note published in May 2016 the HLPE listed, among others, Agroecology.

HOW DOES THE CFS WORK?

CFS PLENARY

It is the sovereign annual assembly where all policy decisions are adopted by consensus. The Plenary is the central body for decision making, debate and convergence for all relevant actors.

ADVISORY GROUP (AG)

Before taking any decision the Bureau meets periodically with all participants to hear their perspectives and advice. The participants give their contributions through the AG.

THE BUREAU

It is composed by a chair and 12 elected member states delegates representing regional groups.

For each topic of the plan of work a process is identified and implemented through the creation of a working group, ... in the CFS they are called:

OPEN ENDED WORKING GROUPS

Open to all members/participants/observers. Working groups submit its decision to the AG and Bureau. The Working Groups are the most inclusive spaces where the intersessional work happens.

RELEVANT CFS POLICY OUTCOMES

- 2016. Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition
- Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crisis
- 2016. Sustainable agricultural development for food security and nutrition: what roles for livestock?
- 2016. Connecting Smallholders to Markets
- Water for Food Security and Nutrition (CFS 42, 2015)
- Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of the national food security
What is the CSM?
The CSM is...

...an open and inclusive space

...an articulation of the local, national, regional and global struggles you are already engaged in

...a collective learning process

The CSM is not...

...NOT an end but a tool

...NOT about representation but about facilitating

...NOT a membership organization, is a space with participating organisations

Read the power point to learn more about CSM mandate, structure and principles...
For each workstream in the CFS the CSM establishes a Policy Working group by making an open call to all its participating organisations.

For example: Nutrition, Women, Forestry, Monitoring, etc...

Each Working group is coordinated by one or two CC members and supported by a facilitation team.

The CSM Working Group (WG) prepares collectively its own vision:
What do we want from the CFS on this topic?

Based on this vision the WG will engage into the CFS policy process together with all the other actors in the CFS.

Each workstream in the CFS follows a different policy process and can deliver a different outcomes:

More Comprehensive outcomes like the VGGTs, FFA, GSF
More specific policy recommendations like the one on Water, Livestock, Smallholders access to markets, Forestry

Once the policy outcome is adopted by the CFS Plenary all CFS actors should be engage and committed to disseminate, use and apply this decision.

CFS should also periodically monitor its work at national, regional and global level.
But what has the CSM achieved so far in the CFS?

Thanks to the constant struggle of CSOs, important milestones have been achieved:

- Women rights have been recognised in the [Livestock policy recommendation](#). This may seem a minor achievement, but, by creating a precedence we advance in our struggle to fulfill, protect and respect the rights of women.

- The CSM proposal for an [HLPE report on Agroecology](#) was accepted! This is the first step to struggle towards a concrete alternative to the dominant agricultural industrial model and the eradication of the root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition.

- The [CFS "Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security"](#) are the result of an inclusive process including a series of consultations and negotiations at different level! The VGGTs contain really important instruments to fight against natural resource grabbing and are a great achievement of local and global struggles. Communities and organizations are now raising awareness about the VGGTs at the local level and demanding to their governments to implement them.
What is the CSM Coordination Committee?

The Coordination Committee (CC) is the governing body of the CSM; this means that all relevant political decisions within the CSM, on internal and external issues, are taken by the CC by consensus, if possible, and by vote if a consensus is not possible, reporting the divergent view. The Members of the CSM Coordination Committee are elected by the 11 constituencies and 17 sub-regions (5 sub-regions in Africa, 4 sub-regions in the Americas, 6 sub-regions in Asia and 2 sub-regions in Europe). Gender and geographic balance within its composition is always ensured.

- The CC consists of 41 members from the 11 constituencies and 17 sub-regions.
- The role of CC members is to facilitate the work of CSOs within their constituencies and sub-regional groups.
- The CC is responsible for ensuring that the functions of the CSM are carried out effectively as possible and according to the organizing principles. Ensuring a two-way communication process.
- The CC perform this role by sharing information, facilitating dialogue and consultations, supporting analysis and advocacy at national and regional level.
How can a CC member facilitate the work in its constituency or sub-region? Here some tips:

• Share with them once a month the CSM Update, with all the news on CFS and CSM processes;

• Bring to the CSM their demands, perspectives, experiences and knowledges by actively engage in one of CSM Working Group and in the CC;

• Report back periodically to your constituency or sub-region on the successes achieved, the challenges identified, the need for more inputs;

• Support your constituency and sub-region in disseminating CFS policy outcomes at local, national and regional level;

• Support the strengthening of linkages among the different levels of the struggles, from home to Rome and back;
CC member = facilitator of voices

Tell them this and this and this!

I am going to Rome to bring our demands. What do we need?

With this CFS decision we can advance our rights!

Home

Policy decision
**CSM STRUCTURE**

11 GLOBAL UNITS known as: CONSTITUENCIES

Made of: Global and continental organizations and networks of each sector

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smallholders farmers</th>
<th>Pastoralists herders</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fisherfolk</td>
<td>Indigenous people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agric and farm workers</td>
<td>Urban Food Insecure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Women</td>
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<td>Consumers</td>
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Made of: Sub-regional CSOs that bring together more than one sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Northern America</th>
<th>Central America and Carribbean</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andean Region</td>
<td>Southern Cone</td>
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<td>Western Europe</td>
<td>North Africa</td>
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<td>West Africa</td>
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<td>South Africa</td>
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1 CC member = 1 CC member

16 SUB-REGIONAL UNITS know as: SUB-REGIONS

41 CC MEMBERS

1 CC member for each subregion
Suggested questions on CFS to be asked to more experienced CC members and CSM participating organisations:

What are the biggest challenges for human rights in the CFS?

Why is food sovereignty a taboo in the CFS?

What makes the CFS a unique space?

What is the difference between multi-stakeholder and multi-actor?

Why a Constituency is different from a Working group?

Is the CFS an implementing body?

What is the role of the Private Sector in the CFS and how it is organized?

How can the CFS be useful for my/our struggles?

How to report back to my own organization what happens here?

How was the CFS before the Reform in 2009?

Why is agroecology such a controversial issue in the CFS?

What if we do not agree with a policy outcome of the CFS?

What is the role of the Rome Based Agencies (FAO, WFP, IFAD) in the CFS?

Why the big majority of CFS activities and documents are only available in English?

Why is the CFS at a crossroads?
Suggested questions on CSM to be asked to more experienced CC members and CSM participating organisations:

What are the biggest challenges as CSM in the CFS?
What is the difference between representing and facilitating?
What is the difference between a constituency and a sub-region?
Why there aren’t similar experiences for CSOs in other international food global governance fora?
How to strengthen my constituency or sub-region?
How to process this overload of informations?
Has this space been useful so far?
Does my struggle fits here?
How do we build our own political positions?
How do we fund our activities and work?
Is the CSM an organisation?
What type of support the CSM Secretariat delivers?
Are the CSM Communication always written in Spanish, French and English?
What is our role in the CFS?
Why the CSM Working Groups are so important?
What is the CSM Forum?