

**CSM Contributions to the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau Meeting
21 November 2017**

Agenda Item 1 – Feedbacks from CFS 44

CSM assessed CFS 44 and would like to highlight the following points:

- A major achievement of CFS 44 was reaching a common understanding which clearly and unequivocally recognizes that women's empowerment, gender equality and women's rights are strongly interrelated. This is now also a key challenge for the future: CFS 44 „emphasized the importance of mainstreaming gender equality, women's and girls' rights and women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition in all CFS work streams, products and documents.” (CFS 44 Final Report, paragraph 27 e)
- The Policy Convergence on Sustainable Forestry for Food Security and Nutrition was a difficult process, as it did not have the needed time and resources, and the negotiation week before CFS did not allow for a broader participation. CFS should revise this format for policy convergence in the coming years. The outcome of the Forestry process, however, is important and needs a thorough follow-up. The Plenary agreement on a further discussion on the relation of commercial tree plantations and food security and nutrition needs to be included into the CFS Workplan for 2018.
- The agreements of CFS 44 on the MYPOW 2018-19, including the request for an HLPE report on agroecology and other innovations for Food Security and Nutrition is an important step ahead; as well as the approval of the CFS monitoring agenda for its more comprehensive policy outcomes until 2022, starting with the Global Thematic Event on the Right to Food Guidelines in 2018.
- While the overall attendance and engagement of members and participants to the CFS Plenary and Side events was again impressive, the participation on the ministerial level and the media impact was very limited. This is concerning and needs to be further addressed in implementing the response to recommendation 5 of the CFS evaluation.
- Also, the agenda and methodological preparations of the CFS Plenary sessions need to be well prepared with proper consultation during the preceding months. If this is not properly done, as we could see in the session on Urbanization and rural transformation, valuable plenary time is not used to best effect, the indications expressed by members and participants are not properly recorded in the report, and unnecessary tensions are generated.
- The dramatic increase of hunger and malnutrition, as reported by SOFI 2017, was discussed at CFS 44, but the CFS needs to strengthen its capacity to become truly and effectively responsive to such urgent global challenges. In this context, we suggest that the CFS should become the central platform to convene periodic and ad-hoc reviews of famines and severe food crises, focusing on the assessment of policy responses and their impact on the root causes. This also would, for sure, enhance the policy relevance, visibility and effectiveness of the CFS enormously.

Agenda Item 2– CFS Workplans

a) Workplan on CFS Evaluation

We congratulate China and Germany for accepting the roles as co-facilitators of the next period.

In general, the draft workplan for the further response to the CFS evaluation looks good to us, considering that is, of course, preliminary. However, we have some key remarks and suggestions to be taken into account by the two new co-facilitators:

- the importance of mainstreaming gender equality, women's and girls' rights and women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition in all CFS work streams, products and documents, should be included when discussing the Strategic MYPOW.
- The role of the Rome based Agencies and their multiple ways of interaction with the CFS, should be tackled in several occasions of the upcoming discussions, particularly when we discuss the dissemination, use, application and monitoring of CFS policy outcomes. The role of RBAs on this aspect is fundamental, particularly when discussing recommendations, 7, 10 and 11 in the coming days. Furthermore, their role will need to be further discussed when coming back to the role of the CFS Secretariat, the Advisory Group and the Budget.
- The discussion on how to make CFS a truly responsive place of the challenges of today should be included into the discussions on several recommendations, including on recommendation 7, the strategic MYPOW and the Plenary.
- The meeting calendar should be revised again in the sense, that meetings are better clubbed together (on subsequent days, not with distance of 4-6 days between to meetings). The CFS Advisory Group includes several participants from outside Rome, and the planning should take this into account.
- With regards to the discussions on recommendation 4, we suggest that these discussions should be re-scheduled, considering the Plenary decision that the Bureau may exceptionally re-appoint the Advisory Group in March 2018. The respective discussions within the CFS evaluation process should therefore not be held after March 2018, rather before. The current dates from March-April-May should be rescheduled to 5 February and 20 March 2018, so that the CFS Bureau can take an informed decision on this topic by end of March 2018.

b) Workplan on Nutrition

- As this Workplan was circulated with very short notice, we believe that the OEWG on Nutrition should discuss and agree on the Draft Workplan in February 2018, for subsequent approval by the Bureau in March.
- The translation of the HLPE report is critical. We understand the different budget lines (Secretariat and HLPE), but we also see that significant resources have been allocated on nutrition (three intersessional events plus the FSN Forum costs), while the HLPE has not been translated. By when will the HLPE report be translated?
- The discussion on Terms of Reference is a substantive rather than purely procedural one, as it will embody the definition of the scope and areas of focus of the CFS Policy

Guidelines. This calls for a proper discussion, “digestion” and reflection on the HLPE Report. This reaffirms the need for having the translation as soon as possible.

- Overall objective and expected outcomes: the proposed Overall objective is fine with us. In terms of expected outcomes, the country-level focus is understood and agreed, but there is also a need to assess the global frameworks/systems that limit the normative and fiscal space that countries have to advance their respective nutrition agendas and realize the right to adequate food and nutrition;
- Activity plan 1: In light of the resource scarcity, we would like clarification on the costs involved in the FSN Forum e-consultations and ensure that a cost-benefit analysis is performed before including this item.
- Activity planning 2: The modality to select case studies for the lessons sharing session at CFS 45 need to be discussed by the OEWG, should not only focus on best practices but also on policy gaps, and need to ensure that the CFS mechanisms (CSM and PSM) are not bypassed when selecting cases that would showcase experiences from their respective constituencies;

Additional remark, if needed: The ongoing FAO-WHO Regional Symposia on Food Systems and Nutrition are not mentioned in the CFS workplan, which is fine. Should they re-appear in the meeting, it is essential to highlight that the engagement process for these meetings has not been transparent and inclusive. The recommendations emerging from these meetings, if any, should bear no consequences on the ToR and should not be seen as legitimate regional consultations for the CFS context.

c) Workplan Urbanization and Rural Transformation

- We are satisfied with the proposal work plan for 2018, the two intersessional events will be based on the 2 topics that we find very relevant and, in principle, we agree with the possible timing of the events.
- We would suggest recalling the full titles of the two selected topics for the intersessional events, as they contain negotiated wording: as 1. “food security and nutrition impacts of urbanization and rural transformation on lower income groups and to address them and the root causes”. 2. Promoting youth and women engagement and employment in food systems across the rural-urban continuum, including linking producers to markets.
- We also suggest specifying in the description of the intersessional events that they should be designed in a way to aim for policy outcomes as a result. We want to recall that there was large support by governments during the CFS 44 Plenary for having a “policy outcome”. We really fear that if this requirement is not addressed, many actors will be demotivated from investing further energy and resources in this workstream.
- Finally, we would suggest that the Task Team which will be responsible for discussing the preparation of the intersessional events start work as soon as possible. The first meeting should be held in December.

d) Workplan on SDG

- SDG sessions at CFS45: The proposal for format and programme of the SDG sessions at CFS45 are listed among the expected outcomes but are not then articulated in the activity plan. So either these are removed or they are included within the “open meeting” discussions;
- Stimulus to VNR (Voluntary National Report) countries: Following last years’ experience, it would be useful to follow-up the Chair initiative and invite countries

leading their VNRs to consider the use and application of CFS outcomes. This was also mentioned positively at CFS44.

e) Workplan Monitoring

- The draft workplan reflects properly the Plenary's decision on the Global Thematic Event 2018. However, it does not include into the activity plan the Plenary request in relation to the monitoring events for the more specific CFS Policy Recommendations. The monitoring events for the more specific policy recommendation are mentioned in the overall objective, but not in the activity plan for 2018. It should be therefore included into the activities of the Technical Task Team and the OEWG meeting.
- In preparation of the Global Thematic Event 2018, it is important that CFS members consider holding a national monitoring event, in line with the Terms of Reference adopted by the CFS in 2016, to prepare inputs for the Plenary 2018.
- In addition, as suggested by the FAO DG Graziano da Silva, we encourage countries and FAO to organize side events to the FAO Regional Conferences as regional monitoring events on the Right to Food Guidelines.
- We also recall the explicit offer of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food expressed at CFS 44, to provide technical support for national and regional monitoring events on the use and application of the Right to Food Guidelines.
- The CSM has started a comprehensive and worldwide consultation process for the elaboration of an independent civil society global monitoring report on the use and application of the Right to Food Guidelines which we will present during the Global Thematic Event at CFS 45.

Agenda Item 3 – Dates and Agendas of the Bureau and Advisory Group meetings

- We observe that a huge number of meetings are scheduled on the response to the CFS evaluation. We sincerely believe that this number should be reduced and we request again that the dates of these meetings should be combined as much as possible back to back, so that it makes it more feasible, in terms of time and funding, for CSM and other AG members from outside Italy to attend these meetings.
- As said before, the Plenary agreement on a further discussion on the relation of commercial tree plantations and food security and nutrition needs to be included into the CFS Workplan and meeting calendar of 2018.

Agenda Item 4 – Updates on CFS Budget

- The budget of the CFS continues to be an issue of serious concern. The critical situation is, as we said before, not mainly a financial issue, it is mainly a consequence of the lack of political commitment to the CFS. We will again discuss the causes and possible sustainable solutions to this problems within the CFS evaluation context.
- We are particularly concerned about the situation of the HLPE, and would like to know how the HLPE will continue its work in 2018/2019?
- For the medium-term funding of the CFS and its components, we continue to propose that the RBAs should consider to increase their contributions to the CFS,

and that the UN Voluntary Scale of Assessment should be adopted establish as sustainable funding mechanism for CFS.

- In relation to the CSM itself: we have taken measures to re-allocate resources foreseen for 2017 for the most critical first months of 2018. We are confident that additional resources for 2018 will be approved in the first months of 2018, so that the CSM budget for 2018 can be covered at least partially. If a government or UN agency is willing to support us in the coming years, we encourage them to contact the CSM Secretariat.