CSM Update
May, June and July 2020
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Ciao Stéphane

CSM Annual Report 2019

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Ciao Stéphane,

Your premature and sudden departure has left us without words to express the big suffering we are feeling now. We have lost a friend, a comrade, a colleague. We have lost one of the best human beings we ever met. You were kind, gentle, honest, patient, altruist, committed to advance the rights of people.

For those who weren't so lucky to work with you, they have to know how much work, energy, time, you put into the work to ensure the legitimate land rights of the small-scale producers, indigenous peoples and landless. How much you worked to ensure that private investment didn't grab land to the most vulnerable communities. How much research and efforts you put to advance the agroecology agenda at global, national, and regional level. How strong you were to support women's rights across all the processes.

You spent your last time in Oxfam, and within a big NGO, you were a paladin of the alliance with the social movements at the front of the struggle. You were always ready to support the strategic thinking, the writing of pieces, the oral interventions in front of institutions to defend the rights to land, to seeds, to food sovereignty of those who produce most of the food.

You were the best comrade someone can have, serious but always ready to spark a laugh. We'll never forget your sense of humor, your French-style English, your gentle and smiling eyes. Your cakes and quiches after long negotiation days. Your music.

You were a pillar in the CSM, we have enjoyed working with you, sharing many struggles together. We'll miss you, but we’ll always keep a seat for you because we know, that you will be there struggling with us.

With this message the CSM wants to convey its condolences to Stéphane’s family, friends and colleagues who shared with him, day by day and heart by heart, a truly inspiring life.

Buon viaggio amico.
CSM Annual Report 2019

The CSM Annual Report 2019 is now available online!

2019 was a year of trials and tribulations for global food governance. We witnessed unprecedented attacks on multi-lateral intergovernmental spaces, including the CFS, and new attempts of corporate capture of the United Nations. And yet, amidst a new world food crisis and collapsing ecosystems, the number of food insecure people across the world is growing.

In 2018, the CSM expressed loud and clear that it was high time to recommit to the CFS and its vision. In 2019 the CSM asserted once again that the change of direction we recommitted to is vital. Transformational action cannot wait any longer! The CSM Report 2019 sets out to be a shared tool that covers all the work carried out by the CSM Coordination Committee (CC) members and CSM participating organizations throughout 2019, as well as an exercise of accountability and reporting. Our intention in writing this document is also to express our gratitude and appreciation for the incredible work carried out by CSM participating organizations at local, regional and global levels, day in and day out, in the struggle for the right to food for all.

Updates on CFS processes

Updates on CSM Positions and CFS policy response to the Covid-19 crisis

Covid-19 continues to disrupting lives and livelihoods. During the last weeks we could see a major shift in CFS membership positions, which are now acknowledging the inevitable need to elaborate a CFS policy response to Covid-19, affirming the need to take up responsibility for the elaboration of such a response according to its mandate and reform spirit. Nevertheless, there are still divergent views on how such a policy response could be shaped and on which type of timeline it could be based. Few but influential voices still object any type of policy response from CFS, claiming that the integration of Covid-19 text within the ongoing policy workstreams would be sufficient. On May 13, the CFS Bureau mandated an informal working group open to Advisory Group and Bureau members to draft an options paper on how such a response could look like according to the three Strategic
Objectives informing the CFS Multi-Year Plan of Work (MYPoW). The informal working group, chaired by Spain, met on June 15th, and an options paper was drafted as an outcome of the discussion and submitted to the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meeting of 23 June, for Bureau decision. CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meeting of June 23rd, debated and generally welcomed the paper, which was subsequently endorsed by the Bureau meeting of 24 June. CSM has been actively engaged along the process and brought its contributions to the meeting of May 13, June 2, June 15 and June 23. CSM remarked the importance of ensuring a response along the three Strategic Objectives (SO) avoiding a cherry-picking exercise among them: Strengthening the platform function of CFS by putting at the center the most impacted and marginalized constituencies and voices (SO1); ensuring a policy response from CFS that could translate into policy guidance, using as the basis the wealth of knowledge gathered by the platform function and the HLPE recommendations on the topic (SO2); advancing the uptake and monitoring of CFS Policy outcomes (SO3).

The Bureau meeting of 24 June also agreed to move forward with the operationalization of the ideas gathered under Strategic Objective one, and a CFS event on supply chains and food and agricultural workers has been planned as a result. The informal working group led by Spain convened an additional meeting on July 2 to identify the scope, title and timeline of such an event that will take place on July 21st and would address Resilient Food Supply Chains and Workers Health during Covid-19. CSM is actively contributing to the organize the meeting together with other CFS Advisory Group members.

Despite the positive move of most many Bureau members and Advisory Group participants regarding the CFS Policy response to the crisis, the level of ambition of CFS needs to be strengthened and needs to respond to the urgency of the situation. October will offer the first moment to politically debate the findings and recommendations of the HLPE Synthesis Report launched last 25th of June, together with the outcomes of the new SOFI Report, and possibly the CFS Bureau should move ahead immediately after such debates in October with the organization of a policy guidance response to Covid-19, to be endorsed at the upcoming CFS 47th Plenary Session.

Updates on the planning of the CFS 47 Plenary Session

Uncertainties remain high about the possibility to re-start in-person meetings at FAO HQs in Rome. For this reason, the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau members discussed different options in relation to the upcoming CFS 47th Plenary Session, originally scheduled to take place from 12 to 16 of October 2020. During the Advisory Group and Bureau meetings of May 13, the majority of CFS members and participants expressed their view that CFS 47th should be postponed to
the first trimester of 2021 (now scheduled for 8-12 February 2021) to allow ongoing policy convergence processes to be concluded, including a possible policy response to Covid-19, also hoping that by that time in-person meetings would be feasible again. This option did not exclude the possibility to use the October dates to organize virtual meetings offering a space of substantial discussions on SOFI, the HLPE synthesis report on the global narrative and Covid-19, with the possibility to hold additionally a very limited number of virtual side events. According to the CFS Secretariat’s proposal, these days in October would not foresee any space for negotiations, deliberations and agreements, but would only result in a CFS Chair’s Summary. These Virtual CFS meetings would take place either purely virtually or in a hybrid form, depending on the development of the health protocols operated by FAO and the Italian government.

During the last meeting of the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau of 23 June, the Bureau agreed, in its subsequent meeting, to hold a three days high-level virtual event during the World Food Week (13-15 October 2020) and identified an outline for the themes planned. The Bureau also confirmed that the virtual meetings in October would not be for decision but only for discussion and a CFS Chair’s summary will be drafted as the only conclusion. In accordance with this Bureau decision, the CFS Secretariat is starting to prepare the outlines for the High-level Special (virtual) CFS Event to take place from 13-15 October 2020. This Special Event will consist of three (virtual) sessions to address the following topics:

- The current state of play in global food security and nutrition, reviewing the SOFI 2020 Report and the CFS HLPE Report on Building a Global Narrative towards 2030;
- COVID-19 and its impacts on global food security and nutrition – what can stakeholders do to respond, rebuild, and strengthen resilience ahead of future zoonotic crises;
- The CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition, the CFS Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches, and their relevance to the objectives of the UN Food Systems Summit.

Advisory Group members and participants were invited to provide in written ideas and proposals for speakers, moderators, format, and desired outcomes from each of these discussions that will assist the Secretariat and CFS Chair in planning for this event. The CFS Secretariat also confirmed that the selection of speakers and moderators for the three sessions will take into account regional representation and gender balance, and will seek to provide and offer a wide variety of views and inclusivity, reflective of CFS’s multi-actor model. We are expecting soon also an opening for submission to a limited number of virtual side events that could take place during the three days of October. Read CSM contributions to the CFS meetings of 2 June and 23 June.
Updates on CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meetings

The CFS Advisory Group and Bureau met three additional times since April. On May 13 the AG and Bureau meeting was preceded by a virtual meeting promoted and organized under the initiative of the CFS Secretariat. The meeting titled “Covid-19: Food Security and Nutrition responses by CFS Advisory Group members to avert a global food crisis” intended to offer an exchange on the current Covid-19 crisis and its impacts on food security and nutrition.

The CFS Secretariat asked some selected members of the Advisory Group to share their perspectives, analysis and responses to avert the global food crisis. HLPE, FAO, IFAD, WFP, IFPRI (CGIAR) and WHO were invited to deliver contributions. Media were also invited to attend as part of the CFS Communication strategy. Despite concerns about how this event was organized, the CSM delivered its key messages during that occasion. Consecutively to this open virtual meeting, the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau also met. The agenda items discussed put at the center the debate on Covid-19, Food Security and Nutrition and the responses by CFS Advisory Group members to avert the global food crisis. The meeting also addressed the workplan proposal for the workstream on Gender equality and Women’s empowerment, and was concluded with a brief exchange on the outcomes of the CFS Advisory Group reporting exercise. On that occasion CFS members and participants also honored the loss of Dr. Ayazi, the permanent representative from Afghanistan who served as a member of the CFS Bureau for many years. CSM contributions to the meeting on the different topics are available here: on Covid-19, on the workplan of the workstream on Gender Equality and Women’s empowerment and on the AG reporting exercise. CFS Bureau outcomes are available here.

The meeting on June 2 addressed many substantial points and defined the inevitable need for the CFS to take responsibility in formulating a policy response to Covid-19 and the related food crisis. It became evident that CFS could not shy away anymore from the evidence unfolding on peoples’ lives in the different regions of the planet. Nevertheless, concerns and divergent views remained about which shape and timeline this response should have. On June 2, the AG and Bureau meeting also addressed a contingency plan for CFS 47th Plenary session and an options paper on how to...
proceed with the scheduled policy negotiations on Food Systems and Nutrition and Agroecological and other innovative approaches. CSM Contributions can be found here and CFS Bureau Outcomes here. On 23 June, the Advisory Group and Bureau met again and continue the discussion on the CFS 47 contingency plan, CFS potential roles in response to Covid-19 and the options papers for the pending policy negotiations on Food Systems and Nutrition and Agroecological and other innovative approaches. The Bureau, in its meeting on June 24, agreed that policy negotiations on Food Systems and Nutrition would not take place virtually in July, as originally proposed, but would possibly start in September, assessing the possibility to conduct them under a hybrid format or purely virtually. CSM strongly advocated to ensure that the hybrid format would comply with clear, shared and inclusive methodology and criteria, including the possibility for CSM to have more than one representative in the room as suggested in the Secretariat’s proposal.

The Rapporteur of the process on agroecological and other innovative approaches also mentioned during the last meeting of the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau that policy negotiations on this topic would possibly take place in between mid-October and December 2020.

**Updates on the Food Systems and Nutrition policy process**

After the meeting of April 14, the OEWG Chair, requested the submission of written text proposals in track changes to the latest draft of the Guidelines, soliciting the indication of specific priorities and rationales for such changings by May 11. Find here CSM submission. Based on these submissions, a Matrix was generated as a basis for the discussions for the two-full days meetings called for 28 and 29 May 2020. The Matrix, however, missed to incorporate many of the comments submitted by Members and participants. CSM comments were not reflected in the Matrix. During the OEWG on 28th of May, several Member States expressed their discontent about the process, especially regarding the Matrix, as they assessed that their submissions were not adequately reflected in it.

The meeting, consisted in a presentation of the different positions by the CFS members and participants, section per section but not paragraph per paragraph. However, many concrete amendments of wording were presented, the language of the interventions seemed very similar to a negotiation. The CSM assessed that the lack of a clear methodology for this meeting was evident and did not allow for a meaningful discussion of the contentious issues. You can find here detailed CSM interventions.

As a conclusion of the OEWG of April the Chair asked CFS members and participants to submit further text proposals by the first week of June, that would be integrated in the Matrix. The Chair,
in its conclusions, also assured the OEWG will have two full weeks of negotiations either in person or virtual and that the final decision was to be taken by the Bureau meeting of June 24th.

The CSM Working Group subsequently decided to share a letter to the Chair of the OEWG, in copy to the CFS Chair, to express their deep concerns on the process and to share some concrete proposals for the upcoming period. So far, the letter has remained without response and no additional open meetings has been scheduled yet before the summer break to further explore convergent and divergent positions or develop a clear methodology for the hybrid negotiations.

Updates on Agroecological and other innovative approaches policy process

As a follow-up to the last OEWG meeting on 14 April, the Rapporteur of the process launched a series of informal virtual discussions with the aim to address a number of key issues, to explore convergent and divergent views on these key topics, and better inform the elaboration of the first draft of the policy recommendations, expected to be released at the end of June, beginning of July. This first draft would lay the basis for the policy negotiations. Prior to each meeting concept notes were shared and guiding questions were identified to orient the discussions.

• The first informal virtual group discussion took place on May 7 and addressed both concerns on the process and comments on how the transition pathways could be identified, as well as expectations on the first draft. Please find here CSM comments and contributions to the meeting.
• The second informal virtual group discussion took place on May 22. The meeting focused on the identification of context-specific strategies for sustainable food systems challenges. Please find here CSM comments and contributions to the meeting.
• The third informal group discussion took place on May 27 and focused on agroecological and other innovative approaches, including relevant tools such as digitalization. Please find here CSM comments and contributions to the meeting.
• The fourth informal group discussion took place on June 4 and focused on the Right to Food, Gender and Agency. Please find here CSM comments and contributions to the meeting.
• The fifth informal group discussion took place on June 16 and focused on markets, incentives, agrochemicals, and Covid-19. Please find here CSM Comments and contributions to the meeting.

As mentioned above, the first draft is expected to be released at the beginning of July and policy negotiations might be scheduled between October and December, as CFS 47th Plenary session is confirmed to take place during the first trimester of 2021.

Updates on the monitoring of the Framework for Action on protracted crises

The Global Thematic Event on the Framework for Action is scheduled to take place at the upcoming CFS 47th Plenary Session, now postponed to 8-12 February 2021. The CFS is currently working in the finalization of its Report, based on the inputs and experiences received throughout the open call for submissions and online surveys. On June 30, the CSM has also concluded the gathering of its own experiences and inputs through its online survey.
The outcomes and findings of this process will additionally inform the drafting of the CSM autonomous report on the monitoring of the FFA. To follow-up on this issue, please subscribe to the CSM Monitoring WG.

**Updates on the HLPE synthesis report on Global Narrative towards 2030**

The HLPE synthesis Report on Global Narrative towards 2030 was launched on June 25th through a virtual meeting. The English version is already available here, while translation in UN languages will be made available beginning of September. The launch was very interesting and highlighted important aspects such as the need for a radical transformation of food systems, a prioritization of the right to food as a key requirement of the current global narrative on food security and nutrition, the need to recognize the centrality of agency and sustainability within the concept of food security, along with the four other dimensions of availability, access, utilization and stability. The fact that food systems are complex and interacting with other fundamental sectors such as health was emphasized, as well as the importance of public policies to defend the public interest, as well as the importance of context-specific and localized solutions to strengthen food systems resilience.

The HLPE Report will be debated in October during the first day of the High-Level Special (virtual) events in October, together with the findings of the SOFI Report, that will be launched on July 13.

To follow-up this issue, please subscribe to the CSM Working Group on Global Food Governance!

**Updates on the upcoming Guidelines on Gender equality and Women’s empowerment**

The CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meeting of May 13th debated the draft workplan of the upcoming Guidelines on Gender equality and Women’s empowerment. Please find here CSM contributions. A CFS Technical Task Team open to Advisory Group members will be convened soon by the CFS Secretariat. The process is expected to start in November 2020, and a call to identify the Chair of the related OEWG has been recently issued by the CFS Secretariat, with a deadline for submissions on July 15th.
Updates on CSM internal processes

CSM Coordination Committee agrees re-prioritization for 2020 Covid-19 responses

The CSM Coordination Committee met virtually on 28-29 April and agreed to re-prioritize the CSM 2020 Workplan, including as a new priority the response to the food crisis accompanying Covid-19, addressing the impacts of the pandemic on food systems, exchanging the experiences of solidarity and grassroots community responses carried out by all CSM participating organizations, and working on the elaboration of proposals for public policies to advance the right to food and nutrition at local, national and global scales.

CSM has a new logo!

The Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples’ Mechanism (CSM) has a new logo that intends to respond to our own identities, which are plural and diverse. The tree seemed to be the element that could connect all of us.

The trees are essential elements of the ecosystem and biodiversity, they are fundamental for fisherfolks to ensure good fish, for pastoralists, herders and their animals, for smallholders and family farmers; they offer the shade under which agricultural and food workers can rest; trees are the biodiversity youth is trying to protect for their own future, the soil on which it rests calls for the land rights of landless and gather the seeds women are ancestrally protecting through their self-determination struggle for the right to food; trees are essential elements of forestry which for Indigenous Peoples have profound and multiple meanings, they are fundamental for the cities and urban gardens we want to foster and connect consumers and producers in that context.
Moreover, the tree has solid and structural roots that sink in land and water and grows towards the sky, which reflects our efforts to connect the local and global struggles, to bring home to Rome and Rome back home in the CFS. The plurality of colors and textures of the leaves are our creativity and plurality putting the accent on our diversity, resistance and the dissonance we bring in the CFS and its institutional setting. The fonts of the CSM are proposed to be simple to counterbalance the institutional setting in which we operate. In this sense the tree and its colorful leaves are the creative place where we gather and the alternatives we all are trying to bring to the CFS showing them that another world is possible and that institutions such as the CFS should be listening and learning from us and becomes a peoples’ tree.