

Side Event #:
#64
Side Event Title:
Food system and nutrition guidelines: How can the CFS make a difference? Perspectives and expectations of small-scale food producers, civil society and Indigenous Peoples
Key speakers/presenters:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stefano Prato, Society for International Development (SID) • Adwoa Sakyi, International Union of Food-workers (IUF), Ghana • Margarita Gomez, La Via Campesina (LVC), Argentina • Sid Mehta, Executive Vice President, Emerging Ag, and Secretariat of the Private Sector Mechanism of CFS • Maria de los Angeles Gómez Aguilar, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Agencies in Rome • Isabel Álvarez Vispo, Urgenci, Spain
Summary (Total 500 words maximum) - Please use the sub-headings
Main themes/issues discussed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perspectives and expectations of small-scale food producers, civil society organizations and Indigenous Peoples with respect to the forthcoming CFS Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition; • Ways in which the CFS can really make a difference in proposing concrete policy pathways for normative and fiscal interventions that can realign food systems, in all their components; • Urgency to fulfil the right to adequate food and nutrition while ensuring healthy and sustainable diets; • Concrete propositions on the key issues CFS should tackle for the guidelines to be an effective policy instruments.
Summary of key points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Tenure Guidelines negotiations required almost 5 years, so it is important to recognise that it is ambitious to negotiate the CFS guidelines on food systems and nutrition in only 2 years. The discussion needs to go beyond Rome negotiations. Regional consultations must be at the core of the process, bearing in mind the centrality of the rights holders; • Many argued that the guidelines will need to embrace a holistic definition of and approach to nutrition to counter past narrow definitions that de-rooted nutrition from food, as counterintuitive as this may sound. Nutrition has a broad range of domains and it is therefore inherently multidimensional and systemic in nature;

- The event voiced a shared understanding that food systems are dysfunctional under many criteria. However, they are currently the objects and subjects of dynamics that make such dysfunctions even bigger (i.e. dematerialization, digitalization, financialization), many of which keep increasing the distance among actors within these systems, and continue to invisibilize production to consumers and policy makers. The drivers of these dysfunctions need to be exposed and addressed. At the same time, the process of economic and political power concentration in few hands has further shrunk the space of democratic sovereignty and the guidelines need to reclaim the multidimensional public objectives that food system reform serves;
- On this background, the key principles that should be applied to the upcoming policy convergence process in the CFS: 1) a holistic view of all the dimensions of production (social, environmental, cultural); 2) a systemic approach that looks at the root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition; 3) a monitoring system embodied in the guidelines that would drive implementation. In this context, it was stressed that the CFS needs to embrace a critical approach: it is essential to identify the key leverage points for moving the transition forward, inserting key policy elements that can drive change;
- Participants also raised the need to explicitly link key dimensions of the human rights framework as those related to right to health, right to food, women's rights and children and youth's rights. Many others highlighted the need to re-establish proper soil fertility cycles, reorienting the agricultural practices on the basis of ancestral knowledge and returning to traditional ways of production. In all these respects, agroecology was mentioned by many participants as the fundamental way forward to reshape food system to address multiple developmental challenges;
- When addressing nutrition, it is also essential to be aware of the conditions of agricultural and food producers, being often the most affected by hunger and malnutrition. They are often invisible in policy discussion, also given the difficulties in retrieving data on workers' condition in plantations and consequently acting against the human rights violations therein. (i.e. the ILO clauses on occupational safety are not implemented in various working areas, consequently toxic pesticide chemicals are often used causing issues and diseases with intergenerational effect).

Key take away messages

- Nutrition has a broad range of domains: it is essential to address nutrition in its multidimensional nature and with a holistic and systemic approach;
- Need of a holistic and integrated human rights approach when negotiating the CFS guidelines on food system and nutrition;
- Key Principles for the process: holistic view, focus on the root causes, monitoring system;
- Centrality of human rights, women's rights as well as women and youth empowerment;
- Impossible to talk about nutrition without putting workers' rights at the centre;
- Essential to retrieve ancestral knowledge on food, agriculture and nutrition and have it reflected by the future guidelines.