

It's time to recommit

CSM statement towards CFS 45

October 2018

The world is not on track to reach the Zero Hunger goal of the SDG, as the international community recognizes. We strongly urge the CFS to engage in an in-depth discussion about the causes, obstacles and drivers that have led to this alarming situation.

To achieve SDG2 and related SDGs linked to achieving food security and nutrition, it is **indispensable that governments and the UN express a new and full recommitment to the right to adequate food** and reaffirm their obligations to respect, protect and fulfil all human rights, in recognition of their invisibility, universality, interrelatedness and interdependence.

On the eve of the **70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, the preamble reminds us that “the recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”.

Governments must not challenge but defend and support the human rights mandate of the United Nations. Governments and UN need to implement their duties to promote and protect human rights of all people, including in those policies directly or indirectly affecting food security and nutrition. This approach necessarily implies the inclusion, participation and special attention to the rights-holders who suffer from violations or are most at risk.

We, the people, are the most critical agents for change. We are the organizations of the rights-holders while governments and intergovernmental institutions are duty-bearers. We are the most important producers, processors and providers of food and nutrition worldwide. National, regional and global public policies have the potential to influence either positively or negatively the environments in which we and our communities live and work.

Our voices, our demands and proposals as women and youth, indigenous peoples and landless, small-scale and family farmers, artisanal fisherfolks and pastoralists, agricultural and food workers, urban food insecure and consumers **must be heard more strongly in the future** at the local, national, regional and global levels.

Governments and UN should give priority attention to seeking advice from those organizations and communities who struggle, reflect and can report on the daily realities of hunger and malnutrition, exploitation, discrimination, poverty, exclusion, ecological degradation, conflict and violence. Those who directly experience these realities and the suffering of the people, are in the best position to analyze the causes and drivers, revise policies and propose concrete solutions.

Let us work together for the fundamental and continued changes that put people first, and place their inclusion, participation, voices and rights at the center of policy convergence, coordination and coherence, especially when addressing hunger and malnutrition and their causes.

The reformed CFS has made significant steps in this direction, but we all know well that this innovative experiment of inclusive global governance on food security and nutrition is still under threat.

Now is the time for all of us, especially governments and Rome-based Agencies, to revive their commitment to the CFS, its vision and roles, by providing renewed political and financial support to

the policy processes and effective functioning of the CFS and to the comprehensive dissemination, use, application and monitoring of its policy outcomes.

In this direction, **CFS 45 is an important opportunity to strengthen efforts and collaboration** on the following key issues:

1. **Strengthen the CFS in its strategic direction to face the enormous challenges of food insecurity and malnutrition today and in the near future:** The CFS enters into a new period with the adoption of the implementation of the response to the CFS evaluation report. The intensive and rather inward-looking period of the CFS evaluation process can hopefully be concluded with CFS 45, followed by a period in which all members and participants should engage with new spirit and high energy.

The implementation report presents important agreements on “providing more strategic direction to strengthen CFS to achieve its vision”. It particularly underlines that “CFS work will focus on activities that identify and address the root causes of food insecurity and malnutrition with a focus on people most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition. Gender equality, women’s and girls’ rights and women’s empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition will be mainstreamed in all CFS workstreams and products.”

This new strategic direction includes **three strategic objectives** to which CFS members and participants should dedicate their full support and commitment:

- i. Strategic Objective 1 – PLATFORM: Leverage the convening power as the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform to discuss the FSN situation and coordinate collective action at all levels
 - ii. Strategic Objective 2 – POLICY: Develop voluntary global policy guidance for policy convergence and coherence to achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote the progressive realization of the right to adequate food
 - iii. Strategic Objective 3 – UPTAKE: Foster the uptake, follow-up and review, and sharing of experiences and best practices on the use and application of CFS products at all levels
2. The most immediate opportunity to show renewed commitment is by providing the necessary **financial and political support to the upcoming policy convergence processes in 2019 and 2020 on food systems and nutrition, and on agroecology and other innovative approaches.** The regional consultations in 2019 towards the voluntary guidelines on food systems and nutrition, in particular, offer an opportunity for regional groups and regional organizations to contribute to CFS policy work. CSM would also highly appreciate financial support from countries and intergovernmental institutions to facilitate participation of social movements, indigenous peoples and civil society organizations in these consultations on the regional and global level.
 3. Promoting the **dissemination, use and application of CFS policy outcomes must be a priority** of CFS members and participants during the upcoming years. We particularly invite governments and RBAs to discuss the enhanced use and application of CFS policy outcomes with civil society organizations on the national, regional and global level. The Rome-based agencies should systematically include the use and application of CFS Policy Outcomes in their program and country work, in close cooperation with governments and other actors.
 4. The **CFS 45 Global Thematic** event to monitor the use and application of the Right to Food Guidelines is an **opportunity to bring the right to food and human rights back to the center of**

CFS debates. The high quantity and quality of reports and events organized in preparation of this event show that the CFS monitoring exercise and the relevance of the Right to Food is appreciated and supported from the country level. The continuation of the CFS innovative monitoring mechanism, as agreed in the context of the response to the CFS evaluation, is essential to underpin CFS relevance and effectiveness with concrete and useful actions, based on continued assessments and lessons learned.

5. **CFS 45 will start the consultation process for the MYPow 2020-2023.** It is fundamental that this prioritization process be strongly linked to the CFS vision, its overall objective and strategic objectives, as agreed during the CFS evaluation process discussions and that, in particular, “all activities in the MYPow are designed, planned and implemented to promote: resilience of livelihoods; attention to the people most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition; a multi-sectoral inclusive and participatory approach; evidence-based decision-making; environmental, economic and social sustainability; gender equality, women’s and girls’ rights and women's empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition.”

Final remark: We are convinced that it is impossible to attain the SDGs, particularly SDG2, without a radical change and a totally renewed commitment of the international community towards policies which adopt, as their primary principle and foremost important purpose, the promotion and protection of the right to adequate food and all human rights of the people most affected and at risk of food insecurity and malnutrition. We call on governments, UN and all relevant actors to collaborate in this endeavor, considering that CFS 45 is an important opportunity for a step in this new direction.