

CSM engagement with CFS processes: Overview about key activities and critical issues November 2017 – September 2018

This overview aims to provide a **synthesized update of the engagement of the CSM with CFS processes** between November 2017 and September 2018, by pointing to the main activities, the related key positions and critical issues, and the situation before CFS 45:

| CFS Process | CSM Activities | Key positions and critical issues |
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| <p>CFS evaluation</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A total of 15 (!) CFS meetings on the response to the CFS evaluation were held with participation of CSM AG members and members from the CSM Global Food Governance Group • Preparatory and bilateral meetings in all these cases • Written contributions to all meetings or deadlines • Periodic assessments, updates and skype calls for strategic positioning and proposals of the CSM with CSM WG on Global Food Governance and CSM Advisory Group <p><i>All activities and contributions are documented on the CSM website: http://www.csm4cfs.org/working-groups/cfs-evaluation/</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to CFS evaluation must aim at strengthening the CFS, not weakening it; the bottom line is what is in the CFS Reform document and what has been agreed by the CFS before. • Human rights framework: recognition of the essential role of the CFS vision the explicit inclusion of women’s rights, women’s empowerment and gender equality and the progressive realization of the right to food • The explicit inclusion of monitoring and accountability in accordance to previous CFS decisions on the innovative monitoring mechanism of the CFS; • Responsiveness and inclusiveness of the prioritization process: the CFS must be able to respond to urgent issues, and should plan the process for the next MYPOW in the most inclusive format; • The roles of the most innovative pillars of the reformed CFS, the HLPE and the CSM, must be strengthened, not undermined. • A stronger and concrete commitment of member states and RBAs for ensuring funding for the CFS in all its components. • |
| <p>Situation before CFS 45: the overall assessment of the discussions on the response to the CFS evaluation can be summarized in few sentences: Discussions on the CFS evaluations were difficult in a setting where some few, but vocal and influential actors aimed at weakening the CFS, while a significant number of other members was decided to strengthen the CFS, and an even bigger number of countries did not really engage. The process was often too self-referential and technocratic for allowing a broader participation. However, in terms of the outcomes and the draft implementation report of the response to the CFS evaluation, as submitted to the CFS 45 for approval, the CSM can assess positively that our key priorities and demands have been included into the final draft, although not to the degree we wanted. The overall finding is that the group of those who believe in the reformed CFS and its vision have demonstrated to be stronger than those who wanted to downsize the CFS. This is why CSM and all other friends of the CFS should call for a recommitment to the CFS as part of a much stronger response to the alarming situation of food insecurity and malnutrition today. The controversies within the CFS will continue but will maybe express themselves more in the upcoming policy negotiations on agroecology and other innovative approaches, food systems and</p> | | |

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| | nutrition, and the setting of the future political agenda of the CFS within the MYPOW process. | |
| Monitoring Use and Application | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive consultation and elaboration of the CSM independent Report on Monitoring the Right to Food Guidelines • Workshop with the informal group of the Friends of the Right to Food • Support to most of the 15 national, regional and global monitoring events • Contributions to the preparation of the CFS Background document for the Global Thematic Event and its agenda • Participation to the OEWG meeting on monitoring and discussions on monitoring specific policy recommendations • Presentation of a proposal for a pilot regarding monitoring specific policy recommendations. • Discussion of this proposal in the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meetings end of July: <p>Elaboration of a joint proposal Italy-CSM, to hold a Stocktaking event at CFS 46 to monitor the use and applications of three specific CFS policy recommendations (investing in smallholder agriculture (2013), connecting smallholders to markets (2016), and sustainable agricultural development, the role of livestock (2016))<i>See for more information the CSM website: http://www.csm4cfs.org/working-groups/monitoring/</i></p> | <p>Major discussions in the monitoring related discussions in the CFS evaluation were generated by the attempt of few but influential countries to stop the use of the word monitoring in the CFS context. However, after several discussions, a common understanding was reached about the elements of the CFS innovative monitoring mechanism and the steps ahead.</p> <p>In the preparations and during the OEWG monitoring meeting, it became clear that certain countries were afraid that the GTE on the Right to Food Guidelines during the Plenary might strengthen the human rights approach in CFS. They expressed several times their objection on this, and that the event should not have any follow-up.</p> <p>The Joint Workshop of the Friends of the Right to Food in Rome and the CSM, in March, however, made some important recommendations, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased cooperation on the Right to Food between the Rome based Agencies, in particular FAO, and the OHCHR in Geneva; • Strengthen the leading role of FAO for the global implementation of the Right to Food; • Create a permanent space in the annual CFS session for the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food. <p>The discussions on holding a stocktaking event at CFS 46 in 2019 on monitoring specific policy recommendations faced some difficulties. However, the joint proposal from Italy and CSM received strong support from several countries. A final decision, if the proposal will be included into the draft decision box for CFS 45, will only be taken by the CFS Bureau on 25 September.</p> |
| | <p>Situation before CFS 45: The most important issues are: the Global Thematic Event on the Right to Food Guidelines is well prepared and can help to visualize a strengthened commitment to a human rights and the right to food in the CFS. The achievement of a common understanding of the CFS innovative monitoring mechanism within the CFS evaluation discussions is an extremely important step. The pending issue for the Plenary is the adoption of, or potential controversy about, the proposal to eventually monitor specific CFS policy recommendations in 2019.</p> | |

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| Nutrition and Food Systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSM WG on nutrition organized a consultation about its visions and strategies for the upcoming CFS process on food systems and nutrition from 6-8 March 2018 • A well-attended informational meeting was organized on 8 March to share the main messages with CFS members and participants • CSM WG participated and contributed to 3 OEWG meeting between end of March and mid-June in which the Terms of reference for the upcoming policy negotiation process on Voluntary Guidelines on Food systems and Nutrition were discussed and agreed. <p>More information on the CSM Website: http://www.csm4cfs.org/working-groups/nutritionCSM/</p> | <p>CSM key positions brought forward to the CFS process: the new Guidelines should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirm a holistic understanding of nutrition and the need for systemic approach to counter fragmentation and promote policy coherence; • Present a unique opportunity for the CFS to generate a foundational outcome on the public policy pathways to reshape food systems in order to tackle malnutrition in all its forms; • Shall be based on Human rights and women’s rights, gender equality and gender analysis; • Address the food-health nexus in close conjunction with the livelihoods and ecological challenges and therefore seek synergy with the agroecology process; • Put people at the centre, explicitly all constituencies of the CSM, with a focus on small-scale food producers • Consider power dynamics and particularly conflicts of interest; • Ensure that the budget of the workstream allows for meaningful participation, including at the regional level. |
| | <p>Situation before CFS 45: The Terms of Reference for the process towards the Voluntary Guidelines for Food Systems and Nutrition are a good basis for the actual negotiation process. The CSM was instrumental to convince governments that the scope of these guidelines should be broad and holistic, and not only focus on food environments, and that adequate time is needed. The policy convergence process will start now in October 2018 and shall be concluded in October 2020. One open question is the funding for the process, particularly the resources needed to hold the regional consultations scheduled for June to September 2019, and the resources needed to fund the civil society participation to the whole policy process. The CSM working group on Nutrition can take the opportunity of the CSM Forum to organize its strategy towards this policy process.</p> | |
| Urbanization and Rural Transformation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The workstream foresaw two intersessional events and one open meeting for the first semester of 2018. The CSM WG made comments on the outline of the first event, but then the CFS cancelled both events due to lack of funding. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This case is emblematic for the weakness of the CFS: on one side, there was already the opposition of a few but influential countries to any policy negotiations on this subject. Then, due to the lack of funding, the process was stopped completely and the CFS intersessional events were cancelled. Finally, the CFS Bureau decided to hold the two events in the next intersessional period, in November 2018 and January 2019, |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation before CFS 45: The CFS Technical Task Team started in September preparing the rescheduled intersessional events. The CSM working group on Urbanization and Rural Transformation can take the opportunity of the CSM Forum to organize its | |

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| | participation and contributions to these upcoming events. | |
| CFS Bureau and AG meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three AG/Bureau meetings were held between November 2017 and May 2018. The main topics (outside the CFS evaluation) were the discussion on the Workplans for the CFS in 2018 and the CFS 45 agenda. More here: http://www.csm4cfs.org/csm-contributions-to-the-cfs-agbureau-meeting/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key issues regarding the CFS workplan in 2018 were the follow-up on Forestry and monitoring (see above and below). The major controversy on the CFS 45 agenda with regards to the proposal to replace the first two days of the CFS with a FAO high-level event. After heated discussion, this could be reversed to the practice of previous years. A major point of tension is the fact that the Bureau could not agree on a proposal from CSM to include a key note address of a rural women representative into the Opening Panel of the CFS Plenary 45, given that 15 October is the International Day of Rural Women. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Situation before CFS 45: The CSM will continue to insist with the CFS Chair and CFS Bureau and Advisory Group that a rural women representative will speak on the International Rural Women's Day during the CFS 45 Opening. | |
| SDGs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three open meetings were held to finalize the CFS contributions to the HLPF 2018 and start preparation for the contribution 2019. CSM participated and contributed substantially to these meetings and documents. More here: http://www.csm4cfs.org/working-groups/sdg/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The discussions in this process generally reflect the overall picture of cleavages in other areas. However, as it is not a negotiation process, controversies tend to be settled by referring to CFS agreed language. The CFS contributions to the HLPF was delivered in July, but it is difficult to see significant impact of this contribution in the HLPF Ministerial Declaration 2018. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Situation before CFS 45: the CSM Working Group on SDGs will have the opportunity to discuss at the CSM Forum its suggestions for the further CFS reporting process to the HLPF in general, assessing the experiences of the past years and considering the outcomes of the SOFI 2018. It also will have to prepare the specific contributions to the debate on the CFS contributions to the HLPE exercise in 2019. | |
| Agroecology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CSM WG contributed with a comment on the consultation of the scope of the HLPE report. The next step will be to draft a comment on the zero draft and discuss a vision and a strategy for the process in 2019. More here: http://www.csm4cfs.org/working-groups/agroecology/ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was no formal discussion within the CFS on agroecology in the first months of 2018. However, the FAO Symposium on Agroecology in April and its uptake by the Committee on Agriculture of FAO in early October will shape the direction and environment for the CFS process to follow in 2019. In autumn 2018, the zero draft of the HLPE report on agroecology and other innovative approaches will come out for e-consultation. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Situation before CFS 45: The CSM working group on agroecology can take the opportunity of the CSM Forum to discuss its strategy towards this process and organize its comments on the zero draft of the HLPE report. | |
| Forestry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CSM WG made a proposal through the CSM Advisory group for preparing the event on | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSM protested and requested that the AG/Bureau meeting in September should come to a decision for holding the event in 2019. The CFS Bureau |

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| | <p>commercial tree plantations and FSN, as approved by the CFS 44, but the Bureau could not agree on holding the event in 2018. More here: http://www.csm4cfs.org/working-groups/forestry/</p> | <p>decided that only the Bureau meeting in November will take a decision on this matter. CSM will continue to insist that this activity will be held and properly prepared in 2019.</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation before CFS 45: the CSM will remind the Bureau at the September meeting, that a decision on this topic shall be taken by the Bureau meeting in November. For that purpose, a proposal for decision needs to be prepared. | |
| <p>HLPE report on Multi-stakeholder Partnerships</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CSM Working Group drafted and submitted a comment to the draft zero of the HLPE report on this topic and prepared a preliminary statement for its launch on 27 June. 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main discussion around this report will be content-wise on the value and ambiguity of multi-stakeholder partnerships in the field of FSN, and process-wise about the question if and which kind of policy convergence will follow. • Translation of the report into all UN languages was postponed due to lack of funding. It is announced, but not sure, that the report is available in all languages before the CFS Plenary. |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situation before CFS 45: Two different kinds of contributions will be required from CSM and other actors for the CFS plenary debate on this topic: on the one hand, the CSM Working group on Global Food Governance needs to draft a position on the content of the report. On the other hand, a concrete proposal is needed for the follow-up process to this report. The CSM Forum provides an opportunity to discuss these questions on the basis of proposals from the CSM Working Group. | |