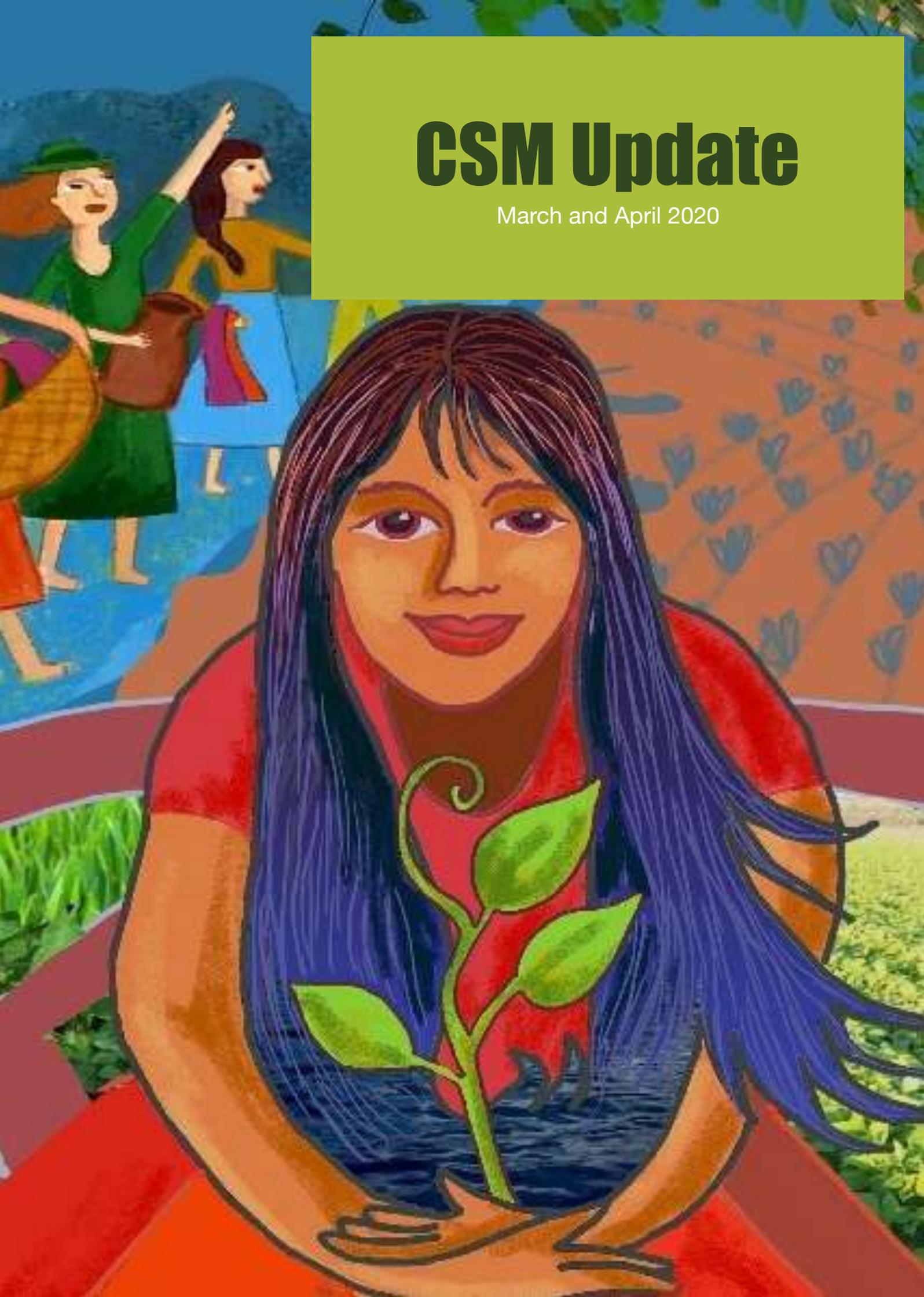


CSM Update

March and April 2020



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Introductory message on Covid-19, the related food crisis and the new priorities of CFS

First of all, let us open this CSM Update by expressing our deep and collective solidarity in these times of crisis. We hope and wish that you are all safe and healthy in these complex moments. In the past weeks the CSM has been adjusting to the new challenges raised by the pandemic. We've been concentrating our efforts to continue with sharing and facilitating collective (virtual) spaces of reflection, analysis and content in light of the current crisis.



We have been engaging in these reflections by strengthening a cross-cutting strategic approach throughout CSM. In addition to the regular working groups' meetings, we've been convening joint meetings of the CSM Advisory Group members and Working groups' coordinating and facilitating teams, with the aim of having a clearer overall picture of the situation on the ground and trying to align in a synergic way our efforts, strategic approaches and contributions to CFS in this critical moment.

In this sense the first step was the drafting of a [preliminary message on Covid-19](#) that was presented during the first CFS extraordinary Advisory Group and Bureau meeting of 19 March, devoted on its impact of this pandemic on food security and nutrition. We have also elaborated a contribution on the needed CFS policy response to the emerging food crisis in the context of the CFS exchange with the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy on the Food Systems Summit 2021, Agnes Kalibata on 31st of March. The CSM Working Groups on Food Systems and Nutrition and Agroecology have been attending and delivering the working group's messages to the OEWGs meetings held virtually on April 14th. Finally, contributions were also delivered on the occasion of the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meeting of April 17.

The CSM has stated in these occasions that CFS cannot continue doing business as usual. CFS was reformed in the aftermath of the food and financial crisis in 2008, and should, in light of this dramatic crisis, be able to fully perform its coordinating, converging and policy coherence functions for a global policy response to the emerging food crisis, complying with its reformed mandate as the most inclusive international and intergovernmental platform on food security and nutrition. The CSM Global Food

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Governance Working Group has elaborated a draft narrative for the global response because the moment to act is now.

The CSM has also organized a webinar on April 16th "Learning about the Covid crisis in the Committee on World Food Security" where different panelists from different academic areas were able to interact with a large audience about the impacts of this crisis on food systems and nutrition and the shape of a possible coordinated response.

Through this CSM Update issue you will have the possibility to read all CSM statements and contributions of these weeks, as well as to access to the recording of the webinar.

Updates on CFS processes

Update on CFS extraordinary virtual Advisory Group and Bureau meeting on COVID-19 global pandemic (19 March 2020)

On 19 March the CFS Chair, Mr. Thanawat Tiensin, convened an extraordinary Advisory Group and Bureau meeting on COVID-19 and its impacts on food security and nutrition. This was the first virtual meeting convened by the CFS since the restrictive measures were adopted in Italy, resulting in the closing down of FAO HQs, at the beginning of March.

The CSM welcomed the CFS Chair's initiative for convening this meeting and offering an initial moment of exchange and analysis on the current pandemic and its impacts on food security and nutrition, also for commissioning a HLPE note on the impact of COVID-19 on food security and issuing a Chair's Statement on the topic.

The debate was important to demonstrate that CFS has the mandate and the capacities to respond to the current crisis by performing its role as the most inclusive global platform working on policy coordination, coherence and convergence. Nevertheless, the subsequent weeks showed that there is no consensus on this within CFS membership. A number of governments expressed their wish to only continue the ongoing workstreams with little interest in opening a substantial and meaningful policy space on COVID-19 impacts on food security and nutrition. Other governments and actors within CFS have supported CSM's proposal to develop a global coordinated response to the food crisis that comes along with the COVID-19 pandemic.

On March 24 the CFS Chair released a statement on Covid-19 as a result of this meeting.



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Update on CFS extraordinary virtual Advisory Group and Bureau meeting with United Nations Secretary General's Special Envoy for the UN Food Systems Summit (31 March 2020) and follow-up information from CSM Global Food Governance Working Group

On March 31st the CFS Chair convened an additional extraordinary CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meeting with UN Secretary General's Special Envoy on the Food Systems Summit, Agnes Kalibata. The CFS Chair had a bilateral meeting with the Special Envoy in February and organized, as a follow-up step, this dialogue to better inform the Special Envoy on CFS nature and participants' perspectives, and to foster an initial dialogue and



exchange on the possible CFS role in the Food Systems Summit (FSS) scheduled for 2021. The last part of the meeting was dedicated to a collective brainstorming to gather CFS members' and participants' views and perspectives around the CFS workplan for the upcoming period.

During the first part of the meeting, Agnes Kalibata presented the state of the art of the Food Systems Summit preparation. After this brief initial input CFS Advisory Group participants were invited to introduce themselves and

bring their expectations about the role of CFS in the framework of the FSS. CSM made a powerful statement, also mentioning the collective letter signed by over 500 hundred small-scale food producers, social movements and civil society organizations delivered to the UN Secretary General in March.

Member states followed-up on Advisory group's presentations by also intervening and raising some questions about the process towards the Food Systems Summit: How will inclusiveness and transparency of the process be ensured? Who are the Summit's Advisory Committee, the Scientific Committee and the Champions' Group composed and who and how has this been decided? What is the Summit venue? How is funding for the Summit being managed? How is the COVID-19 crisis impacting the preparation process and how it would be included in the FSS agenda?

The replies given by Agnes Kalibata were vague and not satisfactory, as it seems that there is no certainty on the venue, no transparency about the composition process of the three committees, even though she welcomed the idea that the CFS Chair could be part of the Champions Group and generally underlined that inclusiveness is an important feature of the process. The CFS Chair made a summary of the meeting that you can find here.

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Update on CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meeting of 17 April and related information on CFS workplan for 2020.

On April 17th morning the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau held a regular meeting. The main part of the discussion was devoted to the agenda item related to the CFS workplan adjustments in light of the crisis. Many member states reaffirmed the need to ensure face-to-face policy negotiation processes for both workstreams on Food Systems and Nutrition and Agroecological and other innovative approaches, supporting CSM position. Otherwise, some country representatives asked for establishing legal and binding rules for virtual negotiations if they should be needed.



CSM has been arguing to change the rhythm of the ongoing policy processes to ensure inclusiveness, transparency and meaningful participation of the constituencies most affected and most contributing to food security and nutrition to the ongoing policy processes. The urgency and priority at the moment relies in the elaboration of a global policy response to the crisis. Please find here CSM contributions to the meeting.

Other agenda items foreseen discussions on: a) Theme for the CFS 47th Plenary Session; b) Proposal for a final drafting of the report for CFS 47; c) Budget updates; d) CFS Workstream and activities updates.

The meeting also included a brief exchange moment on the use and application of the VGGT and RAI, and the work done by FAO and IFAD on fostering the use and application of this policy outcomes. This CFS Chair initiative was welcomed by the CSM and will become a periodic moment of exchange during CFS Advisory and Bureau meetings.

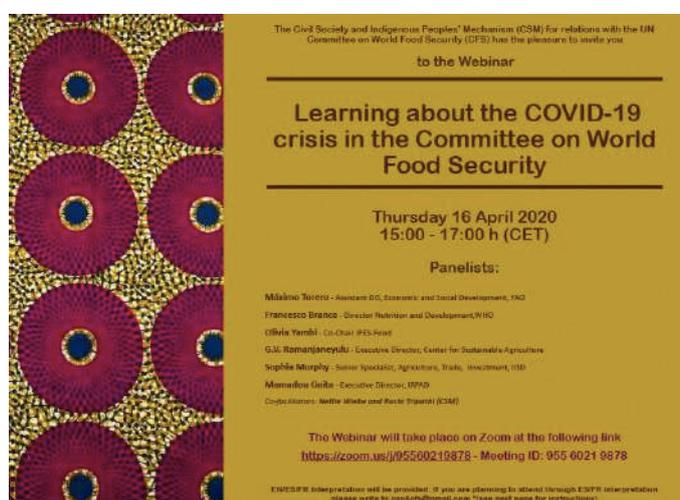
CSM also noticed that in the Bureau meeting agenda that took place on the 17th afternoon, Bureau members were called to take a decision on the composition of the Advisory Group. The CSM Youth Working Group therefore requested the CFS Chair to address this item under Any Other Business in the Advisory Group and Bureau meeting. They have read a letter to clarify to Bureau members their position on the Youth Council request to have a seat in the AG. The Youth Council at the moment does not include CSM constituencies and its composed by youth organizations that have been participating to CFS through the PSM.

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Update on CSM Webinar “Learning about the Covid crisis in the Committee on World Food Security” on 16 April 2020.

On April 16 the CSM decided to organize a webinar titled “Learning about the Covid crisis in the Committee on World Food Security”. The webinar was a success and was attended by more than 120 participants. You can access to the recorded webinar here!

The CFS can count on its own High-Level Panel of Experts and, importantly, on the data collection and knowledge generating activities of the RBAs, FAO in particular. At the same time, through the multiple constituencies that comprise it, the CFS has unprecedented



access to the evidence and proposals of the most vulnerable, who are also responsible for the bulk of food production in the world. CSM thinks that these insights and perceptions together can help us to learn lessons regarding what makes food systems resilient and what normative process needs to be engaged to work towards inclusive, equitable and sustainable food systems.

The webinar addressed the impact of COVID-19 on food systems and policy responses to it. The panel comprises of speakers from international organizations

and the academic and research world, from different regions, and followed by an interactive debate with CFS members and participants.

Update on CFS Food Systems and Nutrition policy process

A Virtual OEWG meeting on Food Systems and Nutrition took place on 14 April 2020. This was the last meeting of the OEWG Chair Liliane Ortega from Switzerland and a new OEWG Chair has been appointed by the Bureau of the 17 April: Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen from The Netherlands.

The outgoing OEWG Chair presented the latest version of the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSyN) released in March. The translation in all UN languages was made available on April 8th. During this meeting the OEWG members had the opportunity to share views on the document, highlighting the main elements they support, as well as flag issues on which they have a divergent opinion. This meeting was also intended to give indications to the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau about the way forward and possible adjustments to the work plan on this workstream, which was

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originally expected, before COVID-19 pandemic, to be concluded after two rounds of presentational negotiations in May and July, at the upcoming CFS 47th Plenary Session.

CSM made an urgent appeal to reassess the timeline in order to postpone negotiations. Food producers as well as agricultural workers, Indigenous peoples, urban food insecure and consumers and other CSM constituencies are overwhelmed by the crisis, and this should not exclude them from CFS processes and online procedures. The most appropriate role for the CFS in this moment is the response to the crisis. COVID crisis is exposing the shortcoming of policies, and this has to be reflected in the Guidelines, otherwise the Guidelines will lose relevance before they are even adopted.



Crisis showed fragility of food systems and the vulnerability of global value chains. The holistic systemic understanding of nutrition that was raised during CFS regional consultations is not reflected in the current draft. CSM made clear that nutrition is not the only outcome of food systems. The CFS Guidelines need to re-consider nutrition as a critical space of political coherence between health, food, livelihood, ecology and cultural appropriateness.



CSM also underlined that the Guidelines shifted from healthy and sustainable diets to a focus of nutritious food, which is a more industry-friendly concept. The crisis has exposed the centrality of public services and the Guidelines should recognize public goods. Finally, CSM also stressed the lack of human rights approach and other rights frameworks, no references to right of food, health, workers, peasants, women, indigenous peoples and the need to reaffirm the centrality of human rights.

During the meeting very, few interventions addressed the process issue. Many interventions included concerns on how the COVID crisis would be included in the document and stressed the need of resilient food systems. Also, many linked again the CFS Food Systems Guideline process to the UN SGs Food Systems Summit 2021. You can find [here](#) the OEWG Chair's Summary of the meeting.

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A written letter of the new OEWG Chair clarified that OEWG participants are invited to send written comments on the current draft by May 11. The policy negotiations originally planned for the second week of May will not be conducted, but virtual OEWG meetings will be scheduled for end of May for discussion.

Update on CFS Agroecology and other innovations policy process



The zero draft of the Policy Recommendation on Agroecological and other innovative approaches was released on March 18th and a virtual OEWG meeting was convened by the Rapporteur on 14 April 2020. The meeting had two main focuses: from one side, to present the Zero draft of the policy recommendations on Agroecological and other innovative approaches and to present an overview of the written comments received after its release; on the other side, the meeting offered a space to discuss

implications of Covid-19 on policy recommendations' content and process.

The CSM Agroecology Working Group raised concerns in terms of process by aligning its statements with the ones delivered during the OEWG on Food Systems and Nutrition and the CFS Advisory Group and Bureau meeting. CSM elaborations on the content are captured in the written comments submitted at the end of March. You can find here the Rapporteur's Summary of the meeting. As a follow-up to the last Open Meeting on 14 April and to the 17 April Bureau meeting, the Rapporteur shared a proposal of Concept Note and timeline for informal virtual discussions on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches, The purpose of such informal discussions is to address a number of outstanding issues in order to develop a First Draft which articulates convergence among CFS stakeholders. Prior to each informal meeting, a background document will be shared in order to facilitate dialogue on the specific issue(s) to be discussed. These efforts intense to ensure that the First Draft of the Policy Recommendations would be considered an adequate starting point for negotiation.

Updates on CFS monitoring process of the Framework for Action and postponement of deadline for the submission's inputs and survey

The deadline for the submission of inputs for the CFS monitoring process of the Framework for Action was postponed to the 30th of April. Due to the coronavirus outbreak in Italy, CSM couldn't organize the global consultation in Rome on this theme, originally foreseen at the beginning of March. The aim of the meeting was to gather a recompilation of CSM experience to prepare the CSM independent report to monitor the implementation of the FFA in preparation of the GTE. The Monitoring Working Group jointly with the Protracted Crisis Working Group have nevertheless held a series of virtual calls to gather

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such inputs and finalize the drafting of a CSM survey to feed the CSM autonomous monitoring report on this policy outcome.

CSM Contribution to the HLPE online consultation on its upcoming report on Global Narrative towards Agenda 2030

The CSM has submitted on February 23rd its written contributions to the HLPE online consultation on the zero draft of the Report “Food security and nutrition: building a global narrative towards 2030”. The HLPE Report is expected to be launched on June 17th

