

## Workstreams and Activities Updates

**\*\*\*These updates cover the period since the 21 May 2021 CFS Bureau Meeting\*\*\***

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### **1. CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSN)**

The Secretariat continues to engage with a variety of partners to promote the uptake and utilization of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSN).

As part of this effort, a public webinar was organized on 8 June 2021 in the context of WHO Health Talks. The event - which was attended by more than 150 people - was intended to raise awareness about the CFS, its Voluntary Guidelines, substantive content with particular attention on the health dimension, and priority areas and actions to advance public health in the context of sustainable food systems. The discussion also focused on how these Guidelines could represent a useful tool in the hands of policymakers and development partners, and how the Guidelines can be used at regional, country, and local levels. The Concept note, agenda, recording of the meeting and other relevant information regarding the webinar are available in the [“Events” Section](#) of the CFS website as well as on this [WHO dedicated webpage](#).

A similar event on the Voluntary Guidelines has been organized in conjunction with the World Bank on 16 June, 13:30-15:00 (CET). An invitation to the event has been sent to CFS stakeholders including Bureau members and the Advisory Group.

A promotional video on the Voluntary Guidelines and other communication materials are being developed and will be shared with all CFS stakeholders in the coming weeks.

### **2. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

#### **Open Ended Working Group (OEWG)**

The OEWG meeting on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment, initially scheduled on 25 May, was postponed to 5 July to accommodate final negotiations of the CFS Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches, per decisions of the Bureau.

The objective of the OEWG meeting is to discuss version 2 of the Zero Draft of the *CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition*, and agree on the final version of the Zero Draft. The agenda of the meeting can be downloaded from the [working space of the CFS website](#). The meeting will be webcast and interpreted in FAO's six languages.

The Zero Draft aims to frame discussions around proposed policy areas to inform the preparation of the First Draft of the Guidelines at the end of the year following regional consultations. The process will include six regional consultations between September and November 2021 and an electronic consultation (September 2021) via FAO's Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition. The 5 July meeting will focus primarily on Parts 2 and 3 of

the Zero Draft. The text in Parts 2 and 3 presents initial ideas on issues/topics to be considered and discussed during regional consultations. It should not be considered as draft recommendations and therefore is not expected to be negotiated.

All comments received by the 8 June deadline (and afterwards to the extent feasible) on Version 1 of the Zero Draft will be incorporated into a revised version of the document (Version 2) which will be available in English two weeks before the 5 July meeting and in other languages as soon as available. All comments received are being posted on the [working space of the CFS website](#).

### Regional consultations

The dates and format of the regional and electronic consultations, which will be held in September-November 2021 to discuss the Zero Draft, are being finalized. The consultations will be held virtually, taking into account the time differences in countries of the same region and limitations of the virtual format.

### 3. Data Workstream

CFS-HLPE Steering Committee selected a Team Leader for the CFS-HLPE Report #17 on data systems and analysis. A Technical Task Team, composed of interested (ad hoc) Advisory Group members, has been formed to organize an intersessional public event planned for 1 July 2021.

### 4. Monitoring

#### **a) *Global Thematic Event at CFS 50 in October 2022 on the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems***

As agreed by Plenary at CFS 44 (CFS 2017/44/11), the Committee agreed to hold a Global Thematic Event (GTE) on *the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems* (CFS RAI) in October 2022, which follows previous GTEs held during CFS 45 and 47, to share experiences and take stock of the use and application of the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, and the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crisis, respectively.

The objective of the 2022 GTE will be to take stock of the use and application of *the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems* endorsed in 2014.

As per standard timing and practice, a public call for inputs will be issued during the summer of 2021, and will remain open until April 2022. The inputs received will be summarized by the CFS Secretariat into a session document made available for delegates to CFS 50, and will serve to inform the substantive debate on this topic.

#### **b) *CFS Policy Recommendations on Water and Climate Change for FSN***

A call for experiences in the use and application of two sets of CFS policy recommendations on climate change and water in the context of food security and nutrition, via FAO's FSN Forum ([http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/discussions/CFS\\_climate\\_change\\_water](http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/discussions/CFS_climate_change_water)),

closed on 15 June 2021. The inputs will inform a monitoring event to be held at CFS 49 Plenary Session in October 2021.

## 5. CFS 48

The Forty-eighth (Special) Session of CFS (CFS 48) was held on 4 June 2021 to endorse the [CFS Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches](#). The virtual session was attended by delegates from 102 Members of the Committee; 5 non-Member States of the Committee, and by representatives from: 10 United Nations Agencies and Bodies; 70 Civil society organizations; 2 International agricultural research organizations; 1 International financial institution; 33 Private sector associations and private philanthropic foundations; and 7 Observers.

In total, over 600 delegates registered for the Plenary including 4 Ministers and 2 Vice-Ministers. Among the Plenaries highlights was a [video address by the President of Sri Lanka](#). Other notable speakers included FAO Director-General, IFAD Vice President, WFP Deputy Executive Director and Chair of HLPE Steering Committee. Members and other CFS stakeholders also delivered their statement. All speeches, statements and presentations are available on [speeches and statements section](#) of CFS 48 webpage.

In addition, 10 side events were organized on the margins of CFS 48. Cumulatively attended by over 2,000 participants, the side events focused on a broad range of topics that added colour to the Plenary's discussion. The full list of the side events and summaries of the discussions are available on the [side events section](#) of the CFS 48 webpage along with links to recordings of all sessions and side events.

For more information on CFS 48, please visit the [CFS 48 webpage](#)

## 6. Chairperson's Outreach Activities

The Secretariat continued to support Chair's participation in numerous public events and meetings to advance knowledge of CFS, its multi-stakeholder model, and its policy products. Some of these engagements included:

- the UN Economic and Social Council, where the CFS Chair presented the final report of the CFS 47 Session;
- two side-events at CFS 48, where he spoke on the role of agroecology and other innovations in tackling the issues of food insecurity and malnutrition in a context of changing climate; and how to move from commitments to action on the use of the CFS policy recommendations on agroecological and other innovative approaches;
- the 11th meeting of the Global Alliance on Sustainable Livestock, where he promoted the CFS policy work relevant to the livestock sector;
- the annual meeting of the PSM;
- a workshop of UNFCCC to speak about CFS and its work around the issue of the impact of climate change on food security and nutrition; and
- meetings with some FAO Regional Groups.

CFS Chair also strengthened engagement in the Food Systems Summit's preparation, including his active participation in the Summit's Advisory Committee and two Independent Dialogues. CFS Chair issued an [Op-Ed](#) with the CFS HLPE Steering Committee Chair calling for strengthening of the CFS High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition.

## 7. HLPE Updates

- Report #16: "Promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems" will be launched on 5 July 2021. The Executive Summary of the report will be released in all 6 UN languages by then.
- The HLPE Steering Committee appointed Carlo Cafiero as Project Team Leader for report #17 on "Data collection and analysis tools for food security and nutrition". Selection of the rest of the team is underway.
- The Successful side-event at CFS 48 has paved the way for the update of the COVID-19 issues paper to be released in September 2021 and translated in all languages for CFS 49.

## 8. Communications and Outreach

The Secretariat continues to drive the positioning of CFS and its products through multiple channels including supporting the staging of bespoke events; production, dissemination and amplification of content and messages on multiple channels including the website and social media; consistent branding of CFS products and processes; and engagement with partners and stakeholders. Some of the notable engagements in the period include:

- Organizing CFS 48 and related side events.
- Communications work to promote the newly endorsed [CFS Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches](#).
- Development of the joint OpEd by CFS Chair, HLPE Chair and HLPE Steering Committee member calling on the UN Food Systems to Strengthen HLPE and CFS instead of creating another science-policy platform on FSN. [The OpEd was published by Devex](#).
- Organizing events with partners including WHO, World Bank and WTO to promote the uptake of CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition.
- Engagement with UNFSS including moderating their recent Civil Society Public Forum.
- Twitter engagement including through a Twitter Chat with GAFSP on promoting gender equality within food systems using CFS VGFSN.