

THIRTIETH REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

**Gyeongju, Republic of Korea
27 September – 1 October 2010**

Side Event on “ENHANCING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNANCE OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION: CAPITALIZING ON CFS REFORM”

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

Since 1974 the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) has served as an intergovernmental forum in the United Nations system for review and follow-up of policies concerning world food security. Over the last two years, the CFS has taken up the challenge to reform itself so that it can play its role as the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for a broad range of committed stakeholders to work together in a coordinated manner and in support of country-led processes in the area of food security and nutrition. In 2009, the CFS reform has received endorsements at the highest political level from the World Summit on Food Security and at the G8 L'Aquila Summit as well as during the FAO Conference.

The framework of the reformed CFS broadens participation and aims to:

- ✓ Give a voice to all stakeholders in the world food system
- ✓ Be inclusive and encourage an exchange of views and experiences
- ✓ Build on empirical evidence and scientific analysis
- ✓ Monitor the effectiveness of actions towards reducing hunger

From a regional perspective the new CFS presents two challenges. The first is for each region to decide how the reformed CFS can advance food security and nutrition by establishing or strengthening multi-disciplinary mechanisms based on a multistakeholder partnership. The second is to consider how regional and sub-regional food security structures can be linked coherently in order to be part of CFS.

Building consensus on regional mechanisms for food security and nutrition governance

The role of FAO Regional Conferences in the reformed CFS has been included as discussion item in the agendas of all regional conferences.

The state of debate presents both commonalities and differences across regions where FAO regional conferences have been held so far this year (Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean). Government and other stakeholder representatives expressed enthusiasm to engage in partnerships and develop implementation initiatives for achieving sustainable development. It was emphasized that participation in and integration of multi-stakeholder dialogue processes are key. While all regions welcomed and supported the CFS process and agreed on a multistakeholder process towards food security and nutrition strategies based on existing structures, differences can be found in the institutional mechanisms chosen to operationalize such linkages between each region and the CFS.

In the case of Latin America and the Caribbean, it was suggested that the Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean 2025 Initiative could serve for communication between the region and the Committee on World Food Security during intersessional periods, providing the basis for a process of participation of different regional stakeholders within the reformed Committee, reflecting the multisectoral nature and plurality of important actors. It would also serve as an important channel of communication to involve the more vulnerable countries with major food insecurity problems, especially the small island states of the Caribbean.

In the case of Africa, the proposal for the creation of a regional ad hoc steering group in support of the CFS reform building on existing structures was welcomed in principle. It was decided to start through

the standing Chair of the Regional Conference for Africa who would initiate the process in collaboration with voluntary contributions from Member States.

Europe welcomed the new opportunities for regional level consultations but stressed that there was no need to create new and parallel structures to facilitate this dialogue. However, it took note of the proposal of the Chair of the Working Party on Women and the Family in Rural Development to serve as a focal point between the Regional Conference and the CFS.

Member States in the Asia and Pacific region may therefore choose to discuss and agree on a concrete proposal that will lay the foundations for a regular and meaningful interaction with the CFS. The wealth of successful experience in enabling and promoting multi-stakeholder participation and facilitating partnerships in sustainable development both at national and regional level represent an excellent starting point for discussion. Sharing innovations and good practices on the approaches to sustainable and inclusive food security and nutrition can be considered a constructive step towards defining an institutional mechanism to operationalize linkages between the region and the CFS.

Objectives:

- To identify institutional mechanisms that will facilitate the regional implementation of the CFS Reform
- To raise awareness and build consensus among APRC participants on the timeliness, feasibility and need for a regionalized process of consultation and reporting, including development of a regionalized CFS mechanism as a multi-stakeholder, multi-disciplinary process

Outputs:

- Presentation of case studies/lessons learned on multi-stakeholder partnerships for food security, and the network among current initiatives addressing food insecurity and poverty challenges
- Informal proposals for elements of a regional action plan to be presented at the Ministerial Segment during the discussion on the CFS item
- Chairperson's Summary of the side event

Participants:

Around 100-150 participants including representatives of senior level delegations from Governments in Asia and the Pacific, international development organizations, regional bodies (ASEAN, SAARC, others), donors, private sector, national, regional and international non-governmental and civil society organizations are expected to attend.

Structure:

The Panelists from selected institutions will summarize and highlight key elements drawing on case studies and lessons learned. They will showcase best practices in enabling and promoting multi-stakeholder participation in institutions and mechanisms at national and regional level contributing to food security and sustainable development. These experiences constitute inspiration for the region and can serve as building blocks as an inventory of best practice and mechanisms to promote within the CFS. In addition, there will be interventions by the participants from the floor representing key stakeholder regionally. Some speakers may be encouraged to take the floor to ensure a range of examples and perspectives. This will be part of an open debate where participants from the floor will have an opportunity to contribute their own experience, provide comments and suggestions. The facilitator will catalyze discussion and distinguish the emerging questions on major challenges and solutions to food security.

Guidelines for panelists and resource persons will be prepared with a view of having a facilitator engaging participants to have a vibrant and interactive discussion.

Date and duration:

The side event will be the afternoon of Wednesday, 29 September 2010, from 14:45 to 16:45 at the venue for the FAO Regional Conference.