



# FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

**Thirty-sixth session**

**19-21 October 2020<sup>1</sup>**

**The Committee on World Food Security (CFS): Driving Transformation  
Toward Sustainable Food Systems and Healthy Diets**

**Special Event - 20 October de 2020 (12.30-13.30)**

**Concept Note**

## Abstract

The CFS event will highlight the relevance of the global policy work and inclusive approach of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to advance food security and nutrition. The event will focus in particular on the country level impact of the CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and food systems (CFS RAI) adopted in 2014 and the forthcoming Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSyN) expected to be endorsed in February 2021. Participants will gain a clear understanding of the CFS, its core policy products and the need for multistakeholder, cross-sectoral and whole-of-government approaches to transform the global food system and advance food security and nutrition globally.

## Background

As recognized by the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Summit 2019<sup>2</sup>, there is an urgent need to accelerate action by all stakeholders at all levels to fulfil the vision and goals of the 2030 Agenda. According to the 2020 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report<sup>3</sup>, 690 million people are hungry (8.9 percent of the world's population – up by 10 million people in one year and by nearly 60 million in five years). If recent trends continue, the number of people affected by hunger will surpass 840 million by 2030. Although Africa is where the highest levels of total food insecurity are observed, it is in Latin America and the Caribbean where food insecurity is rising the fastest: it increased from 22.9

<sup>1</sup> Rescheduled from 27-29 April 2020, Managua, Nicaragua.

<sup>2</sup> Political Declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (A/HLPF/2019/L.1)

<sup>3</sup> SOFI 2020 Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/ca9692en/online/ca9692en.html>

percent in 2014 to 31.7 percent in 2019, due to a sharp rise in South America. The SOFI report also warns about the increase in obesity (particularly among children under 5), as well as about the cost of a healthy diet which, with an average value of USD 3.98 per day per person, is the highest in the world. This value is 3.3 times more expensive than what a person below the poverty line can spend on food and 34 percent more expensive than the global average. The CFS Guidelines will address the complex links between under-nutrition, obesity, and environmental sustainability in our current food systems, and recommend policy convergence in the most important areas associated with food and health, including in pandemics. Partnering across borders, across sectors, and with the private sector and civil society is essential to such convergence and to effective outcomes.

## Concept

During this 60-minute virtual event, the CFS Chairperson (Thailand) will be joined by regional policy-makers and experts to address the ongoing work of the CFS. Specifically, they will address key aspects of the draft CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition with a specific focus on its relevance to regional governments, the importance of cross-sectoral policy coordination, and “uptake” of the Guidelines by regional leaders once adopted at CFS 47.

By attending this CFS-organized special event, participants will be able to:

- Identify the CFS, its roles, and the relevance of its products to the Latin America/Caribbean region;
- Understand how the CFS draft Voluntary Guidelines (VG's) on Food Systems and Nutrition can contribute to regional, national, and local food security strategies;
- Recognize the urgency of collective action to effectively use CFS VG's on Food Systems and Nutrition (and other major CFS products) to achieve SDG-2 targets.

## Tentative programme

- Mr. Thanawat Tiensin, CFS Chairperson and Permanent Representative of Thailand to the Rome-based Agencies
- Mr Qu Dongyu, Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- Senator Jorge Pizarro, President of the Parliament of Latin America and the Caribbean (PARLATINO) (TBC)
- Marisa Macari, *El Poder del Consumidor*, Mexico - Representative of the CFS Civil Society Mechanism
- Maria Nelly Rivas, Cargill, Representative of the CFS Private Sector Mechanism