

**Possible measures for consultation with NGOs/CSOs in the work of the CoC-IEE
(CoC-IEE Working Groups I, II and III meeting)**

1. Based on guidance provided by the CoC-IEE on 21 January 2009, proposals for possible measures have been prepared. Precedents for consultation with NGOs/CSOs in FAO are considered in the light of relevant rules and procedures with a view to securing a transparent process.
2. The precedents for INGO participation in FAO's technical meetings and governing bodies demonstrate the positive role of INGOs in exchanging information, providing inputs at consultations and assisting in implementation in areas of FAO mandate such as the application of international instruments and programmes with outreach at the national, regional and global levels. Examples include the World Food Summit, World Food Summit:*five years later*, the Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security and the CFS Special Session assessing progress in achieving the WFS Goals. A new space for dialogue and interaction amongst Rome-based Agencies and INGOs/CSOs offered under the IAAH adds credibility to FAO's will and its capacity to facilitate various kinds of partnerships and broad coalitions at global and country levels.
3. Principles of possible NGO/CSO consultation: The following principles were applied regarding possible NGO/CSO consultation in the work of the CoC-IEE:
 - a. Soliciting NGO/CSO views would be useful on relevant areas given their importance to food and agriculture (including forestry and fisheries). For some NGO/sCSOs their members – farmers, forest users, fishers, herders and rural workers - are directly involved in food and agriculture while other NGOs/CSOs provide relevant support;
 - b. The eligible NGOs/CSOs are international only;
 - c. International NGOs/CSOs (INGOs) may be invited to relevant sessions of the CoC-IEE as observers;
 - d. INGOs cannot participate in the decision-making of the CoC-IEE;
 - e. INGOs will not participate in the Working Group sessions.
4. Modalities of INGO consultation: In order to provide INGOs input for Members' consideration as constructive and relevant contributions to FAO reform, modalities in accordance with rules and procedures, capitalizing on experience and at lowest cost in human and financial resources are proposed. The proposals are complementary. These are:
 - a. Presentation of INGO written remarks on relevant areas for FAO renewal:
 - INGOs can access information available to the general public through the CoC-IEE website. They would be invited to provide brief papers summarizing their views and offering recommendations on FAO reform through the CoC-IEE web-site, supplemented by a consultative process through INGO focal points¹ responsible for collecting and voicing their collective concerns.

¹ The focal points would serve as the spokespersons for major constituencies in civil society working on food and agriculture issues. This would include the consultative mechanisms specific to FAO – the Group of International NGOs with Formal Status at FAO, the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty (IPC) – and consultation with the two global

- The FAO unit responsible for cooperation with civil society would facilitate participation of INGO focal points on food and agriculture issues.
- The FAO unit responsible for cooperation with civil society would liaise with INGO focal points to ensure wide access to the information on the website, manage the timing of their inputs, collect their proposed inputs and provide it to the CoC-IEE Secretariat in a timely manner.
- Costs of approximately US\$20,000 would include a part-time consultant for the web-site and interface with INGO focal points, communication, preparation of papers and translation of the summary papers for the period until the 136th Session of the FAO Council (15-19 June 2009).

b. Participation of INGOs at CoC-IEE sessions:

- INGO representatives resident in or on travel (at their own expense) to Rome could be provided the opportunity to attend relevant CoC-IEE sessions.
- The CoC-IEE would identify the relevant session or sessions for INGO participation.
- In order to increase regional input, videoconference facilities would be used as possible to facilitate participation of INGOs unable to travel to Rome.
- The FAO unit responsible for cooperation with civil society would prepare a summary record of discussions to the CoC-IEE.
- Costs of approximately \$5,000 per session would cover a short-term consultant to support preparation and reporting on the session and the videoconference facilities.

5) The Chair of the CoC-IEE may informally meet INGOs on a periodic basis in the course of 2009.

Annex

Rules and practices for participation of NGOs/CSOs in FAO fora

1. Definitions generally followed in FAO

- NGOs are all not-for-profit actors who are not governmental and inter-governmental, providing services and mobilizing public opinion. Member organizations are not included.
- CSOs are organizations where citizens and social movements organize themselves around shared objectives, constituencies and thematic interests. These include both NGOs and popular organizations.
- NGOs/CSOs include: (i) rural and urban people's organizations, such as farmers' organizations, consumer organizations; (ii) development NGOs; (iii) humanitarian NGOs; (iv) advocacy NGOs; (v) international NGOs and NGO networks; (vi) professional associations and academic/research institutions; (vii) agricultural trade unions; and (viii) private sector associations.

2. Eligibility for participation in FAO fora

In light of FAO's rules and practices, only NGOs/CSOs that are international in scope, structure and activities are eligible to participate in FAO fora.

- The first category includes organizations with formal relations with FAO. These formal relations are of three types: consultative status approved by the Conference; specialized consultative status and liaison status granted by the Director-General. Such organizations can attend FAO forums as observers and enjoy a number of rights defined in the Basic Texts.
- The second category of international NGOs/CSOs may be invited to FAO fora as observers, if they meet one or more of the following criteria, in the light of past practice:
 1. knowledge/experience in areas related to food security and agricultural development;
 2. experience in policy advocacy and public information related to food and agricultural development issues;
 3. normative/operational cooperation with FAO in areas of work related to food security and agricultural development;
 4. participation in preparatory activities.

3. Principles for participation

- International NGOs/CSOs attend FAO fora, such as sessions of Governing Bodies and technical committees.
- Participation as observers only.

- International NGOs/CSOs cannot participate in decision-making which is a matter for Members only.
- Their participation aims at exchanging information and inputs and at consultation.

4. Review of rules and practices

Some organizations of the United Nations system have reviewed their rules and practices regarding participation of non-governmental organizations in their work. A similar process might be initiated in FAO in future, taking into account however current priorities.