



# COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

**Forty-sixth Session**  
***"Making a Difference in Food Security and Nutrition"***

**Rome, Italy, 14-18 October 2019**

**URBANIZATION, RURAL TRANSFORMATION AND IMPLICATIONS  
FOR FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION: SUMMARY OF THE  
2018-19 INTERSESSIONAL EVENTS**

1. At CFS 44, the Committee agreed to continue exploring the theme of “Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security and nutrition” by focusing on two areas identified by its Members and Participants as requiring further attention:
  - a) **The food security and nutrition impact of urbanization and rural transformation on lower income groups; and**
  - b) **Promoting youth and women’s engagement and employment in food systems across the rural-urban continuum.**
2. To this end, two thematic intersessional events took place in November 2018 and February 2019 with a view to assess the feasibility of working towards policy convergence to support governments and other stakeholders at the national and local level in addressing food security and nutrition within the context of changing rural-urban dynamics.
3. The two thematic events built on the outcomes of the work carried out by CFS in 2016 through the Forum on Urbanization, Rural Transformation and Implications for Food Security and Nutrition, and the work of the OEWG in 2017 to compile experiences and effective policy approaches in addressing food security and nutrition in the context of changing rural-urban dynamics. They were organized with the support of the Technical Task Team set up in 2016 made up of representative from FAO, WFP, UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN), UN-Habitat, CFS Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) and CFS Private Sector Mechanism (PSM). It also benefitted from the inputs of

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the HLPE Chair, Patrick Caron, through his participation as keynote speaker. The CSM and PSM played a lead role in the organization of the event on youth and women.

4. During the events a wide variety of experiences related to the changing dynamics of urbanization and rural transformation were presented and discussed by CFS Members and Participants (see Agendas in Annex). Overall, these highlighted a policy gap and a call for action in terms of seeing global frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda translated into effective policies at the national, subnational and territorial levels. The experiences and approaches shared during the events also highlighted the need for adaptation and mitigation strategies that will smoothen the ongoing transitions and ensure, in line with Agenda 2030, that no one is left behind.

5. The experiences that were presented, the key messages that were shared and the comments that were made during the events can be synthesized in the following points:

- i) The degradation of rural areas characterized by poor infrastructure and low access to services and education – especially by youth and women - was highlighted as a key driver for the exodus towards urban areas. As a result, the “renaissance” of rural areas through appropriate policies and investment in infrastructure was stressed as a high priority. The need to reform the basic education system to include food and agriculture in school curricula was mentioned as key to making youth aware of the potential of agriculture and food systems as viable employment options. Likewise, the need for funding and training to support urban dwellers who want to go back to rural communities was emphasized;
- ii) The accelerated urbanization trends and subsequent difficulties faced by urban areas in delivering decent jobs, sustainable livelihoods and healthy diets for all, were highlighted as a critical development challenge requiring an innovative, comprehensive, interdisciplinary and inter-institutional approach. Successful experiences by local governments (Sao Paulo, Toronto) were presented, also as part of the wider Milan Urban Food Policy Pact initiative;
- iii) It was emphasized that neither urban nor rural areas will prosper - nor food security and nutrition will be ensured - unless their interconnectedness is better understood and promoted through appropriate policies and investment;
- iv) The urgency of involving youth and women in the urbanization and rural transformation debate at the local, national and global level was mentioned as a high priority in light of the key role they are playing. Likewise, the centrality of local and regional governments in facilitating the dialogue between rural and urban actors was strongly emphasized;
- v) Respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights of women, including their equal participation in decision making was mentioned as pivotal to addressing food security and nutritional challenges across the rural-urban continuum;
- vi) Similarly, youth were perceived as deserving a targeted focus. The growing engagement of youth who want to be agents of change in their communities clearly emerged from the discussions. It was mentioned how it is often youth who are traveling between cities and rural areas for work and study and their key role in building greater connectivity was stressed. The need to develop the skills and talent of youth through training and mentorship both in agriculture and wider food systems was emphasized. Access to land and resources to foster youth’s own investment and engagement was also highlighted;

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- vii) Peer learning and knowledge exchange of successful experiences were suggested as effective strategies to inform and improve policy making. The importance of strengthening this lesson sharing dimension both within CFS and outside was reiterated;
  - viii) Territorial approaches were identified as an effective analytical and operational framework for understanding and addressing the complexity of the structural economic, cultural, social and spatial transformations currently taking place across the world. Their potential in ensuring synergies, and re-balancing inequalities between rural and urban areas, was also highlighted;
  - ix) The need to keep urbanization and rural transformation issues high on the global agenda in light of their relevance and implications for food security and nutrition was stressed, especially in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the New Urban Agenda and the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition;
  - x) The comparative advantage of CFS in providing a unique space for dialogue for both the rural and urban stakeholders was underlined.

## **The Food Security and Nutritional Impacts of Urbanization and Rural Transformation on Lower Income Groups**

**Monday 19 November 2018, 10:00 am – 17:30 pm, Red Room (FAO HQs)**

### **Summary**

#### **Opening remarks by Mr. Hans Hoogeveen**

Highlights and key messages:

- Only 11 years are left until 2030. We will not reach the objectives set-out in the 2030 Agenda, nor be able to operationalize the New Urban Agenda, unless programmes, policies and investments address the very important transformations that are shaping our rural and urban areas;
- The work carried out by CFS through this thematic workstream, and also highlighted in the second HLPE report on critical and emerging issues, lay the foundations for our discussions today and at the next event;
- The programme today is focused on learning from experiences, which is key to better understanding how urbanization and rural transformations are impacting the food security and nutrition of lower income groups.

#### **Framing the Issue: addressing inequalities across the rural-urban continuum**

Highlights and key messages:

- Rural areas are being left behind and, as a result, the majority of the population now lives in urban areas. These figures are expected to rise;
- The livelihoods of the majority of families around the world is based on farming and 85% of the global hungry live in rural areas: CFS has an important role to play in highlighting the specific needs of the rural context, which is often overlooked at the UN level;
- Investment in infrastructure, as well as access to education, credit and markets, are among the key factors contributing to promoting healthy, vibrant rural communities. Policy guidance can help drive and expedite this process;
- Vulnerabilities differ in rural and urban areas but they are linked as urban flows are often stimulated by poverty in rural areas;
- Gender inequalities are particularly acute in the rural context. Cultural aspects play an important role as rural societies are often associated with conservatism;
- We need to move beyond the rural-urban dichotomy towards a new social pact that is based on rural-urban linkages. Rural areas and urban areas need each other and they must be linked in order to thrive;
- Territorial approaches can be a way to build on local capacities and the ability of people to decide for themselves, creating the conditions for intersectoral policies;
- Scaling up may not prove to be an effective approach in a context where transformations may evolve differently.

#### **Governance, access to natural resources, services and infrastructure**

Highlights and key messages:

- The problem of lower income groups being negatively impacted by urbanization and rural transformation can be described as an issue of “poor transitions”. There is a need for both adaptation and mitigation strategies to smoothen the ongoing transitions and also address the structural causes of inequalities, both within and between rural and urban areas;

- Greater policy integration is needed both horizontally (bringing together different sectors and different stakeholders) and vertically (bringing together actors at local, national and international levels);
- Very few countries have developed food policy so far and this is clearly a gap that needs to be addressed;
- Neither urban nor rural areas will prosper - nor will food security and nutrition be ensured - unless their interconnectedness is better understood and promoted through appropriate policies and investment;
- The setting forth of guiding principles and a framework for action to strengthen urban-rural linkages could help provide guidance to national and local governments, civil society and the private sector;
- Local governments have a central and growing role as emerging actors in the food security and nutrition governance arena and multilateral institutions can concretely support local actors;
- Small and medium urban centres have potential in developing inclusive food systems and play a key role in rural-urban linkages, offering – among others - opportunities for rural producers to access markets. We need to develop national and subnational policies that are able to create functional territories.

### **Changing Food Systems and Healthy Diets**

- Evidence shows that diets are changing rapidly and that they are the number one risk factor for morbidity, outstripping alcohol, drugs and air pollution;
- Evidence also shows that there is an urban bias: rural places have been forgotten and they have the highest numbers of both undernutrition and malnutrition;
- Smallholders play an essential role in injecting nutrients into our diets and many of the solutions to food insecurity and malnutrition will be found along the rural-urban continuum;
- The food insecure and malnourished in both urban and rural areas lack social safety nets and their voice is often unheard;
- Municipalities and local governments are increasingly involved in food systems governance and their emerging role should be further expanded;
- There are examples of urban legal frameworks which embed food security and nutrition in territorial planning (e.g. 2016 law establishing that all of Sao Paulo's school feeding programmes be sourced with organic food);
- Young people are very engaged in the current debate around sustainable food systems and need to have more opportunities to participate

## **Promoting youth and women engagement and employment in food systems across the rural-urban continuum**

**Monday 4 February 2019, 9:30 am – 17:00 pm, Green Room (FAO HQs)**

### **Summary**

#### **Opening remarks by the Mr. Hans Hoogeveen**

Highlights and key messages:

- Achieving the SDGs will not be possible if we continue implementing the same policies we have had in the past decades: policies need to anticipate transitions to make them smoother and mitigate the negative impacts;
- Farming, even in the most developed countries, is not perceived as an attractive or viable option and this is endangering the future of food production;
- Today we will look at the transformations along the rural-urban continuum from the perspective of youth and women.

#### **How can food systems and enhanced rural-urban linkages provide more and better jobs for youth and women?**

Highlights and key messages:

- Generally speaking, both producers (trapped in poverty) and consumers (food of poor nutritional quality) suffer and there is no dialogue between them. Funding and technological investment goes to the intermediate levels;
- Rural areas in the global south often lack infrastructure (e.g. water, electricity) and basic social services (e.g. education, health care). Even though they are perceived as providing a healthy environment and a (sometimes conservative) social structure, they are often times perceived as “provincial”. Many youth in rural areas (in particular with some degree of education) see the poverty of their parents and leave. Those who stay tend to have no education and no access to training;
- Youth migrate to peri-urban areas primarily to seek jobs and services. Many of them engage in fruit and vegetable production, as urban consumers provide a market, or find small jobs (quick income generation, usually in the informal sector) and social services. They eventually return to their village, in particular when they age;
- In many parts of the world (e.g. Africa) rural urban linkages at household level remain very strong resulting in an increasing hybridization of lifestyles;
- Education and training are a major problem. Basic education does not mention agriculture. And as tertiary education (presented in developed countries as a prerequisite for any professional support) is incompatible with farming, students are often obliged to leave and move to cities;
- Youth have a low status and limited say within families, farmers’ movements and society in general. They also have no access to training or funding;
- There are a lot of opportunities for young and female entrepreneurs, especially in food systems (niche products, agroecology, processing, distribution and catering, including in urban and peri-urban areas) and in particular in the informal sector. NGOs/CSOs/charities support promising practices but these remain small-scale and usually less visible. Governments are usually not involved and often provide limited, if any support to women and youth;

- In some cases/regions people increasingly want to leave cities and return to community lifestyles, but this is difficult;
- Young people – generation Z - are interested in local foods and climate change/sustainability issues but policies and food law (including related land tenure and food standards) are not adapted and need to be revisited/reformulated for increased relevance and coherence at local level;
- It is important to start from family agriculture, and encourage youth to look at food and agriculture and become aware of its potential. This should start with a reform of the basic education system to include more awareness of the important role and opportunities in food and agriculture;
- Governments should support youth and female entrepreneurship in both rural and urban areas and see how to make food systems sustainable and resilient. Training of youth and women is essential. Mentoring and funding platforms should be set up to help young people who are doing well to scale up. There is a need for responsible investment and public/private partnerships at local level and to embark beyond ministerial approaches;
- Peer learning and knowledge exchange of promising experiences are essential. These should be fed back into policies, tools and communication/training strategies. It is urgent to harmonize resources and initiatives and to support networks of actors, as well as concrete partnerships with other youth and women related processes;
- National and international levels are often driven by agribusiness and multinationals, and may end up undermining family farming. Local and regional governments (and cities) therefore have a key role to play and a dialogue between rural and urban actors must be established. Youth and women should be given space and a say at the local level and should gain a better understanding of relevant national and international processes and institutions (including FAO and CFS);
- Urbanization and Rural Transformation, and more generally urban-rural linkages, are key to the SDG process and provide a framework to bring together the different workstreams of CFS

## ANNEX

### **The Food Security and Nutritional Impacts of Urbanization and Rural Transformation on Lower Income Groups**

**Monday 19 November 2018, 10:00 am – 17:30 pm, Red Room (FAO HQs)**

Urbanization and rural transformation present both challenges and opportunities for urban and rural areas alike. The transformation of rural areas stimulated by interactions with urban centers can deliver positive impacts in terms of sustainability, as well as in terms of access to services and higher incomes. This transformation, however, can also result in certain areas being left behind and in creating pockets of poverty and obliging people to escape from their areas of origin in search of better living conditions.

How do inequalities differ in the rural and urban context? How are rural and urban areas connected and what role do the interconnections play in addressing inequalities? What are the advantages of a territorial approach to food security and nutrition? And what is the potential of food systems in supporting smoother transitions in a context of changing rural-urban dynamics? These are some of the key questions that, through an interactive format, will be discussed during this first intersessional event.

From a policy perspective, identifying vulnerabilities of groups and individuals, understanding how they vary in rural and urban areas and how they're likely to evolve in the context of ever-changing rural-urban dynamics, is essential to designing policies that address their needs. It is also fundamental to include these marginalized individuals and groups in the design and implementation strategies at local, national, regional and international levels.

A second event on Promoting youth and women engagement and employment in food systems across the rural-urban continuum, including linking producers to markets, will follow on 29 January 2019 in FAO.

Besides furthering CFS stakeholders' understanding of the interplay between food security, nutrition and rural-urban linkages, the intersessional events are also expected to facilitate a functional and effective link with the CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work planning process. Through this exercise CFS is expected to develop concrete proposals on how it sees its work on Urbanization and rural transformation going forward in a way that builds on and adds value to other ongoing initiatives at the global level, as well as other CFS workstreams.

Interpretation services will be provided in all UN official languages. The webcast can be followed on: <http://www.fao.org/webcast>

The event will build on the findings of the following CFS documents:

[CFS 44 2017: Addressing Food Security and Nutrition in the Context of Changing Rural-Urban Dynamics: Experiences and Effective Policy Approaches](#) (CFS 2017/44/6)

[CFS 43 2016: Urbanization, Rural Transformation and Implications for Food Security and Nutrition: Key Areas for Policy Attention and Possible Roles for CFS](#) (CFS 2016/43/11)



## AGENDA

10:00 – 10:15 **Opening remarks by the H.E. Hans Hoogeveen, Ambassador of the Netherlands to the Rome Based Agencies and Facilitator of the CFS workstream on Urbanization and Rural Transformation and implications on Food Security and Nutrition**

10:15 – 11:45 **Framing the Issue: addressing inequalities across the rural-urban continuum**

*Keynote by Patrick Caron, HLPE Chair*

*Discussants:*

- *Souad Mahmoud, World March of Women (Smallholder/women perspective)*
- *Margaret Munene, CEO of Palmhouse dairy (Private cooperative/small business perspective)*

Following an overview of the food security and nutrition challenges faced by lower income groups as a result of rural transformation and urbanization dynamics, this session will provide an opportunity for CFS stakeholders to listen to two different experiences on how these challenges are being met.

CFS stakeholders will be invited to share their experiences and engage in a dialogue with the discussants and keynote speaker.

11.45 – 13:00 **Governance, access to natural resources, services and infrastructure**

*Introduction Panagiotis Karfakis, Economist, FAO*

*Discussants:*

- *Gianluca Brunori, University of Pisa (Research perspective)*
- *Florence Egal, Consultant, UN-HABITAT (Guiding Principles on Urban Rural Linkages)*

This discussion will build on the findings of the opening session to delve deeper into issues pertaining to unequal/insecure access to natural resources, services and infrastructure by lower income groups as a result of growing urbanization and rural transformation. CFS stakeholders will have an opportunity to hear about the latest trends and research findings, as well as ongoing global processes such as the UN-HABITAT led initiative on developing Guiding Principles on Urban Rural Linkages in the context of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

CFS stakeholders will be invited to ask questions, share their perspectives and updates on additional research findings, as well as on other initiatives bringing together the rural and urban dimensions of food security and nutrition.

13:00 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30 – 15.45      **Changing Food Systems and Healthy Diets**

*Introduction by Jessica Fanzo, Team Leader, HLPE report on Nutrition and Food Systems*

*Discussants:*

- *Andre Luzzi, Urban Movements in Food and Nutrition Security - Sao Paulo (City perspective from the global south)*
- *Irene Onwona Amuzu, 4-H Youth Delegate (Young entrepreneurship perspective)*

This discussion will focus on the challenges related to securing access to diversified and nutritious products in the context of fast urbanization and changing food systems, as well as on the potential of food systems to address these challenges. CFS stakeholders will hear the perspective of a local government on how food systems can be repositioned from just supplying food to providing high quality diets for all. The youth/women perspective will also allow to connect to the main topic of the second intersessional event and touch upon the decent employment and income generation dimension of the changing food systems.

CFS stakeholders will be invited to share their perspectives/experiences and interact with the discussants.

15.45 – 16.00      **Response by Patrick Caron, HLPE Chair**

16:00 – 17:25      **Policy implications and possible roles for CFS going forward**

Open floor discussion co-moderated by Hans Hoogeveen and Technical Task Team members

17:25 – 17:30      **Wrap up and conclusions by H.E. Hans Hoogeveen**

## **Promoting youth and women engagement and employment in food systems across the rural-urban continuum**

**Monday 4 February 2019, 9:30 am – 17:00 pm, Green Room (FAO HQs)**

Over the next 15 years, it is estimated that about 1.6 billion people will reach working age in low and middle-income countries. How can food systems and enhanced rural-urban linkages provide more and better jobs for women and youth? What are the key driving factors and enabling conditions for food systems and enhanced rural-urban linkages to create employment and decent work? What is the role of small cities and rural towns in promoting women and youth employment in the food systems? And what is their role in linking producers to diverse and more equitable markets?

Inclusion of youth and women in the food system labor market will be paramount to achieving food security and nutrition for all. Following the first intersessional event on The Food Security and Nutritional Impacts of Urbanization and Rural Transformation on Lower Income Groups, through an interactive format, this event will focus on policy approaches that support employment opportunities, improved livelihoods and adequate working conditions for youth and women, across food systems and across the rural-urban continuum.

Besides furthering CFS stakeholders' understanding of the interplay between food security, nutrition and rural-urban linkages, the intersessional events organized under the workstream Urbanization and Rural transformation and implications for Food Security and Nutrition are also expected to facilitate a functional and effective link with the CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work planning process. Through this exercise, CFS is expected to develop concrete proposals on how it sees its work on urbanization and rural transformation going forward in a way that builds on and adds value to other ongoing initiatives at the global level, as well as other CFS workstreams.

Interpretation services will be provided in all UN official languages. The webcast can be followed on: <http://www.fao.org/webcast>

The event will build on the findings of the following CFS documents:

CFS 44 2017: Addressing Food Security and Nutrition in the Context of Changing Rural-Urban Dynamics: Experiences and Effective Policy Approaches (CFS 2017/44/6)

CFS 43 2016: Urbanization, Rural Transformation and Implications for Food Security and Nutrition: Key Areas for Policy Attention and Possible Roles for CFS (CFS 2016/43/11)

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## AGENDA

9:30 – 9:45 **Opening remarks by the H.E. Hans Hoogeveen, Ambassador of the Netherlands to the Rome Based Agencies and Facilitator of the CFS workstream on Urbanization and Rural Transformation and Implications on Food Security and Nutrition**

9:45 – 11:45 **How can food systems and enhanced rural-urban linkages provide more and better jobs for youth?**

- **Imelda Agondanou** – ROPPA (Network of Peasant Organizations and Agricultural Producers in West Africa)
- **Tori Okner** – ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability)
- **Nikki Chaudahary** – Chaudahary Agriculture Services

Moderated by: **Xander Beks** – i4Nature

This session will first focus on the aspects of rural and urban work and life that attract, or have potential to attract, young people in food systems jobs. CFS members and participants will be encouraged to comment on the key challenges and share their own experiences of fulfilling life and work along the rural-urban continuum. The focus will then expand to those actions needed by local and national governments to support youth engagement and employment in food systems in both rural and in urban areas.

11.45 – 12:30 **How can food systems and enhanced rural-urban linkages provide more and better jobs for women?**

- **Ruramiso Mashumba** – Mnandi Africa
- **Nzira Deus** – World March of Women
- **Diana Johnson** – City of Toronto

Moderated by: **Bianca Pomeranzi** – CEDAW expert

This session will start with presenting the challenges to women's employment across food systems in both urban and rural contexts. Speakers will respond to moderated questions on the constraints that inhibit women from pursuing employment in the food systems. CFS members and participants will also have the opportunity to address the same questions from their different perspectives.

12:30 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 15:15 **How can food systems and enhanced rural-urban linkages provide more and better jobs for women? (continued)**

Using the same format as in the morning session, speakers will share concrete examples of successful initiatives on how food systems and enhanced rural-urban linkages provide not only more but also higher quality jobs for women. CFS members and participants will engage in a facilitated Questions and Answers with a view to highlight the enabling conditions and success factors at the core of the experiences shared.

15.15 – 16.55 **Policy implications and possible roles for CFS going forward**

Open floor discussion co-moderated by H.E. Hans Hoogeveen and Technical Task Team members

This session will build on the key messages emerging from the two thematic sessions on youth and women to reflect on the role that CFS can play in light of its mandate and comparative advantage.

16:55 – 17:00 **Wrap up and conclusions by H.E. Hans Hoogeveen**