

STATEMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES ON THE OCCASION OF THE 49TH SESSION OF THE CFS

Agenda Item 6: Promoting Youth Engagement and Employment in Agriculture and Food Systems

delivered by: Ambassador Domingo Nolasco, Permanent Representative of the Philippines to UN Agencies based in Rome (FAO, WFP, IFAD)

October 13, 2021

1. Excellencies, the Philippines appreciates the work of the HLPE and its report on "Promoting Youth Engagement and Employment in Agriculture and Food Systems."

2. From this Report, we note the policy convergence process that will start with a dedicated and substantive discussion within the CFS Bureau and Advisory Group on how the youth can meaningfully engage in food security and nutrition-related policymaking, and that Advisory Group members will also be encouraged to invite representatives of their youth constituencies to provide inputs and share their perspectives and experiences.

3. We look forward to seeing an agreed set of CFS Policy Recommendations to be presented at CFS 50 in October of 2022 that has been generated from an inclusive process.

4. The Philippines wishes to share the following comments.

a) The Philippines recognizes the youth as agents of revolutionary change, given their dynamism, innovativeness, technology-savviness and their overflowing desire to make an impact in communities in the world. The Philippines proposes the following priority policy areas to be addressed by the CFS policy convergence process in order to promote a cultural shift in perspective regarding agriculture and food systems that would facilitate youth engagement in agri-food systems transformation.

There is lack of interest of among the youth in agriculture, and a lack of opportunities to develop their capacities and economic conditions. Even parents may not want their children to pursue careers in agriculture. To promote their engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems, education, knowhow, technology, investment and financial support services should be integrated in the youth's ecosystem. Agricultural education, may have to be integrated into the education curriculum starting in primary school. Entrepreneurship and business management skills will need to be integrated into agricultural education.

b) It is important to have a policy environment conducive to the creation of opportunities for active participation of the youth in food systems, including making them part in the decision-making process. The youth will need to be engaged for them to view agriculture as a means for career development and sustainable livelihood.

The CFS can adopt the policy recommendation of the HLPE Report to support youth participation and leadership in rural, urban and rural-urban organizations including workers, farmers, fishers, cooperatives, and women's organizations, and guarantee and encourage representation in formal governance mechanisms on food security and nutrition and in other decision-making fora.

c) As part of our reform strategy, we are driving the active engagement of the youth by honing them to be the best food security contributors they can be, through the institutionalization of scholarship programs on agriculture related courses, loan programs for start-up, leadership and value formation training, intensified training programs on entrepreneurship and innovations on agriculture and food systems, including exposure to foreign countries food and agricultural/ agri-tech systems for a better understanding of the global food and agricultural production, processing, marketing and trading system.

Thank you.