

VI. URBANIZATION, RURAL TRANSFORMATION and IMPLICATIONS for FSN

Chairperson

Thank you very much, indeed that concludes the item and we move now to item six.

Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security and nutrition. We will have only 30 minutes for a presentation and feedback on the outcomes of two intersessional events held on this subject and the associated challenges. We had scripted the 30 minutes long before we were faced with this time constraint that we have here now.

I will immediately pass the floor to my dear colleague and old friend, Ambassador Hans Hoogeveen of The Netherlands. He is the Chair of the FAO Programme Committee. That is the Evaluation Committee of FAO programmes for those not familiar with it and who conducted this workstream during the past three years. The floor is yours Hans.

Mr Hans Hoogeveen, Chairperson OEWG Urbanization

Thank you very much Mario, and I do hope that, with this presentation, I can spice up a little bit of your life, not only with words but because yesterday when I was preparing the presentation, I saw on Youtube a video about the work which we have done,

because we working on urbanization, world transformation but especially on women and youth and I thank the Chair and the Secretariat for the flexibility for a last moment presentation of a video. This is visualizing the work which we have done and which is very much need and it is under the title, this is how we rise. If we can show the video?

Video

Applause

Mr Hans Hoogeveen, Chairperson OEWG Urbanization

We have to rise that is the clear message, not only for women, not only for a nation but certainly, also for the youth. In the last month, we have seen thousands of youths marching for climate change, but where are the people who are marching for the 900 million people living in hunger. Mario and I were in New York at the climate summit and all heads of state spoke about the urgency of the climate change agenda. But none of them were referring to the food security or the food system needs and we have to bring that on par with climate change, and of course we know the countdown to 2030 in which we have to achieve zero hunger in all other development goals has started.

A little more than ten years to go and we all know that we are lagging far behind. The rise in hunger, 40 million people last year, undernourishment and obesity brings us urgent challenges in the face of our 2030 Agenda and especially both in the cities as well as in the rural areas. The impact of our food system

on climate, water use, biodiversity loss, land and marine degradation and public health is a fear and not acceptable anymore. That was a clear message coming out of the two events.

We also see the political tensions between the regions. If we will not solve them, we cannot solve anything when it comes to rural transformation, urbanization. Times call for not only renewed global action but certainly, regional efforts to lay a foundation for concerted action based on undisputed scientific information. Ladies and gentlemen, it seems to be a little bit of a depressing story. As we have seen in the video, it is also a message of hope and the crisis are man-made, so we can solve them and perhaps better today than speak about women's day. For every manmade crisis, there is a women made solution.

When we look to the two events, the main objectives of the two events were the following, to assess the feasibility of working towards policy and convergence to support governments and other stakeholders at the national and local level in addressing food security and nutrition within the context of chasing rural/urban dynamics. It were lively events, well participated with many interesting and innovative ideas. The two events especially focused on the food security and nutrition impact over urbanization and rural transformation on lower income groups as well as promoting youth and women engagement and employment in food system across the rural urbanization continuum.

During the two events and also during the working group the last three years, it became clear that we cannot and could not arrive at a consensus for continuing this working stream. But, as we see now, the MYPOW, I think we have a positive message for three crucial elements of the MYPOW for the period 2020-2023 because we can link the outcomes to the workstream on women's empowerment and gender equality. Respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights of women, including their equal participation in decision making was mentioned as pivotal to addressing food security and nutrition change challenges across the rural/urban continuum.

It also linked to the workstream on promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture and food systems. Youth was perceived as deserving a targeted focus. The growing engagement of youth who want to be agent of change in their communities clearly emerge from the discussions and we should give them not only a voice but also a role in the transformations.

Last but not least, it is also linked to the workstream on inducing inequalities for food security and nutrition. 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 and a critical challenge requiring an innovative, comprehensive, inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional approach. We already saw some promising events coming out of these two events. We see regional meetings in Latin America, Francophonie cities as well as two

that see 40 major events where they are taking up some of the measures and ideas coming out of these two events.

It is clear that we have to rise. This evening, we will have a side event with the youth and I do hope that you show that we have to support the youth and how we can support the youth. Let us not forget, in a month's time, we have here 3,000 schoolers and students coming to Rome from all over the world for their summit weekend. We can make the change, let our hopeful signals, although we could not arrive at a consensus for the workstream. Our work continues. Thank you Mr Chair.

Chairperson

Let us open up the floor briefly for comments or questions. I see Switzerland.

Switzerland

Thank you Chair. Urbanization, rural transformation are very important subjects for the whole world with significant impact on food security and nutrition. It is also a challenge for Switzerland. Production in semi-urban and urban zones are becoming greater and greater to meet urban demand for local produce. In Switzerland, a number of initiatives aimed to link systematically rural and urban zones which has enabled us to have an innovation platform for local consumption which enables us to take into account aspects of nutrition and food and the choice for consumers, but also takes into account work conditions and remuneration for producers.

The Committee, which is meeting today and this week, has a very important role to play in this discussion. The importance of urbanization and rural transformation. Given the importance of the subject, Switzerland regrets, at the two intersessional events only took place at the end of 2018 and the beginning of 2019 and that the subject of urbanization and rural transformation has not been followed up by stages which would lead to political convergence.

Nevertheless, Switzerland is very glad to see that the MYPOW of 2020-2023 which will approve on Thursday foresees having workstreams which create a link between the subject of urbanization and the rural transformation. In particular, the workstream on youth and the reduction of inequalities. Also, in the development of voluntary guidelines on the food systems and nutrition, strengthening links between urban and rural zones in order to provide healthy food diets which has been highlighted during the consultation process. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson

Thank you, Switzerland. Well, the Secretariat has proposed and the Chair agrees that we should give speakers two minutes. I am going to read the list. We have got CSM, Argentina, Private Sector, Finland and Thailand and then the Democratic Republic of Congo and Afghanistan.

CSM

Thank you, very much indeed, for giving us the floor. Good afternoon, Andreas Lucid is my name and I am taking the floor as to speak on behalf of those facing food insecurity in the cities. We would like to share with you certain general observations relating to this workflow.

We are living in an age where, for the first time, the urban population is greater than the rural one and we are now seeing changes in agriculture and urbanization and this has brought about major challenges in respect to food security and nutrition for the entire global population. In spite of all the resources made available and the work of many people, the workflow has not managed to come up with some answers to some key issues. We think that we should have sought for a focus to begin with which will be crucial to such a complex workflow and it was a little bit vague they were changed on various occasions which became very confusing for the main stakeholders involved.

On the thematic actions which have been presented by the Dutch Ambassador, on those points we would like to raise the following. The results reflect quite well the debates but, there is little mention of civil society and a point that we have made that the present situation just has not happened by itself, it is the result of policies which affect and increase inequality which means that land is being lost as is biodiversity and there are economic losses for small scale producers including women and children and young people in particular. Land is being lost which should be used to feed the cities.

This is the result of educational systems and perceptions which see agriculture as being a type of job with no status and there is little support being provided for young people and those living in the rural environment. The sentence which sums up the conclusion of this report, we feel is out of place and,

therefore, we hope that something can be done to ensure that the work put in under this workflow has not been in vein and that, on food systems and nutrition, we can do further work and particularly focus more on young people, bringing them into issues relating to food security and nutrition. We want to see jobs worthy of young people being created which allow them dignity and we really hope that these reforms can come about.

Chairperson

Thank you CSM. Argentina.

Argentina

We would like to express our thanks for the provision of the basic document for this session which includes the basic conclusions for 2018-2019 for the links between urbanization, rural transformation implications for food security and nutrition. We know that this provides an awful lot of opportunities in a global environment where, by 2050, we should see a major increase in food production to satisfy demand.

Obviously, rural development is crucial because it is only by developing the rural areas and creating attractive conditions for jobs and investment and particularly young people that we can really tap into the full potential of the rural section. Argentina is committed to working on this front and encouraging our rural populations to learn about innovative technology which will ensure quality work. We also want to build capacity and try to breathe new life into rural areas.

Finally, Mr Chairman, we would like to stress how important it is to promote investment which will bring more interest into food change and increase the production capacity at local level so that we can also provide for exports as well which will help us combat poverty and eradicate hunger. We agree with the comments made by certain other delegations on how this workflow can be linked to those issues which have been included under the MYPOW for the next four years. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you, Argentina. The Private Sector, please.

PSM

Thank you, Chair. My name is Cassandra Hayward and I am part of Food Secure Canada's Youth Caucus Executive Committee. We have all spoken about how we want to make the CFS Plenary more vibrant, so you have our appreciation for both the way this session has been organized, the topic and, of course, the Chair.

We are also extremely supportive of the CFS's understanding of the urgency of involving youth and women in the urbanization and rural transformation debate at the local, national and global level.

During the intersessional events, 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. We need to support the growth potential of rural areas through appropriate policies and investments in infrastructure and this also includes the need to reform the basic education system to include food and agriculture in school curricular to make youth aware of the potential of agriculture and food systems as viable employment options.

This means developing the skills and talent of young people through training and mentorship in recognizing that access to land and resources to foster youth's own investment engagement is also vital.

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. Local and regional Governments and cities, therefore, have a key role to play. A dialogue between rural and urban actors must be established and small and medium urban centres have potential in developing inclusive food systems and play a key role in rural-urban linkages.

Young people, as you are all now very aware of, are actively involved in addressing climate change. Youth and women should be given the opportunity and a voice both at the local level and more involved in the relevant national and international processes as well as the institutions, including the Rome-Based Agencies and CFS. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you, Private Sector. Finland now has the floor.

Finland

Thank you, Mr Chair. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the European Union and its 28 member states. We would like to thank the CFS Secretariat, the technical task team and members and, in particular, the members of the open-ended working group for the presentation of this document and the participants of the two intersessional events for all their hard work.

Urbanization and rural transformation increasingly shape people's livelihoods and opportunities and the challenge they face and hence their food security. Given the important linkages between SDGs two and 11, tackling these issues is also necessary in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

An innovative and comprehensive interdisciplinary and inter-institutional approach is required in order to better understand the complexity of the issues and address food security challenges in both rural and urban areas. In addition, we should explore the potential offered by territorial approaches as an effective analytical and operational framework for understanding and addressing these issues.

Those challenges linked to urbanization and rural transformation require proper policies to be developed and implemented through increased dialogue between rural and urban actors at all levels, the involvement of young people who will be the next generation of food producers and the involvement of women as well as greater responsible public and private investment.

Considering its relevance and implications for food security and nutrition, the topic should remain high on the CFS agenda. We recommend starting a process to prepare solid terms of reference for the preparation of the HLBA report to be presented for the CFS during the 2023-2027 MYPOW. Thank you, very much, Mr Chair.

Chairperson

Thank you. Now, we have Thailand. Please

Thailand

Thank you, Mr Chairman. Thailand has an honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Asian Regional Group. First of all, we would like to express our appreciation for the dedicated force in recognizing the traumatic events and delivering several important messages regarding food security and nutrition. In the context of changing dynamics of urbanization and rural transformation, two focus areas are relevant to our regions where urbanization rate is rapidly increasing and rural populations is the

world's largest. According to the last statistic of the United Nations department of economics and social affairs, 54 percent of the world's urban population and 90 percent of the world's rural population live in Asia. Moreover, rural population is mostly composed of the poor smallholder with large youth populations and approximately 43 percent of women farmers with low education level.

In addition to youth and women, identified as the vulnerable and most effected by the dynamic trends of urbanization and rural transformation, we would also like to emphasise that smallholders, particularly low income smallholders, is the vulnerable group specific to Asian regional context. As such, policies and strategic plans aimed at facilitating, smoothing and mitigating the ongoing transitions must take into account the specificity, the regional and national contexts to achieve SDG under Agenda 2030.

Many Asian countries have already started the implementations of policies and plans to reduce vulnerabilities and to build capacity of the youth, women and smallholders. For instance, through programme targeted on young farmers, women entrepreneurs programme and school feeding programmes. With this statement, Asia support all key messages highlighted in the document CFS2019\46\4 and call for concrete actions with the comparative advantage of CFS in addressing the issue of urbanization and rural transformation and the implications for food security and nutrition which will be prioritized in the global politics agenda, especially in the frames of the United Nations decade on action on nutrition and the United Nations decade of family farming. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you, Thailand. The Democratic Republic of Congo now has the floor.

Democratic Republic of Congo

Thank you, very much, Chair and moderator of our session. Today I am taking the floor on behalf of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and I would like to take advantage to thank those who have spoken about investment in rural areas and to say, also, that food security and nutrition is a problem that the DRC is trying to resolve together with the assistance of its technical partners, FAO, IFAD and the World Bank. We have tried to come up with a new concept which talking about intelligent agriculture for nutrition and this concept is something that gives us the opportunity to make the most of all our wealth, our potential in the DRC, whether it be in rural areas or in semi-urban areas.

Today, throughout the DRC, which has some 80 million inhabitants, 75 percent are women that are involved in agriculture, feeding the population. Now, oddly enough, children from zero to five years old are suffering from malnutrition and pregnant women, about 5 million of them, are suffering from anaemia as a result of a lack of highly nutritional food.

Today, we have setup a programme for food security and nutrition in agriculture. We have setup a national programme for the agriculture for nutrition under the aegis of the Ministry of Health. I am someone who is from the Ministry of Agriculture and the investment that we are carrying out is to try to identify and evaluate all highly nutritional foods that have developed in a decentralized way throughout the provinces as a pilot project. We have pinpointed provinces that have a high agricultural potential.

I would like to thank you once again for having given me the floor, since we are appealing for assistance from all our partners in order to be able to conclude these programmes as well as we can on food security and nutrition. Thank you.

Chairperson

Thank you. We have to final speakers, Afghanistan and Morocco. Two minutes each please. Afghanistan

Afghanistan

Thank you, Chairperson. Chairperson, I am honoured to make this short statement on behalf of the Near-East Group. It is estimated that in the Near-East and North Africa, which make up 20 countries, their population by 2050 will reach 725 million. Out of this, 70 percent will be urban. High rates of urbanization in the countries of Near-East and North Africa combined with adverse effects of climate, prolonged armed conflict and protracted crisis have created severe challenges to help sanitation, education, infrastructure and the availability of food and water to large cities and peri-urban areas. All these factors raise the risk of overweight obesity, micro-nutrient deficiency and the spread of non-communicable diseases.

Chairperson, the Near-East Group wishes to pay tribute to the outcome of the two thematic events of 19 November 2018 and 4 February 2019 and gladly endorse the ten Roman points listed under paragraph five of CFS2019\46\4, especially point three which says, the interconnectedness between urban and rural sector, point number four, active involvement of women and youth in the process of urbanization and rural transformation and point seven, peer learning and knowledge exchange. Thank you, Chairperson.

Chairperson

Thank you, Afghanistan speaking for the Near-East. Now, the last speaker, Morocco.

Morocco

Chair, the delegations of the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Congo are taking the floor on behalf of the African Group under item six on this agenda. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the CFS for the relevance of the action that they are taking in the field of food security and nutrition within the context of rural and urban areas and also what is found in paragraph five of the document, in particular when it comes to the interdependence between the urban and the rural sector, the participation of women and youth in the rural transformation and apprenticeship through exchange of knowledge.

However, among the areas most affected by food insecurity and the areas most committed to eradicate hunger, we are taking particular actions in order to take up the challenges of food security and nutrition. We are working hand in hand with the Director-General, Mr Qu Dongyu, and the priority is to work in favour of those living in the most vulnerable areas of the world affected by food crisis and highly populated areas, the majority of which are to be found on the African continent.

Chair, in addition to the problems of market access and lack of financing, the increase in populations, non-sustainable agriculture, all these are factors that affect mostly food security in Africa. Given the increase of urbanization, which goes up by four percent a year, which in 2030, this will reach 53 percent before reaching 60 percent ten years after that. We very much depend on the rural population in order to ensure food security and livestock which greatly affects food security throughout the continent. The rapid development and inclusive development in Africa is vital to meet this challenge to eradicate poverty, to meet the requirements of the youth and to reach the SDGs.

In order to do this, the African Regional Group would like to urge the FAO to help them in stimulating agriculture production and the structure in high quality production, strengthening women in rural areas, meeting the challenges of climate change and also to shore up the activities that we are taking for woman and youth. Thank you, Chair.

Chairperson

Thank you, Morocco and Africa. We will now ask the Ambassador if he can answer those questions which have been raised and expand a little bit on the base of what we have heard this afternoon. Thank you.

Mr Hans Hoogeveen, Chairperson OEWG Urbanization

Thank you, very much, Chair. I would like to thank all the delegates who took the floor and by your comments you saw how the discussion was not only this afternoon but, how the discussion was during the events. It is clear that urbanization and rural transformation is a very complex issue. There is a lot at stake, many people, as was stated, going to the city, hopefully finding jobs but, not finding jobs and at the same time, the cities depend on the food production in the rural areas. The ultimate question would be, of course, if we cannot solve this problem, who is going to produce our food in the rural areas because the food cannot only be produced in cities and I think, during the discussions and the preparations, it also became clear that a lot is not known yet about the linkages between urbanization and rural transformation and much more research has to be done to get a more evidence based approach.

At the same time, the key messages coming out of the work done by this workstream give a clear indication in which direction we have to go and I echo the words which were said by the CSM that we need to find jobs for the youth and we have to get more employment. Only in Africa, every year, 11 million people and youth people are entering the workforce and for 80 percent of them, there are no jobs available. We have to do something for the youth. It is an urgent matter because, otherwise, the cities will drown and we will not have food production anymore.

I echo, also, the words that were said by Argentina. We need much more investment and not only investments from the public sector, but also from the private sector. The private sector giving more space to the youth, getting them on board in innovative projects, instruments and also sitting together with the youth what they need for jobs. We have many instruments especially focusing on the youth, for example, the start-ups. But for that, funding is necessary. Funding hopefully from public donors but, certainly, the private sector can do a lot and I spoke several times, yesterday and today, with the private sector and they are eager to approach the youth to sit together to see what they can do.

Of course, as was stated also by PSM, a discussion between the local stakeholders is very much needed. Urban stakeholders as well as rural stakeholders to sit together, what they need from each other.

Last but not least, I think it is important to understand that the hard work being done by many of you in the working group, as well as in the two events, is certainly not lost. On the contrary, it will be continued, as I said, in three workstreams, on women empowerment and gender equality, promoting youth engagement and employment in agriculture as well as reducing inequalities for food security and nutrition. Also, as was stated, it will get its input, hopefully, in the work being done on the guidelines for the food systems and nutrition.

Probably somewhere this week, hopefully, the food systems summit will be announced. This gives a crucial momentum for the work being done during the workstream in the events as to put into the preparations of the food systems summit because we have to continue our work. Our road did not end and I really would like to thank all of you who participated in this workstream for not only your hard work but, also, for a very emotional discussions and when emotions come in, you always get tension but, you always get the best results and in this respect I really would like to thank Chiara from the Secretariat for the work she has done and the technical task team for input they have given in the preparations. Most of all, of course, I thank you. Thank you.

Applause

Chairperson

Thank you, Hans. Thank you, so very much. If I may share with you and with everybody, very briefly, the fact that I have friends but, these friends that I have, that I am going to say now, I have only found them in developed countries that have moved from the cities to the countryside to work in agriculture and in other forms of food production. So, this is what we need to have for our friends in the developing world, to move from the cities to the countryside because we are able, as Governments, to create with the help of the CFS, the enabling environment so that they can make economic and social progress by working the land, by becoming pastors and fisher folk and so on and so forth, so that we reverse the trend.

Thank you so very much, for your inspiring words and this gets us to the conclusion of item six on urbanization and rural transformation and the implications for food security and nutrition and as for the Chair's summary on this subject, we will apply what we already agreed that we would do for items such as these. With that, we close item six. Thank you, again.