

Workstreams and Activities Updates

*****These updates cover the period since the 10 September 2021 CFS Bureau Meeting*****

1. Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment

Regional consultations

All six planned regional consultations to discuss the *CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition* were successfully organized. The objective of the consultations was to obtain inputs from CFS stakeholders to align the Guidelines with regional and national priorities and needs. The discussions have been summarized in the Co-Chairs' Summaries that are being posted when ready on the dedicated [webpage](#) of the CFS website.

Electronic consultation

All CFS stakeholders have been invited to provide their comments on the Voluntary Guidelines electronically via the FAO Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition. Comments will be accepted until 23 November 2021.

First Draft of the Guidelines

The inputs obtained in the regional and electronic consultations will inform the preparation of the First Draft of the Guidelines to be shared with the OEWG on 17 December.

2. Food systems and Nutrition

A session on the uptake of the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSN) was held at CFS 49 to discuss and mobilize political commitments by governments, donors, civil society, private sector, and the UN system for further promotion and implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines. The session brought together different food systems and nutrition actors who shared plans and ideas concerning uptake of the Voluntary Guidelines, their potential use at regional, national, and local levels, and the role of different stakeholders and coordination mechanisms in promoting their uptake.

A number of concrete activities being developed in support of the uptake of the VGFSN were presented. These included, among others, projects funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation such as the [one being implemented by John Hopkins University, CIAT, Rikolto Honduras and the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction](#)). In addition an [evidence platform for agri-food systems and nutrition](#) that was developed by FAO was launched. The platform links the VGFSN recommendations with existing evidence to support governments and stakeholders in the implementation of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition.

A recording of the session is available [here](#).

3. Youth

The policy convergence process on this workstream kicked off at a [CFS 49 session on 13 October](#). This session was based on the HLPE Report on [Promoting Youth Engagement and Employment in Agriculture and Food Systems](#) (available in all UN languages). The inclusive discussion highlighted the key role played by youth in building the food systems of the future.

In line with the [workplan and timeline](#) approved by the Bureau in September 2021, CFS stakeholders were asked to provide further inputs in writing to cfs@fao.org by **22 November** sharing views on and addressing the following guiding questions:

1. Which priority issues and policy-relevant areas should be addressed through this CFS policy convergence process and included in the policy recommendations?
2. Do you have any suggestions for CFS meaningfully engaging youth constituencies in the policy convergence process?

All inputs will be posted on the CFS website and be used to inform preparations for the first Open Ended Working Group meeting scheduled for the afternoon of 19 November (15:00 – 18:00).

Bureau and Advisory Group members are warmly encouraged to disseminate information regarding this policy workstream among their constituencies, regional groups as well as youth organizations with a view to promoting an inclusive and participatory process.

Relevant info and background document are available in a [dedicated section of the CFS Working Space](#).

4. Data

The CFS Secretariat has been in discussion with a partner for a substantial financial contribution to this workstream. The contribution agreement will be confirmed before the end of this calendar year.

5. Monitoring

A first meeting of the Technical Task Team for the Monitoring of the CFS Principles for Responsible Investments in Agriculture and Food Systems (2014, CFS-RAI) was held on 26 October 2021. Participants were informed of the timeline of the process (below), reminded of the two different types of Calls for Inputs (one for events referencing the Principles and the other for use & application experiences related to CFS-RAI) and requested to share the Calls for Inputs within their respective networks. Participants also exchanged ideas for a relevant and forward-looking event to be organised at CFS 50

Preliminary timeline for the monitoring exercise on the use and application of the CFS-RAI

ACTIVITY	TIMEFRAME
GLOBAL THEMATIC EVENT ON RAI AT CFS 50 IN OCT 2022	

i. Send email to RBAs +AG members to identify the Technical Task Team (TTT) members.	– by the end of July for nominations by end of August (extended to September)
ii. Calls for inputs to report on events and on individual experiences to be issued through: 1. FSN Forum, and 2. CFS website	2 September <i>Calls will remain open for about 8 months (2 September 2021 to 15 April 2022)</i>
iii. Technical Task Team meeting to be held to: - share background of the CFS-RAI, - share questionnaires, - inform them on the process (e.g. their expected role in reviewing the summary report for Plenary); and - ask their support in the dissemination of the calls	By end October 2021
iv. Technical Task Team meeting to discuss and prepare a summary report based on the inputs received (e.g. draft outline of the report)	20 April 2022
v. Share Draft Summary report to the TTT for their feedback	13 May 2022
vi. Submission of summary report (and outline of the GTE?) to the Bureau & Advisory Group for discussion and decision	June 2022
vii. Preparation for the panel discussion (e.g. contact moderator and panelists)	June – July 2022
viii. Global Thematic Event at CFS 50	October 2022

6. **CFS 49**

The Forty-ninth Session of CFS (CFS 49) was held from 11 to 14 October 2021. With more than 1,300 registered participants, 131 Member and non-Member Nations, the Plenary focused on, among other items, the 2021 State of Food Security and Nutrition report, uptake of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition, the implications of the UN Food Systems Summit on CFS, CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work, and other ongoing CFS workstreams and priorities. The Plenary also featured a Special Event by the CFS Secretariat on synergies and opportunities between CFS and the 3 Rio Conventions. CFS 49 report and all relevant documents including speeches, presentations and national statement are on the [CFS 49 webpage](#). See this [summary of the plenary](#) by the IISD Earth Negotiations Bulletin for a highlight of the outcomes of the Plenary

New CFS Chairperson Elected

Mr Gabriel Ferrero, Ambassador at Large, Global Food Security at Spain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation was elected as new CFS Chairperson (2021 - 2023).

New CFS Bureau and Alternates (2021-2023)

The following countries were confirmed as new CFS Bureau Members and Alternates: Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China, Dominican Republic,

Ecuador, Egypt, Germany, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Kuwait, Mauritania, Netherlands, New Zealand, Russian Federation, South Africa, Switzerland, United States of America, and Zambia.

CFS 49 Side Events

To enrich and complement the CFS 49 Plenary, CFS gave its partners and stakeholders an opportunity to highlight their work in 16 virtual side events over four days on diverse topics ranging from data to youth to land rights and finance. recordings and summaries of each side event are available on the [CFS 49 webpage](#).

7. Chairperson's Outreach Activities

Since his election on 14 October 2021, the CFS Chair has had a number of public, bilateral and private engagements with critical CFS partners and stakeholders to promote CFS and its products. This has included meetings, either in person or virtually, with Ambassadors, Permanent Representatives, senior management of the RBAs, CSM, PSM and other stakeholders. In terms of public engagements, Chair was a high-level speaker at two side-events during UNFCCC COP-26. He also spoke during a PSM-led training event on CFS VGFSN addressing the business community in the Americas. He also spoke in Paris at the Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance for Multilateralism, organized by the French and German Ministers of Foreign Affairs.