

CSIPM written inputs on objectives and potential areas of work to be addressed in the Action Plan of the CFS Workstream on "In-depth debate on enhanced efforts to increase awareness, ownership, use and usefulness of CFS policy outcomes at all levels"

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Introduction

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is the foremost inclusive Committee in the UN with the specific mandate to achieve the progressive realization of the Right to Food. It is the only space in the UN where communities and constituencies most affected by food insecurity can participate directly in policy decision-making. The problems people on the ground are facing are extremely serious, as demonstrated in the two *Voices from the Ground* reports ([2020](#) and [2022](#)) published by the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSIPM). Our constituencies are investing so much energy in the CFS because they believe they can find some solutions in this Committee. For the CSIPM, it is fundamental to make sure that the work we do in this global space addresses the concerns and proposals of people on the ground, and that the outcomes that are negotiated here go back to the territories and transform realities there in the direction of the right to food. For this reason, the workstream on use of the CFS policy outcomes is of utmost importance for the CSIPM.

Developing and endorsing policy frameworks, voluntary guidelines and recommendations are only part of the work. Once these have been discussed and agreed in the CFS, it is essential to connect them to the different regional and national contexts, translate them into policies and legislation that are relevant within the different territories, implement the policies, and monitor the implementation processes as well as their effects. These important actions bring home the outcomes agreed in Rome, reaching the different levels of governance: regional, national, and local.

The work on Uptake and Application of CFS Policy Outcomes is, therefore, closely interrelated with the CFS Coordination Function. Coordinated action and collaboration are necessary to disseminate, use and implement CFS instruments. These instruments offer recommendations to design policies that lead to the progressive realization of the Right to Food and for this reason it is a great opportunity that the workstream on Uptake and the 20th anniversary of the Right to Food guidelines coincide. Taking these three workstreams forward in a synergetic manner over the coming four years will strengthen the impact of all three and guard against fragmentation of the MYPoW, including the policy convergence processes that are foreseen in the four years ahead. This will require a carefully thought-out methodology and plan of action, on which we will touch in the following sections.

1. Expectations in terms of desired outcomes and areas of work of this CFS workstream

Improving the use and application of CFS policy outcomes has been a concern for some years now. The Independent Evaluation of the CFS undertaken in 2016-2017 devoted space to this issue and noted this as a weakness of the CFS. The evaluation found that members of the CSIPM were the most active component of the CFS in promoting outreach and application of policy outcomes at national levels. The CFS response to the evaluation adopted in the 2018 CFS Plenary includes relevant suggestions on enhanced dissemination, use and application. A special event on 'Bringing home the results of Rome' co-organized

by the Permanent Representation of the Federal Republic of Germany held in April 2017 also furnished interesting reflections. Among others, these include:

‘The CFS’s inherent principle is to focus on the social groups most affected by food insecurity and malnutrition, who are at the same time the most relevant contributors to food security and nutrition worldwide. An operative principle for the use and application of the CFS outcomes, therefore, is to achieve the best impact possible for these social groups---small-scale food producers, family farmers, fisher folk, Indigenous Peoples, food and agricultural workers, pastoralists, landless, women, youth, consumers, the urban food insecure---- and the progressive realization of their right to adequate food.’

The CSIPM has undertaken its own assessments of factors that enhance or limit the use and application of CFS policy outcomes on the ground. Some examples are included in section three below. We are collecting others and will be happy to share them with the team drafting the Action Plan. Other useful reflections can be gleaned from the reports prepared for the annual Monitoring Events that have taken place in the CFS Plenaries¹. Insights from all of these inquiries should form the basis for the work carried out in the present workstream.

One expectation of the CSIPM is that this workstream should result in a roadmap and a methodology able to assist different actors to incorporate CFS policy outcomes in their operations, at all levels. Globally, procedures that can connect CFS policy processes with other international spaces or international institutions in New York and Geneva are extremely important. Legal normative frameworks based on a human rights approach should be connected at all international spaces through the work of different actors. Engagement with regional intergovernmental institutions is also critical, as is the national level, where global policy guidelines are translated into binding legislation, and bridge the gap between what is happening in the CFS and people’s realities on the ground.

The Action Plan, which is the intended outcome of this workstream, should ensure that the visibility of the CFS is strengthened, while its outcomes are used at national/regional/global levels to guide a Right to Food-based food system transformation. It needs to be strongly interconnected with the coordination function workstream and the Right to Food Guidelines anniversary of the CFS.

The CSIPM also expects that importance is given to meaningful, inclusive and effective social participation at all levels (where meaningful social participation has been ensured, CFS outcomes have enjoyed a more successful implementation), and that the CFS is taken as an example to ensure social participation to develop food policies at regional and national levels.

2. Main elements to include in the Action Plan

Main elements that should be included in the Action Plan include the following:

¹ CSIPM monitoring reports on the use and implementation of CFS policy outcomes: [Tenure Guidelines \(2016\)](#) ; [The Right to Food Guidelines \(2018\)](#) ; [CFS policy recommendations on smallholders \(2019\)](#); [CFS-FFA \(2021\)](#); [Climate Change and on Water \(2022\)](#); [Food price volatility and social protection \(2023\)](#).

Consolidation, dissemination and communication

- The HLPE-FSN should be asked to prepare a reasoned compilation of key recommendations of CFS policy products within a human rights framework, aimed at addressing the challenges of hunger and the transformation of food systems. This would be an extremely useful tool to bring to other global, regional and national spaces, since the fragmentation of CFS policy outcomes is one of the weaknesses that have been identified from the time of the 2016-2017 evaluation. It would make it easier for other actors/institutions to understand the overall transformative logic of CFS policy work but, at the same time, to identify particular aspects of relevance to them. It would also help identify gaps in the policy work undertaken by the CFS thus far that could be addressed in the coordination platform and/or in upcoming policy convergence processes.
- The Action Plan should include a mapping of the relevant spaces and processes where the CFS needs to be present and disseminate its outcomes. This is also connected to the coordination function of the CFS. All CFS Members and participants are responsible for the identification of relevant spaces where CFS outcomes should be brought at the end of Policy processes, and the CFS can map these and keep track of where coordination needs to happen. This work should be done in a participatory way.
- Given the important role of FAO in the dissemination and implementation of CFS outcomes, strengthened efforts could be made to bring CFS outcomes to the attention of FAO governing bodies at global and regional levels.
- The CFS' communications strategy and work need to be strengthened to increase the visibility of the CFS and the HLPE, as well as the dissemination of their products. The Action Plan should include a comprehensive communication strategy for consistent and coherent information dissemination, awareness-raising, and promotion of CFS and HLPE outcomes to relevant target audiences, through different traditional and innovative media formats and channels. Special focus is required on collecting, documenting and effectively disseminating examples where the transformative and Right to Food-based impact of CFS policy results is evident.

Inclusive and participatory spaces at the national level and support for national implementation

- The visibility of CFS products can be increased through awareness-raising events at national level by governments and other actors. Training and awareness raising can be conducted at national and regional levels for governments and other actors, including CSOs and affected communities. The development of context-specific, rights-based action plans for dissemination and implementation of CFS policy products at national level should be supported. Establish follow-up and monitoring mechanisms, and internal and external evaluations of the impact of policy recommendations in alignment with CFS guidelines, including on CSOs and most affected populations.
- Communication between CFS global processes and the national level should be enhanced, including through close communication between Rome-based Permanent Representatives and their counterparts in the capitals (e.g., Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Agriculture, etc.).

and through sensitization and advocacy conducted by national civil society organizations and social movements active in the CSIPM.

- A factor that has been shown to be positively correlated with use of CFS policy outcomes is the existence at national level of a structured inclusive space which guarantees meaningful participation in food-related decision-making by sectors of the population most affected by food insecurity. The Brazilian National Council of Food and Nutrition Security (known as CONSEA) is an excellent example of such a mechanism. The Action Plan should involve mapping such spaces and suggesting how horizontal exchanges of best practices could be promoted.
- Support by the RBAs, FAO in particular, has been identified as a key factor in ensuring uptake and application of CFS outcomes at national level. This workstream should identify and promote measures that can strengthen this collaboration.
- Cooperation between the RBAs, the CFS and members and participants to translate CFS outcomes into popular manuals, technical manuals for practitioners, different types of communication materials and other tools that can be used by different actors for dissemination in different spaces.
- The workstream should also examine means of mobilizing financial support for the Uptake and Application efforts, particularly of most affected countries in the Global South. The related issue of reducing the debt burden of these countries in order to free up national resources should be discussed under the coordination platform programme of the MYPoW.

Targeted dissemination and application

- There should be a special effort to apply the CFS Framework for Action in Protracted Crisis and other relevant policy outcomes in places such as Gaza, Yemen, Congo.
- The Action Plan might include a roadmap for the use and application of the recently adopted Gender guidelines starting in some specific countries.

Linking with policy convergence processes in the 2024-2027 MYPoW

- Local governments have the responsibility for devolution of power in land use. Territorial markets are a main avenue for ensuring healthy locally produced and marketed produce. We need to draw on the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGTs) and the Policy Recommendations on Connecting Smallholders to Markets in order to work with local governments and create awareness at the local level during the upcoming workstream on urban and peri-urban food systems.
- Many existing CFS policy outcomes are relevant to the on-going work on inequalities and to the convergence process on building resilient food systems.

Update of some existing CFS policy outcomes

- Some CFS instruments which were adopted some time ago might usefully be updated. An example is the climate change policy recommendations, adopted in 2012, which should be connected with and inform the work of the Rio Conventions.

3. Concrete examples of uptake activities carried out by our constituencies, including indications on their impact, challenges encountered as well as areas for improvement.

The CSIPM participating organizations have worked on the uptake and application of CFS policy outcomes that are particularly relevant for CSO and Indigenous Peoples, where discussions and policy processes are strongly connected to the transformation of food systems based on a human rights framework, and to peoples' experiences in the territories such as the VGGTs, Connecting Smallholders to Markets, the CFS-FFA, and the Gender Guidelines.

When a policy process is relevant and there are proper conditions that can guarantee adequate and inclusive participation in their negotiation (adequate time, resources, interpretation, adequate facilitation, and inclusive methodologies) there is an increased opportunity to bring these policy products to national and local levels so that organizations can use them in their work and advocacy with local and national authorities.

The table below illustrates some factors that have been cited by CSIPM members as promoting effective use of selected CFS policy outcomes by the CSIPM. We commit to collecting more extensive information on impacts, challenges and areas for improvement as a contribution to this workstream.

Factors influencing effective CSIPM work on uptake of selected policy outcomes

Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGTs)

- Targeted an issue that is fundamental for our constituencies and territories.
- Negotiation process adequate in length and well facilitated;
- Outcome represents a strong consensus among the actors;
- Provides a framework for dialogue among actors at all levels from global to local;
- Clear principles and strong human rights framework that is open to universal human rights, including women's and Indigenous Peoples' rights. A response to the argument that the CFS guidelines are only 'voluntary'.
- Provides elements to have an influence on laws and build peoples' capacity to use laws.
- Lots of publicity by FAO and others, and ample funds made available for implementation;
- The popular manual is a good tool for grassroots work.

Connecting smallholders to markets/investing in smallholder agriculture

- Markets are a fundamental issue, strongly linked to local realities, clearly relevant to grassroots people.
- CSOs strongly engaged throughout the process. CSIPM started to work on use and application already during the negotiations and made the effort to provide a good communications support.
- Strong engagement by FAO in developing methodology for use and application in partnership with small-scale producer organizations in all regions was extremely important.

- Earlier HLPE report and recommendations on Investing in smallholder agriculture provided concrete data and recognized that smallholders are relevant to real economy.