

CFS OEWG on Uptake: Inputs on the Consultation on the Draft Outline

1) Regarding the proposed structure of the document

The Uptake function of the CFS is well established in the CFS Reform Document and in the CFS Strategic Plan. The OEWG was established to strengthen the CFS in this function and develop an Action Plan that can guide the work in this area for the period of the current MYPow 2024-2027.

The proposed structure of the document is certainly conducive to this purpose. The following suggestions aim to strengthen the structure of the document in line with the overall objective to enhance the Uptake function of the CFS:

The Structure of the document should be introduced by **anchoring this effort in the mandate and vision of the CFS**. In this sense, it would be recommendable to explicitly refer to the CFS Vision and indicate that this Plan of Action aims to contribute to the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.

Since all CFS policy outcomes explicitly aim to contribute to the realization of the right to adequate food, it is obvious that the **objective of the Uptake Action Plan should be to contribute to the progressive realization of the right to adequate food**.

By anchoring the Action Plan in the CFS mandate, the Strategic objectives and the current MYPow, the introduction should also indicate that:

- the **Uptake Action Plan is closely linked to the monitoring function of the CFS** to promote accountability and sharing best practices (as established in the CFS Reform document and further developed with the Innovative Monitoring Mechanism of the CFS adopted by the CFS Plenary in 2028 as part of the Implementation of the Response to the CFS Evaluation in 2017 (see <https://www.fao.org/3/mx545en/mx545en.pdf>, paragraphs on Uptake, 28-33 and Appendix C);
- the **Uptake function aims to support the policy coordination function of the CFS** as established in the Reform document and specifically included in CFS Workstream on „ [Collaborative governance for coordinated policy responses](#) to emerging global food crises towards sustainable agriculture and food system transformation“.

The structure of the Outline is helpful to provide **clear guidance to the different levels of actors** on the CFS (CFS as such; the CFS members in their national capacity; the UN Agencies and other international organizations; the civil society and Indigenous Peoples' organizations; and the private sector and philanthropic organizations) in the sense that each of them has a list of clear tasks in the Uptake.

While this is certainly a good and practical approach, it would be important to **complement it by a section (and maybe a visual figure) that shows the inter-action between these levels** and the need of cooperation among the interested actors from different levels. In addition, it might be good to have a specific **subsection on the tasks CFS Secretariat** in the first section on the CFS.

2) Specific considerations regarding the areas of action

There is a need to build this **process toward the Action Plan in parallel to a continued process of analysis and lessons learned**. The activities on lessons learned should both further inform the process of elaboration of this plan, and included as part of it.

In these months, the **experiences around the use and application of the Right to Food Guidelines**, 20 years after their adoption, are being assessed and could be an additional source in this regard. In fact, it could be a **practical suggestion to include in the next OEWG meeting an item on this reflection on the Uptake of the Right to Food Guidelines**, since it was not presented in the first meeting of the OEWG and could provide important insights about what could be achieved in a two-decades process: what were the impacts and which were the shortcomings, what were the factors of successful uptake and which were the limiting conditions? The Institute would be willing to contribute to such reflection, if this was considered useful by the OEWG.

Regarding the discussion on a **common understanding of terms and concepts**, it might be good to advance this discussion as well in the next few months. One of the most important aspect in this contexts is a better understanding of the **conditions of connectedness** that need to exist to enable a CFS policy outcomes to be used and applied in a national context.

The „attribution problem“, as it has been called in the technical discussions around the CFS evaluation in 2017, is an important question in this regard. A top-down implementation of CFS Policy outcomes is not realistic nor desirable. The **really productive and fruitful situation** exists when a national policy or legislation deliberation on a certain topic, such as for example land tenure, is being informed and inspired by a CFS policy outcome, in this case the VGGT.

The successes of the VGGT or the Right to Food Guidelines arise from these situations where actors of national deliberation processes (governments, parliaments, social organizations, academia, media, UN experts, etc.) have effectively connected the national debate with an international normative document on this issue. Hence, the **question is how to support generating such enabling conditions**, what are the needed actions and tools, and what roles for the different categories of users that are connected to the different constituencies of CFS.

A note of caution against a negotiation on **terms and definitions**: the experience in CFS has been that this kind of discussions could lead to lengthy debates within CFS, and consensus was difficult to find unless there were already definitions that had general agreement. More important than having clearly defined specific terms is to find a **common understanding** on what should be the concrete responsibilities, tasks and actions which then will be interpreted by the different actors according to their own priorities and contexts.

A recommendation for the **further process**: the OEWG could maybe devote at one of the next meetings an item on **how the envisaged Action Plan will be implemented after October 2024**. This is an important practical question which will need to be addressed at some point, and it could be good to hear the suggestions from the OEWG in this regard. This practical aspect has also a relevance for the design of the Action Plan itself, since its content and implementation will be intrinsically linked.