

ROSA Newsletter



OPERATIONAL FOOD SECURITY NETWORK

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IEWS ON CURRENT ISSUES

CFS

Committee on
World Food
Security

Main outcomes of the 39th session of the Committee on World Food Security

Founded in 1974, the CFS is an inter-governmental body that acts as a forum within the United Nations system to examine and track policies relating to world food security. In 2009, the Committee was reformed to increase its effectiveness. The goal was to shore up its role as a consultative and decision-making body with renewed governance. The CFS has created several bodies that allow it to extend the discussions and participation to all concerned stakeholders, notably a consultative group made up of representatives of five major categories of stakeholders¹, a Civil Society Mechanism (CSM)² to facilitate consultation of civil society organisations, and a high-level panel of experts (HLPE)³. This article looks at the outcome of the 39th session of the CFS, which was held in Rome from October 15 to 20, 2012. What progress was made on key subjects on the negotiating table? Two years after the reform, what can be said of the CFS's reform?

One major advance is the **adoption of the first version of the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF)**. Adopted on October 17 after several months of difficult negotiations⁴, this document is seen as the framework of reference worldwide. It is not a binding legal instrument. The GSF offers guidelines and recommendations aiming to promote better coordination and ensure coherence across strategies, policies and interventions in the field of food security and nutrition. Several key issues are addressed in the document, in particular: the need to combine short-term actions to meet the immediate needs of vulnerable populations with long-term integrated strategies aiming to improve resilience and address the structural causes of food and nutrition crises (twin-track strategy); investments in agriculture; the fight against price instability; promotion of sustainable agriculture; better integration of food security and nutrition policies; and land tenure issues and women's rights. The process by which the GSF were elaborated is also an important step forward given the vast scale of the participation and consultation involved. The adoption of this shared document therefore shores up the CFS's legitimacy as a framework for negotiations on food security policies and strategies.

¹ Specifically, the United Nations institutions, civil society organisations, agricultural research institutes, international and regional financial institutions, and finally private sector associations and charities.

² The CSM aims to facilitate participation by CSOs, notably in the CFS's plenary sessions, working groups with open membership, special teams, the CFS consultative group, and other CFS mechanisms.

³ The HLPE was created to ensure that the debates on policies are well informed and lead to better quality, effectiveness and coherence in food security and nutrition policies.

⁴ One of the main stumbling blocks in the negotiations was Chapter VI on may require further attention by the international community where they are relevant to the international debate on food security and nutrition. Notably, the inclusion of the expression "food sovereignty" crystallised differences between countries. Ultimately, a compromise was reached to remove this reference from the final draft.

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Another key element in the CFS's 39th session was the **launch of a consultative process to elaborate principles for responsible agricultural investments**. These principles will be elaborated in an inclusive consultation process steered by the CFS. The principles will take into account existing policy frameworks (such as the principles for responsible agricultural investment elaborated by the FAO, IFAD, UNCTAD and the World Bank); they will be based on the Voluntary Guidelines (VGs) on land and the right to food. What is more, this process began after the VGs on land tenure regimes were validated (approved by the CFS in May 2012)⁵ to guarantee the coherence and complementarity of these two frameworks of reference. Despite hesitations as to the level of ambition (voluntary, non-binding principles), the launch of the process within the CFS is a major step forward. Defining principles based on vast and inclusive consultation should ensure broader adhesion to the outcome. The process will also establish dialogue among the various stakeholders. Several regional and national consultations are planned in 2013 and early 2014, along with electronic consultations. The principles will be submitted for approval by the CFS in October 2014. More broadly, reflections on agricultural investments will be a central line of work for the CFS. Outside the process of elaborating voluntary principles, the High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) on food security and nutrition will address the constraints linked to investments by small farmers. The results of this work will be presented at the plenary session of the CFS scheduled for October 2013.



Since 2010, the CFS has included the **fight against food insecurity in protracted crises** as one of the key areas in its work program. In this context, a high-level expert forum on food insecurity was organised under the auspices of the CFS in September 2012, following up on the decision reached during the 37th CFS session⁶. Basing its decision on the recommendations formulated by this forum, the CFS decided to support a consultation process for the elaboration of an Agenda for Action for food security in countries in protracted Crises. This document shall serve as a point of common reference for all stakeholders working on food security in this type of situation. The challenge is now to clarify the timeframe and process envisioned for the development of this agenda for action.

Two round tables were held to discuss the results and recommendations arising from the HLPE's work, which focused this year on (i) **social protection** for food security and nutrition, and (ii) **climate change** and food security. The question of the CFS's legitimacy to address these issues was raised notably during the discussions on climate change⁷. However, after intense negotiations, a consensus was reached. The final declaration contains recommendations on social protection policies and issues relating to climate change. This made it possible to strengthen the CFS's role to ensure greater policy convergence while recognising the roles of other negotiation bodies⁸.

The report of the 39th session of the CFS is positive overall. The progress that was made will allow the CFS to position itself as a true platform for global strategic coordination. However, the process is still fragile. It is crucial to support the effective implementation of the CFS's decisions and recommendations, such as the Voluntary Guidelines on tenure regimes and the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition. This is a fundamental step in the reform of the Committee.

⁵ *The Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security were endorsed by the CFS at its 38th (special) session.*

⁶ *This forum provided an arena for policy consultation and dialogue destined to improve mutual understanding and collaborative efforts among the various stakeholders involved. Among the themes addressed are: the promotion of integrated strategies to fight food insecurity in protracted crises; integration of food security into efforts to promote peace and governance on the regional and national levels; and the need to reinforce resilience of vulnerable population.*

⁷ *Discussions on social protection turned out to be more consensual than those on climate change, in particular because this question is not addressed in other international forums.*

⁸ *On climate change, it was acknowledged that the United Nations Framework Convention (UNFCCC) was the main body responsible for running negotiations on the subject.*



Upcoming events

26 November-7 December: 18th session of the Conference of the Parties on Climate Change (COP 18) - Doha (Qatar)

4-6 December: 28th Food Crisis Prevention Network Meeting - Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)

13-14 April 2013: Conference on hunger, nutrition and climate change (Ireland)

May: Launch of a new series of papers on undernutrition - Revue The Lancet

13-14 June: G8 Summit (UK)

Past events

- **AGIR Expert Group Meeting – Paris, 7-8 November 2012:** Following the launch of the Global Alliance for Resilience Initiative (AGIR-Sahel), consultations with stakeholders has been taking place in recent months to discuss on the implementation of the initiative. A first dialogue meeting with agricultural producer's organisations, civil society groups and the private sector was held on 22 October in Ouagadougou. An expert group meeting, involving West African regional organisations, civil society and international partners took place on 7-8 November 2012 at the OECD headquarters. At this meeting, participants discussed the overall structure of the draft roadmap and next steps for the implementation of the initiative. On the basis of suggestions made during the meeting, a revised version of the roadmap will be produced to be circulated for amendment by participants of the meeting. The objective is to have a supporting document for a political statement by the beginning of December. AGIR will be officially launched on 6 December within the framework of the 28th annual meeting of the Food Crisis Prevention Network. Read the summary of conclusions [>>>](#)

EC's latest news

Adoption of the new Food Assistance Convention – November 2012: The Council of the European Union has just adopted the new Food Assistance Convention. Together with the European Parliament's consent on 25 October, the EU can now deposit the instrument of ratification by 30 November and join Japan, the United States, Switzerland and Denmark as one of the Convention's five signatories. This will allow the new Convention to come into force 1 January 2013. Read the text of the new Food Assistance Convention [>>>](#)

EU, IFAD, FAO and WFP side event during the CFS – October 19, 2012: In the framework of the 39th Committee on World Food Security session, the Delegation of the European Union in Rome together with FAO, WFP and IFAD organised a side event, "Working jointly towards food and nutrition security". The purpose of this event was to discuss about the cooperation between the EU and the Rome-based Agencies on Food and Nutrition Security. The event, moderated by David Nabarro, counted with panelists from the 4 institutions, as follow: Jean Pierre Halkin (EuropeAid), Henrike Trautmann (DG ECHO), Laurent Thomas (FAO), Kevin Cleaver (IFAD) and Pedro Medrano (WFP). The EU presented its current and futures strategies in the area of food security and food aid, by focusing the attention on nutrition, the next financial framework and the main elements contained in the recently released EC Communication on resilience.



New online resources

- **2012 Global hunger index. The challenge of hunger: Ensuring sustainable food security under land, water and energy stresses, IFPRI, Welthungerhilfe, Concern Worldwide and ACTED – October 2012:** The 2012 report focuses on the issue of how to ensure sustainable food security under conditions of water, land, and energy stress. The report describes the evidence on land, water, and energy scarcity in developing countries and discusses the various factors contributing to natural resource scarcity. Concern Worldwide and Welthungerhilfe provide on-the ground perspectives on the issues of land tenure and title as well as the impacts of scarce land, water, and energy on poor people in Sierra Leone and Tanzania and describe the work of their organisations in helping to alleviate these impacts. [>>>](#)





- **The state of food insecurity in the world – SOFI 2012, FAO, IFAD, WFP – October 2012:** This year's report also discusses the role of economic growth in reducing undernourishment. It underlines that overall growth is necessary but not sufficient for a sustained food insecurity reduction. Agricultural growth is particularly effective in reducing hunger and malnutrition since most of the poor depend on agriculture and related activities for at least part of their livelihoods. However, growth will not necessarily result in better nutrition. Policies and programmes that will ensure “nutrition-sensitive” growth include supporting increased dietary diversity, improving access to safe drinking water, sanitation and health services and educating consumers regarding adequate nutrition and child care practices. >>>

- **Integrated Food Security Phase Classification: Technical Manual Version 2.0 – October 2012:** The IPC Technical Manual Version 2.0 is a comprehensive revision and update of the IPC Technical Manual Version 1.1. This revised version offers new innovations, such as the IPC analytical framework and prototype tools for analysing chronic food insecurity situations. It also reconciles key differences in approaches to food security analysis among national governments and international agencies, allowing for greater buy-in and collaboration. >>>

- **First line of defence. Assessing the potential of local food reserves in the Sahel, Oxfam – October 2012:** This study focuses on local food reserves in the Sahel. It argues that this “first line of defence” have a number of distinctive features that make local food reserves particularly well placed to positively contribute to food security strategies in the region. The first part of the report explores the ways in which local food reserves can contribute to food security, and analyses the fragility of local food reserves in terms of their vulnerability to price risk and climate risk as well as the challenges linked to their promotion, planning and design. The second part of the report seeks to determine the factors and conditions required to create an enabling environment in which local food reserves can operate effectively. The final section proposes a series of recommendations for governments and producer organisations. >>>

- **Regional food security reserve. Feasibility study, ECOWAS – July 2012:** The feasibility study constitutes the proposal by the ECOWAS Commission to decision-making bodies of ECOWAS. The ECOWAS Commission recommends the region establish a Regional Food Security Reserve in order to have a third line of defense in the event of a food crisis, to complement the local and national food security stocks, which may also be deployed or bolstered as appropriate. >>>



- **Effectiveness of European Union development aid for food security in Sub-Saharan Africa, European court of auditors – March 2012:** The European Court of Auditors has assessed whether EU development aid for food security in sub-Saharan Africa is effective by analysing whether EU development aid for food security is relevant to the countries' needs and priorities and whether EU interventions are effective. The audit focused on interventions supported through the European Development Fund (EDF), which is the prime framework for cooperation with individual sub-Saharan countries, as well as three thematic instruments financed through the general budget of the European Union (the Food Security Budget Line - FSBL, the Food Security Thematic Programme - FSTP and the Food Facility). >>>

External resources and links

- **Contributions to the FSN Forum discussion on “Making agriculture work for nutrition: Prioritising country-level action, research and support”:** Results of the online discussion are available on the [FSN Forum](#).
- **Food security in Africa: issues, controversies and aid modalities (translated title), Volume 21, Number 5 - Cahiers Agriculture:** The new issue of the revue Cahiers Agriculture focuses on food security in Africa. It calls for the development of new technical instruments and policies and a paradigm shift to respond to new food security challenges (convergence between rights, capabilities, inequality, vulnerability ...). All items are online and free.
<http://www.cahiersagricultures.fr/index.phtml>

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This bulletin was written by the GRET team in charge of animating ROSA.

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The points expressed do not reflect the official position of the European Commission.

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