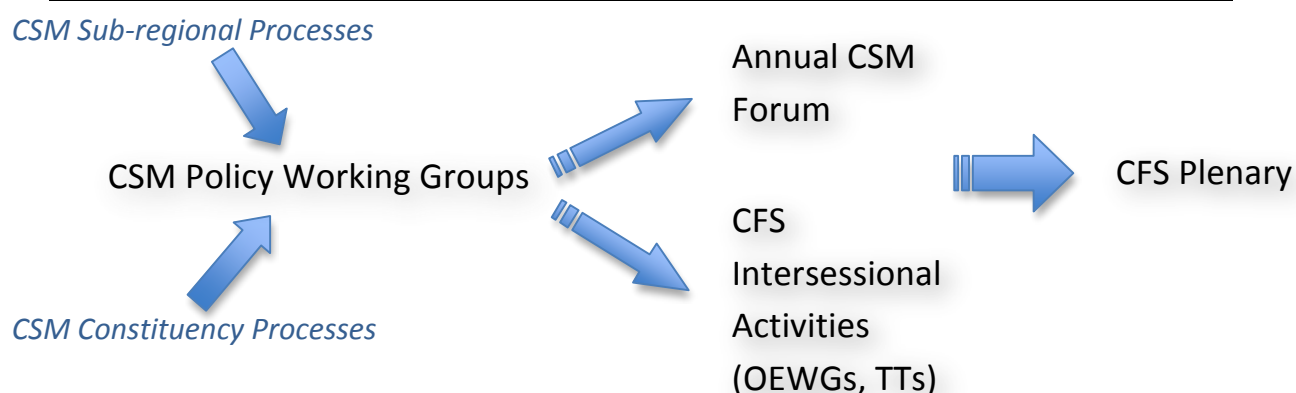


PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN THE CSM FORUM AND COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY 39TH SESSION

This guide has been developed to assist civil society organisations to easily participate in the Annual Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) Forum and 39th Session of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

For a complementary document, providing a comprehensive look at the dynamics and inner-workings of the CFS and CSM, please refer to “*A Civil Society Guide to the CFS & CSM*” available: http://www.csm4cfs.org/files/Pagine/1/csm_cfsguide_finalapr2012.pdf



THE ROLE OF THE CSM IN FACILITATING CIVIL SOCIETY

PARTICIPATION IN THE CFS

The International Food Security & Nutrition Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) facilitates the participation of CSOs in the work of the CFS, including input to negotiation and decision-making. The CSM provides a space for dialogue between a wide range of civil society actors where different positions can be expressed and debated. The CSM enables common positions to be presented to the CFS where they emerge and the range of different positions where there is no consensus.

The CSM does this by:

- widely sharing information on the work of the CFS and organizing civil society consultations on CFS policy issues,
- facilitating the development and communication of common policy positions and lobby strategies
- facilitating the identification of CSOs spokespersons in CFS inter-sessional meetings and CFS Plenary sessions
- facilitating the participation of a broad range of CSOs in CFS events and processes, whilst ensuring a balance across civil society constituencies, sub-regions and gender.

- prioritizing the voices of the people most affected by food and nutrition insecurity (e.g. smallholder producers, fisherfolk, pastoralists, indigenous, urban poor, migrants, agricultural workers etc.)

The CSM is a facilitation mechanism and never seeks to represent the views of CSOs in the name of the CSM. The CSM supports CSOs to work together and develop common positions, if they choose to do so, and communicate these positions in their own names.

LEADING UP TO THE ANNUAL CFS SESSION...

INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE CSM

CSM POLICY WORKING GROUPS (PWGs)

CSM Policy Working Groups have been established as a means of consulting with CSM members, promoting dialogue, and feeding diverse views of CSOs into the work of the CFS. The roles of CSM policy working groups are:

- To **enhance circulation of relevant documentation** and information on the issue and on the related process in the CFS
- To provide a **space for dialogue and the exchange of views** amongst CSOs on the issues under consideration by the CFS Open-Ended Working Groups/Task Teams (OEWG/TTs)
- To provide a space for CSOs to **develop strong and well-articulated civil society positions**
- To **provide inputs** to the civil society members of the CFS OEWGs and TTs

To **identify civil society participants** in CFS OEWGs, Task Teams and in Round Table panels. PWGs are open to all members of the Civil Society Mechanism and aim to receive inputs from the broader membership of the CSM and through the CSM constituency and sub-regional coordination processes, facilitated by CSM Coordination Committee members. Once inputs are received from these channels, they are then collated into common CSO positions endorsed by the CSM working groups and used during intersessional activities of the CFS, such as Open Ended Working Groups (OEWGs) and Task Team (TTs) processes, etc. to influence the CFS discussions and outcome documents (more information on CFS intersessional activities can be found below).

Prior to CFS OEWG meetings, TT meetings, joint Bureau/AG meetings and special plenary sessions, the CSM will organize a preparatory meeting (1 or 2 days depending on the complexity of the topic) to further develop joint civil society positions, lobbying strategies and identify spokespersons. The organization of preparatory meetings is based on the availability of funding.

Policy messages developed through the PWGs are then brought to the Annual CSM Forum for further elaboration, finalization and endorsement before being presented during the Annual CFS plenary sessions. Together, the PWGs influence on the CFS intersessional processes, and the

common CSO positions coming out of the CSM Forum have proven to have great impact on the outcomes of the CFS plenary session.

- LEADING UP TO THE CFS PLENARY SESSIONS

Policy working groups play an important role in the lead up to the CFS Plenary Sessions by facilitating a diverse range of civil society inputs into the policy discussions.

Although policy working groups are active all-year-round, those that have a direct link to the upcoming agenda of the CFS Plenary Session vis-à-vis Policy Roundtables, are particularly busy in the months leading up to October to facilitate CSO inputs into the drafting of 'Decision Boxes' and background documents of the Roundtables.

During the CSM Forum, civil society receive a copy of each of the draft decision boxes, including the civil society input, and further development of the positions will be elaborated, finalized and endorsed.

WHAT ARE DECISION BOXES?

Decision boxes list issues to be brought to the attention of the Committee on World Food Security for each of the Policy roundtables or agenda items, and are drafted prior to the CFS Annual Plenary Sessions through a 'Task Team' with the full participation of civil society.

For more information on the ways of working within the policy working groups, and a list of active working groups see: http://www.csm4cfs.org/policy_working_groups-6/

INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE CFS

With the reformed CFS, more emphasis has been given to intersessional activities in the lead up to, and preparation for, the Annual Plenary Sessions - held in October of each year. During each Plenary, Committee Members will agree on policy priorities for the upcoming year and delegate tasks to its executive arm, the Bureau. It is during this intersessional period that all of the work and preparations are undertaken by various CFS mechanisms (see below) to nurture linkages between the various stakeholders at the different levels, and to ensure that the work of the CFS is guided by the reality on the ground.

CFS-led intersessional preparations include:

OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUPS (OEWG)

- Membership is open to all members of the CFS, and led by the CFS Bureau. OEWGs are formed upon the request of the Bureau, to bring various stakeholders together to carry out a process and negotiate a CFS policy issue throughout the intersessional period. Examples of OEWGs include, Voluntary Guidelines for Land Tenure, Global Strategic Framework,

developing guidelines for responsible agricultural investment, etc. The result of this process is brought to the Annual Plenary Session for consideration and endorsement.

TASK TEAMS (TT)

- Task Teams are formed with short-term objectives and have a smaller membership. Most often, Task Teams are formed to commence drafting of the background documents for Policy Roundtables and the Decision Boxes, which are brought to the Annual Plenary Session for negotiation and endorsement.

BUREAU AND ADVISORY GROUP MEETINGS

- The Bureau, as the Executive arm of the CFS is made up of 12 member countries, plus a Chairperson. While the Advisory Group is composed of UN body representatives, Civil Society, the Private Sector, International Research bodies and IFIs, with a mandate to aid the Bureau in advancing the objectives of the CFS and support two-way exchanges between the various stakeholders. Meetings take place approximately once every 6– 8 weeks.

SPECIAL PLENARY SESSIONS

- In particular cases, the CFS will call for a “special session” outside of the usual October Annual Plenary. This recently happened with the 38th Special Session of the CFS to endorse the Voluntary Guidelines on Land Tenure.

AD-HOC BRIEFING SESSIONS

- Various briefing sessions will take place in FAO Headquarters to brief CFS members and participants of the on-going work and progresses of the policy processes during the intersessional period.

PARTICIPATING IN THE ANNUAL CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

What is it?

In preparation for the Annual Plenary Session of the Committee on World Food Security, a two-day CSM Forum is held to **assist in the development and endorsement of common civil society positions and strategies in relation to the CFS agenda**. The Forum is a space where CSOs can finalise the positions which they have been developing through the CSM working groups during the intersessional process. The CSM Forum is open to all interested civil society participants working in the field of food security and nutrition. Emphasis is put on the broad and inclusive participation of social movement representatives, to ensure that they are able to effectively influence the messaging and eventually, the outcomes of the CFS. The CSM Forum also provides the space for Coordination Committee members to report back to the broader membership of the CSM.

The forum is divided into two formats, Plenary and Working Group:

PLENARY

Plenary sessions set the stage for the Forum, providing a general introduction into the ways of working and an overall review of the policy issues at stake for the CFS session. After participants break out into working groups, they reconvene into plenary to report-back, discuss and endorse CSO common policy positions and lobby strategies. If there are any issues or inputs from the group, they can and should be brought up during the report back plenary session.

BREAK OUT WORKING GROUPS

Given the number of issues on the CFS agenda, and the limited time to finalise and endorse CSO messages, breaking out into parallel working groups allows for participants to focus their time and expertise on a specific subject, while providing the opportunity to cover more topics over the 2 days.

ENDORSEMENT OF COMMON POLICY POSITIONS

The CSM Forum provides an opportune and unique moment for civil society organisations from around the world to come together to discuss relevant policy issues being negotiated in the CFS and to endorse as a group the policy messages coming out of the Forum.

The CSM enables and encourages the development of common CSO positions, where possible, and has the obligation to enable divergent positions to be communicated where there is no consensus.

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A “CSM POSITION”

Since the CSM is a facilitation mechanism, there is no such thing as “CSM Position”. The CSM supports CSOs to speak in their own names, and reinforces that policy positions should be owned by, and communicated in the name of the CSOs which develop them.

IDENTIFICATION OF CSO SPOKESPERSONS

Civil society speaking slots for each CFS Session will be decided during the CSM Forum during the policy break out groups. Priority should be given to spokespersons from social movements who have been actively involved in the inter-sessional process and can provide recommendations substantiated by real life experiences and evidence.

PARTICIPATING IN THE COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

WHAT IS IT?

The global CFS Plenary Sessions are held each year in October, in conjunction with World Food Day. The Plenary is the central body for decision taking, debate and convergence between all

stakeholders at the global level. More information on the structure of the CFS Plenary's can be found on page 31 of the CFS/CSM Guide:

http://www.csm4cfs.org/files/Pagine/1/csm_cfsguide_finalapr2012.pdf

PREPARATION

There is a lot of work during the intersessional period that goes into the preparation of the Annual CFS Session. The Bureau, with support from the Advisory Group and the CFS Secretariat determine the annual agenda for the CFS. (Refer to above section on "intersessional activities".)

CSO PREPARATORY/WRAP-UP MEETINGS

Civil society are given a "CSO Room" for the duration of the CFS week (location varies), whereby participants come together twice a day to prepare in the mornings and wrap-up in the evenings (this will vary day-to-day).

Interpreters will be available for most preparatory/wrap-up meetings, unless they are needed for parallel side-events.

CSO SPOKESPERSONS

During the CFS week, civil society organisations are granted 5 speaking slots per session. It is during the Forum, with the support of the Policy Working Groups that these speaking slots are identified for each agenda item/session and then communicated to the Chairperson of the Session beforehand. The purpose of the 5 speaking slots is to enable the communication of the common positions developed by CSOs through the CSM. Civil society participants in the CFS are kindly requested to respect the priority, which is given by the CFS, to the communication of common positions facilitated through the CSM. The CFS recognizes that these common positions have a high level of legitimacy because they are the outcome of a process involving a diverse range of CSOs/NGOs, in particular social movements and peoples' organizations representing the people most affected by food and nutrition insecurity.

When spokespersons intervene, they are advised to be clear in whose name a position is being communicated, and to keep interventions as concise and focused on specific recommendations as possible.

SIDE-EVENTS

CSM Guidelines have been developed to provide a steer on the development and organization of CSO side events during the CFS Plenary Session.

Once the CSM is made aware of the number of side-events allotted to civil society, the CSM is responsible for putting out a call, collecting and submitting the proposals to ensure that as many CSOs as possible are able to be involved in the event, and to avoid duplication of efforts.

Upon request, the CSM Secretariat will arrange for interpretation for CSO side-events throughout the week.

More information can be found here:

http://www.csm4cfs.org/files/Pagine/24/csm_guidelines_cfs_side_events_110819.pdf

MEDIA

During the CFS Plenary Sessions and other intersessional activities, many Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) will work with the media to give their positions visibility. The main aim of the CSM as a facilitating structure is to ensure that the individual media work of CSOs supports, rather than undermines, the collective policy and media messages and helps give social movements a predominant voice in the media. In order to do this, the CSM has developed draft guidelines for media work during the intersessional and Annual Plenary Sessions.

THE MEDIA WORKING GROUP

A core media working group is in the process of being set up to oversee the achievement of these objectives. The working group will be facilitated by the CSM Secretariat and consist of a mix of policy and media people.

Taking these guidelines as a benchmark for media work, the CSM working group should:

- Promote consistency between CSO media messages and common CSO policy positions – and thereby also consistency in messaging between CSOs
- Promote CSO media work which is consistent with CSM principles and ways of working and media guidelines
- In particular, ensure that social movements are strongly visible in media work
- Target key media around the world – especially in key developing countries
- Maintain independence from governments and international organisations and ability to be critical of inadequacies in the policy issues

More information can be found here:

http://www.csm4cfs.org/files/Pagine/24/guidelines_on_media_work_050412_en.pdf