



Summary Report First Meeting of the Coordination Committee and Policy Seminars Córdoba, Spain, 30 May – 1 June, 2011

I. Background

Civil Society has come a long way since playing an influential role in the Reform of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) back in 2009. It was the full and active participation of civil society in the reform process, which ensured their recognition as official participants and their right to self-organise in future interactions with the CFS. As a result of this unprecedented reform, they were encouraged to autonomously establish a global mechanism to facilitate future CSO consultations and participation within the CFS.

During the 2010 Civil Society Consultation, just prior to the 36th Session of the CFS, a draft proposal for an *International Food Security and Nutrition Civil Society Mechanism for Relations with the CFS (CSM)* was presented and discussed. It was subsequently endorsed on the basis that an evaluation would be conducted after 1 year of operation and amendments made if/as necessary. The Consultation also served as the starting point to move forward processes and plans to appoint focal points to the Coordination Committee – the governing body of the CSM. Through the end of 2010 and up until mid-2011, consultations, nominations and selections took place in almost all of the 11 constituencies and 16 sub-regions. The results of these processes have been documented and made available to the public. Details on the membership of the Coordination Committee can be found on the official CSM website: <http://cso4cfs.org>.

With 75% of the Coordination Committee members endorsed, one of the principle tasks was to organise the first face-to-face meeting, so that the members could legitimize their new roles and effectively contribute to the work of the CFS in preparation for the 37th Session.

The First Meeting of the Coordination Committee was held in Cordoba, Spain, from 30 May to 1 June 2011. The purpose of the meeting was twofold:

1. Conduct a CSO seminar/training on CFS-related policy issues (Land tenure and agricultural investments, food price volatility, and the Global Strategic Framework)
 - a) Mobilise CSOs on main policy issues
 - b) Identify key priority demands
 - c) Increase shared understanding
 - d) Strategize until the CFS Session
2. Organisational functioning of the CSM for the CFS
 - a) Appoint 4 Advisory Group members by and among the CC members
 - b) Draft CSM 2011 work-plan and finalise terms of reference for CC
 - c) Set up a light Rome-based Secretariat

II. Participants

There were 3 categories of participants during the meeting, Coordination Committee Members, Coordination Committee Focal Points and Observers. Focal points were representatives of either a constituency or sub-region where a consultation process has not yet begun or has not been concluded, and therefore an endorsed CC member had not been selected. The participants represented a diverse range of constituencies and sub-regions,

reflective of the CSM constituency and sub-regional quota system. Spaces for observer were prioritized to social movement representatives, who had specifically requested to be present for the training portion of the meeting.

III. Outcomes of the Policy Seminars

The policy seminars focused on two major CFS-related policy discussions: (1) Land Tenure and Agricultural Investment and (2) Food Price Volatility. In addition to the two prominent sessions, a third information seminar for all participants was dedicated to the (3) Global Strategic Framework (GSF). The purpose of the seminars was to train and increase the individual and collective capacity of the Coordination Committee and its members. Participants were asked to choose one of the two seminars for the duration of the two days, based on their interests and experience. Resource persons related to the two issues were chosen to facilitate and guide the discussions with the objectives to:

- Identify key priority demands
- Increase a shared understanding and
- Discuss how best to strategize until the 37th Session of the CFS.

Benoit Daviron (CIRAD), Team Leader for the High-Level Panel of Experts study on food price volatility attended as an observer to gain CSO insight and perspective for the HLPE policy report.

A brief summary of the key outcomes from each of the policy seminars:

1. Land Tenure and Agricultural Investment

During the land tenure and agricultural investment seminar, participants separated into two language groups, English and Multilingual. The purpose of which was to define the views and frame the perspectives of food producers on the presented issues. To do so, groups were assigned a list of questions (see below), the conclusions of which were reported back during Plenary.

A) Based on the discussions on agricultural investment, the following key points were drawn:

1. What are the most crucial investments for small-scale farmers, fisherfolk and pastoralists?
 - Local Infrastructure and Community Based Governance Systems
 - Promotion of Agro-ecology and Family Farming
 - Education and Training
2. What are the main sources of investment for small-scale farmers, fisherfolk and pastoralists?
 - Farmer investment, investment by the state and private sector investment. Although the majority of investment is made by the farmers themselves (approximately 80%)
3. What problems do small-scale farmers, fisherfolk, pastoralists face to undertake these investments?
 - Market protection at the expense of local food producers
 - Land redistribution and agrarian reform

- Erosion of traditional systems of governance
- Large-scale land acquisitions or land grabbing
- Lack of recognition of small-scale producers and non-sedentary food producers
- Migration of rural youth, loss of young farmers

4. Next Steps: How to get prepared for the CFS-led process on agricultural investment?

- **Establish a working group** on Agricultural Investment within the CSM
- Prepare a document to clarify further what is meant by investment
- Establish a clear idea of what kind of investment is needed and identify priorities in terms of investments
- Proposal to improve the efficiency of statistical methods to measure investments made by family farming production
- A mapping of dangerous investments in agriculture
- Broader discussion and comprehension of the language and terminology used to ensure stronger communication within the CSM (e.g. investment, farmer, small-scale food producer etc.)

B) Results from the discussion on the process of the Voluntary Guidelines:

Although a request had been made to the FAO Secretariat by civil society, to release the first draft of the VGs for discussion and input during the Land Tenure policy seminar, it was not made available in time. Upon its release on 1 June, CSOs held an informal meeting to preliminarily assess the first draft. Based on this discussion, the CSOs prepared comments (available here: http://cso4cfs.files.wordpress.com/2010/11/first-draft-vg_en.pdf), which were used to prepare the first meeting of the open-ended working group (OEWG) between 12 – 17 June 2011.

Confirmation about funding CSO participation to the first meeting of the OEWG was not given prior to the meeting in Córdoba. As a result, no persons were appointed in Córdoba as CSO spokespersons for the first meeting of the OEWG. Nonetheless, CSOs decided to mobilize their own funds to ensure the participation of a small delegation. The CSO delegation who attended the first meeting of the OEWG will write a briefing about the outcome of the meeting, and will make suggestions on how to prepare for the July negotiations. Furthermore, it was decided that the Facilitating Team set up by the IPC to facilitate the VG process will continue to do so by the mandate of the CSM. It was also decided that Sofia Monsalve from FIAN International will continue in her role as Focal Point/Facilitator of the process.

It was concluded that the continuous and meaningful participation of CSOs within the CFS OEWGs (VGs, RAI) and task teams (Agricultural Investment) are the best ways forward in providing valuable inputs into the CFS 37th Session.

2. Food Price Volatility

Participants of the food price volatility (FPV) seminar convened into regional groups to discuss the regional issues of FPV before coming back into plenary and reaching the following conclusions:

Four main areas of policy effecting FPV have been identified:

a. **Price policies**

Price policies are the answer to food price volatility. We need to reverse the terms of the debate by starting with volatility at the local, national and regional, not the international level. Price policies should not only address the issue of volatility, but also the issue of fair prices, to allow food producers to have a decent income and on the other hand, poor consumers to access food. Price policies should therefore:

- Cover the costs of production and a decent income
- Respect basic rights including the right to food (also for agricultural workers), decent income, social rights, social protection
- Internalise positive and negative externalities (value public goods, sanction public bads)
- Allow food producers and consumers to take control over the price formation
- Strengthen public policies of price, including supply management to avoid dumping practices

b. **Trade**

Trading food is a widespread component of our food systems, however, trade rules cannot be determined by the WTO, unfair regional trade agreements and power concentration of a handful of corporations. Trade should have priorities rooted in the local food systems, and should be seen as an instrument of support to the right to food, food security and sovereignty principles. Trade policies should therefore:

- Prioritise the local and domestic markets first, strengthen regional coordination, leaving to the international markets a limited role
- Recognize the specificity of agricultural markets, food cannot be considered a mere commodity. Markets should be regulated by public policies to deliver on food security and sovereignty, sustainable use of natural resources, equitable market power,...
- Be discussed at the CFS to allow for coherence, coordination and accountability of policies and guarantee inclusiveness in decision making processes

c. **Food reserves**

Food reserves have the power to mitigate food price volatility. Food reserves should therefore:

- Be based on local food production systems and support local stock holding systems at the farm and community levels.
- Be regulated at the national levels by public policies and not determined by private sector interests. Public procurement policies can be supportive to local food systems.
- Include other feed stocks than just the three main cereals (rice, wheat and corn) and also pay attention to stocks for pastoralists and fisher folks.
- Be governed in an inclusive way, where both small food producers and poor consumers/agricultural workers should participate in their governance
- Emergency stocks and food aid should be in support of the local food systems and not respond to the needs of donor countries

d. **Financial Speculation**

- The financialisation of agricultural markets is a development in the food system that will not strengthen food systems but rather contributes to the problems of volatility or power concentration.
- We call governments to adopt the precautionary principle, where it is up to the financial investors to prove that their activities are indeed transparent and not harmful.
- Financial speculation needs to be addressed by the CFS as an important case of incoherence of policies

B) Next Steps: How to get prepared for the 37th Session of the CFS

- Reiterate the CFS as the only legitimate political space to discuss FPV
- Establish a working group on FPV to: provide input into the CFS round table Task Teams working to prepare recommendations for the 37th Session of the CFS; elaborate more detailed propositions on the 4 strategic issues; and look into the possibility to prepare a motion for vote at the CFS meeting.
- Prepare input into the HLPE reports via the FPV working group
- Identify potential areas for introducing a motion for vote from CSOs
- Mapping relevant experiences on FPV that are strengthening local food systems
- Identify training opportunities for local leaders to participate in high level debates and negotiations
- Involve issues of urban consumers, how can their concerns be raised in the agrobusiness model?
- Develop more concrete proposals on the strategic issues of price policies, trade regulation, food reserves and financial speculation

3. Global Strategic Framework (GSF)

An update and information session on the process of setting up a Global Strategic Framework took place during the afternoon plenary session on the second day of meetings. The GSF is at the core of the CFS reform, and depending on the support/opposition it receives, will define what role the new CFS will play in relation to other intergovernmental processes (G8/20, WTO, IMF etc.). To ensure a strong commitment from key Governments, the following next steps will be taken:

- a. Until END of June 2011: Lobby with your governments to actively support the GSF process in the CFS and CFS Bureau
 - To be completed before the CFS Bureau meeting in July (approx. July 12th). A template letter has been sent to all CC participants in all 3 languages with an explanatory note to use when contacting governments.
- b. June – November 2011: Provide inputs to the electronic consultations on the GSF Annotated Outline
 - Deadline is November 18th 2011.
- c. 2012: National preparation for regional consultations on “draft 1” of the GSF
 - Based on the annotated outline and the electronic consultations. In parallel to the FAO regional conferences in the first semester of 2012.

IV. Outcomes of the First Meeting of the Coordination Committee

The third day of the meeting was dedicated to the institutional functioning of the CSM and participation was reserved for the endorsed Coordination Committee members. The objectives of the meeting were for the four *ad interim* civil society representatives of the Advisory Group to report on the major results of their involvement in the Advisory Group since 2010, and outline key CFS political priorities that the Coordination Committee need to address. Furthermore, it was to clarify the objectives and functions of the CSM Coordination Committee and roles of its members, as well as the roles of the four civil society representatives to the CFS Advisory Group. In order to make the best use of the little time available, the CC members convened into regional groups and were asked to discuss and report back to Plenary on the following:

1. Building communication and synergies: Each sub-region and constituency to briefly report on how it conducted its process of selection of the CC member(s). How to improve outreach and communication over the coming period? How to build communication and synergies among different constituencies?
2. Making the CFS process relevant to the concerns of your sub-region: how could global policy decisions on the issues of price volatility and land and investment at the 37th Session of the CFs impact on your regional/national processes and struggles (positively and negatively)?
3. Participating in preparations for the CFS in October: How can your region contribute to the various tasks in the different thematic areas?
4. Attaining advocacy objectives: what are the priority advocacy objectives vis-à-vis governments in the region in the run-up to the 37th Session and how could they be promoted? What kinds of material do you need to support your advocacy/communications work?

More details on the outcomes of the working groups will be available in the full report.

The following priority objectives for the CSM for 2011/12 were identified:

- Link experiences of CSOs at the national level to feed into global political processes.
- Enhance communication and links between and among constituencies and sub-regions at the regional level.
- Capacity building of CSOs on CFS-related policy issues to ensure greater understanding and concrete engagement
- Strengthen positions of CSOs on key policy issues
- Raise awareness of the CSM and CFS at the national and regional levels to broaden outreach to civil society organisations dealing with food security and nutrition, with particular focus on the South.
- Engage in and contribute to annual CFS plenary sessions and intercessional activities.

Specific outcomes of the CC meeting:

- The Current ad interim Advisory Group Members will continue with their mandate until October 2011, to allow for more capacity building within the Coordination Committee.
- An ongoing rotational system to appoint CSO representatives to the Advisory Group meetings will be considered for the future. Rotation could take into consideration the capacity and expertise of the CC members in relation to the issue being discussed.
- The Pacific Islands has been recognized as its own sub-region, apart from Australia/New Zealand and will make up the 17th sub-region represented in the Coordination Committee. The reasons presented for this, is that the Western World has imposed the linking of these two sub-regions together merely based on their proximity to one another and location, despite the fact that they have very different challenges/constraints and development needs.

V. Next Steps for Civil Society in relations with the CFS

1. Policy Working Groups

One of the primary decisions to come out of the policy seminars was to form policy-working groups. The purpose of which will be to facilitate civil society input and participation with the CFS task teams, which have been created to help prepare for the 37th Session of the CFS. They will also help facilitate participation in the OEWGs created for multi-stakeholder consultation (including the VG, RAI etc.). Working groups will be formed (some of which already exist), and facilitators assigned for the following issues:

1. Voluntary Guidelines on Land Tenure
2. Agricultural Investment
3. Food Price Volatility
4. Global Strategic Framework
5. Gender and Nutrition

Civil society organisations through the CSM will be able to provide collective inputs into the CFS political processes vis-à-vis the working groups. The future success of the CSM will greatly depend on the quality of CSO engagement and input into the CFS policy discussions, and creating specific working groups that correlate to the CFS priorities will help translate experience and expertise into concrete proposals and negotiations.

2. Develop 2011 CSM work-plan and individual CC member work-plans

An overall road map/work plan for the CSM which details activities and outputs for the remainder of 2011 will ensure that the CC are organised in their joint efforts at the national, regional and global levels. It will also provide the opportunity to participate and organise regional initiatives with the sub-regional representatives.

During the meeting, CC members committed to providing individual work plans and to submit reasonable requests for human resource support for outreach and advocacy work by the end of June 2011. The individual CC work plans will identify key priorities and activities for their respective constituencies and sub-regions, and ways in which they will conduct their outreach work. The CSM Secretariat is foreseen to support the CC members in their initiatives and will be responsible for posting all information related to the work plans on the CSO4CFS website.

3. Produce a lesson learning document and guidelines for future selection process of CC members

To aid with the one-year evaluation of the CSM (to be held in October 2011) members of the Coordination Committee will be identified to help conduct consultations with a broad range of CSOs and other CC member, to produce a lesson learning document to be shared at the October 2011 CSO meeting.

4. Organise CSO Meeting in preparation for the 37th Session of the CFS

It is foreseen that in preparation for the 37th Session of the CFS, a Civil Society Meeting will be held in October 2011. The CSO Meeting will include participants inclusive of and beyond the Coordination Committee members of the CSM. In the preliminary stages of discussion, it is suggested the meeting will be open to all interested civil society participants, but will be limited to 40 supported delegates (voting participants). The meeting will provide an important occasion for exchanging information from the national and sub-regional levels, discussing the priority policy issues on the CFS 37 agenda and deliberating common policy positions. It will also provide the opportunity to conduct an evaluation of the first year of operation for the CSM. It is expected that at this meeting, CC members will democratically elect the four civil society representatives to the Advisory Group, and discuss the possibility of extending the mandate of the current Coordination Committee until October 2012, considering the fact that they have actively started their mandate only in mid 2011 (also pending on outcome of lessons learned from year 1)

5. Establish a Rome-based Secretariat

Due to a lack of resources, a CSM Secretariat has yet to be established. Up until now, the IPC and Oxfam have contributed human resources to organise the preparatory meetings and to facilitate some communication and outreach activities. Once funding is secured, it was suggested during the meeting that three people from the Coordination Committee who have been closely involved in the process should sit on a selection committee to draft the ToRs, advertise the posts and fill the recommended three positions (overall coordinator, communications and policy officer and finance/admin officer).