

# FOOD POLICY UPDATE

## FROM ROME

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**Food Policy Updates from Rome** aims to provide an up-to-date information on the global food governance system and strategic activities of ActionAid.

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## The Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

### 1. Policy Round Tables—37<sup>th</sup> Session of the CFS

Three policy round tables will be held during the 37<sup>th</sup> Session of the CFS in October: a) [agricultural investment](#) (provisional guidelines for presenters, 61 KB, PDF); b) food price volatility; and c) [gender, food security and nutrition](#) (provisional guidelines for presenters, 102 KB, DOC).

Three *Policy Roundtable Task Teams* have been set up by the CFS Secretariat to prepare the agenda items and to propose panelists for each Round Table, including chairpersons.

Selected panelists will present each issue with background documents. All participants, including civil society organisations (CSOs), will discuss the policy recommendations proposed in the documents; once endorsed, they will be included in the CFS 37 Final Report.

During the first meeting of the Coordination Committee of the Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) in Cordoba (30 May-1 June), it was decided that working groups will be created for the key agenda items of the CFS 37. These *CSM Working Groups* will work closely the CFS Task Teams to prepare for the Round Tables and to coordinate CSO inputs to the background documents.

Facilitators for each CSM Working Group have been appointed at the Cordoba meeting; their main task is to share information, coordinate inputs and facilitate the participation and inclusion of CSOs in all processes leading up to the CFS Plenary.

#### **Policy Round Table No. 1**

*“How to Increase Food Security and Small-holder-Sensitive Investment in Agriculture”*  
Chair: IFAD • CSM Working Group Facilitator: Nora McKeon (Terra Nuova)

The first meeting of the CFS Task Team on Agricultural Investment took place on 15 June at the FAO. The CFS Secretariat presented the [draft concept note](#) (73.4 KB, PDF) for the Round Table, and received initial feedback from the different Advisory Group stakeholders and civil society representatives – including, Sofia Monsalve (FIAN), Nico Verhagen (La Via Campesina via teleconference), Mamadou Goita (ROPPA via teleconference) and Antonio Onorati (Crocevia). [Civil society members emphasised](#) (CSO comments, 37.4 KB, PDF) the need to address the issue of agricultural investments from the perspective of smallholder farmers and their needs; investment in agriculture should enhance food security, contribute to the fight against poverty, and focus on the smallholder-led sustainable agriculture.

#### CFS Policy Roundtable Task Teams

1. Agricultural Investment Task Team
2. Food Price Volatility Task Team
3. Gender, Food Security and Nutrition Task Team

*Each Task Team is made up of Advisory Group members, which includes UN bodies, research institutes, private sector organisations, financial institutions and CSOs.*

**Policy Round Table No. 2***“Gender, Food Security and Nutrition”**Chair: WFP • CSM Working Group Facilitator: Sarojeni Rengam (CSM CC representative for Women’s constituency)*

The [first meeting](#) (19 KB, DOC) for this Task Team also took place on the 15th at the FAO. The CFS Secretariat presented the first [draft concept note](#) (90.3 KB, PDF). ActionAid participated in the meeting as a member of the Task Team to discuss the [proposed outline](#) (49 KB, DOC) for the Round Table and the way forward.

Important background documents for this Round Table will be the FAO’s [State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11: Women in Agriculture](#) (3.33 MB, PDF) and the World Bank’s [2012 World Development Report: Gender Equality and Development](#).

**Policy Round Table No. 3***“Food Price Volatility”**Chair: FAO • CSM Working Group Facilitator: Thierry Kesteloot (Oxfam)*

The first meeting of the Task Team on Food Price Volatility (Main conclusions, 39.7 KB, PDF) took place on 17 June at the FAO. The CFS Secretariat presented the first [draft concept note](#) (41.7 KB, PDF) for the Round Table and received initial feedback from the different Advisory Group stakeholders. Civil society representatives attending the meeting—Thierry Kesteloot (Oxfam-Solidariteit) and Antonio Onorati (Crocevia)—[suggested](#) (Summary of CSO recommendations, 30 KB, PDF) the CFS to recommend policy options for countries to reduce their dependency on food imports, to focus on agroecology to strengthen local production, to regulate the financial commodity market, and finally to introduce a system of national and regional food reserves.

**For further information on the CFS Policy Round Tables**Link: <http://www.fao.org/cfs/workingspace/>

User Name: TaskTeam

Password: CFS37RT

**2. FAO Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of tenure of Land and Natural Resources (VGs) – June meeting and next steps**

The first meeting of the Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) on the VGs was held from 14 to 17 June at the FAO. ActionAid was one of the four CSO spokespersons invited to attend this meeting. The objective of the meeting was to forge consensus among members for a final draft of the VGs and to recommend its adoption by the CFS in October.

The [Bracketed First Draft of the VGs](#) (441 KB, PDF) was circulated following the meeting by Gregory Myers, Chair of the OEWG, with all the comments from Member States and civil society participants. In the [Chair’s Summary](#) (56.6 KB, PDF), he identified *five key issues* that are likely to challenge the achievement of consensus in July, when formal negotiations for the finalisation of the VGs will begin:

- a) [Scope and Purpose of VG](#) (Working Document, 32.3 KB, PDF), including whether or not to include water and other natural resources
- b) Land Reform, including Redistribution and Expropriation (sections 15 and 16)
- c) Land Markets (section 4.11), Investments, and Concessions (including discussion of balancing pro-investment and safeguards, including FPIC) (sections 9 and 12)
- d) Language harmonisation with international agreements
- e) Definition of state and non-state actors and their roles (section 4 and other places in the document)

Proactive input from ActionAid, the EU Delegation and Oxfam on strengthening the treatment of gender in the VGs has been recognised and it was agreed that an additional gender section will be included in the final text.

Based on requests for clarifications for a number of terms used in the VGs, the FAO Secretariat provided a [Working Document](#) (35.5 KB, PDF), explaining terms such as “implementing agencies”, “investment concessions”, “gender sensitive”, and “tenure” - including subsidiary, customary and informal tenure rights.

In addition, all participants agreed on the need to improve the section on “Monitoring and Implementation” and several members and participants offered to provide an alternative language so as to strengthen the section.

Following the meeting, CSOs prepared a briefing note outlining alternative proposals on each of the five key issues addressed above ([EN](#), 89 KB, PDF/ [ES](#), 92 KB, PDF/ [FR](#) 96 KB, PDF).

### 3. The High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) Study on Climate Change

The HLPE is conducting a new study on climate change to facilitate and inform the policy decision-making of CFS members. Member States have encouraged the HLPE to finalise the study before the Rio+20 Earth Summit in June 2012. The HLPE released the [proposed scope of the study](#) (102 KB, PDF), which identifies the following focus areas:

- a) Assessing direct and indirect impacts of climate change on food security and nutrition;
- b) Identifying vulnerable regions and populations;
- c) Adaptation and mitigation options for food security and nutrition; and
- d) Recommendations for policies and actions.

### 4. Mapping Food Security Actions at Country Level

The Task Team on Mapping prepared the [first draft report](#) (92 KB, DOC) to submit to the CFS Plenary in October, with a first set of recommendations in the so-called “decision boxes”. The main recommendations for the Plenary are to continue to support the development and implementation of country level mapping of food security and nutrition actions and to request the Secretariat to continue facilitating the process and to provide an update at the session of the CFS in 2012.

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## UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

### I. FAO Conference and the New Director General



Ministers and high level representatives from 191 Member States have elected **José Graziano da Silva** as the new Director General of the FAO to replace Jacques Diouf who has led the organisation for the past 18 years. Graziano da Silva received a total of 92 votes out of 180 votes cast, winning over former Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Ángel Moratinos Cuyaubé, who received 88 votes.



Ruchi Tripathi, ActionAid's Head of Right to Food, reads the CSO statement to FAO Member States and the new Director General © Alberta Guerra



ActionAid meets with the new FAO Director General, Jose Graziano da Silva © Alberta Guerra

On the day of the election, ActionAid, Oxfam, and WOCAN (Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture and Natural Resource Management), together with many other CSOs, released a [joint statement](#) (281 KB, PDF), urging the Member States and the new Director General to put women at the center of FAO activities.

In a [video](#) released on the same day, the FAO Good Will Ambassador, **Anggun Cipta Sasmi**, explained that women farmers can save up to 100-150 more million people from hunger if they are provided with adequate resources.

Welcoming the seven-point action plan outlined in the joint CSO statement, Graziano da Silva stressed that women's empowerment will be the core of his mandate.

***“Timeliness [on the focus on women in food and agriculture] could not be better. The road ahead is clear.”***

- FAO Director-General Elect  
José Graziano da Silva

Blogs from the FAO Conference:  
<http://bit.ly/qLvY4Y>  
<http://bit.ly/puCs1g>

## 2. FAO Launches New Publication: *Save and Grow*

The FAO launched a new publication, [Save and Grow](#), at the FAO Conference, encouraging the shift to agroecological production systems. The report calls for sustainable crop intensification as the only viable way to produce more food for the growing world population. Many of the findings in the report are similar to what ActionAid has been advocating for years; the new approach calls for supporting smallholder farmers in adopting techniques that, partly drawn by conservation agriculture, do away with or minimise ploughing and tilling, thus preserving soil structure and health.

## 3. FAO Regional Policy Seminars to Address High Food Prices

On 8-9 June, **Elisa Jabor Huguency**, ActionAid's Regional Policy and Programme Interim Coordinator for the Americas, attended the [Sub-Regional Seminar on “Food Price Volatility: Threats and Opportunities” in Santiago, Chile](#) (Report of the Seminar, 175 KB, DOC). Organised by the FAO, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the seminar was attended by high level representatives from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay, as well as international agencies including the World Food Programme (WFP), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and IFAD, and representatives from the Embassies of the United States, France, and the MERCOSUR.

The seminar was an important venue for exchanging experiences regarding measures taken by countries to deal with the threats and opportunities of the rising food prices. During the seminar, the role of smallholder agriculture in ensuring food security and the need to open up the seminars to underrepresented CSOs were highlighted.

#### 4. Consultation on the Implementation of the Right to Food: Experiences from Latin America & the Caribbean

On 9-10 June, an expert consultation on the right to food in Latin America and the Caribbean – jointly organised by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the FAO – was held in Bogotá, Colombia. Around 50 food experts, policy-makers and CSOs discussed the achievements made and challenges ahead in the realisation of the right to food in the region. ActionAid Haiti's Food Security Coordinator, Macdonald Michel, [attended this consultation](#) (Report of the consultation, 25.1 KB, DOC) along with other CSO representatives from Oxfam, FIAN and La Via Campesina participated in this consultation.

The consultation involved discussions on how to increase public awareness on the right to food, as well as the importance of opening up a platform for dialogue among diverse actors, including government officials, parliamentarians, national human rights institutions and CSOs.

#### European Union (EU)

##### European Seminar: "Agricultural Market Volatility – Consequences and Political Actions"

On 21 June, ActionAid and IFSN attended the seminar on "[Agricultural Market Volatility—Consequences and Political Actions](#)" (Programme, 179 KB, PDF), organised by the Belgium Platform for Food Security, at the European Parliament in Brussels. Seminar participants discussed the main causes of food price volatility and possible tools to stabilise agricultural markets.

There were lively discussions around supply management tools (e.g. grain stocks) to regulate food production and to stabilise prices. Another important issue discussed at the seminar was the need to better monitor and analyse the causes of food price rise at the national level, and its impact on farmers and their production decision making. ActionAid is moving forward in this direction with the forthcoming study on national food prices in Uganda, Burkina Faso, Senegal and Afghanistan.

#### Upcoming Events

##### JULY

- **CFS Led Negotiations for the Finalisation of the VGs**  
12-15 July, FAO Rome, Italy  
For more information: <http://www.sharefair.net/share-fair-11-rome>

##### SEPTEMBER

- **Second Global AgriKnowledge Share Fair** - Jointly organised by FAO, IFAD, WFP, Biodiversity International  
26-29 September, IFAD, Rome, Italy  
For more information: <http://www.sharefair.net/share-fair-11-rome>

##### OCTOBER

- **Family Farming International Congress: Feeding the World, Caring for the Earth** - Organised by World Rural Forum  
5-7 October, Bilbao, Basque Country, Spain  
For more information: <http://www.ruralforum.net>
- **CFS 37th Plenary Session**  
17-22 October, FAO, Rome, Italy

