

## Accountability in the Committee on World Food Security

### Introduction

The UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) has been dealing with important topics related to food insecurity and malnutrition. Many of these issues are directly linked to the struggles of social movements and civil society organizations (CSOs) involved in changing realities at the national and local level, and are thus highly relevant for them. The 2009 reform of the CFS opened the body up for participation from groups that have traditionally been excluded from decision making in relation to food and nutrition, including peasants, pastoralists, fisherfolks, indigenous peoples, agricultural and food workers, landless, women, youth, consumers, and the urban food insecure.

In this context, the monitoring of the impacts of CFS decisions and policies becomes crucial. After all, the promotion of accountability, particularly through an innovative monitoring mechanism based on human rights, is one of the key functions of the CFS. Yet the establishment of such a monitoring mechanism is still pending more than 5 years after the CFS reform.

### CSM Proposal for an Innovate Monitoring Mechanism

The CFS Open-Ended Working Group on Monitoring has been for some time discussing about the appropriate monitoring mechanism for the CFS. The starting points for the proposals put forward by the Civil Society Mechanism of the CFS (CSM) are the Global Strategic Framework's (GSF) five principles for monitoring and accountability systems:

- They should be human-rights based, with particular reference to the progressive realization of the right to adequate food;
- they should make it possible for decision-makers to be held accountable;
- they should be participatory and include assessments that involve all stakeholders and beneficiaries, including the most vulnerable;
- they should be simple, yet comprehensive, accurate, timely and understandable to all, with indicators disaggregated by sex, age, region, etc., that capture impact, process and expected outcomes; and
- they should not duplicate existing systems but rather build upon and strengthen national statistical and analytical capacities.

Key elements of the CSM proposal include in-depth country assessments, the holding of national, regional and global events on monitoring, and dedicating every year during the CFS annual meetings an entire session to reporting on these monitoring exercises.

Social movements and CSOs are called upon to develop and carry out their own independent monitoring of CFS decisions and frameworks. They can:

- prepare their own reports using the Global Strategic Framework on Food Security and Nutrition, the Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests, and other standards agreed upon by the CFS as baselines for the monitoring;
- organize national events to discuss the impact of CFS frameworks in their countries;
- encourage national governments to establish participatory monitoring platforms to assess the progress in the realization of the right to adequate food and nutrition;
- organize regional events to discuss the impact of the CFS at the regional level;
- seek and promote synergies among the national monitoring mechanisms (e.g. national human rights commissions or ombudsperson) and the regional and international human rights reporting systems, improving the reports submitted to these bodies using CFS frameworks as baseline.

In 2015 the CFS will conduct a global thematic event to take stock of the use and application of the Guidelines on Governance of Tenure. All CSO are invited to submit their inputs in order to prepare an independent CSO report on this topic. This report will be facilitated by the CSM.