**Consultation for the development of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women’s and Girls’ Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition**

Members of the ***Next Gen(d)eration Leadership Initiative*** (<https://www.nextgenderationleaders.org/>) we are pleased to be able to share our feedback in response to the [guiding questions](https://www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/consultations/CFS-voluntary-guidelines-GEWE) through this consultation process for the development of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women’s and Girls’ Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition.

Our overarching comments is the need to integrate leadership by women as part of the VG, including in professional roles. By way of example, we consider gender equality in leadership roles at FAO and other international food systems institutions as part of gender equality in food systems. We suggest the messages of the Global Food Systems 50/50 report are included. (See: <https://globalhealth5050.org/globalfood5050/>)

Specific comments are below:

Does the [Zero Draft](https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs2021/gender/CFS_GEWE_Zero_Draft_final_EN.pdf) appropriately capture the main challenges and barriers that hinder progress in achieving gender equality and the full realization of women’s and girls’ rights in the context of food security and nutrition? If not, what do you think is missing or should be adjusted?

* Overall, we commend the drafting team for an important and well written guideline. The comments we have provided are meant to help further.
* Part 1 Point 7 notes the important role of women as agents in the food system and how gender equality is important, but little is said about the role of women as leaders and decision makers. There needs to be more emphasis on the importance equality in decision making in households, communities or governments and the links to a range of outcomes.
* Part 1 Points 10 and 16 should also include leadership as an objective:
  + “…to advance gender equality, women’s and girls’ rights, and women’s and girls’ empowerment and leadership as part of their efforts to eradicate hunger¸ food insecurity and malnutrition, towards the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security.”
  + “The Guidelines are intended for all stakeholders that are involved in addressing food security and nutrition, gender equality, women’s empowerment and leadership.”
* Part 1 Point 13 should also acknowledge the role of women currently in leading across the various sectors of the food and nutrition system in implementing the various action plans in communities, on the ground, at national and multilateral levels.

Does **Part 2 of the Zero Draft** satisfactorily reflect the core principles which should underpin the Guidelines? If not, how do you propose to improve these principles?

* Part 2 Point 20 should also recognize women and girls as leaders: “The Guidelines rest integrally on strengthening women’s and girls’ empowerment, recognizing them as right holders, agents of change and leaders in their space”.

Do the nine sections of **Part 3 of the Zero Draft** comprehensively cover the policy areas to be addressed to achieve gender equality and the full realization of women’s and girls’ rights in the context of food security and nutrition? If not, what do you think is missing?

* We were very pleased to see the specific listing of leadership within section 3.1. Under this section, the policy areas for discussion it would also be useful to explicitly add leadership development. It should also address how to overcome structural (political & economic) barriers to gender equality in leadership.

Does **Part 4 of the Zero Draft** provide all the elements necessary for effective implementation and monitoring of the use and application of the Guidelines? If not, what do you propose to add or change?

* Part 4 appears to be vague. There should be language about the need for governments to report how they are performing relative to these guidelines in Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound (SMART) ways. The development of a rubrics and tools for monitoring can help support governments and agencies.

Thank you for your consideration of our feedback,

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