**Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition • FSN Forum**



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# ****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** (**<https://www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/consultations/CFS-voluntary-guidelines-GEWE>**) **[1]****

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**[1] Contribution submitted on November 29, 2021 (Monday) to** Françoise Trine, Marina Calvino and Alyson Brody, CFS (Committee of World Food Security) Secretariat*,* **the** FSN Forum Team, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00153 Rome, Italy **at Email** fsn-moderator@fao.org

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**Important Note**: **(a)** Views expressed below are personal (and **NOT** of the PERC, SNDTWU, the contributor was employed previously). **(b)** Wherever needed, data sources have been quoted in the text.

* Does the Zero Draft 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?

The Zero Draft adequately covers all 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 (FSN). However, I am of the determined view that the component of value education (VE) should form part of the interventions needed to advance gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment. Appropriately designed VE programs are critical to (a) achieving the vision of ending hunger, and (b) ensuring FSN for all.  The conceptual framework of VE, in broader terms, can be defined as *“the process by which people give moral values to each other”*.

The VE can take place at home, as well as in schools, colleges, universities, offender institutions and voluntary youth organizations. There are two main approaches to values education. Some see it as inculcating or transmitting a set of values which often come from societal or cultural ethics (or religious rules). Others see it as a type of dialogue where people are gradually brought to their own realization of what is good behavior for themselves and their community. The VE also leads to success.

[Source: Value Education: Definition and the Concept of Value Education (With Example): <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/essay/value-education-definition-and-the-concept-of-value-education-with-example/30222>, accessed on November 28, 2021]

Diagram-1 depicts the broad components that should form part of VE. As shown in the diagram, there are two aspects: (a) Explicit VE, and (b) Implicit VE. Explicit VE is associated with those different pedagogies, methods or programmes that teachers or educators use in order to create learning experiences for students when it comes to value questions. Implicit VE, on the other hand, covers those aspects of the educational experience resulting in value influence learning, which can be related to the concept of hidden curriculum. This discussion on implicit and explicit raises the philosophical problem of whether or not an unintentional action can be called education.

[Source: Value Education: Definition and the Concept of Value Education (With Example): <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/essay/value-education-definition-and-the-concept-of-value-education-with-example/30222>, accessed on November 28, 2021]

Diagram-1: Components of Value Education (VE)



[Source: <https://www.yourarticlelibrary.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/clip_image00277.jpg>, accessed on November 28, 2021]

More than good intentions are required to remove the inequities and obstacles facing women and girls. Nor is amendment of legislation that is gender-discriminatory by itself sufficient. Social and cultural norms and the gendered division of roles they impose must be challenged. Empowerment of women is required. This means a greater role for women in decision making at all levels, including the household, local communities, and national parliaments. Women’s empowerment is not only a priority goal in itself but an intrinsic human right, already recognized as such in pledges and commitments by governments. It is recognized also because it has instrumental value and is a condition for society to benefit from the increased contribution of women to food security and adequate nutrition. Society urgently needs the full potential of women’s contribution, but it can only materialize with wider recognition and acknowledgment (by women and men alike) of its benefits to all society, and the vital importance of reshaping social structures. It is in this very broader context the VE plays a significant and meaningful role.

[Source: FAO and ADB (2013). “Gender Equality and Food Security: Women’s Empowerment as a Tool Against Hunger”. Manila, Philippines: Asian Development Bank (ADB), Accessed on November 29, 2021 from: <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/30315/gender-equality-and-food-security.pdf>]

* 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?

According to my research-based opinion, Part 2 of the Zero Draft **does not** satisfactorily (and adequately) reflect the core principles which should underpin the Guidelines. I (contributor of the on-going Consultation) am of the determined view that the principle of protection of women and girls from consequences resulting from climate change and global warming should form part of the principles. I present following argument in support of what I say here:

Climate change is one of the greatest global challenges of the twenty-first century. Its impacts vary among regions, generations, age, classes, income groups, and gender. Based on the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), it is evident that people who are already most vulnerable and marginalized will also experience the greatest impacts. The poor, primarily in developing countries, are expected to be disproportionately affected and consequently in the greatest need of adaptation strategies in the face of climate variability and change. Both women and men working in natural resource sectors, such as agriculture, are likely to be affected. However, the impact of climate change on gender is not the same. Women are increasingly being seen as more vulnerable than men to the impacts of climate change, mainly because they represent the majority of the world's poor and are proportionally more dependent on threatened natural resources. The difference between men and women can also be seen in their differential roles, responsibilities, decision making, access to land and natural resources, opportunities and needs, which are held by both sexes. Worldwide, women have less access than men to resources such as land, credit, agricultural inputs, decision-making structures, technology, training and extension services that would enhance their capacity to adapt to climate change.

Women's vulnerability to climate change stems from a number of factors: social, economic and cultural. According to an estimate, nearly 70% of the 1.3 billion people living in conditions of poverty are women. In urban areas, 40 per cent of the poorest households are headed by women. Women predominate in the world's food production (50-80%), but they own less than 10 per cent of the land.

Women represent a high percentage of poor communities that are highly dependent on local natural resources for their livelihood, particularly in rural areas where they shoulder the major responsibility for household water supply and energy for cooking and heating, as well as for food security. In the Near East, women contribute up to 50 per cent of the agricultural workforce. They are mainly responsible for the more time-consuming and labour-intensive tasks that are carried out manually or with the use of simple tools. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the rural population has been decreasing in recent decades. Women are mainly engaged in subsistence farming, particularly horticulture, poultry and raising small livestock for home consumption.

Women have limited access to and control of environmental goods and services; they have negligible participation in decision-making, and are not involved in the distribution of environment management benefits. Consequently, women are less able to confront climate change. During extreme weather such as droughts and floods, women tend to work more to secure household livelihoods. This will leave less time for women to access training and education, develop skills or earn income. In Africa, female illiteracy rates were over 55 per cent in 2000, compared to 41 per cent for men. When coupled with inaccessibility to resources and decision-making processes, limited mobility places women where they are disproportionately affected by climate change.

In many societies, socio-cultural norms and childcare responsibilities prevent women from migrating or seeking refuge in other places or working when a disaster hits. Such a situation is likely to put more burden on women, such as travelling longer to get drinking water and wood for fuel. Women, in many developing countries suffer gender inequalities with respect to human rights, political and economic status, land ownership, housing conditions, exposure to violence, education and health. Climate change will be an added stressor that will aggravate women's vulnerability. It is widely known that during conflict, women face heightened domestic violence, sexual intimidation, human trafficking and rape.

In terms of strategies that need to be undertaken in order to **improve women's adaptation to climate change, the contributor of this consultation states that renewed efforts are need of the hour. This is because of the fact that i**n spite of their vulnerability, women are not only seen as victims of climate change, but they can also be seen as active and effective agents and promoters of adaptation and mitigation. For a long time women have historically developed knowledge and skills related to water harvesting and storage, food preservation and rationing, and natural resource management. In Africa, for example, old women represent wisdom pools with their inherited knowledge and expertise related to early warnings and mitigating the impacts of disasters. This knowledge and experience that has passed from one generation to another will be able to contribute effectively to enhancing local adaptive capacity and sustaining a community's livelihood.

[Source: Osman-Elasha, Balgis (Year of publication not mentioned). **“Women...In** The Shadow of Climate Change”. New York, the USA, United Nations (UN), Accessed on November 29, 2021 from:<https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/womenin-shadow-climate-change>**]**

* 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?

In the response to the above question, my response is: **no**. I am very critical in writing this. Nine sections of **Part 3 of the Zero Draft** will 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 *“the principle of protection of women and girls from consequences resulting from climate change and global warming”* (as outlined by the me [the contributor] in response to the above question). I have already presented (above) facts in support of including this renewed principle.

* 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 of the Zero Draft** provides adequate and necessary information needed for effective implementation of the initiatives needed for ensuring **gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment (in the context of food security and nutrition), at all levels (including macro and micro levels).** However, information provided on monitoring of the use and application of the Guidelines, according to best of my knowledge, **is not** **adequate**. I make herewith two points. First, national governments alone should not be entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring (and evaluation) tasks, other involved stakeholders should also be involved (in this endeavour).

Second, from monitoring mechanism point of view, it is pertinent to note that effective measurement of gender equality and women’s empowerment is challenging in low and middle-income countries (LMICs), and even more so in humanitarian settings. Conflict, natural disasters, and epidemics may increase gender inequities, but also present an opportunity to address them. These important and significant considerations need to be taken into account while designing and implementing monitoring framework.

[Source: Goulart, Céline M.; Purewal, Amber; Nakhuda, Humaira; Ampadu, Anita: Giancola, Amanda; Kortenaar, Jean-Luc; & Bassani, Diego G. (2021). “Tools for measuring gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) indicators in humanitarian settings”.Conflict and Health**,** Volume 15, Article number: 39 (2021), accessed on November 29, 2021 from:<https://conflictandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13031-021-00373-6>**]**

**Additional points by the contributor:**  I suggest following points in order to make the document titled ***Zero draft of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women’s and Girls’ Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition* (published on web link:** <https://www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/consultations/CFS-voluntary-guidelines-GEWE>**) more informative for the policy makers and other stakeholders working in the field of food security and nutrition (FSN), both at both macro and micro levels. In am mindful in putting forth the suggestions from practicality point of view. Outlined below are suggestions (which I am presenting in tabular form:**

**Table-1: Additional Points (Suggestions) [In Response to: 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]**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **S. No.**  | **Point Made (Suggestions)** | **Justification (Rationale)** |
| **1.** | Abbreviations of ley terms used: I suggest that abbreviations of ley terms (such as CFS, SDG, FSN, SME, & CEDAW) used in the document be explained, either in the beginning or at the end as Appendix.  | **This will facilitate the potential readers of the published document [1] understand the texts in a better manner.**  |
| **2.** | **Publisher (publication) details: I am of the determined view that as per standard academic and research code of conducts (and practices), publisher details need to be outlined. From the information provided on the web link [2]**, **I understand that the publisher of the document is: Committee of World Food Security (CFS). In this case, on the second page of the document, following information needs to added:**1. **Physical address of the CFS;**
2. **Year of publication;**
3. **Email (including telephone, of permissible) of the CFS;**
4. **ISBN (Print, PDF, and Online), if applicable;**
5. **Contributing authors (or collaborators); and**
6. **Copyright © details, if any.**
 | **Publication/publisher details need to be given; this is mandated as per research ethics. Importantly, I have come across several documents (published both through online and off line mode) wherein year of publication and name of publisher (including place or location of the publisher) are not specified. This makes the work of readers (of the published document) difficult; they need these details which need to be known while quoting the source (by readers) in research work (under reference section). Also, names of author (authors) and/or names of publishing organization (organizations) ought to be specified).**  |
| **3.** | **Additional resources: I suggest that details of other relevant publications (that are available both via online and offline modes) on guidelines on gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment (in the context of food security and nutrition) be included at the end as appendix.**  | **This arrangement will provide the readers of the documents will additional resources for the purpose of reference. More specifically, added information on resources will provide researchers and academicians with more references that are needed while authoring studies.**  |
| **4.** | **Executive summary: Summary of major findings of the work contained in the document [1] needs be presented. It should not exceed more than two pages.**  | **Presentation of relevant facts (under the heading Executive Summary) makes the publication more scientific and meaningful. Readers and researchers will it relevant while referring to the published work.**  |
| **5.** | **Feedback provision: I suggest that at end of the document [1], one-page blank sheet be added with the heading Feedback Sheet. I should be meant for obtaining inputs from the readers of the document (a) about its usefulness, & (b) on ways to improve it further. Thus, the Feedback Sheet should be divided in two parts. Notably, address (including email) should be added on which the readers can send their inputs (feedback).****Important Note: Although the present on-going Consultation [3]** aims at getting inputs from various policy makers & stakeholders on the Zero draft document **[1], I am suggesting above. However, I leave the final decision in this matter with the CFS team.**   | **Feedback is important aspect of the process of publishing any document. It is continuous process. It gains increased significance in the context of preparing and publishing a guideline like Zero draft of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women’s and Girls’ Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition.**  |
| **6.** | **Refer to page 17 of the document [1], heading/sub-heading** PART 2 - CORE PRINCIPLES THAT UNDERPIN THE GUIDELINES: Under 17 (The Guidelines are intended to build upon and complement the work and mandate of other …... including), there are **five points** (bullet marked) on Declarations, Conventions, & Resolutions which do not indicate web links. They need to be added.  | **This (adding relevant web links) will ensure that there is uniformity in presentation of facts in document [1]. Also, it will provide interested readers (users) with ready reference to access to information on provisions of the concerned** Declarations, Conventions, & Resolutions. **Important Note:** Five points not not showing web links are:* Universal Declaration of Human Rights – adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948 and human rights treaties which are binding for the respective State Parties
* International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights
* Security Council Resolution 1325
* International Conference on Population and Development, 1994
* Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995

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**Explanation of bold, red-marked numbers indicated in Table-1 above:**

**[1] Document titled: Zero draft of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women’s and Girls’ Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition**

**[2] Web link:** <https://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs2021/gender/CFS_GEWE_Zero_Draft_final_EN.pdf>

**[3] 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**