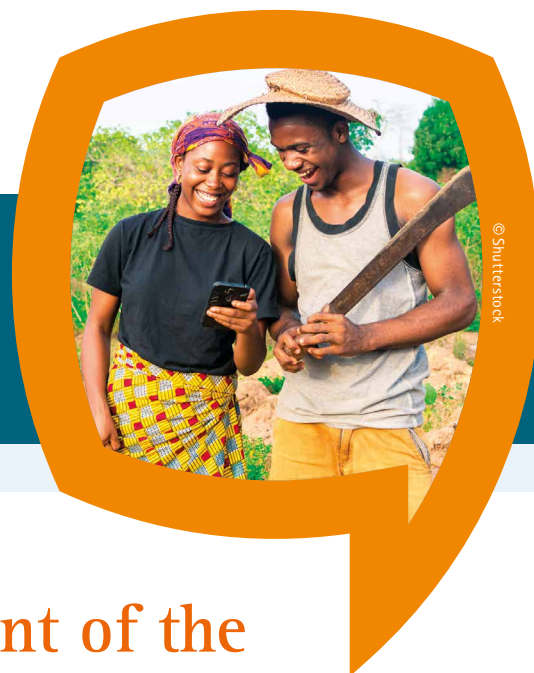




Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition

FSN Forum

Report of the
online consultation
No.175
from 16.09.2021
to 30.11.2021



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

About this online consultation

This document summarizes the online *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* held on the FAO Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN Forum) from 16 September to 30 November 2021. The consultation was facilitated by Françoise Trine, Marina Calvino and Alyson Brody from the Secretariat of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

This online consultation was part of a broader consultative process on the Zero Draft of the Voluntary Guidelines, which also included six regional consultations. Online consultation participants provided general feedback and specific comments on the four parts of the draft.

The 113 contributions received included comments from individual FSN Forum members and CFS regional consultation participants, official submissions from eight countries, and 25 contributions with official or collective feedback from international, regional and national organizations. The topic introduction and the guiding questions, as well as the contributions received, are available on the consultation page:

www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/consultations/CFS-voluntary-guidelines-GEWE

General feedback

Participants highlighted the urgency of addressing gender inequality with a holistic approach, implying the need to recognize the interdependencies between food security, nutrition, health, and gender equality (European Union, France, Denise Giacomini), and for transformation at both the individual and systemic level, and across informal and formal spheres of life (Norway, Loïs Archimbaud).

In addressing the root causes of gender inequality, the Guidelines should stress the key role patriarchal structures (Canada, France) and the political economy of food systems play in this regard (Lilian Nkengla). It is crucial that the Guidelines discuss throughout how the current food system, based on neoliberal policies, is unsustainable, and how it builds on and perpetuates gender inequality (Civil Society and



Indigenous Peoples Mechanism [CSM], Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries Section of the Asian Fisheries Society [GAFS], International Collective in Support of Fishworkers [ICSF]). In fact, the Guidelines should advocate for a structural transformation that addresses power imbalances, and put forward a model grounded in food sovereignty and a solid human rights framework (CSM, SwedBio, Vera Helena Lessa Villela) – in this regard, it is also essential to recognize the importance of agency, which should be clearly reflected in the Guidelines' approach (Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere [CARE], CSM, SwedBio). Throughout the Guidelines, agroecology should be highlighted as the preferred alternative, given its benefits in terms of sustainability, distribution of power and a more balanced access to resources (European Union, France, CARE, CSM, SwedBio, Lutz Depenbusch, Vera Helena Lessa Villela).

A comprehensive approach also requires systematic integration of specific groups of people, including girls and youth (Canada, CARE), as well as the following aspects (ensuring adequate recognition of differences between stakeholders):

- **Gender diversity.** Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) people and their concerns should be explicitly integrated (Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights [OHCHR], European Union, Canada, Norway, CSM, Private Sector Mechanism [PSM], ICSF, CARE, World Vision Australia, George Institute for Global Health [GIGH], Ruth Mendum, Shameem Sheik Dastagir, Alejandra Ortega).
- **Intersectionality.** All sections of the Guidelines should give greater attention to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, considering, *inter alia*, the following factors: skin colour, cultural background, ethnicity (Indigenous Peoples), age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, class, income, health/physical abilities and migration status (European Union, OHCHR, Canada, Finland, CSM, CARE, GIGH, SwedBio, Audrey Pomier Flobinus, Ruth Mendum).

- **Geographical diversity.** Rural and (peri-)urban realities should all be adequately addressed (European Union, CARE, CSM, SwedBio, World Vision Australia).
- **Agricultural production and value chain diversity.** Crop production, forestry, fisheries, aquaculture and livestock should all receive proper attention (European Union, CARE, CSM, GAFS, ICSF, SwedBio).

Furthermore, participants felt that adequately addressing the following aspects would make the Guidelines more complete and improve their relevance:

- **Breastfeeding.** The discussion should move beyond the nutritional needs of breastfeeding mothers (European Union) to stress: a) the need to support women and address cultural factors that hamper breastfeeding (Lissandra Santos), and b) the importance of implementing the WHO International Code of Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes (GIGH).
- **Climate change and environmental degradation (CARE).** The gender-differentiated impacts of different climate change effects on various types of ecosystems should be better addressed (United States of America, World Vision Australia, Santosh Kumar Mishra), as well as women's leadership (CARE) and engagement in adaptation efforts (United States of America, World Vision Australia, Santosh Kumar Mishra, Violet Chanza Black). The Guidelines should mainstream wetland activities (Gilbert Mugisho) and stress the need for patent-free technologies for climate-smart agriculture (Sarada Prasad Mohapatra).
- **Conflicts and protracted crises (Lilian Nkengla).** Conflict should be mentioned as a primary driver of food insecurity (Canada) and the socio-economic and nutritional impacts related to sanctions and other measures, as well as food aid, should be discussed (CSM, GIGH, Adeline Razoeliasoa, Brendaline Shieke Nkenen).
- **Context-specific and participatory analysis.** References to such analyses should be integrated throughout the document (European Union, CARE).
- **COVID-19.** The Guidelines should include adequate analysis and forward-looking initiatives related to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security, care responsibilities, gender-based violence (Canada) and access to education (European Union, Canada, Shameem Sheik Dastagir).
- **Energy poverty (Ruth Mendum).** Adverse effects on women and children in terms of air pollution, increased work burden, and safety risks during fuelwood collection should be addressed (Suani Coelho).

- ▶ **Engagement of men and boys** (Charity Kruger). The Guidelines should systemically integrate men's and boys' engagement (Canada, CARE, Self Employed Women's Association [SEWA], Deborah Joy Wilson, Lissandra Santos, Esther Muindi), highlighting the need for: a) promotion of positive masculinity (Loïs Archimbaud, Shameem Sheik Dastagir); b) social and behavioural change interventions (Deborah Joy Wilson); and c) engagement of male public figures in efforts that address gender-based violence (Gashawbeza Haile).
- ▶ **Fisheries and aquaculture.** These sectors have been neglected in relevant research and policymaking, while their own policies are often gender-blind. The Guidelines should advocate for adoption of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication [SSF Guidelines] (European Union, Karlynn Kelso) and systematically integrate the sectors' challenges. Specific issues include: a) the lack of formal recognition of and knowledge on tenure and user rights (European Union, GAFS); b) high vulnerability to climate change (European Union, ICSF); and c) fish-for-sex practices and the related high HIV prevalence among female fish sellers (European Union, SwedBio, Eni, Karlynn Kelso).
- ▶ **Financial inclusion.** Improving women's access to financial services and credit on favourable conditions needs more discussion (Adele Grembombo, Nawal Abdel-Gayoum Abdel-Rahman, John Ede, Marie-Louise Hayek). At the same time, the Guidelines should consider the limited effectiveness of microcredit services: empowerment would be better promoted by facilitating control over credit rather than access to it. Institutional saving services are crucial, but pension services should also be highlighted (Getaneh Gobezie).
- ▶ **Gender-transformative approaches** (SwedBio). Moving beyond "self-improvement" of individual women towards transforming power dynamics requires expansion of gender-transformative (rather than gender-sensitive) approaches throughout the Guidelines (Canada, CSM).
- ▶ **Human rights.** The Guidelines should ensure: a) usage of internationally agreed language (United States of America); b) adequate discussion on the human rights-based approach to food and its link with gender equality (SwedBio); c) emphasis on states' human rights obligations (OHCHR); and d) a clear definition of, and distinction between, duty bearers and right holders (SwedBio).
- ▶ **Legal frameworks and justice.** Inadequate, and inadequately implemented, legal frameworks (European Union, Development Law Service of FAO [LEGN], Loïs

Archimbaud) and access to legal assistance and justice (European Union) should be better addressed, including women's inability to legally challenge social norms that affect their control over resources (OHCHR). National measures to achieve de facto gender equality should be prioritized (LEGN).

- ▶ **Social norms** (CARE, Lal Manavado). Perceptions of both men and women on social norms should be addressed (Bibiana Muasya, Celina Butali) through education on values (Santosh Kumar Mishra) and critical examination of parenting styles (Shirega Minuye). The Guidelines should specifically address the impact of social norms on career choices for (female) youth as well as avenues to promote engagement in sustainable farming (Ilkay Unay-Gailhard).
- ▶ **Sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights** (SRHR). One contribution stressed that with regard to this concept, SDG language should be used (Hungary). Multiple participants appreciated the inclusion of this concept (Canada, France, CARE, Birgit Nikumba Madsen, Dorothy Onoja Titlayo); in fact, the Guidelines should encourage integration of SRHR in national policies (Birgit Nimukamba Madsen).
- ▶ **Trade policies** (European Union). Such policies need *ex ante* impact assessments (Marie-Louise Hayek) to ensure that they are sensitive to issues of gender and of food security and nutrition (European Union).



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► **Women's and girls' leadership.** The importance of supporting women's leadership in all sectors and at all levels of the agrifood system should be integrated throughout the document ([Next Gen\(d\)eration Leadership Initiative \[NGLI\]](#)).

Participants highlighted a range of other issues that would need more discussion, including: a) food loss and waste ([CARE](#)); b) intrahousehold inequality; c) indirect gender violence ([Marie-Louise Hayek](#)); d) agricultural collectives and women's organizations ([CARE](#), [ICSF](#), [SEWA](#), [Lamia Ayadi](#)); e) feminization of agriculture; f) gender-responsive budgeting ([European Union](#)); and g) child care ([Natalie Riediger](#)).

From a technical writing point of view, the Guidelines could be strengthened by: a) adopting a targeted approach ([United States of America](#)); b) including data and evidence ([PSM](#), [GIGH](#)); c) providing concrete guidance and action steps



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([Norway](#), [Amber Hill](#), [Rachel Bahn](#)); and d) distinguishing between "mainstreaming" and "targeting" in relation to proposed actions ([LEGN](#), [Shameem Sheik Dastagir](#)).

PART 1. Introduction

1.1 Background and rationale

Participants stressed the need to specify that gender inequality blocks women from benefitting equally from their work and creates barriers to food system inclusiveness, innovation and sustainability ([CARE](#)). Furthermore, the discussion on the different manifestations of discrimination could be extended, mentioning specifically: a) women's unequal access to information, training, financial services and markets ([FAO RAI team](#)); and b) the lack of women's *meaningful and full* participation in decision-making ([SwedBio](#), [FAO RAI team](#)).

In addition, the gendered impacts of some issues could be stressed, such as those stemming from discriminatory power structures ([CARE](#)), but also from climate change, ecosystem degradation and biodiversity loss ([SwedBio](#)). Furthermore, the impact of women's engagement on unpaid care and domestic work needs more discussion ([Canada](#)).

This section could also include a better description of women's position in food systems and households, in particular in relation to their: a) key role in care and domestic work ([Canada](#)); b) engagement in informal work, with related vulnerabilities ([World Vision Australia](#)); and c) role as leaders and decision-makers ([United States of America](#), [NGLI](#)).

Finally, concerning the reference to the need to support women in order to be able to produce 50 percent more food by 2050, this should be reviewed: projections for such required increases are contested ([CARE](#)) and, in any case, the focus should be on establishing equitable conditions in food systems for persons of *all genders* ([Lutz Depenbusch](#)).

1.2 Objectives of the Guidelines

This section could be strengthened by: a) highlighting the importance of "systems change" ([United States of America](#)); b) focusing on the outcomes of the described processes ([GAFS](#)); c) further specifying the stakeholders the Guidelines aim

to support, including the private sector and civil society ([Canada](#)); and d) widening the scope of policy coherence, including climate change, biodiversity ([CARE](#)) and health care ([Denise Giacomini](#)).

1.3 Nature of the Voluntary Guidelines and their intended users

In general, this section should highlight that if real progress is to be achieved, legally enforceable policies and mechanisms should be adopted ([Manuel Castrillo](#), [Karlynn Kelso](#)). Furthermore, the Guidelines should not only address stakeholders that are already involved in relevant efforts, but also target those who currently do not contribute to (or even hinder) gender equality and food security and nutrition ([FAO RAI team](#)).

Regarding the Guidelines' intended users, reference should be made to the "executive, legislative and judicial organs of the State" rather than "governments" ([LEGN](#)); also, some of the stakeholder categories should be unpacked, such as "civil society" ([SwedBio](#)). Furthermore, the list of users should include: a) micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises ([CARE](#)); b) professional societies ([GAFS](#)); and c) religious organizations ([United States of America](#)).

PART 2. Core principles that underpin the Guidelines

Some participants believed that the list with core principles is too long ([FAO RAI team](#), [Adeline Razoeliasoa](#)), and that some of the principles mentioned would rather be objectives ([FAO RAI team](#)). Furthermore, the human rights standards and principles underpinning efforts towards gender equality should be discussed ([OHCHR](#)), with specific reference to: a) the indivisibility of human rights ([OHCHR](#), [CSM](#)); b) accountability and access to justice ([OHCHR](#)); and c) non-discrimination and gender equality, and states' obligation to ensure de facto equality ([LEGN](#), [OHCHR](#)). Free, prior and informed consent ([CSM](#)) and the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment should also be considered ([SwedBio](#)).

The list of policy and legal frameworks and instruments on which the Guidelines build should also include:

- ▶ CFS Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches ([France](#));
- ▶ CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems [CFS-RAI Principles] ([France](#), [FAO RAI team](#));
- ▶ CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition ([European Union](#), [France](#));
- ▶ CFS Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security [VGGT] ([European Union](#), [France](#), [SwedBio](#), [LEGN](#), [ICSF](#));
- ▶ Gender Dimensions of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights by the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights and UNDP ([Eni](#));
- ▶ ILO instruments C100 and C111 ([GAFS](#));
- ▶ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ([OHCHR](#));
- ▶ Resolutions of the Commission on the Status of Women;
- ▶ Rome Declaration on Nutrition 2014 ([France](#));
- ▶ SSF Guidelines ([European Union](#), [GAFS](#), [ICSF](#), [LEGN](#), [SwedBio](#));
- ▶ UN Decade of Family Farming 2019–2028 ([World Farmers' Organization](#) [WFO]);
- ▶ UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ([CSM](#), [GIGH](#), [OHCHR](#), [SwedBio](#));



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- ▶ UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (OHCHR, CSM, SwedBio);
- ▶ UN Security Council Resolution 2417 (Canada).

The individual core principles could be strengthened as follows:

Commitment to human rights and realization of the right to adequate food

This principle should stress a) the Guidelines' consistency with existing international and regional instruments (LEGN), and b) the need for parties to uphold human rights obligations (Canada).

Empowerment of women and girls

It should be clear that women's empowerment should be rights-focused (CARE) and support women's self-determination, decision-making power and (economic) autonomy (CARE, CSM).

Gender-transformative approaches

Application of such approaches also requires: a) active engagement of youth (European Union) and gender minorities (GAFS); b) recognition of women's and girls' leadership (OHCHR); and c) commitment to sustainably strengthen local-level engagement (European Union).

Strengthening policy coherence

This principle should also include legal and constitutional coherence (LEGN).

Context-specific gender analysis and approaches

Such analyses should include human rights analysis (World Vision Canada) and Gender-based Analysis Plus (Canada), and also consider the impact of certain contexts on gender lifestyles (Denise Giacomini).

Reinforcing the collection and use of gender-disaggregated data

Some concepts should be reviewed, implying: a) usage of "sex-disaggregated" rather than "gender-disaggregated" data (Hungary); b) inclusion of "contemporary" / "evolving" knowledge (OHCHR); and c) clarification of the association of qualitative data with "traditional", "indigenous" and "local" knowledge (European Union). In relation to data collection and use, there is a need to: a) promote this *at all levels* (Canada); b) adopt participatory and inclusive approaches (World Vision Canada); c) include the perspectives of children and youth (European Union); and d) consider other intersectional variables (CARE) and robust gender-transformative indicators (World Vision Canada). Existing data gaps and Indigenous Data Sovereignty should also be addressed (GIGH).



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Inclusiveness and participation in policymaking

This principle should also target law-making processes (LEGN).

Intersectionality and multidimensional approach

This principle could be improved by: a) explicitly recognizing a number of factors related to intersectionality (see "General feedback"); and b) referring to "sex-based" rather than "gender-based" discrimination (Hungary).

Multistakeholder collaboration and partnership

The following actors should also be mentioned: a) *local* actors / women-led organizations (Canada); b) religious leaders and faith-based organizations (World Vision Canada); and c) forest users and their associations (United States of America). Specific attention is needed for the private sector in terms of: a) measures to address conflicts of interest (European Union,

CSM, ICSF); and b) the need to support gender approaches with favourable regulations rather than partnerships (Lutz Depenbusch).

Adequate financial, technical and human resources, supported by political commitment and public policies

The focus should be on *gender-transformative* efforts that also address *bias* against women and girls (Canada).

Finally, the list of core principles should also consider: a) sexual and gender-based violence (Canada); b) climate resilience (Karlynn Kelso); c) the precautionary principle; d) a life-cycle approach to nutrition (CSM, GIGH); e) a regenerative approach; f) women's traditional knowledge (CSM); g) a transition to just food systems (Lutz Depenbusch); and h) decolonization, localization of aid, and participatory approaches (CARE).

PART 3. The Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition

Feedback on the structure of Part 3 highlighted the possibility to improve its coherence by grouping the chapters around six areas: 1) gender-based violence and discrimination; 2) economic and social rights; 3) participation, voice and leadership; 4) equal sharing of care and domestic work; 5) gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment in the context of sustainable food systems; and 6) gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment in the context of food security and nutrition assistance in humanitarian crises (European Union).

General comments on the content of the proposed actions stressed that the Guidelines should not reinforce stereotypes (CARE), further harm women, or put additional burdens on them (Canada, Lilian Nkengla, Mst. Zakia Naznin, Deborah Joy Wilson, Shameem Sheik Dastagir). In fact, they should generally stress the responsibility of all household members (GAFS).



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3.1 Women's participation, voice and leadership in policy- and decision-making at all levels

This section should clearly distinguish between and discuss different contexts, types and levels of participation and decision-making (European Union, CSM, FAO RAI team, Eni, Deborah Joy Wilson), while emphasizing that women's participation, voice and leadership should cover the *entire* food value chain (World Vision Canada). The following barriers

to women's participation and leadership should be explicitly mentioned: a) racism (GIGH); b) sociopolitical (CSM), physical and psychological violence (CARE); c) the risk of becoming targets of violence when speaking out (CSM); and d) social norms that sustain gender-based violence, and the legal frameworks that fail to address it (CARE).

From a national-level perspective, the section could discuss the impact of women's political leadership on agriculture spending and on food security and nutrition ([United States of America](#)). From a household-level perspective, the statement that women's influence on spending patterns is associated with healthier diets and better child nutrition may exacerbate gender stereotyping, and fails to recognize women's own well-being ([OHCHR](#), [Lissandra Santos](#)) and nutrition ([European Union](#), [Lilian Nkengla](#)). In fact, improving the well-being of all household members requires equal distribution of care and domestic work ([OHCHR](#), [World Vision Canada](#), [Lissandra Santos](#)).

Women's participation and leadership should be mainstreamed at all levels and in *all* sectors ([WFO](#)) through robust policies ([CSM](#)), focusing specifically on: a) traditionally male-dominated sectors such as finance, economics and planning ([European Union](#)); b) high-level political economy processes ([GAFS](#)); c) decision-making in traditional contexts ([John Ede](#));

and d) women's overall power in household decision-making ([World Vision Australia](#)).

More concretely, policies should focus on: a) child and elderly care services ([World Vision Canada](#), [CSM](#)); b) political and leadership training ([CSM](#), [World Vision Canada](#), [NGLI](#)); c) flexible work arrangements for men and women ([World Vision Canada](#)); d) focal points for violence and abuse; e) prevention of early-age marriages ([CSM](#)); f) financial support for women's rights organizations ([CARE](#)); g) parental leave for both men and women ([Lissandra Santos](#)); and h) secure rights to natural resources ([CSM](#), [LEGN](#)).

This section could include additional references to positive discrimination measures ([LEGN](#)) but should also consider that positive discrimination would not imply dismissal of the merit system ([World Vision Canada](#), [FAO RAI team](#)). Furthermore, other efforts, such as investments in education, would be more effective ([Hungary](#)).

3.2 Elimination of violence and discrimination against women for improved food security and nutrition

This section should include more discussion on the direct links between violence and discrimination against women and food security and nutrition ([Lilian Nkengla](#)). Further, it should adopt a comprehensive approach, recognizing intersecting forms of discrimination ([European Union](#)) and referring to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 ([CSM](#)) and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) understanding of gender-based violence ([OHCHR](#)).

Economic, environmental and patrimonial violence, and psychological violence and harassment ([CSM](#), [CARE](#), [Asikaralu Okafur](#)) as well as "microaggressions", should be specifically mentioned ([European Union](#)). Adequate attention should also be given to the different levels at which violence and discrimination occur, including the state ([Shameem Sheik Dastagir](#), [CSM](#)), workplace ([Shameem Sheik Dastagir](#), [Lilian Nkengla](#)) and household level ([CSM](#)), giving mention to



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particularly vulnerable groups such as pregnant women and adolescent girls (PSM).

The section's statement that "food insecurity can exacerbate tensions and lead to domestic violence" is limited, and should rather focus on how changes in food security status can intensify power imbalances and drive increases in gender-based violence (CARE).

Combatting sexual and gender-based violence requires stronger efforts to implement not only CEDAW but also other international human rights declarations (World Vision Canada), as well as a more comprehensive approach that adequately addresses the different causes and contexts in which violence takes place (CSM).

The proposed policy area "changes in social norms and stereotypes" is rather an objective that requires the definition of policy areas to achieve these changes, such as those related to more women in leadership positions, equal access to education and economic opportunities, and legislation against discrimination (European Union). In any case, in the context of social norms the need to eliminate harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and child, early-age and forced marriages should be specifically mentioned (France).

Local-level interventions should include: a) capacity building and knowledge sharing on the elimination of violence; b) establishment of a mechanism for confidential reporting on cases of abuse (John Ede); c) counselling for the people concerned (SEWA); and d) training of traditional leaders on gender-based violence (John Ede).

3.3 Access to education, capacity building, training, knowledge and information services

This section should acknowledge different types of knowledge and knowledge transmission, including indigenous knowledge (CSM, CARE, SwedBio, ICSF, Kamasa Dorothy Azimi) and informal and participatory learning (CARE, ICSF, SEWA). Furthermore, individuals should also be perceived as knowledge holders (France, CSM, SwedBio).

3.3.1 Access to formal education

In general, this subsection should focus on how infringement of women's right to education affects women *themselves*, before addressing impacts on other people (Lutz Deppenbusch). Furthermore, in discussing barriers to education, household responsibilities and care work should be mentioned (Canada) as well as poor menstrual hygiene management and related taboos (United States of America, Eni, Sampson Agodzo, Amber Hill).

The discussion on the impact of women's literacy and numeracy levels should also include: a) the negative relationship with total female fertility rates (European Union); and b) the positive relationship with women's access to and control over financial resources (Eni). The reference to the positive correlation between literacy and understanding of improved crop varieties and fertilizers raises concerns that the education is being provided to integrate producers into the industrial model, rather than a more sustainable model (CSM).

The policy areas for discussion should also focus on increasing social services and changing social norms around domestic and care work (Canada). Furthermore, while financial incentives could promote women's enrolment in agricultural

and nutrition education (World Vision Canada), they would not, for instance, be sufficient to promote girls' school enrolment – rather, this requires negotiation with parents (Sampson Agodzo). In addition, the specific challenges of child brides, teenage mothers (CARE), orphans and other vulnerable children in accessing education should be highlighted (PSM).



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Educational materials and teaching methods should a) seek to eliminate gender stereotypes (OHCHR, Shameem Sheik Dastagir), and b) include women's contributions in different areas of knowledge (Lissandra Santos, Canada). At the same time, girls' access to a variety of disciplines – including science, technology, engineering and mathematics – and education levels should be promoted (OHCHR, Lissandra Santos, Mahesh Chander).

Policies should focus on: a) skills development in the field of gender roles and care work among men and boys (OHCHR, GIGH, Lissandra Santos); b) health, garden and nutrition education for all (SEWA, Denise Giacomini, Amber Hill, Atika Marouf); c) sexuality education for all (OHCHR); d) life skills training for women (CARE); and e) nutrition-sensitive agricultural education (Lizzy).

3.3.2 Access to advisory and extension services

This subsection should refer to CEDAW, which recognizes women's right to community and extension services (OHCHR). It should also clearly state that low public budgetary allocations and a limited number of female extension staff, with male extension workers focusing on men rather than women, hamper women's access to such services (World Vision Canada). Furthermore, extension services often focus on male-dominated crops (CARE) and sometimes promote policies counter to women's needs (Rose Hogan).

The subsection should also highlight the need for: a) a balance between extension services and other entrepreneurial and vocational support (European Union), including self-education

and exposure to innovation (Rose Hogan); b) measures that consider women's constraints and opportunities in terms of *training times and venues* (Amin Abu-Alsoud); and c) promotion of digital technology for information sharing (Deborah Joy Wilson, Denise Giacomini).

3.3.3 Access to financial services and social capital

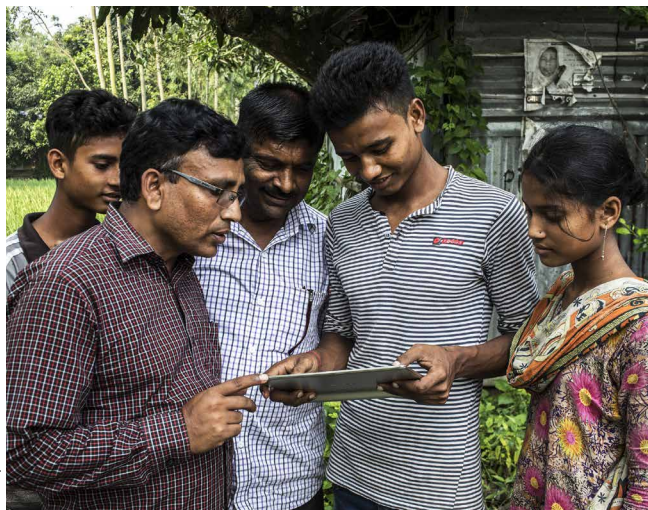
This subsection should stress that women's limited access to financial services and social capital limits their ability to recover from *external shocks in general* (France), and could also include a broader discussion on the impact of limited access to such services and capital on poverty reduction (Canada).

In discussing women's barriers to financial services and social capital, the Guidelines should highlight: a) the lack of knowledge on *commercial* financial services (United States of America); b) gender-discriminatory laws and norms in civil and family law, and in social security (OHCHR); c) issues related to land ownership and other collateral (United States of America, BBVA Microfinance Foundation); and d) women's engagement in unpaid work that limits their participation in social networks (BBVA Microfinance Foundation).

Regarding agricultural risks, this subsection should discuss how these are amplified due to climate change (Canada), and highlight the need to support women's active participation and leadership in discussions on climate finance for agriculture and ecosystems services (United States of America).



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In general, policies should adopt a stronger gender lens ([Canada](#)) and focus on *administrative, technical, financial and legal* solutions to improve women's financial inclusion ([LEGN](#)). Importantly, one should consider the risks associated with algorithm-driven decision-making in relation to eligibility for financial services, which may exacerbate gender inequality ([OHCHR](#)).

Furthermore, policies should focus on: a) financial literacy opportunities ([Deborah Joy Wilson](#), [John Ede](#)); b) creation of enabling environments for collective land leasing; c) recognition of women's ownership of crops, stands of trees

and business inventories; d) facilitation of collateralization of assets to which women contribute ([United States of America](#)); e) gender-sensitive training for financial service providers; and f) banking services that ensure direct payments for produce once delivered ([PSM](#)). In general, the importance of informal, solidarity- and collective-based approaches should be highlighted ([CARE](#)).

3.3.4 Access to appropriate ICT-based, digital and innovative technologies

This subsection should highlight the need to assess a) access to information and communications technology (ICT) for the most marginalized ([Shameem Sheik Dastagir](#)), and b) the usefulness of ICT for different groups of women ([European Union](#)). In general, the discussion on the usefulness of ICT should be broadened – for instance, it also facilitates property registration ([United States of America](#)) and dissemination of food knowledge ([Denise Giacomini](#)).

The policy areas for discussion should underline the need for: a) technologies (co-)designed by women ([CSM](#)); b) improved access to radio for women ([Rose Hogan](#)); c) promotion of rural connectivity through partnerships with mobile operators ([BBVA Microfinance Foundation](#)); d) creation of *locally designed and appropriate digital content* ([CARE](#)); and e) technology platforms for broader "systems change" ([United States of America](#)).

3.4 Women's economic empowerment in the context of sustainable food systems

This section's problem statement should clearly stress the need for a transformative approach with respect to both gender and food systems ([European Union](#)) and then continue with a focus on local food system development ([France](#), [CSM](#)).

It should also explicitly acknowledge diversity in terms of food production ([OHCHR](#)), marketing and exchange ([Lutz Deppenbusch](#)), and highlight that women's economic activities are not only instruments for family income but are independent and autonomous, and form part of collectives ([CARE](#)) which also warrant adequate attention ([ICSF](#), [CSM](#)).

The policy areas for discussion should stress the need to develop relevant *gender-transformative legal frameworks* rather than the promotion of "legal rights" ([LEGN](#)); in this context, specific attention should be given to inheritance and customary law ([Canada](#)) and women's access to loans and subsidies ([Heleen Claringbould](#)).

In general, this section could highlight good practices from the private sector in supporting women's economic empowerment for replication ([Sharon Jean Gonzales-Gulmatico](#)). Efforts should, in any case, target value chains with the greatest potential to promote gender equality ([World Vision Canada](#)) and equalize access to resources and markets, realizing the latter through women's markets ([SEWA](#)), collective marketing mechanisms and "first-mile" produce collection points ([Canada](#), [Nawal Abdel-Gayoum Abdel-Rahman](#)). The policy areas for discussion should also highlight the need to address *adverse regulations and patterns in the provision of public services* ([Lutz Deppenbusch](#)) as well as social norms regarding *unpaid care work* that limit women's time for engagement in food system activities ([CARE](#), [Celina Butali](#)). In fact, governments should allocate resources to the redistribution and reduction of unpaid care work ([CSM](#)).

3.5 Access to and control over natural and productive resources

This section in particular should be framed in the context of industrial agriculture and its implications for local people (CSM), for instance in how it forces displacements and leaves those concerned without alternative livelihood options (Shameem Sheik Dastagir). Furthermore, the general problem statement should stress the need to secure women's and girls' access to, use of and control over resources, and stress that *girls require equal rights to inheritance*, including in customary and faith-based inheritance regimes (LEGN).

3.5.1 Access to and control over natural resources, including land, water, fisheries and forests

This subsection needs more consideration of collective tenure and customary rights to natural resources (ICSF) as well as challenges related to customary practices and land grabbing (CSM). In addition, a stronger focus on access to justice (including property rights) and legal assistance is needed (European Union).

More discussion should be included on women's critical engagement in a) environmental stewardship (Canada), and b) the fisheries sector – the latter being in urgent need of adequate engagement of all stakeholders in natural resource management (European Union).

Regarding forests, the Guidelines should stress that: a) access to and control over forests is related to agricultural expansion, a key driver of deforestation (Canada); and b) women's non-timber forest product activities are

more sustainable than men's forest-based activities and constitute diversified business ventures with high potential for sustainable growth (CARE).

The policy areas for discussion should focus on: a) secure equal tenure rights (Canada), including inheritance rights, which should also be guaranteed independent of women's faith; b) women's *equal and meaningful* participation and leadership in natural resource governance and *all aspects of environmental policy formulation and actions at all levels* (United States of America, CARE, LEGN); c) the role of secondary rights to natural resources (United States of America); and d) land data production to formalize title documents and promote equal distribution of resources (France).

3.5.2 Access to and control over productive resources

This subsection's scope should be broadened to cover not only production but the entire value chain (France, GAFS). Furthermore, the problem statement should a) state that women lack access to resources *adapted to their needs and priorities* (Canada, GAFS, Kamasa Dorothy Azimi) and *capacities* (Eni, Nawal Abdel-Gayoum Abdel-Rahman); and b) highlight the need for food systems to be made sustainable – i.e. women should be supported in developing sustainable farming methods (France).

The subsection needs further discussion on laws, norms and customs that affect ownership and control over productive assets (Lutz Depenbusch), specifically on the right to seeds (SwedBio, Rose Hogan).

The discussion on breeding and crop management programmes should highlight that: a) these programmes ignore the needs of marginal and (labour-)poor farmers, and those in conflict areas (European Union); and b) *gender-responsive* breeding programmes are needed that integrate women's knowledge, which could be brought together in the context of women's associations. This would also promote women's power over their environment (France).

As women are time- and resource-poor, investments in non-traditional sectors, such as beekeeping and mushroom cultivation, are needed (World Vision Australia). Furthermore, mechanical efficiency should be improved and production models adapted, considering women's physical efforts and the need to reduce the physical burden of agriculture (Canada).



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3.6 Access to labour markets and decent work

The Guidelines should give due attention to decent work, considering the high prevalence of informal labour in the agricultural sector (CSM, Malavika Dadlani). In addition, women's unpaid family work (Lilian Nkengla), the particular vulnerabilities of girls taking on paid work (CSM), child labour, and general labour exploitation – especially in industrial agriculture (Lilian Nkengla) – deserve more discussion. Furthermore, addressing exploitation of migrants has become ever more urgent considering increasing migration rates as a consequence of climate change (CSM).

Harassment and gender-based violence in the workplace should be better addressed (CARE) as well as other issues that hamper women from finding decent employment, which, *inter alia*, relate to stereotyping of women's work, lack of women's representation in workplace decision-making (GAFS), and social and cultural norms (SwedBio). In addition, issues of workplace safety and security, such as those related to adequate toilets and rest spaces, need more discussion (CSM).

Regarding the hazardousness of the agricultural sector, the Guidelines should stress the importance of knowing

the gender-disaggregated impact of agrochemicals on reproductive health before allowing their application (Heleen Claringbould). In general, this section should highlight that addressing the sector's hazards requires moving away from industrial food production (CSM).

The policy areas for discussion should stress the need for a solid legal framework, establishing the right to decent work and safeguarding key principles in this regard (OHCHR), as well as stronger efforts to fully implement the ILO Conventions (Canada). At the same time, it should also be acknowledged that the justice sector is often unable to effectively implement such frameworks (European Union).

Furthermore, policies should promote: a) investments in skills development of women, allowing them to obtain formal employment (Malavika Dadlani); and b) redistribution of unpaid and paid care work between the *household, community, state and private sector* (Canada). Unequitable distribution of unpaid care work could also be addressed by backing employment policies with interventions that address harmful social and gender norms in this regard (CARE).

3.7 Recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work

Women's unpaid care work burden should be clearly linked to the patriarchal system (CSM) and the problem statement should explicitly mention men's and boys' lack of engagement (GIGH). In fact, data on the distribution and value of unpaid care work should be included in the Guidelines (Canada), but also in national statistics (CSM, Nisha Verma).

The Guidelines should adopt a broader approach and also include other cases of unpaid work, ranging from caring for the disabled (Canada) to efforts in the field of environmental stewardship (GAFS) and, specifically, contributions to improving ecosystem services (Chandima Gunasena).

Challenges that require better discussion include those faced by women who carry out both paid work – in particular, intense agricultural labour activities – and unpaid care labour (European Union, Lilian Nkengla), as well as those of women and girls employed in paid and domestic care work in conditions of exploitation (Lilian Nkengla).

The section's focus should be on *equal sharing* of care and domestic work between women and men (European Union) and the state (CSM). In this process, the risk of harm to women (United States of America) or dependents should be avoided (Deborah Joy Wilson), and the differential impact of unpaid care and domestic work on people considered (Shameem Sheik Dastagir).

Furthermore, policies should focus on: a) SRHR and their link to social security (European Union); b) strong health and care systems (CSM); c) child care facilities for female labourers; d) care-related benefits (Lilian Nkengla); e) universal, gender-responsive and digitalized public services (Shameem Sheik Dastagir, Birgit Nikumba Madsen); and f) home technology as a "time saver" (BBVA Microfinance Foundation) – although the focus should be on tackling the root causes of the issue (CSM). Solutions proposed by women should receive particular attention (BBVA Microfinance Foundation).



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3.8 Women's and men's ability to make strategic choices for healthy diets and good nutrition

Healthy diets and good nutrition are outcomes that are fundamental to the entire document – they should not be framed as stand-alone issues, which currently seems to be the case.

Furthermore, this section's statement that "women and girls are more likely to suffer from different forms of malnutrition than men and boys" is misleading and requires reference to specific data; in addition, girls' and boys' nutritional status needs to be specifically addressed ([European Union](#)).

The section should highlight how healthy diets are key to the health of *both* women and their offspring ([Denise Giacomini](#)) and point out that malnutrition in pregnancy not only impacts the child's nutritional status, but also constitutes a risk for safe delivery ([Deborah Joy Wilson](#)).

In discussing the factors that affect people's ability to make strategic choices for healthy diets and good nutrition, a broad approach should be taken that acknowledges the links between (diversified) production systems and environmental challenges, and their gendered impacts on nutrition ([SwedBio](#)). Furthermore, other aspects to be considered include: a) gender-discriminatory norms related to care work, early marriage, and influence of family members ([Srikanthi Bodapati](#)); b) food poverty; and c) aggressive marketing of unhealthy foods ([European Union](#), [CSM](#)). The section could also specifically highlight the challenges of elderly women and widows ([United States of America](#)).

Box 1. Women's Empowerment in Nutrition Index

Nutrition programmes aiming to promote community and child nutrition often target women but neglect women's own nutritional status. In fact, while empowering women can improve household food security and dietary diversity, women's own nutritional status does not correlate to their empowerment status. The Women's Empowerment in Nutrition Index (WENI) aims to bridge the gap between empowerment and women's individual nutrition and health, introducing the concept of "nutritional empowerment" to identify barriers to better nutrition for women ([Irish Forum for International Agricultural Development](#)).

The policy areas for discussion should also include laws that acknowledge women's and girls' specific needs linked to their life cycle ([LEGN](#)) and, related to this, should consider that nutritional needs may also change due to (empowerment) interventions that affect women's labour burden ([Canada](#)).

Furthermore, reference should be made to the need for: a) gender-sensitive research on health, diet and nutrition ([OHCHR](#), [Heleen Claringbould](#)); b) policies and programmes that encourage and enforce healthier food environments



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(GIGH); c) public regulations on food labelling; d) nutrition education on local sources of nutrients (Srikanthi Bodapati); e) adequate dissemination of information on food; and f) restrictions on the promotion of unhealthy products (Lutz

Depenbusch). In general, sustainable diets, such as the Mediterranean diet, should be promoted: these diets can meet health needs, counteract climate change, and promote women's empowerment at the same time (Sofia Fratianni).

3.9 Social protection and food and nutrition assistance

The focus should be on the *full scope* of social protection and the establishment of universal social protection systems (European Union), with a legal framework (CSM) that sanctions inadequate provision (OHCHR). Such systems should be funded by domestic resources and international solidarity organizations (CSM), which could, however, also support community-led social protection (Shameem Sheik Dastagir – see Box 2).

Furthermore, this section should stress the need to: a) adequately define the recipients of social protection support

(LEGN); b) consider that conditional social protection / cash transfers can increase gender stereotyping and women's exposure to abuse (OHCHR); and c) adopt a comprehensive approach in addressing barriers to school attendance, rather than focusing merely on school feeding (European Union).

The policy areas for discussion should also focus on: a) linking social protection and agriculture programmes (John Mugonya); b) SRHR (Canada); c) adequate maternal health services (Adèle Grembombo, PSM); and d) nutrition-sensitive measures that mainstream aquatic food (European Union).

Box 2. Community-led social protection measures in Myanmar

Communities in Myanmar have been developing two mechanisms to systematically address local food insecurity with a participatory approach. The first entitles the most vulnerable people, especially women – including elderly people, orphans and people with disabilities – to free food throughout the year. The second mechanism, the food-for-credit programme, targets those who are

able-bodied but vulnerable to food insecurity in the lean season, including single women, female-headed households, and unemployed people. NGOs will assist communities in implementing this initiative, providing the initial capital, building of storage facilities, and technical capacity building. Eventually, the initiative should be self-sustaining (Shameem Sheik Dastagir).



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PART 4. Implementation and monitoring of the use and application of the Guidelines

Participants highlighted that Part 4 of the Guidelines should also include references to relevant international declarations and legally binding instruments ([European Union](#), [SwedBio](#)) and the work of human rights monitoring bodies ([OHCHR](#)). Furthermore, this part might be strengthened by a discussion on how the Guidelines could play an instrumental role in achieving the 2030 Agenda ([FAO RAI team](#)) and by placing

them in the framework of broader development efforts. The Guidelines should specifically highlight the need to connect with the implementation and monitoring of previous CFS products ([European Union](#), [ICSF](#)) and integrate lessons learned so far ([European Union](#)), but also address the need to avoid duplication of efforts ([Gashawbeza Haile](#)).

4.1 Policy formulation and implementation of the Guidelines

Participants pointed out that this section should: a) encourage implementation of the Guidelines by all stakeholders ([Canada](#)); b) refer to principles for sound implementation ([SwedBio](#)), such as those of the CFS-RAI Principles and the VGGT ([FAO RAI team](#)); c) provide practical ideas for implementation,

especially for stakeholders that are not specifically sensitive to gender issues ([Alejandra Ortega](#)); and d) include more concrete and all-encompassing implementation provisions ([LEGN](#)).

4.2 Building and strengthening capacity for implementation

This section should highlight the importance of: a) gender-responsive budgeting ([United States of America](#)); b) supporting women-led networks and civil society organizations ([SwedBio](#));

and c) meaningful consultations with, and empowerment of, local actors in designing interventions ([CARE](#)).

4.3 Monitoring the use and application of the Guidelines

The Guidelines should stipulate that monitoring take place with *full and effective* participation of all stakeholders ([SwedBio](#)). Women food producers are key actors in this regard, and should be able to participate in spaces that are free of discrimination and harassment and that have safeguards against power imbalances ([CSM](#), [ICSF](#)).

This section could include key performance indicators ([World Vision Australia](#), [CSM](#), [PSM](#), [Lamia Ayadi](#)), but should also consider that measuring impacts is often challenging ([Santosh Kumar Mishra](#), [Adeline Razoelarisoa](#)). In fact, governments may (rather) be encouraged to use the Guidelines as a tool to support reporting towards SDG 5 and other gender-related monitoring mechanisms ([FAO RAI team](#), [LEGN](#), [GAFS](#)).

A soft reporting mechanism could be established ([WFO](#)), as well as monitoring tools ([NGLI](#)) and a platform that facilitates collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated data ([GIGH](#)). This could be mentioned in the Guidelines, as well as including best practices and guidelines on monitoring and data collection ([Canada](#)).

Finally, a stronger discussion on the role of CFS is needed, which should: a) encourage governments to use the Guidelines ([GIGH](#)); b) support the implementation and monitoring of the Guidelines ([Loïs Archimbaud](#)); and c) ensure that its own programmes of work comply with the Guidelines ([GIGH](#)).

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