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# NUTRITION, EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING FOR THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD

THEMATIC STUDY 6

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## Foreword

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To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the *Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security* (hereinafter “Right to Food Guidelines”), the FAO Right to Food Team has prepared seven thematic studies that document and highlight progress made over the last ten years, while also capturing the challenges ahead in relation to major issues covered by the Right to Food Guidelines (RtFG). The studies are helpful in reflecting upon current gaps and areas of improvement for future implementation of the guidelines and valuable for every person or organization that works in the context of national food security and is interested in realizing the right to adequate food by implementing the RtFG.

The thematic studies<sup>1</sup> cover the following topics:

- 1. THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD IN FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION POLICY DESIGNS**  
Guidelines 2, 3, 5, 6 and 13
- 2. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD**  
Guidelines 5, 18
- 3. LEGAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PROGRESSIVE REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD**  
Guidelines 7
- 4. NATURAL RESOURCES GOVERNANCE AND THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD**  
Guideline 8
- 5. SOCIAL PROTECTION AND AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD**  
Guidelines 8, 14
- 6. NUTRITION, EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING FOR THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD**  
Guidelines 10, 11
- 7. INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS OF THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD**  
Guideline 19, Part III

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<sup>1</sup> The views expressed in these thematic studies are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of FAO. The conclusions given are considered appropriate at the time of preparation. They may be modified in the light of further knowledge gained.

## Acknowledgment

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This Thematic Study was prepared with the invaluable contribution and input from the Nutrition Division (ESN), Development Law Service (LEGN) and the Right to Food Team of the Agricultural Development Economics Division (ESA) of FAO, under the lead authorship of Serena Pepino, Project Officer, Right to Food Team/ESA. The author would like to specially acknowledge the substantive contribution and guidance of Ellen Muehlhoff, Senior Officer/Group Leader, Nutrition Education and Consumer Awareness Group, ESN. The study has benefited from the comments and suggestions of Cristina Alvarez, Lalita Bhattacharjee, Ruth Charrondiere and Ramani Wijesinha Bettoni from the ESN, Margret Vidar and Yoon Jee Kim from the LEGN, and Juan Carlos García y Cebolla, Simon Blondeau, Maarten Immink, Frank Mischler, and Sisay Yeshanew from the Right to Food team in ESA. A special thanks goes to Annamaria Ausania, Right to Food Consultant in ESA, who provided background research and content to the country case studies. The author wishes to thank Andrew Park, who edited the Thematic Study.

## List of acronyms

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<b>CESCR</b>	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
<b>CFS</b>	Committee on World Food Security
<b>DDP</b>	Desirable Dietary Pattern
<b>EAN</b>	Estrategia Acción Nutrición (Nutrition Action Strategy)
<b>ECLAC</b>	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organizations of the United Nations
<b>FSN</b>	Food security and nutrition
<b>HRBA</b>	Human rights-based approach
<b>GHI</b>	Global Hunger Index
<b>GSF</b>	Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition
<b>ICN2</b>	Second International Conference on Nutrition
<b>IFPRI</b>	International Food Policy Research Institute
<b>IICA</b>	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture
<b>JFFLS</b>	Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>PASE</b>	<i>Programa de Alimentación y Salud Escolar</i> (School Feeding and Health Programme)
<b>PNAE</b>	<i>Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar</i> (National School Feeding Programme)
<b>RtFG</b>	Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security (Right to Food Guidelines)
<b>SOFI</b>	The State of Food Insecurity
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNSCN</b>	United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition
<b>UNSG</b>	United Nations Secretary-General
<b>UNSR</b>	United Nations Special Rapporteur
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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The Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security (Right to Food Guidelines) provide practical guidance to states in their implementation of the progressive realization of the human right to adequate food. The Right to Food Guidelines (hereinafter “RtFG”) call for the right to food to be at the core of Nutrition (Guideline 10) and Education and Awareness Raising (Guideline 11)<sup>2</sup> programmes and activities, regulations and strategies, as well as at the centre of nutritional, cultural, health and educational practices which promote intersectoral collaboration on food security and nutrition.

The objective of this Thematic Study is to show, through current global processes and debates and country-level best practices, how nutrition is an integral part of the right to food, and how education and awareness raising are essential vehicles to facilitate its fulfilment. It argues that nutritious diets and access to education are not only instrumental, but vital to achieving people’s full physical and cognitive potential and health, concepts which are interdependent, indivisible and interrelated with regard to the right to food. The study addresses the benefits of using a human rights-based approach and the PANTHER principles<sup>3</sup> in nutrition, education and awareness interventions, by looking at concrete examples which translate into practice, in whole or in part, some of the guidelines relevant to these topics. These examples illustrate how, by taking targeted, country-level action in a participatory, accountable and non-discriminatory manner, it is possible to create a stronger foundation for the realization of the right to food in the long run. Finally, after taking a closer look at the last ten year’s positive evolution in both international and national agendas, the study addresses some of the gaps and challenges<sup>4</sup> primarily related to the implementation of Guidelines 10 and 11, as well as the intrinsically connected Guidelines 13 and 17.

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2 For the purpose of this Thematic Study, awareness raising is understood to be a constructive and potentially catalytic force that ultimately leads to a positive change in actions and behaviors. These changes may be sought by stakeholders in individuals, groups, organizations, communities or societies. To raise (public) awareness of a topic or issue is to inform a community’s attitudes, behaviors and beliefs with the intention of influencing them positively in the achievement of a defined purpose or goal: for example, improving public health or promoting nutrition information (UNESCO, 2006).

3 PANTHER principles: Participation, Accountability, Non-discrimination, Transparency, Human dignity, Empowerment and Rule of law.

4 Legal, policy and institutional gaps and challenges are being addressed in separate Thematic Studies developed as part of the Ten-Year Retrospective on the Right to Food Guidelines.

**GUIDELINE 10. Nutrition**

It promotes strengthening dietary diversity and healthy eating habits and food preparation to prevent malnutrition. Changes in availability and access to food should not negatively affect dietary composition or intake. Cultural values as well as dietary and eating habits should be taken into account when making policy and programme decisions.

**GUIDELINE 11. Education and awareness raising**

It focuses on strengthening education and training opportunities, especially for girls and women, to support sustainable development. Human rights education should be integrated into school curricula and officials and members of civil society trained to participate in the progressive realization of the right to food.

**GUIDELINE 13. Support for vulnerable groups**

It emphasizes the need to identify the food insecure, along with reasons for their food insecurity, and to devise measures to immediately and progressively provide access to adequate food. Discrimination against specific groups, especially women and children, should be overcome and assistance should be targeted effectively.

**2. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

In a world enjoying record wealth and food production, it is widely understood that improving food security and nutrition (FSN) is about more than just increasing the quantity of energy intake – it is also about improving the quality of food in terms of dietary diversity, variety, nutrient content and safety (FAO, 2012). In other words, FSN is not only an issue of sufficient production, but rather a problem of continuous access to sufficient, safe, culturally acceptable and nutritious food; of health-nutrition relationships; of adequate water supply and sanitation; and of adequate knowledge and education about FSN – both in development, and in emergency and humanitarian settings.

In recent years, the human rights and nutrition community have begun to combine forces. An ever-increasing number of development specialists believe that, in order to help people to escape from hunger and malnutrition and to enjoy a healthy and productive life, a holistic, multi-stakeholder and multisectoral approach is required, one that is supported by an enabling policy environment. The RtFG are built on the idea of such a holistic approach. More specifically, they aim to assist states in guaranteeing the availability of food in quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of individuals; and the physical and economic accessibility for everyone, including vulnerable groups, to adequate food (or the means of its procurement), free from unsafe substances and acceptable within a given culture (FAO, 2005).

A multidisciplinary approach to support the progressive realization of the right to food leads to the centrality of well-targeted (i.e. in support of the poor and most vulnerable) nutrition, and education and awareness-raising interventions. This study later provides concrete examples of how these interventions

have been designed and implemented at the country level. But first we take a closer look at the most relevant guidelines of this study: Guidelines 10 (Nutrition) and 11 (Education and Awareness Raising). Guidelines 10 and 11 are among the few that ultimately guide national processes towards the enjoyment not only of the right to food but also of other human rights<sup>5</sup> which are collateral to its realization (such as the right to health, education and information) – rights to which a weak or discriminatory access stifles the capacity of many to feed themselves and others with dignity (United Nations General Assembly, 2012).

Guideline 10 communicates the idea that the enjoyment of the right to food can only be guaranteed on the basis of the acquisition of sufficient and targeted nourishment at all levels. Nutrition constitutes an inherent element of adequacy that is at the core of the right to food. The two themes cannot be separated and must be part of an integrated approach to ultimately eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

Guideline 11 on the other hand, stresses the importance of education and awareness raising, especially on the right to food and other human rights, as ultimate means to strengthen duty-bearers' knowledge of their obligations while assisting communities and rights-holders, especially women, girls and children (the most vulnerable), in demanding accountability regarding their rights and strengthening their educational opportunities in terms of access to education. Human rights education and training constitute important aspects of the right to food in order to disseminate information, raise awareness and encourage implementation of this right and its associated entitlements. Education and awareness-raising programmes and campaigns should target everyone, not just those affected by food insecurity, and should go beyond formal education, expanding and reaching out also to non-formal education such as basic nutrition and literacy trainings.

Nutrition-sensitive food systems, education, and awareness can give consumers better options, but ultimately they choose what they eat from what is available and affordable to them. In turn, this influences their own nutritional status and sends signals back through the food system – to retailers, processors and producers – that shape both what is produced and how sustainably it is produced. This is why Guideline 11 touches also on the importance and need for a specific technical area of education, that is nutrition education, which is key to build a food secure world and foster sustainable development. Defined as “any combination of educational strategies, accompanied by environmental supports, designed to facilitate voluntary adoption of food choices and other food- and nutrition-related behaviours conducive to health and well-being” (Contento, 2007), nutrition education is “delivered through multiple venues and involves activities at the individual, community, and policy levels” (Contento, 2007). Nutrition education empowers consumers to select, enables women to improve children nutrition, and improves children's educational achievements (children who are well-nourished learn better than those who are not). It gives people needed knowledge about what they and their families should eat to be healthy, and helps them develop skills to make good food choices and prepare healthy meals. It can build people's confidence to discriminate between credible nutrition information

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5 Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights highlights the interdependency, indivisibility and interrelatedness of fundamental human rights (adequate standard of living, health, education, housing, food, social security, etc.) as follows: “everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

and deceptive, misleading commercial food advertisements. All too often, inaccurate beliefs, attitudes and practices, traditional values and food taboos, long-established dietary and snacking habits, food distribution patterns in the family, ideas about child feeding, and lack of knowledge of food hygiene and sanitation are contributors to malnutrition, and therefore represent an impediment to the full enjoyment of the right to food.

Improved nutrition and access to education can in turn enhance cognitive development and thereby raise levels of income, especially for the most vulnerable and historically excluded, with benefits at the individual level as well as for society as a whole (FAO, 2012), ultimately contributing to the realization of the right to food. Therefore, nutritious diets and access to education are not only instrumental, but vital for achieving people's full physical and cognitive potential and health, concepts which are interdependent, indivisible and interrelated with regard to the right to food.

Other guidelines include important considerations which strengthen the interdependence and complementarity between the realization of the right to food and nutrition on the one hand, and between the realization of the right to food and education and awareness raising on the other. For example, Guideline 13 provides human rights-based guidance to states by emphasizing the need for putting vulnerable groups and food insecurity-affected people at the centre of both nutrition, and education and awareness-raising programmes and activities. Supporting such groups is at the core of a human rights-based approach (HRBA). The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteurs emphasize how it is imperative to pay particular attention to the most vulnerable individuals and groups and their access to food that should satisfy their dietary needs.<sup>6</sup>

Finally, Guideline 17 brings up an important area of work, equally applicable to nutrition, and to education and awareness-raising interventions, which is presented in the section on gaps and challenges related to the implementation of the RtFG: monitoring.

Therefore the added value of the RtFG lies in the policy guidance they provide; in how they call for the political will of states, having adopted them by consensus, to redress the situation in their respective national food security contexts by emphasizing the human right to adequate food; and in their concrete recommendations on how implementation can be strengthened at the national level and in the context of the thematic areas of this study.

The concept of *adequate* food has three components, the first and third ones<sup>7</sup> being particularly relevant for this Thematic Study: food should be available in quantity and *quality* sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of every individual, man, woman and child;<sup>8</sup> and food should be acceptable within a given culture. The achievement of nutritional well-being and its cultural acceptance has to be therefore

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6 The following documents emphasize such a concept: the CESCR, General Comment 12 on the right to adequate food; and reports of the UN Special Rapporteurs on the right to food, A/HRC/9/23, A/HRC/4/30, A/HRC/19/59 and A/62/289.

7 The second component states that food should be safe for human beings to eat and free from adverse substances. This incorporates an element of consumer protection. The concept is based on paragraph 8 of General Comment 12, adopted by the UN CESCR in 1999.

8 According to General Comment 12 of the CESCR, "*the right to adequate food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has the physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement.*"

seen as an integral part of the full realization of the right to adequate food. In other words, in line with Guideline 10, nutrition considerations must be included in all food system debates and measures being taken which aim towards the protection, fulfilment and respect of this right.

States Parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) are under an obligation to improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, and also by *disseminating knowledge* of the principles of nutrition (UN 1966: Article 11, 2[a]). In connection with this provision, Guideline 11 helps us focus on education and awareness raising through a broad spectrum of issues which can negatively affect the progressive enjoyment of the right to food. These can include among others: decreasing school attendance, especially for girls, lack of knowledge, skills and capacity to diversify one's diet (beyond staple foods, for example) and enjoy a more balanced and adequate combination of energy, fat, protein and micronutrients; inappropriate regulations on food labelling and marketing, especially

those targeting children; and inefficient food distribution networks which, in poor rural and urban areas, increasingly carry energy-rich and nutrient-poor highly processed and salty/sugary snack foods (FAO, 2013b).

A HRBA can strengthen nutrition interventions by striving to address the rights of diverse population groups and people, with different nutrition problems, education and income levels, and by helping to ensure that resources are used justly and equitably to promote food security, adequate nutrition, education and health for all (Steyn and Temple, 2008). Today, those who are historically socially excluded and culturally marginalized, with the least access to fundamental human rights, are of the greatest concern (Guideline 13). The full realization of the right to adequate food necessitates its successful achievement by all (including women, children, indigenous peoples, refugees, etc.) and without the impairment of other human rights (e.g. education, participation and information).

### **3. AN OVERVIEW OF EXISTING CONSENSUS FOR ACTION IN THE GLOBAL DIALOGUE**

Over the past decade a number of international organizations, global governance frameworks and processes<sup>9</sup> have provided important recommendations, shared lessons learned and best practices to the international community in support of nutrition, education and awareness raising as essential vehicles for the progressive realization of the right to food. These have emphasized the merit of the adoption of a HRBA framework to ensure that short-term answers to food insecurity and malnutrition issues do not preclude the chances of identifying long-term solutions (UNSR, 2010).

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9 See adjacent box: FAO touched upon the essentiality of human rights issues to guaranteeing hunger reduction in its State of Food Insecurity (SOFI) in the World 2012. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) pointed out in its Global Hunger Index 2012 how "women's low status in South Asia contributes to children's poor nutritional outcomes in the region because children's development and mothers' well-being are closely linked." The World Development Report 2013 of the World Bank mentioned how "together, nutrition, health, and education form human skills and abilities that have been powerfully linked to productivity, growth and poverty reduction in the medium to longer run." Finally, the UN Special Rapporteur (UNSR) on the Right to Food, in his 2012 report submitted to the UN Human Rights Council, addressed the links between health and malnutrition, recalling how undernutrition, micronutrient deficiency and overnutrition are all different dimensions of malnutrition that must be addressed together through a life-course approach.

A number of recent global efforts have sought to address concerns about the guarantee of the right to food for all, through a specific focus on nutrition, education and awareness raising, setting the context for a more integrated approach to the implementation of the RtFG.

In 2008, FAO, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nation Children’s Fund (UNICEF) launched the Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger Initiative (REACH), which aims to scale up interventions addressing child undernutrition through the coordinated action of UN agencies, civil society, donors and the private sector, under country-led plans. In the same year, the UN Secretary-General’s (UNSG) 22-member High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis explicitly addressed FSN with a focus on links between agriculture, food systems and nutrition outcomes in its Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA). Finally, the Scaling-Up Nutrition (SUN) multi-stakeholder initiative was launched in 2009, founded on the principle that all people have a right to food and good nutrition. The movement calls for collective action to achieve its objectives.

The 36th Committee on World Food Security (CFS) incorporated the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN) in its Advisory Group, aiming at better integration of FSN policy. More explicitly, the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition (GSF) endorsed recommendations included in the RtFG and asked countries to take specific actions to address FSN concerns. In particular, this involved taking steps through education, information and labelling regulations, and through maintaining, adapting or strengthening dietary diversity and healthy eating habits and food preparation, while ensuring adequate availability and access to food (CSF, 2013). The GSF also identified “low levels of education and literacy” among the main demographic and social issues that contribute to hunger and malnutrition. Finally, it remarked how lessons show that the intergenerational transmission of hunger and malnutrition has also been prevented through education and promotion of literacy among the most vulnerable, especially women and girls.

The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), under the slogan “better nutrition, better lives”, will be hosted by FAO and WHO in Rome from 19–21 November 2014. The ICN2 is an inclusive intergovernmental meeting on nutrition, occurring 22 years after the first conference of its kind. The ICN2 will ask delegates to review what progress has been made, identify the challenges that remain, and identify the opportunities for improving nutrition that have since arisen. The Conference will bring food, agriculture, health, education, social protection and other sectors together to mobilize the political will and resources necessary for both improving nutrition and for reaching consensus around a global, multisectoral nutrition framework. The event falls within the same year as the Ten-Year Retrospective on the Right to Food Guidelines, and represents a crucial opportunity to share experiences, best practices and lessons learned, and to harmonize future action on improved nutrition, education and awareness raising and the right to food.

The Outcome Document of the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), the Open Working Group that prepared a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and recent discussions on the post-2015 development agenda all include focus areas on human rights, or even targets and indicators that are closely related to the right to food, and include and link together dimensions of food and nutrition access.<sup>10</sup>

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10 More on this topic is discussed in the Thematic Study entitled *International Dimensions of the Right to Food*.

*“Economic and agricultural growth should be ‘nutrition-sensitive’. Good nutrition, in turn, is the key to sustainable economic growth .... To accelerate hunger reduction, economic growth needs to be accompanied by purposeful and decisive public action .... An improved governance system, based on transparency, participation, accountability, rule of law and human rights, is essential for the effectiveness of such policies and programmes.” (FAO, 2012)*

*“Women’s poor nutritional status, low education, and low social status undermine their ability to give birth to well-nourished babies and to adequately feed and care for their children”, hence preventing them from fully enjoying the right to adequate food. (IFPRI, 2012)*

*“States should ensure a transition towards sustainable diets, supporting diverse farming systems, ensuring adequate diets accessible to all, and supporting the livelihoods of the most poor, especially targeting women helping them make informed decisions about food and feeding, so to ensure the rights of their young children.” (UNSR, 2012)*

The most recent Zero Hunger Challenge (ZHC), encouraged by the UNSG, requires comprehensive efforts to ensure that every man, woman, and child enjoy their right to food, prioritizing those who are most vulnerable, family farming, and food systems everywhere to be sustainable and resilient.

Finally, the recent interest in family farming has been translated into the International Year of Family Farming being celebrated in 2014, through a declaration (FAO, 2014) that recognizes their role in ensuring better food security and nutrition, and preservation of natural resources, from a human rights-based dimension: small-scale family farmers are key figures in the grand scheme of the agricultural sector but, at the same time, particularly vulnerable to climate change events such as extreme weather, droughts and floods.

These important steps forward in the establishment of platforms for global dialogue, guidance and technical assistance are conducive, in the long run, to fostering an “international dimension” regarding the implementation of the RtFG (see Guideline 19), and represent significant achievements since their adoption. Nevertheless, it is important to recognize the need to complement these steps with increasing commitments, concrete results and evidence-based implementation and monitoring. The RtFG themselves and the PANTHER principles are relevant and powerful tools which can provide guidance on the way forward and inspire concrete action, especially at the country level. Surely, we can gather a wealth of examples of successful fights against malnutrition, from nutrition-sensitive food systems operations in Belo Horizonte, the Federative Republic of Brazil (FAO, 2012), to laws and regulations aimed at curbing the rapid increase in childhood obesity in Latin America (Brazil, the Republic of Chile, the Republic of Colombia, the Republic of Costa Rica, the Republic of Ecuador, the United Mexican States, the Republic of Peru, and the Eastern Republic of Uruguay; WHO, FAO, ECLAC, IICA, OHCHR, 2014), to new standards for school food set by Western countries such as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Haroun *et al.*, 2010),<sup>11</sup> and last but

11 The authors conclude that lunchtime food provision and consumption in primary schools have improved substantially since 2005, following the introduction of new standards for school food in 2008. Improvements still need to be made to increase the iron and zinc content and to decrease the sodium content of recipes, and to encourage pupils to eat more fruits and vegetables at lunchtime.

not least to the renewed political interest in family farming, given its potential to mitigate challenges and uncertainties deriving from food insecurity and malnutrition. Countries such as the Argentine Republic, Brazil, the Republic of Nicaragua, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Ecuador, the Republic of Guatemala, and the Republic of El Salvador have implemented important policies that have left family farming well-positioned on the policy-making agenda (Haroun et al., 2010). This list includes examples which have had a positive spillover effect on the realization of human rights. However, strong regional differences still persist in relation to the implementation of the content of the RtFG. Positive examples from Latin America, which still faces a number of gaps and challenges to address, outnumber efforts in other regions in the world where the international community could be key in encouraging targeted nutrition, education and awareness-raising interventions, with the ultimate goal of realization of the right to food.

#### **4. OPERATIONALIZING GUIDELINES 10 AND 11 FOR THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD**

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A number of countries provide evidence supporting some of the recommendations and guidance offered by the RtFG through operationalization of human rights-based interventions. The following examples are illustrative, as they translate into practice some of the recommendations of the RtFG by taking targeted, country-level action, in a participatory, accountable and non-discriminatory way, thus helping to create sound premises for the realization of the right to food in the long run.

##### **4.1 National Food Policy Plan of Action and Desirable Dietary Pattern (DDP): The People's Republic of Bangladesh<sup>12</sup>**

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Bangladesh still faces a significant number of challenges related to FSN, with some new ones emerging. At least 45 million people – almost one-third of the population – still live below the poverty line, and a significant proportion of these live in extreme poverty, especially in rural areas where the poverty rate reaches 36 percent (FAO, 2014). Despite growing levels of per capita availability of food, poverty is still widespread. Furthermore, increasing population and urbanization continue to put pressure on the food and agricultural system to keep up with demand.

Bangladesh's population cannot yet enjoy nutritionally adequate diets, and suffers from periods of food shortage. Fifty percent of children living in rural areas are chronically malnourished and 14 percent suffer from acute malnutrition. One of the country's main challenges is providing access to safe, affordable and nutritionally adequate food, which in turn impacts nutritional status. These issues need to be addressed through concerted efforts across sectors, involving food and agriculture, social protection, education, health and sanitation, etc. Such a cross-cutting approach to FSN would improve dietary diversity, food quality and safety, and dietary practices, ultimately contributing to the realization of the right to food.

Notwithstanding these challenges, the country has seen significant achievements in ensuring progressive changes in the FSN situation of its population. The Government of Bangladesh has kept a strong policy focus on food production and availability, while undertaking several initiatives which have helped enhance the capacities of state actors to progressively guarantee the right to food. These initiatives have

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12 This case study was extracted from an analysis made by the ESA Division, FAO, May 2014.

been introduced in light of the Government's commitment to take action to secure the "basic necessities of life" for its citizens (including food), as expressed in the Article 15 of its constitution.

Most recently, national policy-makers have expressed the need to formulate long-term diet plans for balanced food intake, identifying the quantities of different foods required in order to provide the human body with enough energy and nutrients. This demand has led to the establishment of the Desirable Dietary Pattern (DDP) plan, supported by the Bangladesh Institute of Research and Rehabilitation in Diabetes, Endocrine and Metabolic Disorders (BIRDEM), FAO, the European Union (EU), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The DDP is an evidence-based plan, developed in response to both a national policy target outlined in the National Food Policy Plan of Action, and to actions proposed under nutrition programmes prioritized in the Country Investment Plan (CIP) for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition (FAO, 2014).

The DDP proposes energy requirements for various groups of the population. It benefits from existing FAO/WHO methodologies aimed at providing estimates for total energy requirements over various components of energy expenditure. The DDP takes into account local food habits and food availability, and provides a framework for better understanding the interplay between nutrition requirements and socio-economic status in reaching adequate nutrition standards. Furthermore, the DDP provides normative recommendations for food and health planning.

In this way, the DDP has quantified 13 different food groups for use when planning diverse and targeted diet plans at different cost levels, while keeping basic foods at the centre of each plan. These are fruit, vegetables, milk, and several animal and cereal products, each accounted for on the basis of calculated consumption patterns and needs to fulfil the energy and nutrient requirements for each group at each cost level. Such costs levels were analysed through the Household Income Expenditure Survey of 2010.

The plan has taken into account other variables, such as nutritional biodiversity in the different regions of the country (hill vs. coastal areas). Scientific data on the nutrient composition of all traditional and local foods was gathered to adequately assess and calculate dietary intake of individual family members living in different areas of the country.

In addition to the 13 different food groups, the DDP has planned 24 food baskets (menu options) at varying cost levels, developed dietary guidelines for the population, and prepared a set of nine key nutrition messages to accompany these guidelines.

The merits of the Desirable Dietary Pattern plan, formulated to meet energy, macro- and micronutrient needs, are as follows. First, it can inform and potentially influence the future design of agricultural and food policies and programmes, and the setting of human rights-based, nutrient-related food production targets. Therefore it is not a stand-alone exercise, but rather constitutes a baseline for future work.

Second, the DDP can be adapted and improved according to the growing needs of a changing population, i.e. that of Bangladesh. It is not a static tool, but rather one which can be used for households of varying poverty levels, in both rural and urban areas, in sea and hill regions, through carefully assessed nutrition and dietary improvement programmes managed at the national level.

Third, the DDP analysis on dietary and nutrient adequacy can be used to provide normative guidance for future assessments of national health, nutrition, and food security programmes and interventions.

Fourth, the DDP has set the basis for a multisectoral, cross-cutting approach to solving the problem of food adequacy in policy, programmes and field interventions which stretch across food, agriculture and health sectors.

Finally, the DDP represents a first step toward nationally-driven efforts to promote healthier dietary habits and choices, which in turn can enhance the demand for a healthier food supply and therefore contribute to the progressive realization of the right to food.

The case of Bangladesh shows that improving nutrition and education will be key for the progressive realization of the right to food in the coming years. At the same time, a human rights-based approach to FSN policy and programmes implementation can better sharpen the focus of nutrition-sensitive interventions in order to ultimately support this realization overall.

## 4.2 National School Feeding Programme: Brazil

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The National School Feeding Programme (*Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar*, or PNAE) is part of the Brazilian food security policy and aims at reducing the number of malnourished children and improving the school enrolment rate (FAO, 2013a; WFP, 2007). PNAE is one of the oldest food programmes in Brazil and one of the largest school feeding programmes in the world, both in number of students served and resources allocated. It is an example of an integrated programme in support of food and nutrition security.

Since its creation, PNAE has undergone several structural changes that have resulted in improvements. One of the most important of these is the support for local sustainable development, including acquisition of diverse food products produced locally and respect for healthy regional eating habits. In this way, PNAE has contributed to the progressive realization of the right to food, ensuring the sustainability of its outcomes through a tailored approach, targeting the most vulnerable segments of the Brazilian society.

In the 1950s, PNAE was a highly centralized programme, in which local governments had marginal or no roles in food procurement, distribution, quality control, management and menu planning. Over time, it has gradually improved its effectiveness by extending its support, increasing its resources, focusing on specific groups, introducing food diversity and quality, monitoring food procurement and distribution, and contributing to local and national development.

In 1994, a law came into effect to determine the roles of municipal governments in PNAE (Law 9.913, 12/07/94). This new law obliged each municipality or state government to create a School Feeding Committee (*Conselho de Alimentação Escolar*, or CAE), which functioned mainly as the fiscal body for PNAE at the local level.

From 2003 to 2009, PNAE gradually raised the allocation of money per student for municipal and public crèches, preschools, primary schools, philanthropic schools, and schools in indigenous people's reserves and *quilombos* (Brazilian hinterland settlements founded by people of African origin, most of whom were escaped slaves).

In line with the core of Guideline 7, the process culminated with the adoption of the Framework law on Food and Nutrition Security (LOSAN) in 2009,<sup>13</sup> by which PNAE was extended to secondary schools, increasing its coverage to 46 million students. It establishes specific rights-based school food guidelines about the use of healthy and adequate food, to be vary, safe, and in the respect of different culture, traditions and healthy eating habits; food contributing to the growth and development of students and improving school performance in accordance with age and health, including those that require specific attention; and the inclusion of food and nutrition education in the teaching and learning process.<sup>14</sup>

PNAE is a very interesting example of how a programme can gradually expand in scope and complexity, by learning from positive and negative experiences and civil society participation in decision-making. Furthermore, through a HRBA, it can progressively contribute to the realization of human rights, including the right to food. The project also offers an interesting aspect of local oversight and control mechanisms, involving parents, teachers and other key members of the community, to ensure that a given school feeding programme is handled in line with existing national guidelines. Regulations were also an important factor, along with the policy approach linking food production, nutrition, health and education. After a long process and evolution following a HRBA, school feeding is now established and regulated by an effective law that enshrines human rights principles. The PNAE shows how local food production, school meals and nutrition education can be linked through integrated programmes and policies, improving access to healthier foods. Government leadership, strong legislation, civil society participation and intersectoral decision making are determinant.

Building on the Brazilian experience, FAO is currently partnering with Brazil itself to strengthen home-grown school feeding programmes in Africa, through the integration of local food and family faming, school meals and nutrition education.

### 4.3 School Feeding and Health Programme: El Salvador

The School Feeding and Health Programme (*Programa de Alimentación y Salud Escolar*, or PASE) in El Salvador (FAO, 2013d) is one of the flagship programmes of the Social Education Plan 2009–2014, “*Vamos a la Escuela*” (“Let’s go to school”), implemented by the Ministry of Education. It proposes a student-centred educational plan that focuses on their cultural, social, economic, political, and environmental needs, as well as those of their families and communities.

PASE is part of a series of social programmes of the El Salvador Food and Nutrition Security strategy that aim to improve social equity. General objectives of the programme are to meet the immediate food requirements of children, increase enrolment and retention, reduce absenteeism, and improve the health habits of assisted children.

13 The School Feeding Law of the 16 June 2009, provides for the management of school meals and consolidates the linkage of family farming with the PNAE. It stipulates that at least 30 percent of the total financial resources granted by the Federal Government to the states and municipalities should be used for the acquisition of food directly from family farmers and rural entrepreneurs or their organizations.

14 More information on Brasil Law No. 11.947 available on FAOLEX, at <http://faolex.fao.org>

Specifically, the programme has four different components, which are supported by FAO (in particular components 2 and 3):

1. School meals: made of local products and prepared in collaboration with the students' mothers and the local community, these are provided by the programme every day to students. The food basket consists of rice, oil, a fortified drink, beans, milk, and sugar. Menus are established in line with national nutrition standards set by the Ministry of Education, and nutrition counselling and control is provided during the process.
2. Strengthening and development of the educational community: the programme provides didactic material<sup>15</sup> (training books for teachers and workbooks for students) to the educational community. The material is then used in learning sessions with students, teachers, directors and parents.
3. School gardens: managed by the teachers in collaboration with the students, they are conceived by the programme as educational tools in different subjects. The products are also used for the school meals.
4. The "glass of milk" programme: financed by presidential funds, aims at promoting liquid milk consumption by distributing milk from local farmers to urban and rural public schools in the country.

The responsibility to design, manage, and implement PASE lies with the Ministry of Education, specifically with a unit within the Ministry that manages programmes considered to be complementary to the provision of basic education (for example, life skills, health and nutrition, school feeding). The unit is responsible for day-to-day activities, such as purchasing and distributing food and monitoring and evaluating the development of the programme. At the municipal level there are also staff and resources for storage and distribution of food. A school feeding committee, headed by the director of the school and composed of parents and teachers, oversees the daily implementation of the programme.

From 2008 to 2012, the World Food Programme (WFP) assisted the government with some of the more technical features of the programme, including the establishment of a strategic food reserve. However, from 2013 onwards, the Ministry of Education took charge of the food purchasing.

PASE is therefore an interesting case which shows how intersectoral collaboration for nutrition education intervention can be established through human rights-based targeting, assessment and monitoring, and building on the core objectives of a number of guidelines such as Guidelines 5 and 13. This case also highlights the role of international organizations such as FAO and WFP in assisting with the implementation of the RtFG, and ensuring that the country takes progressive, genuine and stable national ownership of the programme.

#### 4.4 *Oportunidades* Programme: Mexico

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*Oportunidades* (formerly *Progresa*) is the principal anti-poverty programme of the Mexican Government, which aims to “engage in intersectoral strategies and actions for education, health, and food; ensure coordination with other social programmes that support employment and income creation and the increase in savings for households in extreme poverty; promote capacity building to raise living standards, create opportunities, fulfil potentials and facilitate incorporation of these populations into development spheres” (FAO, 2013a). It promotes specific intersectoral actions by providing direct cash payments to the poorest families. Receipt of cash aid is dependent on beneficiary families’ compliance with programme requirements, such as ensuring regular school attendance and health clinic visits. Non-compliance with these activities means the immediate suspension of the cash aid. The subsidy is handed out directly to mothers through public and private institutions in order to enhance women’s roles in low income level households, and to ensure the funds are not diverted elsewhere.

Nowadays the programme assists 6.5 million families in every state of the country and covers 100 percent of the nation’s municipalities, emphasizing those that are most marginalized; it serves approximately 187 000 localities throughout the country, 99 percent of which are rural and semi-urban.

The critical design and implementation of *Oportunidades* includes many features, with the main components being education, health, food and nutrition. Under the education component, the programme aims at increasing the transition to secondary education among low-income children, especially those inhabiting rural zones. Grants are provided for primary through high school, increasing as children progress to higher grade levels. The health component provides basic health care for all members of the family, with a particular emphasis on preventive health care. This service is provided by government public health institutions, which receive financial transfers from the federal government but are managed by state and local governments. The food and nutrition component includes a fixed monetary transfer for improved food consumption, as well as nutritional supplements for children between the ages of four months and two years, malnourished children aged 2 to 4, and pregnant and lactating women.

*Oportunidades* also offers an interesting and practical example of how to integrate an administrative claim mechanism into a food and nutrition security programme, very much in line with a number of guidelines (i.e. Guidelines 3, 7, 13, 17). These claim and recourse mechanisms have been consolidated around the following:

1. information and communication of the programme to beneficiaries, providing information and guidance to families that enables them to claim their rights as programme beneficiaries;
2. a monitoring system for identifying programme deficiencies, using periodic surveys that explore beneficiaries’ perceptions regarding programme operations and the quality of the services rendered;
3. regular and rigorous evaluations of the programme, which has helped strengthen the programme’s legitimacy in the country, leading to expansion into urban areas, support across political administrations, and international recognition.

Evaluations have shown that *Oportunidades* has been successful in providing the intended services to the appropriate populations. Also, on a large scale, human capital investment has increased the ability of children to remain in school, to improve their nutrition level, and to enjoy better health and food in general. Nowadays the *Oportunidades* model is being applied in more than 30 countries in America, Africa and Asia, and is also being analysed worldwide, for example in the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, the Kingdom of Morocco, Jamaica, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Republic of the Philippines, and the Republic of Cameroon (SEDESOL, 2012).

This case and the others show advances, lessons learned and good practices from a number of countries around the world on the implementation of Guidelines 10 and 11, and on other relevant ones such as Guidelines 6, 9, 13 and 17. Nevertheless, there are some areas which still present limited results because of persisting challenges and gaps. Some of these are illustrated in the next section.

## 5. GAPS AND CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GUIDELINES 10 AND 11

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Despite a positive evolution in national agendas, there remain gaps and challenges<sup>16</sup> to be addressed in regards to the implementation of the RtFG. This section highlights some of these, related primarily to Guidelines 10 and 11, but also to those guidelines which are intrinsically connected (such as Guidelines 13 and 17). Country examples are provided in order to learn how others have attempted to overcome such challenges. Just like the previous case studies, these examples can be used as a springboard for action. Learning from others is a cost-effective and useful approach, one which is at the core of FAO's work.

First, recalling once again Guideline 17, FSN information needs to be used for **targeting vulnerable groups**. An overriding challenge that emerges from country experiences is that there is often inadequate attention paid to identifying those whose right to food is not realized. No matter how much emphasis is placed in the overall policy environment to reducing poverty and food and nutrition insecurity, mechanisms to identify the food insecure and to understand the root causes of their vulnerability must be a priority. Implementation plans can be weak at times in defining and targeting vulnerable groups in sufficient detail to be operationally relevant. This is not so much a question of technical obstacles linked to data and analytical capacities as it is a question of a fundamental approach to development. Strategies and action plans must be based on thorough socio-economic assessments of different groups of people, in order for national food security plans to identify the food insecure and vulnerable groups and effectively address their challenges. A HRBA, through its constant concern with those whose rights are not realized and why, can be a powerful tool to sharpen the focus on people.

The Republic of Nicaragua recently elaborated a comprehensive strategy to combat hunger and malnutrition. This policy for food and nutrition security and sovereignty (*Política Sectorial de Seguridad y Soberanía Alimentaria y Nutricional*, 2009) is being operationalized through different social programmes which pay particular attention to targeting. One of them is the *Hambre Cero* programme, which seeks to empower in particular rural women heading households by providing them with a productive voucher (*Bono Productivo*), which provides them with farm animals, plants, seeds and other inputs. The vouchers

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16 Legal, policy, institutional and other thematic gaps and challenges are being addressed in separate Thematic Studies developed as part of the Ten-Year Retrospective on the Right to Food Guidelines.

thus improve their ability and knowledge on how to produce food, enhance their dietary and nutritional standards, and in time allow them to set up cooperatives with other producers (UNSR, 2010).<sup>17</sup>

Second, Guideline 10 recalls the centrality of **nutrition** considerations to the protection, fulfilment and respect of the right to food. The right to food not only provides a framework to nutrition interventions – with the human right to adequate food as an ultimate development objective, it also guides the actual implementation. As shown by the case of El Salvador and its PASE, using human rights principles makes a nutrition programme more effective and ensures multi-stakeholders participation. Embedding nutrition interventions in a human rights framework helps broadening their impact and strengthening their outcome. Nutrition is an integral part of the right to food and the two should consistently be together part of an integrated approach to sustainable development.

Third, Guideline 11 reminds us how **awareness raising, education and information** on human rights, the right to food, and nutrition are constantly needed to raise the profile of FSN interventions. In the long run, these measures have led and will continue to lead to a shift in the perception of relevant stakeholders on the importance of human resource development for the realization of the right to food, especially among the most vulnerable such as girls, women and other underserved populations. Examples of areas for development are broad: they include food and beverage marketing, food preparation and safety skills training, and agricultural, environmental, business and natural resources education, just to name a few.

Thus, awareness raising, education and information strategies and activities should be specifically designed for each programme, taking into account the peculiarities and specificities of the context, the root causes of food insecurity to be addressed, and the particular characteristics of target groups. Human rights learning and education are particularly crucial, and should be prioritized according to each context. They can give people needed knowledge about human rights (about concepts such as right holders and duty bearers for example) and help people become more motivated to act upon them, feel more secure in accepting responsibility and build their confidence in claiming their rights. Educational development within human rights in general, and the right to adequate food in particular, is one condition for people to make progress towards its realization. Although essential to the public, still today these receive little coverage in publications, research and projects.

Equally important to the realization of the right to food are nutrition education programmes and activities which incorporate methods for behaviour change; communicate in ways that can motivate and speak to people in languages they understand; include participation of individuals and the community; and strengthen local knowledge, emphasizing the value of local food, dietary and eating patterns (FAO, 2010). In the Republic of South Africa for example, a number of universities and academic institutions conduct research on food insecurity and vulnerability, focusing on the right to food in their academic research and promoting the discussion on contemporary issues in nutrition, while building on human rights to help solve community nutrition problems (Steyn and Temple, 2008).

A fourth challenge in the implementation of Guidelines 10 and 11, can be found in the adoption of a **HRBA**, that is to say respecting the human rights principles of accountability, participation, and non-discrimination, and integrating such an approach into broader national strategies and

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17 The programme, as has been noted in the UNSR's mission report to Nicaragua, could be further strengthened by being institutionalized, and by improving the quality of the information and the transparency of operations of the programme.

programmes for the realization of the right to food. How can a HRBA increase effectiveness and the ability to contribute to sustainable, long-term solutions in these areas of implementation?

- **Accountability**, in line with Guideline 13.3, requires that, once commitments are made and targets set, progress of such interventions is monitored (including progress in the delivery of resources), and failure to achieve results leads to redefining the means chosen. A HRBA foresees as essential that indicators be built to measure food, nutritional and educational inputs, outcomes, and processes, and that corrective action be taken where resources committed are not made available, or when results do not meet expectations (UN General Assembly, 2011).
- The requirement of **participation**, consistent with Guideline 10.3, ensures that local agricultural and nutrition contexts be considered. It also means that solutions will be demand-driven, that local partners will be identified, and that country-led action will not be equated with government-led action. In addition, it allows for identifying alternative solutions based on local knowledge and conditions, such as homestead or community gardens. Participation requires that beneficiaries take part in the process of evaluation, and co-design the solutions that could benefit them most. This is not only empowering, but also enhances the effectiveness of interventions because it builds a feedback loop to facilitate ongoing learning and improvement of policies (UN General Assembly, 2011). A good practice, illustrating the importance of involving the participation of the most vulnerable in FSN programmes, is the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) programme in the Republic of Mozambique, which targets orphans and vulnerable teenagers living in communities where HIV/AIDS has had a high impact. The JFFLS programme identified the capacity needs of orphans and vulnerable boys and girls, and developed awareness-raising and training programmes to fill these gaps. It has had a strong impact on FSN as it offers an agricultural and life skills learning programme, providing vulnerable children and youth with the knowledge and skills they need to improve traditional and modern agricultural practices, hence increasing their opportunities for the future (FAO, 2013a).
- Finally, the requirement of **non-discrimination** ensures that interventions are targeted, with a focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, and that they are gender sensitive. Interventions must include eligibility criteria in order to ensure effective targeting of assistance, so that no one who is in need is excluded, and none of those not in need of assistance are included. This is to say that such interventions should be in line with Guideline 17.5 and should ensure that the needs of all groups are identified, including those of pregnant and lactating women and infants, and actions planned to address those needs. Such strategies should also link efforts to improve nutrition during early childhood with later life, adopting a life-course perspective as recommended by WHO (UN General Assembly, 2011).

**GUIDELINE 13.3**

States should establish transparent, non-discriminatory eligibility criteria in order to ensure effective targeting of assistance, so that no one who is in need is excluded, and none of those not in need of assistance are included. Effective accountability and administrative systems are essential to prevent leakages and corruption. Factors to take into account include household and individual assets and income, nutrition and health status, as well as existing coping mechanisms.

**GUIDELINE 10.3**

States are encouraged to involve all relevant stakeholders, in particular communities and local government, in the design, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of programmes to increase the production and consumption of healthy and nutritious foods, especially those that are rich in micronutrients. States may wish to promote gardens both at home and at school as a key element in combating micronutrient deficiencies and promoting healthy eating. States may also consider adopting regulations for fortifying foods to prevent and cure micronutrient deficiencies, in particular of iodine, iron and Vitamin A.

**GUIDELINE 17.5**

States should, in particular, monitor the food security situation of vulnerable groups, especially women, children and the elderly, and their nutritional status, including the prevalence of micronutrient deficiencies.

This fourth challenge brings us to a fifth: adequate **monitoring systems** to ensure the realization of the right to food. A good monitoring system can make the greatest contribution in showing whether nutrition, education and awareness-raising interventions (that is, the implementation of Guidelines 10 and 11) are the most effective and tailored. These should be designed in order to take into account, for example, the role of adequate diets in the realization of the right to adequate food and the right to the highest attainable standard of health, and include human rights principles as described above. The major task of institutions chosen to take part in a human rights-based and results-based monitoring system is to bring stakeholders together in a participatory process. The system itself can build on existing institutions and monitoring systems. A number of countries currently have in place institutions and monitoring systems that are relevant to implementing the right to food, such as an agricultural database in the ministry of agriculture, a health monitoring system in the ministry of health, and national statistical surveys on income and expenditures, health, nutrition or environmental conditions.

The Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) of the Philippines, implements a number of programmes with the ultimate objective of realizing the right to food such as National Nutrition Surveys<sup>18</sup> and other types nutrition statistics, assessments and monitoring programmes. These involve periodic nationwide nutrition surveys to assess the food intake of the population and determine the types and magnitude of nutrition problems and their causes. These surveys are based on food consumption, nutritional

18 See the website of Philippines' FNRI, Department of Science and Technology, Research and Development Institute at [http://www.fnri.dost.gov.ph/index.php?option=com\\_frontpage&Itemid=1](http://www.fnri.dost.gov.ph/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1) (accessed in September 2014).

anthropometry, clinical nutrition, biochemical nutrition, nutrition economics and statistics, and finally nutrition knowledge, attitude and practice (KAP). Research results are valuable inputs for the formulation of national and regional development plans for the identification of priority groups and areas for nutrition intervention programs.

Another interesting example of overcoming this challenge is the achievement of nutrition indicators through a human rights-based and results-based monitoring system in Ecuador's *Estrategia Acción Nutrición* (EAN). EAN's human rights-based monitoring system improved transparency and cooperation among different ministries and public programmes on child nutrition, and provided common standards for analysing achievements and limitations (FAO, 2013a). As this example shows, the development and application of a HRBA to monitoring must be considered as a long and continuous process, one in which awareness raising of policy-makers, staff training on rights, and participation in developing the monitoring process need to be promoted.

One last challenge identified in this study, regarding the implementation of Guidelines 10 and 11, is related to the need for a more **comprehensive approach** to promote the realization of the right to food. Integrating human rights into the work of agencies dealing with food and agriculture such as FAO, and strengthening their implementation in the context of national food security, can only be achieved through a wide range of interconnected, intergovernmental, multisectoral and multi-stakeholder dialogue and action. FAO has a crucial role to play in facilitating such dialogue, ensuring that it is effectively translated into country-level actions involving a wide range of technical players, including nutrition, education and awareness-raising experts. FAO is the right player to invest in because its work gives voice to many, and also because it promotes policy coherence and the sharing of best practices. These can provide evidence-based results in the areas of implementation of nutrition, education and awareness-raising interventions conducive to the progressive realization of the right to food.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

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The conclusions with respect to the right to adequate food and nutrition, education and awareness raising, may be the following:

- To realize the human right to adequate food, a **holistic, multi-stakeholder and multisectoral approach**, supported by an enabling policy environment, is required. A multidisciplinary approach in support of the progressive realization of the right to food leads to the centrality of well-targeted (i.e. in support of the poor and most vulnerable) nutrition, education and awareness-raising interventions. In addition, a **HRBA** can strengthen such interventions by further striving to address the rights of diverse population groups and, more generally, promoting the integration of the PANTHER principles in implementation processes.
- The word ‘adequate’ therefore goes beyond kilocalories. The achievement of nutritional and culturally accepted well-being has to be seen as an integral part of the full realization of the right to adequate food. In line with Guideline 10, **nutrition** considerations must be included in all food system debates and measures being taken regarding the protection, fulfilment and respect of this right. Furthermore, the right to food not only provides a framework for nutrition interventions – with the human right to adequate food as an ultimate development objective, it also guides the actual implementation. The RtFG are built on such an idea, and aim to assist states in guaranteeing the availability of food in quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of individuals; and the physical and economic accessibility for everyone, including vulnerable groups, to adequate food (or the means of its procurement), free from unsafe substances and acceptable within a given culture.
- Guideline 11 focuses on education and awareness raising through a broad spectrum of issues including the importance of **right to food learning and education** which, *inter alia*, gives people needed knowledge about human rights (about concepts such as right holders and duty bearers for example) and helps people become more motivated to act upon them, feel more secure in accepting responsibility and build their confidence in claiming their rights. Educational development within human rights in general, and the right to adequate food in particular, is one condition and an essential vehicle for people to make progress towards its realization.

Guideline 11 also focuses on a particular branch of education, **nutrition education** which, *inter alia*, gives people needed knowledge about what they should eat to be healthy and helps them develop skills to make good food choices. Nutrition education programmes and campaigns can protect children from hunger, boost school attendance and foster greater social equity.

**Awareness raising**, also part of Guideline 11, can have a practical impact on the realization of the right to adequate food. It can influence decisions and actions, it can mobilize for action, help disseminating right to food information and promote pro-right to adequate food arguments in advocacy and mobilization efforts.

## 6.1 Looking forward: Strengthening the right to adequate food underpinnings of future nutrition, education and awareness raising implementation

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Nutritious diets, access to education, and awareness raising, are therefore not only instrumental, but vital for achieving people's right to food. There are many opportunities for increased synergy and collaboration on the right to food in nutrition, education and awareness raising. Since the adoption of the RtFG, the global agenda has provided important recommendations in support of a HRBA framework using human rights principles and, through experience and sharing of best practices, has advocated more fiercely in support of these areas of work as essential vehicles for the progressive realization of the right to food.

As the leading UN agency promoting the achievement of food security for all, FAO holds a comparative advantage in enabling more effective and coherent policy actions, in encouraging joint efforts, and in establishing and promoting systems for monitoring and accountability in support of the RtFG at global, regional and country levels.

Long-term commitment to supporting the progressive realization of the right to food in public policies and programmes is key to hunger reduction, especially in core technical areas of work such as nutrition, education and awareness raising. The Ten-Year Retrospective on the Right to Food Guidelines, inspired by ongoing global initiatives and efforts, could trigger a renewal of commitment towards joint action for a common goal – that is, the progressive realization of the right to food – and invite FAO and its partners to:

- reflect on the multidisciplinary approach necessary to the progressive realization of the right to food, which leads to the centrality of well-targeted nutrition, education and awareness-raising interventions;
- address current and future challenges, and work towards closing identified gaps in a coordinated and harmonized manner;
- reinvigorate global, regional and national cooperation on the right to food through broad objectives, targets and accountability mechanisms for all major stakeholders involved;
- support multi-stakeholder platforms on food and nutrition security which can in turn facilitate sustainable partnerships, and support the establishment of standards and the development of global guidance on the implementation of the RtFG, based on evidence and best practices;
- commit resources to promote integrated work on the right to food, facilitating the collaboration and involvement of nutrition, education and awareness-raising experts;
- strengthen global governance and institutional mechanisms for improved implementation outcomes and monitoring, by engaging stakeholders after the Ten-Year Retrospective on the Right to Food Guidelines.

In the meantime, the celebration of the Ten-Year Retrospective on the Right to Food Guidelines will help to take stock of implementation efforts, and draw lessons from what has already been achieved in a number of important areas essential for the recognition of this fundamental human right, as part of an integrated approach to ultimately eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

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The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) would like to thank the Governments of Norway and Spain for the financial support which made possible the development of this report.



### For further information

Visit the Right to Food website [www.fao.org/righttofood](http://www.fao.org/righttofood)  
and the thematic page on FAO's role in the fulfilment of the Right to Food  
[www.fao.org/human-right-to-food](http://www.fao.org/human-right-to-food)  
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