



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

**REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL CONSULTATION
ON THE CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR FOOD LOSS AND WASTE PREVENTION
AND REDUCTION**

**16 DECEMBER 2019
CAIRO, EGYPT**

**REPORT OF
THE TECHNICAL CONSULTATION ON THE CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR FOOD LOSS AND WASTE PREVENTION AND REDUCTION**

**16 DECEMBER 2019
CAIRO, EGYPT**

1. INTRODUCTION

At its 26th Session of October 2018, the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG) requested FAO to take the lead, in collaboration with relevant actors, to develop voluntary code of conduct (CoC) on the reduction of food loss and food waste. In response to that request, FAO launched a global process for developing a CoC that would present voluntary, global, internationally agreed, guiding principles and practices, which different stakeholders can adopt and apply in order to achieve food loss and waste (FLW) reduction and prevention, while yielding positive outcomes in terms of the environment, natural resources, livelihoods, food security and nutrition in alignment with the 2030 Agenda.

In order for the CoC to represent a global consensus on internationally accepted principles and practices for FLW reduction, that takes into consideration and reflects country diversities and the views of all key stakeholders related to FLW, an inclusive consultative process has been launched to develop the CoC.

It is in this regard that a regional workshop was organized on 16 December 2019 in Cairo. The workshop had the following objectives:

1. Provide the rationale and background of the CoC and raise awareness about it among NENA region stakeholders;
2. Develop an understanding of the different elements of the CoC;
3. Discuss, gather inputs, and build consensus from different stakeholder groups on the content of the principles and practices that should be covered by the CoC;
4. Obtain guidance on the applicability of the CoC with specific focus on the NENA context;
5. Strengthen the network of FLW focal points in NENA Region;
6. Exchange field experiences among FLW experts.

Additionally, the occasion of this workshop was seized to discuss the status of food loss in the region, learn from our experience and strengthen the network of country focal points and experts. This regional technical discussion was held on a second day, December 17th, 2019 and outcomes reported in a separate dedicated report.

Thirty-one participants were in attendance, made up of two main categories. First, country focal points who were nominated by their respective governments to participate and represent the member countries. Second, individual “experts” invited for their experience in FLW-based

projects and initiatives implemented in the NENA region by FAO or other organizations. The remaining participants represented organizations with headquarters in Egypt or other NENA countries who work on FLW-related matters in complement to FAO; representatives of UNIDO, IFPRI and AOAD were in attendance. The programme of the event is presented in Annex I, and the list of participants is in Annex II.

2. MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. The need for and applicability of the code of conduct in the NENA context

The CoC sets an umbrella over which country-level planning, policy, strategy takes place. The participants generally agreed on the importance of having a code of conduct on FLW prevention and reduction, and appreciated the thorough effort to develop the draft CoC document. How exactly it would be applied was a subject for discussion, and the participants recognized that vetting the document is a precursor to being responsible for implementing it.

It was suggested to be inclusive of all facets of the FLW issue and understandable to people working in any involved ministry. A concise, well-structured and straightforward document is needed that is easy to digest, particularly for decision-makers. The roles and responsibilities of each actor (private, public, civil society, academia, and international organizations) need to be made clear, noting that the draft CoC put very much emphasis on the state. A benchmarking would be useful to see how the NENA region and countries fare in terms of implementing FLW reduction policy and programs. Finally, it was suggested that the document may consider including a principal on ethics.

2.2. Considerations when planning for principles and actions to reduce FLW

As a foundation for efforts toward preventing and reducing FLW, participants discussed what factors to take into consideration when planning for these efforts in the NENA region.

The response reflected the range of diverse food and agriculture contexts among the countries that make up the NENA region. First, diversity of population in terms of gender, ethnicity, and nationalities present in the country noting that many NENA countries house ethnic groups, refugee populations, migrant workers, expatriate communities. Other considerations are, level of economic development; political stability; natural resource base and climactic conditions, scarcity of land or water; agriculture sector status and whether import or exporting (or self-sufficient); status of infrastructure (electricity, road networks); diets, food style and traditions; education level and human capital; population densities and rural-urban divides; threat of climate change; level of technology and innovation, and availability of expertise in-country; agricultural production systems; social inclusiveness particularly of youth, women, and smallholder farmers; and any relevant laws and legal frameworks for land, industrialization, or agriculture sector in general.

More specifically related to FLW, it is important to consider if there exists data on FLW and how it is recorded, or if there are data gaps. Likewise, if monitoring and reporting mechanisms exist. Who the stakeholders are related to FLW policies and actions in countries and what governance mechanism or regulatory system may apply.

The participants were asked about the overarching principles and main actions that should be followed for FLW reduction in the NENA region, while respecting the three dimensions of sustainability and taking the SDGs into consideration. Emphasis was placed on the fact of natural resource scarcity in the NENA region, therefore consideration should be given to agricultural planning according to regional specificities and natural resources availability, with environmentally sustainable actions. Climate smart policies in agriculture should be developed that contribute positively to food security. Investment opportunities and FLW solutions in green technology should be sought.

Finally, innovative partnerships and collaboration models are needed (such as public-private partnerships 'PPP') that link the public sector with private sector and financing. Coordination among actors at national levels is critical because of the multi-disciplinary nature of the FLW problem, however this is clearly considered to be a challenge. Whereas FAO counterpart ministries are usually agriculture, other ministries tend to have equal or greater authority over food systems.

2.3. The main FLW issues in NENA food systems and measures to address them

2.3.1 Awareness

Although awareness about FLW in NENA is risen significantly in recent years, deeper understanding is needed about the types and locations of FLW, the drivers of FLW, and the downside risk to environment, society and the economy. A more thorough and common understanding of FLW is needed for all actors to be on the same page. Awareness raising about FLW should target all the different actors for purposes, for example raising farmer and consumer awareness about FLW innovations or action that can increase incomes or reduce expenditure.

2.3.2 Definition of FLW

The definition of FLW varies among institutions and stakeholders, initiatives and can be subject to interpretation. Without a standard or uniformly adopted definition, measurement of FLW can be misguided and the levels misinterpreted. This has a knock-on effect for FLW strategy, policy and intervention design.

2.3.3 Data

It was generally agreed that there are insufficient information and data about FLW causes and levels along specific food value chains and within food systems. Participants stated the need for data collection, studies and monitoring of FLW along value chains, and it was explained that better data and statistics at national level will help to implement the CoC. A question was raised about which methodology for FLW measurement to use, and it was explained that a variety of methodologies are available depending on the level (macro, meso or micro) and purpose. It was recommended that countries invest in strengthening their data and evidence base on FLW.

2.3.4 Policies and strategies

The need for policies and strategies that encourage good agricultural and postharvest practices was made clear. NENA countries have a regional strategic framework to serve as a guiding tool, but need to adapt this to the national-level within the each country's context. Strategies to upgrade specific value chains are also needed. Above all, it takes commitment and better cooperation between stakeholders, and it was often noted that involvement of stakeholders is insufficient. The continuous support of the public sector remains vital.

2.3.5 Food Security

Most NENA countries face major challenges to their food security, characterized by a limited natural resource base, large and growing populations, rising malnutrition, and reliance on imports to meet local food needs. Several comments were made about linking food security planning with the goal of reducing FLW. For example, the need to optimize the basket of food goods that a country produces as per natural resource endowment, value, or strategic food security needs. This would entail prioritization of specific food value chains, i.e. cereals, fruits and vegetables.

2.3.6 Political stability and political economy

Many countries in the region are facing political instability and some are in protracted crises. While FLW is certainly a problem in these contexts, the analyses of FLW levels, strategy and actions require a different approach. The question was asked whether the CoC apply for countries in conflict. Certain NENA countries lack the stability to implement initiatives such as the CoC, and it was put forward that stability can be a prerequisite for addressing FLW reduction. The issue of political will for investing in FLW reduction activities was also raised, noting that there could be broader political circumstances that prevent it from taking place.

2.3.7 Urbanization, rural-urban divide, and role of municipalities

Many NENA countries have high levels of urbanization and growing cities, and growing slums within these cities, and this has a major effect on food systems. The role of municipalities in reducing FLW was highlighted frequently as often cities are more in tune with the needs of

populations, local food systems and losses and waste within. It is important to devolve authority to take action on FLW from national to local and municipal levels, and building capacities and providing guidance for cities to tackle FLW.

2.3.8 Climate change

In the NENA region, climate change is extremely important and needs to be reflected in the CoC document. FLW impacts on climate change mainly through CO₂ emissions, but climate change has an impact on FLW that needs to be studied such as, incidence of pests and disease, effects of rising temperatures on pre and post-harvest handling, crop resistance and so on. Support is needed especially to smallholder farmers in climate change adaptation and innovative climate smart technologies.

2.3.9 Natural resources

Scarcity of natural resources, water and land in particular, is a defining feature of agriculture and food systems in NENA. Whereas FLW is viewed as a postharvest matter, it is important to recognise the natural resources used in producing food that is lost or wasted at later stages along the value chain. The association of FLW and cultivation practices or food production is important for capturing the issue of natural resource scarcity.

2.3.10 Smallholder agriculture

FLW reduction planning, policy and strategy must be inclusive of smallholder farmers and small-scale value chain actors who are largely resource-poor, operating in a traditional manner, lack access to information, technology or infrastructure, and located in marginalized rural areas. The point was raised that there may be tradeoff between activities that reduce food losses and that support income generation – for example, reducing losses can yield larger supply which puts downward pressure on prices. Interventions that presumably reduce food loss need to be studied carefully for their macro-level impact on smallholders, and the cost-benefit analysis at the micro level.

2.3.11 Markets and value chains

Lack of market strategies and poor understanding of the concepts concerning supply chain organization, particularly for local and traditional markets in which smallholders participate. Agricultural markets and commodity market systems to be improved and the participants noted that a systems approach is needed. Finally, modern market systems must be inclusive of smallholders and women.

2.3.12 Quality standards and regulations

Quality standards themselves were noted to be often related to causing FLW, particularly if they are too stringent or not applied properly. Therefore, we should take into consideration how quality standards are designed, communicated to stakeholders, and enforced.

2.3.13 Infrastructure

Many participants noted weak infrastructure as being a cause of FLW, all along the value chain. The infrastructure and management of wholesale markets need improvement; postharvest infrastructure for storage, packing, handling and distribution; cold chain technology and infrastructure; market infrastructure; road and transportation networks.

2.3.14 Technology, Innovation, Research & Development

The need for modernization was noted in NENA food systems, with the status of technological innovation being insufficient to upgrade practices and transform the food systems. Strengthening innovation systems; research in postharvest and complementary fields; applied research in packaging, storage, processing technologies were among the gaps mentioned. Importantly, is the need for investment in applied research, institutions and people (human capital), and international collaboration for knowledge exchange.

2.3.15 Training and extension

Training was widely referred as a gap and need for reducing FLW. While capacity building was generally agreed as necessary action, the who and what were questioned in the sense of where to invest our efforts. FLW in education systems and curriculum was suggested, and an example given of considering to develop a masters degree program. For value chain actors, access to good quality information through a revitalized extension service was called for.

2.3.16 Food Waste and Circular Economy

Management of food waste in a more productive way is needed in the NENA region, particularly the countries with dense urban populations and given the regional food traditions and customs that impact levels of food waste. A circular bio-economy approach should be encouraged whereby composting, producing energy from organic waste, and redistributing food to people and animals is encouraged. Innovation in packages and packaging systems is needed to both prevent FLW and reduce the negative environmental impact of some packaging. It was noted that civil society plays a key role in tackling waste, through spreading awareness and taking action such as food banking.

2.3.17 Multi-stakeholder platforms

The role of various ministries, disciplines and stakeholders was recognized and noted as a challenge especially as it comes to coordination. Whereas the entry-point for the present discussion is from the agriculture sector, in fact ministries of health, industry, supply, subsidy,

trade, planning and others play a role in reducing FLW. Effective strategies, policies and action require the collaboration of all, however in practice is not simple and few successful examples exist of cross-ministry coordination. Likewise, food loss and food waste are highly related but divert in terms of the approaches to reduction.

2.4. How to make the CoC practical?

Participants were asked how the CoC can be made practical for implementation in their respective countries, considering the risks for failure and the role of public sector in influencing behaviour and actions along the value chain. The full response of the breakout groups is provided in the Annex III proceedings, but a brief summary is provided here of the main points.

First, it is expected that there is accountability with regards to taking action towards prevention and reduction of FLW. This presumes transparent, fair, and inclusive processes wherein coherent policies and actions are developed. Regulations related to FLW reduction should be applicable to all and progressive enforcement was suggested, in parallel with raising awareness and understanding of FLW levels, causes and solutions.

Dialogue among stakeholders was seen to be critical for reducing FLW, and effective cooperation between ministries, institutions, organizations necessary for the CoC to be implemented successfully. Given the challenges inherent in cooperation, it was suggested to create a structure or innovative means of facilitating cooperation. Examples given were to create a platform, use PPP, or create a dedicated institution (or unit or national council) for CoC and FLW. This structure would help elicit the win-win in FLW reduction for private, public, NGOs.

Implementation would require facilitating access to finance, particularly for smallholder farmers and small-scale value chain actors. The public sector can also facilitate action by easing procedures related to FLW reduction activities, and developing programs to incentivize actors to make changes in technology or practice. Finally, engaging the role of municipalities and decentralizing actions was considered a promising way forward.

2.5 Areas of contention that need to be negotiated

Some of the solutions to FLW reduction can actually have negative environmental consequences, for example use of energy for cooling, or use of non-renewable packaging materials. The NENA region is especially vulnerable to climate change and thus the various trade-offs between environmental, social, and food security objectives need to be considered carefully.

Stakeholders need to be on board with efforts towards FLW reduction and the CoC, especially since they entail changes in behavior, non-sustainable agricultural practices and technologies, and potentially new laws and regulations. Customs in the NENA region can inhibit participation of women in value chains and food systems, and therefore the social implications of FLW reduction on women need to be studied.

While regulations were considered an integral part of food systems and FLW reduction, it was noted that there can be trade-offs or conflict between objectives. Examples were given of trade laws and food safety regulations that can serve to protect or facilitate activities along the value chain, but if designed a certain way can actually exacerbate FLW. This is an important consideration for most of the NENA which are net food importers.

Annex I: Programme of the side event (actual)

December 16th – Consultation on global voluntary Codes of Conduct for FLW reduction

Time	Session
08:30 - 09:00	Registration
09:00 – 09:10	Opening remarks <i>Jean-Marc Faures, Regional Programme Leader, FAORNE</i>
09:10 – 09:20	Goals and objectives of the workshop <i>Jozimo Santos Rocha, Agro-Industry Officer, FAORNE</i>
09:20 - 10:15	Presentation of the concept and content of the code of conduct for food loss and waste reduction <i>Maryam Rezaei, Program Advisor, Strategic program on food systems, FAO/HQ</i>
10:15 – 10:45	Coffee break
	Break-out Groups: identification of gaps and prioritization of principles and actions by thematic area – Assigning a rapporteur per group
10:45 – 12:45	10:45 – 11:45 Question 1 – individual group discussion and reporting from each group 11: 45 – 12:45 Question 2 – individual group discussion and reporting from each group
12:45 – 13:30	Lunch
	Presentation of recommendations from break-out groups
13:30 – 15:30	13:30 – 14:30 Question 3 – individual group discussion and reporting from each group 14:30 – 15:30 Q&A plenary discussion on the recommendations
15:30 – 16:15	Day 1- Closing remarks – next steps and follow-up

Annex II: Participants

COUNTRY FOCAL POINTS

ALGERIA

Mohamed Lehadi Sakhri
Director General
Institute Techniques de Grandes Cultures (ITGC)
Algeria, Algiers
Tel : 00 213 238 28553
Mobile : 00 213 561 243 232
Email : ml.sakhri19@gmail.com

EGYPT

Ehab Essawy
Prof. Dr. of Food Technology Research Institute
Agricultural Research Center (ARC)
Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation
Cairo, Egypt
Tel: 00 202 35718324
Fax: 00 202 35684669
Mobile : 00 2 0100 5734897
Email: ehab_essawy2000@yahoo.com

IRAQ

Ahmed Hussain Al-Badeery
Director of Journal Sciences Department
Ministry of Agriculture
Baghdad, Iraq
Mobile: 00 964 770 650 2807
Email: ahmed_gili@yahoo.com

KUWAIT

Ahmad Alshemari
Research and Studies Head Department
Public Authority for Food and Nutrition (PAFN)
Kuwait, State of Kuwait
Mobile: 00 965 9987 8881
Email: ahmadnouri1973@outlook.com

LEBANON

Nadine Abdul Khalek

Head of Refrigeration & Packaging Service
Ministry of Agriculture
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel: 01 849 620
Mobile: 766 72721
Email: nadabelkhalek@yahoo.com

LIBYA

Abdulsalam AlSnousi Nasr
Member of Wadi Elod Project Committee
Ministry of Agriculture
Sebha, Libya
Mobile : 00 218 925 130570
Email : abdulslamiq67@gmail.com

MOROCCO

Larbi Toumi
Chief Engineer in Charge of Food Security
Secretariat General
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Rural
Development Water and Forests
Rabat, Morocco
Mobile : 00 212 657 831 851
Email : l.toumi@agriculture.gov.ma

OMAN

Nasser Al Nuaimi
Agricultural Engineer
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
Muscat, Oman
Tel : 246 93183
Mobile : 99479164
Email : nasser2alnuaimi@gmail.com

PALESTINE

Samer AlTeeti
Director of Policies and Planning
Ministry of Agriculture
Ramallah, West Bank, Palestine
Tel : 00 970 224 03304/6/7
Mobile : 00 970 598 931063

Email : Samer.titi@moa.pna.ps
Samert02@yahoo.com

SAUDI ARABIA

Musaad Saeed Aljadani
Quality Assurance Manager
Saudi Grains Organization (SAGO)
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Tel : 00 966 12 648 1835
Mobile : 00 966 560 046008
Email: msj@sago.gov.sa

SUDAN

Mahasin Mohamed Ahmed Saad
General Department of Planning and
Agricultural Economic
Food Security Department
Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Natural
Resources
Khartoum, Sudan
Mobile: 00 214 912 904 769
Email: mahasinsaad@yahoo.com

SYRIA

Haitham Haidar
Director of Planning and International
Cooperation
Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform
Damascus, Syria
Tel: 00 963 11223 8220
Mobile: 00 963 94438 8822 – 09 443 999 22
Email: enghithamhaidar@gmail.com

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Abdulla Al Jneibi
Business Development Section Manager
Abu Dhabi Agriculture and Food Safety
Authority
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Tel: 00 971 281 81393
Mobile: 00 971 5511 33000
Email: abdulla.aljeneibi@ADAFSA.GOV.AE

Amal Hassan Ahmed Al Ahmadi

Senior Analyst
Ministry of Climate Change and Environment
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Tel: 009714 214 8530
Mobile: 00 9715 0739 7997
Email: ahalahmadi@moccae.gov.ae

Fatema Al Mulla
Senior Research Analyst
Food Security Office
Prime Minister's Office
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Mobile: 00 97150 404 8218
Email: fatema.almulla@foodsecurity.gov.ae

Sayed Essam Al Hashimi
Head of Section
Dubai Municipality
Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Tel : 045 218998
Mobile : 050 6252425
Email : Sehashimi@dm.gov.ae

YEMEN

Abdullah Omar Othman Bakhawar
Food Research, Post Harvest Technology Center
Aden, Yemen
Mobile: 00 967 777 242 260
Email: dr.a.bakhawar@gmail.com

INVITED EXPERTS

Amira Ben Mosbah Sfaxi
Chef de Service Developpement Technologique
Pole de Competitivite de Bizerte
Tunis, Tunisia
Tel : 00 216 725 72443
Mobile : 00 216 986 73201
Email : benmosbahamira@yahoo.fr
technopole@polebizerte.com.tn

Bouali Saaidia
Professor of Food Technology
Tunisian National Institute of Agronomy

Tunis, Tunisia
Tel : 00 216 97 674 018
Mobile : 00 216 55 674018
Email : boualisaaidia@planet.tn
s.bouali@planet.tn

Dalia Yassin
Senior Researcher
Director of FLW M&E Unit
Agriculture Economic Research Institute (AERI)
Agriculture Research Center (ARC)
Cairo, Egypt
Tel: 002 0100 1200189
Email: dalia.yassin@hotmail.com

ElHoussine Bartali
Professor, Consultant in Post-Harvest
Agricultural Engineering
IAV Hassan II
Rabat, Morocco
Tel : 00 212 5376 23219
Mobile : 00 212 661152805
Email : bartali.h@gmail.com

Hala Chahine
Associate Professor
Postharvest, Packaging, FLW
Faculty of Agronomy, Lebanese University
Beirut, Lebanon
Tel : 00 961 3 371967
Email : hala.chahine@gmail.com
hala.chahine@ul.edu.lb

Jamil Harb
Professor of Plant Biology
Dept. Biology and Biochemistry, Birzeit
University,
Birzeit, West Bank, Palestine
Tel: 00 970 2 298 2162
Mobile: 00970 599 350 713
Emails: jharb@birzeit.edu
jharb11@yahoo.com

Leila Assa
Head of Technical Studies Services

Office National Interprofessionnel Des Céréales
Et De Légumineuses
Rabat, Morocco
Tel : 05 37 21 73 02
Mobile : 06 60 84 26 89
Email : assa@onicl.org.ma
Assaleila9@gmail.com

Nacira Chourghal
Dr en sciences agronomique
Changement climatiques et impacts sur les
cultures
Université Mohamed El Bachir El Ibrahimi Bordj
Bou Arreridj
Algeria, Algiers
Tel : 00 213 305 72584
Mobile : 00 213 541 337132
Email : chourghaln@gmail.com
n.chourghal@univ-bba.dz

Raoudha Khaldi
Professor
Consultant in Agriculture and Agri-business
Economy, FLW and Value Chain Development
National Institute of Agricultural Research of
Tunisia (INRAT)
Tunis, Tunisia
Tel : 00 216 230 239/230 024
Mobile : 00 216 9881 8031
Email : raoudha.khaldi@yahoo.com
khaldi.raoudha@iresa.agrinet.tn

Salim Etsouri
Agricultural machinery and equipment, Rural
Engineering department
National Higher School of Agronomy (ENSA)
Algeria, Algiers
Tel : 00 213 23 721 282
Mobile : 00 213 550 412 876
Email : s.etsouri@ensa.dz
Salim.etsouri@edu.ensa.dz
s.etsouri@gmail.com

ORGANISATIONS

AOAD

Hashim Hassan Salim
Food Security Specialist
Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development
(AOAD)
Khartoum, Sudan

Reda Rizk
Plant Genetic Resources Expert
Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development
(AOAD)
Cairo, Egypt
Tel : 00 202 333 65795
Mobile : 00 2 010 924 99692
Email : Dr. Redarizk@gmail.com

IFPRI

Lina Alaaeldin Abdelfattah
Senior Research Assistant
International Food Policy Research Institute
(IFPRI)
Cairo, Egypt
Tel: 00 202 25778603 (ext. 123)
Mobile: 00 20 1016608877
Email: l.abdelfattah@cgiar.org

UNIDO

Sara Berlese
Project Officer
UNIDO Regional Office in Egypt
Ministry of Industry building
Cairo, Egypt
Tel: 00 20 2 27943477-27941993
Email: S.BERLESE@unido.org

FAO

Jozimo Santos Rocha
Agro Industry Officer
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
Regional Office for the Near East & North
Africa (FAO/RNE)

Cairo, Egypt
Tel: 00 202 333 1 6000 (ext. 2824)
Email: Jozimo.SantosRocha@fao.org

Maryam Rezaei
Program advisor, SP4
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
Rome, Italy
Tel: 00 390 657 054859
Email: Maryam.Rezaei@fao.org

Jennifer Smolak
Agri-business and value chain specialist
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
Regional Office for the Near East & North
Africa (FAO/RNE)
Cairo, Egypt
Tel: 00 202 333 1 6000 (ext. 2926)
Email: Jennifer.Smolak@fao.org

Ahmed Abdalla
Agriculture and Agribusiness Specialist
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
Regional Office for the Near East & North
Africa (FAO/RNE)
Cairo, Egypt
Tel: 00 202 333 1 6000 (ext. 2924)
Email: Ahmed.abdalla@fao.org

Heba Tokali
Technical Programme Assistant
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations
Regional Office for the Near East & North
Africa (FAO/RNE)
Cairo, Egypt
Tel: 00 202 333 1 6000 (ext. 2819)
Email: Heba.tokali@fao.org

Annex III: Proceedings

The opening remarks were given by Mr. Jean Marc Faures, and introduction and objectives presented by Mr. Jozimo Santos Rocha. Following this was a presentation given by Ms. Maryam Rezaei, with the background and explanation of the CoC context and content.

It is important to note that a full zero draft of the CoC document was circulated to the participants prior to the meeting, and on hand during the consultation. This differs from the consultations in other regions where the full document was not yet available; in those meetings, participants were only presented the concept of the CoC and an annotated outline of the document.

Ms. Rezaei explained that the CoC must be comprehensive of all aspects affecting FLW reduction strategy, policy and actions. However, it is a global document that will be implemented at country level and therefore should be relevant and feasible for member countries. The participants, particularly the country focal points, gave high importance to implementing the CoC in their comments.

Presentation of the concept and content of the CoC for FLW reduction

Ms. Rezaei introduced the CoC as the result of a request in 2018 from the Committee on Agriculture (COAG), FAO's highest governing body for technical matters in agriculture. Following this request, a consultative process was put into place starting with face-to-face meetings such as the present occasion. The next steps will be electronic consultations in early 2020 and participants were assured that they will be invited to provide inputs at that time. These consultations will inform the preparation of the final version of the code, which will be submitted to COAG for consideration in October 2020.

It was emphasized that the CoC are a collection of principals and guidelines, serving as an overarching umbrella to the plethora of tools, measures, and documents from the field that now exist since FLW has risen as a priority. They are relevant for all stakeholders at all levels of activity, however hold particular importance for the public sector for planning and implementing FLW reduction policy and actions.

The sections of the CoC document were presented, 1) General guiding principles, 2) Actions to be implemented, and 3) Regional specificities, noting that the final section is not yet drafted and will be available once all regional consultations are concluded.

Ms. Rezaei proceeded to go through the general guiding principles for FLW reduction and prevention and the actions to be implemented pertaining to each principle:

- Contributing to the 2030 Agenda;
- Leave no one behind (being inclusive);
- Right to food;

- Three Pillars of sustainability;
- Healthy people (ensuring food security and nutrition);
- Healthy planet - reduce the food system's impact on the environment;
- Systemic and holistic approach;
- An enabling environment of adequate policies, regulations and institutions;
- Committed and socially responsible private sector;
- Innovation for sustainable development;
- Chain actors with capacity to take action;
- Infrastructure (roads, energy, water).

Before the breakout groups session, an open discussion with comments, questions and answers about the presentation of the CoC took place:

- The issue of the definition of food loss and waste was raised, in particular how it varies according to institution and makes measurement variable as well. Related to this is the need to develop a common understanding of FLW among stakeholders, so they are on the same page when it comes to implementing the CoC or any action related to FLW reduction.
- It was asked if there is a prioritization or hierarchy in which to view the CoC guiding principles. The response given was to emphasize the role of countries in adopting and implementing the CoC. Each country needs to apply the CoC to their context, giving priority to the principles that are deemed more relevant for FLW to them (for example, the situation in Sudan is very different from that in UAE). One thing that is common to all is the hierarchy of FLW reduction, with priority given to preventing FLW from happening in the first place, followed by food recovery and redistribution for people, then for animals, recycling organic waste for productive use in a circular bio-economy, and only as a last resort to incineration or landfill.
- Several participants noted that the contributions toward FLW reduction are from different expertises focussed at different levels of the value chain, for example, farm-level, distribution, processing, and consumer-level. Likewise, food loss and food waste themselves are different in terms of the principles and actions needed to reduce them. As such, the different types and levels of FLW require different expertise and it was suggested to split the CoC policies and actions accordingly.
- Biotechnology is not mentioned in the document; it is important in terms of usage and conduct, as can offer tools for FLW reduction.
- NENA is experiencing severe problems with water scarcity. This should come through more strongly in the CoC to be relevant for the region.

- In relation to the principle on food security and nutrition, it was suggested to reflect through the document the fact that regional and local food styles vary.
- Countries where the agriculture sector is large and a major contributor to the economy, like Sudan, must focus on reducing losses beginning at farm level. Modern agriculture technologies are not easily accessible especially in remote areas; pest and disease pose major risk to crops; untrained labour or labourers moving into other industries causing shortages.

Breakout group questions and reporting:

Five groups were created to provide answers and recommendations to a series of three questions stated above. The groups were formed randomly through an ice-breaker exercise. Each group was assigned a rapporteurs, selected by the FAO team from among the participants and known to be knowledgeable about FLW and capable to lead group discussions.

The formed groups discussed each of the questions for about 20-25 minutes and immediately afterwards Ms. Rezaei moderated inputs from each group and discussions to clarify issues that were raised.

The questions posed are stated below and the breakout group responses in the following tables.

1. What do we need to consider when planning for principles and actions? What are the overarching principles and main actions that should be followed for FLW reduction in the NENA region, while respecting the three dimensions of sustainability and taking the SDGs into consideration?
2. How to make the CoC practical? Considerations for the risks for failure.
 - Indicate areas of disaccord that need to be negotiated to seek convergence of the views of different stakeholder groups.
Example 1: Making contract farming a win-win for small producers and retailers.
Example 2: Coordination between public sector and processors to reduce FLW for instance by reducing tax on packaging materials, etc.
 - Provide recommendations to make the CoC useful for the public sector to effectively influence the behavior and practices of different stakeholders.
3. What exactly is needed in food systems to make a reduction on FLW?
 - What are the main FLW needs and gaps in the NENA region?

→ Looking at the actions in the document, what could be the key actions to be implemented to address FLW in the NENA region?

Question 1. What do we need to consider when planning for principles and actions?

What are the overarching principles and main actions that should be followed for FLW reduction in the NENA region, while respecting the three dimensions of sustainability and taking the SDGs into consideration?

GROUP 1 (Hala Chahine)	GROUP 2 (Raoudha Khaldi)	GROUP 3 (Nadine)	GROUP 4 (Jamil Harb)	GROUP 5 (Prof. Bartali)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of population (#, gender, ethnic groups & nationalities in the countries) • Estimates of FLW, who are involved, stakeholders • Mapping of stakeholders responsible for addressing FLW activities in your countries • Existing knowledge, R&D capacity, innovation, level of technologies, availability of expertise • Economic status of the country. Is investing in FLW reduction a priority? Are there funds available? • Status of infrastructure, and is there room for improvement? • Data management, is the country measuring and recording data? Is there existing data and what are gaps? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of economic development of countries impacts how they deal with FLW • Level of political stability • Governance mechanism and regulatory system within the country to take suitable actions • Laws and legal framework; for land title, industrialization, penalties for waste • Events, festivals and occasions when food is wasted • Climate change • Economic status • Innovation, technological level • Population density and democratic status. Rural vs. urban may differ • Diet, quality of food available • Educational levels • Natural resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate smart policies in agriculture that contribute positively to food security • Encourage PPP for innovative FLW initiatives • Agricultural planning according to regional specificity and resource availability, with environmentally sustainable actions • Adopt policies and regulations or standards that encourage good agricultural and postharvest practices • Financial facilities for women producers and processors • Raise farmer and consumer awareness about FLW with innovations that are profitable • Boost coordination at national and regional level with clear-cut roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritization of specific food value chain, i.e. Wheat, fruit & vegetable • different common understanding of FLW • Considering the impact of infrastructure on levels of FLW (lack of electricity, roads) • Structure of production systems (ex in PAL intensive and extensive) • Fragmentation of land • Status of natural resources and time of climate change • Water scarcity and soil conditions, latter deeply related to fertilizers • Governance of food systems for more sustainable and inclusive development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raising, target all sectors and target all actors • Approach and methodology; quality evaluation • Availability and reliability of data. Identification of issues across different value chains • Coordination among all entities; private sector as key player • Impact of FLW on the economy and the environment. It depends on the country and their situation; importing vs. producing • Social inclusiveness; gender, youth, smallholders • Food style, consider the diet, tradition, and diversity of population • Value chain specific strategies and solutions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green technology opportunities for investment • Geographic location, and natural resource base and climactic conditions • Monitoring & reporting mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Import/export, in relation to food security • Linkage between private, public sector and financial sector (banks) • Inclusion of civil society in tackling waste, or spreading awareness • Data management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial facilities for infrastructure for smart packaging and refrigeration 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change resilience; state of infrastructure, inputs, and capacity of stakeholders
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Question 2. How to make the CoC practical? Considerations for the risks for failure.

→ Indicate areas of disaccord that need to be negotiated to seek convergence of the views of different stakeholder groups.

Example 1: Making contract farming a win-win for small producers and retailers.

Example 2: Coordination between public sector and processors to reduce FLW for instance by reducing tax on packaging materials, etc.

→ Provide recommendations to make the CoC useful for the public sector to effectively influence the behavior and practices of different stakeholders.

GROUP 1 (Hala Chahine)	GROUP 2 (Raoudha Khaldi)	GROUP 3 (Nadine)	GROUP 4 (Jamil Harb)	GROUP 5 (Prof. Bartali)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation fairness and transparency of information for all involved • Regulations must be applicable to all • Ease of procedure, ex land tenure and contract farming & government support in this 	<p>Areas of disaccord:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental • One health not applicable for food insecure countries, need to help them first • Tradition and Customs inhibit participation of for example women • Political stability a prerequisite 	<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a national council to develop the strategy for enabling and follow-up the CoC & FLW. Identify action plan, roles and interaction • Capacity building for all stakeholders, through extension 	<p>Risks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of dialogue between stakeholders • Lack of information • Lack of incentives • Lack of financial coverage for the needed program and actions • Unrealistic laws and regulations 	<p>Areas of disaccord:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free trade laws signed and mass production weaken smallholders position • Lack of prioritization of FLW • Limited capacity to manage food waste

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to finance • Ensure inclusivity, reduce dependency on state and include other actors • Decentralization of action to municipalities (through collaboration, call for tenders, proposals) who are closer to areas and needs • Investment in applied research, institutions and people (human capital), international collaboration for knowledge exchange • Coherent policies and strategies • Platform that validates the CoC for the country and prioritizes actions 	<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International incentive to reward government to apply CoC and reduce FLW • Apply PPP • Create institution responsible for the CoC. Removes conflict between other institutions, ministries in applying CoC • Help adopt new technologies, in case of reluctance to change • Raise awareness of all groups, other than capacity building • Cooperation between institutions, organizations • Quality standards to ensure proper food quality, with certain standards FLW will be reduced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raising such as media campaign for CoC so that all are aware • Launch incentive support for farmers, processors, etc., to help them move closer to CoC objectives • Make laws, standards, controls (quality or administrative) • Launch a finance program to support all above points • Go from national level to local level; decentralize 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance of stakeholders <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective dialogue between government bodies and other stakeholders, esp. private sector. Win-win for private, public, NGOs • Awareness programs for better understanding of CoC • Better extension services • Sufficient financial support for training, awareness, research, projects on FLW; • Gather smallholders in specialized cooperatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food safety regulation that can harm FLW efforts • Non-sustainable agricultural practices <p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative solutions to smallholders; production planning, agricultural calendar, taxes, contract planning • Progressive law enforcement • Subcontracting to private sector, foundations, food banks, recycling • Government support to smallholders • Establish and implement standards <p>Sound agricultural practices</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Question 3. What exactly is needed in food systems to make a reduction on FLW?

→ What are the main FLW needs and gaps in the NENA region

→ Looking at the actions in the document, what could be the key actions to be implemented to address FLW in the NENA region?

GROUP 1 (Hala Chahine)	GROUP 2 (Raoudha Khaldi)	GROUP 3 (Nadine)	GROUP 4 (Jamil Harb)	GROUP 5 (Prof. Bartali)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of importance of FLW and cost to economy • Monitoring of sources of FLW along the VC • Policies + regulations implementation • Improvement of post-harvest practices and infrastructure • Management of food waste in a more productive way; circular economy (compost, energy, people, animals); reusable packages and innovation of packaging systems • CoC for countries in conflict contexts? • Wholesale market losses - improve infrastructure and management • Accountability, implement system across supply chain • Flow and access of information along the food value chains 	<p>Needs and gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political stability /security • Food security issues • Commitment and cooperation between stakeholders • Enabling environment • Involvement of stakeholders insufficient • Extension methods need innovation • Lack of continuous support of Public sector • Lack of data & knowledge sharing across countries • Lack of Market strategies • Include FLW in education systems and curriculum • Boosting postharvest research <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusiveness • Food security and nutrition • System approach • Innovation • Chain actors with Capacity building to take action • Infrastructure • Collaborative interventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right to food comes in first priority • Research elaboration on sources of FLW along the VC • Enhance agricultural extension services for small holders • Modern technologies to be adopted • Eco friendly and efficient sources of energy • Fairtrade exhibitions • Market and commodity market systems to be improved • Research for better packaging and storage technologies 	<p>Gaps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient information and data about FLW causes and levels • Emphasis on marginalized Rural areas • Lack of emphasis on postharvest technology, mainly storage • Lack of concept concerning organization of supply chains • Better coordination and collaboration between actors <p>Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in cold chains • Improved varieties and genotypes • Market linkages for smallholders • Access to capacity building, financial services, and markets for smallholders and women • Food security and nutrition - need national road map • Food safety issue • Pillars of sustainability • Economic aspects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor adaptation of climate change • Infrastructure • Improve Access to information • Efficient comprehensive agriculture extension • Taxing system on FLW • Funding for R&D in sustainable value chain • Circular economy • Marketing • Less restraining regulations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment / climate change adaptation and innovative climate smart technologies 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social aspects and gender equality • Good agricultural practices 	
--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--

Wrap-up and summary of the day:

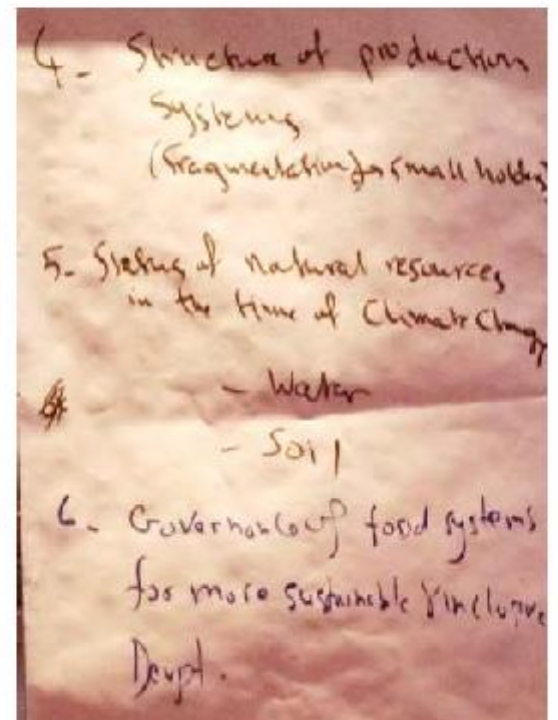
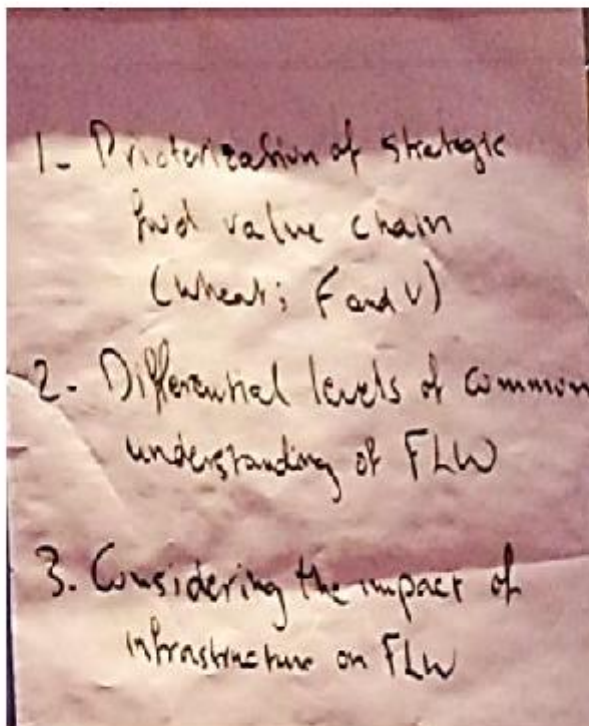
A rich discussion was held and many inputs were received to be incorporated in the first draft and future iterations of the document. A few points that really stood out in the consultation among NENA country participants were summarized in the wrap-up. For one, bringing the global ideas to national level, and then to the municipal-level for action. Two, the importance of political instability, as well as political economy, may have been overlooked. Three, we need to understand the urban-rural demographics and how different levels of urbanization affects the levels and drivers of FLW.

As for the next steps, a workshop report workshop will be produced in English and Arabic and will be annexed o the CoC. The CoC will itself be revised to a first draft and will be made available for an online consultation in early 2020. Following this, another revision will take place and then the final draft will be reviewed in a technical workshop with member states for a page-by-page review before presenting the document to COAG in October 2020.

Annex IV: Breakout group notes

THE TECHNICAL CONSULTATION ON THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR FOOD LOSS AND WASTE PREVENTION AND REDUCTION
16 DECEMBER 2019 CAIRO, EGYPT
GROUPS WORK

Q 1 What do we need to consider when planning for principles and actions? What are the overarching principles and main actions that should be followed for FLW reduction in the NENA region, while respecting the three dimensions of sustainability and taking the SDGs into consideration?



1