

Comments on latest version of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSyN) – 3 June 2020

Philippines

Part 1 INTRODUCTION

1. We welcome the highlight given to **poverty and inequality** as important underlying causes of hunger and malnutrition, and their impact to those most affected by malnutrition, in **paragraphs 7 and 8**, respectively, which are strategic concerns for many countries and stakeholders.

2. We commend the reference to the **UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDIFF) in paragraph 18**, as well as the mention of smallholders and/or family farmers in a number of parts in the draft guidelines and would **request their retention**. As cited in the UN Resolution no. 72/239, in footnote 13 of the draft guidelines, the UN General Assembly recognized the role that family farms play in improving nutrition and ensuring global food security, among other Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, we reiterate that in the UNDIFF Global Action Plan launched in Rome in May 2019, it was emphasized that *“Enabling and supporting family farmers to attain diversified, innovative and dynamic agricultural systems can increase the availability of nutritious, sustainably produced and culturally appropriate food, which can incentivize healthy diets while promoting the transition towards context-specific, diversified, resilient and sustainable food systems.”*

Part 3 VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES

3. We would like to thank the Secretariat for taking on board some of our comments in the matrix such as in **para 3.2.4.a**, on the addition of investments in “logistical support” to enable smallholders and SMEs to deliver goods in a sustainable manner, and in **para 41**, on the consideration of “Animal and plant diseases that are likewise threats to the safety and resilience of food systems and to human health and nutrition,” apart from the COVID-19 pandemic we are currently experiencing.

4. In **para 3.2.4.d**, we did not see in the matrix the reservation we placed on the bracketed phrase “such as foods high in sodium, sugar and trans and/or saturated fats.” We see this as too prescriptive and its misapplication could impact negatively on certain industries. The voluntary nature of the guidelines should not unnecessarily limit members and member states on how to regulate and incentivize promotion of nutritious foods.

It’s good, however, that in the succeeding **para 3.2.4.e**, our reservation on a similar phrase was reflected in the matrix. Again, the voluntary guidelines should be able to provide sufficient flexibility to the private sector on how to promote nutritious foods to meet public health goals.

5. **Another comment not reflected was in para 3.7.3.c**, proposing the inclusion of “accredited non-governmental organizations” in the implementation of humanitarian food assistance in collaboration with registered farmers’ organizations. This is to further enable smallholders and family farmers to better access resources they would need in farm production and in the processes within the value chain.