

To the kind attention of Dr. Lilian Ortega, Chairperson of CFS open-ended working Group on Food Systems and Nutrition.

Here is a swift comment on behalf of the Near East Regional Group regarding the Draft One of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition.

The document as a whole is detailed on very interesting issues regarding Nutrition, Malnutrition, Food supplies and Systems of common interest to our region. Yet we have the following observations:

1. Emphasis should be laid upon the levels of malnutrition prevailing in each country of our region for the simple fact that the requirements and resources available do not match. Therefore, these guidelines should touch upon the role of country offices in propagating the concept behind this document on nutrition and not limiting its dissemination to regional and sub-regional offices, as the basic concept of this document comes from the Countries themselves.
2. The recent regional consultative and technical meeting held in Cairo touched upon most issues of the document in question, with particular emphasis on food loss and waste. In our viewpoint, this issue should be brought more intensively to the attention of the countries in cooperation with FAO country offices if we seriously want these guidelines to be a success.
3. At the national level, certain countries have made efforts to deal with existing problems on nutrition. Therefore, a special authority has been established to look after nutrition and food security. Furthermore, plans to promote more school feeding under certain

international standards are on the rise. This is thanks to the interest of the highest authority of those countries, hence the political will at the highest level is a must if we seriously want to make a difference.

4. The Guidelines in question need to highlight also the problems related to food and malnutrition in countries and areas where protracted crises continue to exist in the region, taking into account the custom food habits of each area. This will require a careful study of the social conditions under such contextual crises.
5. National policies cannot be worked out successfully unless local authorities cooperate with FAO experts, if we really want to transmit the messages behind these guidelines. Of course here we will need the communication between both sides to be developed in a constructive manner, if we really want to introduce innovative approaches.
6. Undoubtedly, these guidelines and the concepts contained in this document cannot be digested so easily as we may expect in the field, unless top priorities for each area and country are specified.

Thank you for your continued collaboration to the best of our welfare.

Best Regards

Yousef Juhail

Chairperson of Near East Regional Group

Permanent Representative of the State of Kuwait to FAO & WFP