**Lal\_Manavado\_CFS POLICY PROCESS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES ON FOOD SYSTEMS AND NUTRITION**

**TEMPLATE FOR SUBMISSIONS**

1. **Does Chapter 1 adequately reflect the current situation of malnutrition and its related causes and impacts, particularly in line with the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda? What are the underlying problems that currently hinder food systems to deliver healthy diets?**

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| **By and large it does; however, the draft does not pay adequate attention to its second vital component, viz., food security. It is obvious that unless food security does not obtain, adequate and wholesome nutrition is impossible.**  **Further, it is true that lack of proper nutrition (frank malnutrition or excessive intake of fats and carbohydrates i.e., unbalanced nutrition) cause the problems listed, it ignores another immediate need nutrition serves, i.e., supply of energy required for every physical and mentalactivity as well as growth and repair of tissues.**  **As it is common in most academic undertakings, it ignores another crucial function of food intake, viz., what I have called ‘dietary enjoyment’. We are not analogous with machines that could be fed on the ‘right fuel’ as prescribed by some organization. In most cultures eating is a social event where it is associated with enjoyment and appreciation. Hence, many a national cuisine man has developed over centuries.**  **It is difficult to understand what is meant by ‘social access’ to food; if it is to mean food that does not mean social disapprobation, for example human flesh, then it would have been better to say ‘food with reference to the relevant food culture.’**  **It is sad to note that I am not successful in persuading the drafters to be bold and use ‘available and affordable’ in stead of the weasel word ‘access’ to food. The logical soundness of my suggestion needs no elaboration.**  **True, a holistic approach to the problem needs to mention the other factors that impinge on global food security and adequate and wholesome nutrition But, some of of the items included here have no relevance to it, for example sanitation. I think here seems to be some confusion between the above topic and good health linked to nutrition. Yes, shortcomings in nutrition have all the health consequences listed here; but things like bad sanitation only exacerbates those consequences. Well, they have an indirect effect on food production and one’s ability to engage in gainful employment needed to procure food. But I think it would be wiser to leave out indirect influences on nutrition.**  **However, another vital point seems to be missing here, viz., what I have called public dietary competence. It embodies one’s knowledge of what is best for one to eat, where and how to procure and prepare it for comsumption, and the skill needed to use that knowledge. It is plain that unless one has this dietary competence, having the money and all the food nearby will not result in that person eating a wholesome balanced diet.**  **One of the real obstacles to youth eating healthy food is the lure of advertising, which is now a universal problem. Training in dietary competence is one of the ways to deal with this issue.** |

Point 9 is well put, I would have preferred to qualify ‘diet’ to ‘people’s diet’ to emphasise it as a concrete entity.

I have a certain about point 10, ‘evolving’ dietary needs… It would be better to drop ‘evolving’ here, for most of the evolving is done by ‘wheeze doctors’ in advertising or by groups who have a pet project to promote. A really people inspired evolution in dietary habits ought to be left to the people by encouraging their own food culture which is often the most benign to the local environment.

In point 12, let us demonstrate our awareness of reality by emphasizing policy changes first and foremost in trade both national and international. Let us recall that even the real food producers/harvesters have to trade in food to meet their needs while most of us have to buy food. An understanding of what may legitimately (not legally, but knowable to a human being) constitutes a food system, would make it clear that every sub-system constituting it has been commercialized. So, trade policy revision as it applies to food is the crux.

1. **What should be the guiding principles to promote sustainable food systems that improve nutrition and enable healthy diets? What are your comments about the principles outlined in Chapter 2? Are they the most appropriate for your national/regional contexts?**

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| Point 19 should be revised in line with the above concerning point 12.  Pity point 21 had to wait so long, do give it a few more teeth and bring it up.  Point 24 makes one wonder aloud; changes in Biophysical environment like qualitative and quantitative degradation in  Biodiversity together with unsupportable increase in the population of one or more species (including human) are directly responsible for a significant reduction in ecosystems services which embraces a salubrious climate, i.e. the opposite of global warming. Therefore, the emphasis should be on the cause, i.e. biodegradation and overpopulation by one or more species, and not on the consequence. Unless we deal with the cause, no effective remedial policies are possible. Human over population should be clearly identified as a problem, which exacerbates the maternal and infant ill health owing to the financial distress it entails the lower middle class and the poor. Why are we afraid to mention family planning instead of burying it in non-words like ‘demographic changes’? Black death also brought about one! Let us not resort to inanities.  24. B. This point is the least important except infra-structure. Technology and innovation per se has no influence until they are in actual use. This use has to be sanctioned by policies concerned with their use. Recommend their reduction in rank if not discharge from service.  24. C. Too mixed up; I would suggest, this point as 24B and revised as follows: Appropriate policies in trade, agriculture, communications (infrastructure), education, health and security, political will and leadership, enhancement of the competence of those who design and implement such policies, etc. Please, please drop the catch word ‘globalisation’, for it only requires a passing knowledge of world history to understand that it has been there since the Roman times if not fearlier. Recall the ‘silk routes’ that ramifyed throuout Asia, Europe, Africa, not to mention the Chinese silks and jewellery found from Viking graves etc. Let us not present an old hat as something new just because its magnitude has increased. Food rationing that lasted for more than a decade in the UK after the WWII shows the extent to which trade was globalised more than 70 years ago! It is governed by the economic and trade policies, thus a consequence. To bring about fair trade, we can’t talk about ‘globalisation’ but should strive to revise the causal policies.  Really, volatility etc. These are just consequences of trade practices allowed by trade policies. Conflicts and their attendant human miseries are a problem of security that affects every thing, hence, my inclusion of it above. Speculation in commodity futures have often lead to ‘artificial shortages and high prices of staples like wheat and rice. I am unhappy no ‘research’ has included this problem. Natural catastrophes can have even more drasticnutritional consequences, not to mention man-made ones like the nuclear accident in Fukishima (forgive my dubious spelling) in Japan,radio activity from which was detected in lamb in the Danube basin just a few years ago. Environmental regeneration can often reduce or prevent some natural disasters.  24D and E are very difficult to grasp. On the on hand, you have UN resolution on right to culture which I fully endorse, and on the other, we point finger at culture as a problem. When a thesis is self-contradictory, it cannot be a sound basis for a way forward. Why not drop both, and concentrate on good policies and their competent implementation? |

Point 25 underlines a major problem. Let me put it in a nutshell. Country involved is Uganda, where government has scarce financial resources and know-how. Number of youth who do not go to school and are unemployed is high. ILO agreements on youth employment banns their ‘official employment’. So government is helpless and children particularly in the age group 15-17 are exploited by private ‘entepreneuers’ who employ them for symbolic wages under dangerous working conditions!y not make the international agreements realistic so that something can be done now for youth who cannot or will not procure a formal education? Their numbers are greater than the statistics would suggest.

We cannot expect good nutrition when free trade agreements permit manufacture, promotion and the sale of demonstrably unhealthy ‘foods’ and beverages especially to youth. This has become a growing problem in in non-affluent countries.

Point 27 carries a category error, viz., failure to distinguish between two elementary notions, system and its use. Of course, system left on its own would serve no purpose, but people are needed to design, build and put it to work. Naturally, it may display faulty design, incompetent use, misuse, over use, etc. This point is rather important if the policies influencing a food system are to be effective.

Point 28is brief and cogent. Excellent.

Point 29 should be deleted, for a food system in use is no more a chain than any large organissation with several departments working in harmony to achieve one big objective. This phrase is not only meaningless and logically flawed, it only leads to confusion. Those named items are merely the sub-systems of a food system, which are in use elsewhere as well, eg., transport of missiles to destroy an enemy of reason.

Point 30, why the pleural environments? This is not common English usage.

Point 34 is strange to say the least. Consider the obvious please, after air and water, food is the most essential thing we need to live, afterwards we can discuss. So, the primary purpose of a food system in use is to enable everyone to obtain a wholesome balanced diet in a sustainable and a fair way. True it has been commercialised

for a long time. But that does not change its main purpose, could we please break out of the economy silo for once? Do we build houses to provide money for builders, or do we wear clothes in winter to enrich fashion designers? No? Well, why then food, the third most essential thing for life on earth?

What they offer seems to be reasonable, but would have been better if it is said that those are done in a sustainable and a fair way.

35 is ok.

36A isrepetitive, while a systemic approach is necessary, it is not, logically not a sufficient condition for attaining the objectives it is intended to achieve. The tool may be perfect, but unless it is used appropriately and skillfully, it does not do any good.

36B fails to see that unsuitable policies can be quite coherent. What is needed here are appropriate policies that display intra- and inter-policy harmony with reference to the overall aims of the authorities. I affirm that the ambiguous term investment ought to be avoided lest the whole endeavour become a commercial venture.

36Cshould be the point A.

36E Revise it to read ‘nutrition and dietary knowledge and skills, because you may know exactly how to ride a bike, but unless you acquire the skill to ride, you can’t do much with the machine.

36G is a little unclear, for it is concerned with policy implementation. These actions are strategies that may be used in policy implementation. It is important to distinguish between policy and strategies used in its implementation.

1. **In consideration of the policy areas identified in Chapter 3 and the enabling factors suggested in paragraph 41 of the Zero Draft, what policy entry points should be covered in Chapter 3, taking into account the need to foster policy coherence and address policy fragmentation?**

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| **Points 37 and 38 are curious indeed. It is difficult to understand what justification one could provide for maintaining that food systems are constituted by those three pieces, ‘supply chains’, ‘food enviroment’ and ‘consumer behaviour’. Recall that food systems have existed before man emerged, and since then from the stone age. It is very unfortunate that an objective analysis of human food system has been so thouroughly ignored even though it is available. Commercialisation of every sub-system constitutive of it, does not mean it has a ‘supply chain’ or any other such object in it. This notion is not only unsound, it is unjustifiable.**  **Point 39 does not seem to grasp the distinction between policy distribution which is necessary and fragmentation that could occur only within a specific policy domain. It is therefore one needs policy harmony within and among policies.** |

1. **Can you provide specific examples of new policies, interventions, initiatives, alliances and institutional arrangements which should be considered, as well as challenges, constraints, and trade-offs relevant to the three constituent elements of food systems presented in Chapter 3? In your view, what would the “ideal” food system look like, and what targets/metrics can help guide policy-making?**

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| **It is necessary to take up the last past of the question first in order to give a satisfactory answer to this question. Ideal or not, a human food system today has the following set of sub-systems. Their emergence and evolution, I have described elsewhere. They are yielder (environment, farms, dairies, etc), harvesting, transport, preserving (drying, salting, freezing, semi-processed like cheese, etc), preparation (cleaning, and cooking) and the last to emerge, selling sub-system. All the previous sub-systems have been in use in harness for a long time before the advent of the selling system. Confined to ‘raw food’ previously, mainly grain, it then entered into commercializing the preparation sub-system, and this now is more or less complete. But, this does not alter the fact the human food system cannot be seen as just a matter of trade. In addition to the above, there is also an adjunctive sub-system of supplementation, which is concerned with supplementing the ecosystems services on which agriculture depends. It has its own ‘research and development sub-system’ which need not concern us here at present.**  **This analysis enables one to identify in a logically coherent way, what policies will be needed to attain our objectives. Moreover, it accurately reflects the evolution of the human food system from the days of hunter/gatherer to modern agriculture.**  **First of all, education policies are needed to instruct and train those who are engaged in using each sub-system to use it in an appropriate way i.e., in an environmentally felicitous manner in line with the local food culture as much as possible. In yielder systems, these may include permaculture, reduction of areas devoted to monoculture, fishing quotas, net size controls, active measures to prevent soil pollution and salination, erosion, etc. It is crucial to promote the use of appropriate equipment and steps to ensure their availability and affordability.**  **Adequate supply of appropriate equipment is essential for satisfactory harvesting, which is often a problem in less affluent countries, which results in food loss in the field. The same is even more important for the storage sub-system as enormous quantities of food is lost to vermin and fungal contamination every year. These policy considerations apply with equal force whether they are commercialized, or not.**  **Strong measures are needed to stop intentional spoilage or dumping of food in order to keep up the prices. Sadly, this commercial action is still with us even though ‘media’ does not seem to show it the interest it deserves.**  **Food transport systems are often inadequate or inappropriate in most countries. It is a pity that in affluent countries, huge articulated lorries are so extensively used for this purpose while rail and water transport could achieve the same objective more cheaply and with greater environmental benefits. Strong policies to promote this objective are an urgent need everywhere.**  **Preserving system has grown extensively making it approximate preparation system in some cases. Here, our main concern is its use of additives whose long-term health effects are unknown. Further, trade in preserved items are also prone to be under trade monopolies that leave the end-user at their mercy.**  **Enhancement of domestic preparation system requires comprehensive measures to increase the dietary competence of the people. In implementing this policy, due attention should be paid to the local food culture. Moreover, active steps should be taken to discourage efforts to undermine this action or to promote unhealthy eating and drinking habits either by advertising or by ‘entertainment’.**  **Commercial preparation system manifests itself in two forms, places where it is served and selling it in forms that may be taken home and consumed after heating it up. I know this is a little simplified, but it would suffice for the time being. I will not comment on the places where standard cuisine of the country or the so-called ‘international cuisine’ is served except when they are run by chains. When the latter happens in a poor country where unemployment is high, it would be of greater human benefit if resources are made available to suitable families to open and run small restaurants serving reasonably-priced meals. This is not a theoretical notion, for in many such countries, international firms selling well-known items of dubious quality are establishing themselves.**  **Frozen prepared food has become an unhappy part of the daily lives of many in affluent countries, and it seems to be making inroads into the eating habits of the developing nations. Its health effects are by no means positive. Here, policies to promote and facilitate the establishment small family owned restaurants that could cater to the local people at a reasonable price would be a welcome social improvement.**  **Food waste in food serving establishments has two causes; excessively large/insipd portions, or country’s own regulations. It would be easy to reduce the individual portion size, but allowing the customer a refill if so desired. Insipid food arises from pre-made items heated up in a microwave over before serving. Here, the customers want ‘fast service’ leaving the cook no choice. Since this is a social problem, not much can be done to remedy it by policies.**  **Most countries require by law to throw away items like bread used to make hot dogs etc., 48 hours after they have been baked. So, they are thrown into the dust bins after that period. Here again, it arises from the impossibility of resolving the conflict between desired service speed and regulations.**  **Now we come to the all pervading selling system. Originally confined to raw food items like cereals, legumes and other edible seeds, it spread to preserved items like salted fish and meat, dairy products and then on to the other more sophisticated preserves like jams, jellies, cordials, and alcoholic beverages. Soon it included all the raw foods as well. Simultaneous with the expansion of selling system came the need for larger storage facilities and extensive transport.**  **Raison d’etre of a selling system is to provide an item or a service at a price commensurable with its value to the customer and a fair reward for the provider of this service. Had it been fair, it would have been praiseworthy activity. However, when the this exchange began to be used for maximizing the profits to the seller, problems for the customer began to arise.**  **This became exacerbated when each sub-system of a food system became highly commercialized. For instance, when sellers began to depend on commercial transport the end-user had to pay the food producer, transporter and the final seller, each requiring his share of expenses and profit. Here, a seller may even hire a storage facility whose cost and profit will have to be borne by the end-user whose nutrition and food security is not exactly enhanced by having to support so many intermediaries. It must be remembered that these intermediaries often employ other people and who have to be paid. True, this is a little simplified, but the perceptive reader will note its validity and will be able to expand it to fit the form of the food system he is trying to improve.**  **Sellers speculate on the value of some of the non-perishable food items in what is called commodity futures market. Products are bought cheaply from the poor producer for cash prior to harvesting, and sold at much higher price to other wholesale buyers. Effect of this on the affordability of essential cereals needs no elaboration.**  **Takeovers of food seller establishments to creat giant food companies is legal today. This has become the norm in affluent as well as many not so affluent countries. Thus a handful of food sellers can dictate to immense number of end-users what they can eat and at what price, making the notion of customer choice a travesty of choice.**  **Its effect on the food producers is equally disastrous, for when there are only a few buyers of their produce, it is what is humourously called a ‘buyer’s market’. Food is often perishable, besides, the modern producers do not have large storage facilities. So, they have to sell at the prices dixctated by ‘cooperating’ big buyers, and seldom receive a fair price. This is why in all affluent countries, food producers are paid an annual subsidy running into billions every year so that they could have a decent income. This subsidy indicates the exact amount of unfair profit sellers gain from food. So, the end result is that the end-user and the producer are unfairly treated by the sellers.**  **Some policy changes are needed to initiate fair trade in food while our primitive notion of profit and consumption driven economy catalysed by ‘competition requires an urgent revision. The conceptual change involved here is very much akin to getting the public to accept the Copernican notion of our solar system instead of the old Geocentric one. The only difference is that when it comes to the solar system, it is not critical, but a change in how we conceive of economy is vital to our survival.**  **Pragmatic trade policy changes would embrace a devolution of food trade everywhere. As unemployment rises everywhere, more labour-intensive approaches ought to be promoted. The distance between food producers and the end-users should be shortened as much s possible to ensure the freshness of food and to enhance the reward a producer may earn. Active policy measures should be taken to abolish monopolies in any part of a human food system be it national or international. It should be salutary for the liberals to recall the the former Soviet food system was a monopoly and its miserable performance is well documented. A private monopoly may be a bit more efficient, but not for the producer, the end-user, nor yet to our environment.**    **I have commented on trade policy now, because it has spread into every sub-system in a food system. Therefore, any change in our food systems towards their sustainability and capacity to offer varied, wholesome balanced diet to all is inseparable from a radical and positive simultaneous change in our trade policies, especially with relation to food production and sales. As long as commercialized food production and sales are driven by increase in profit by increased consumption regardless of the quality of what is eaten, neither our objective nor a reduction in NCD’s can be achieved. Further, it would become the greatest threat to our environment resulting in global warming, loss of arable soil due to pollution and salination, and erosion.**  **Let me now sketch the outline of a comprehensive policy framework. Our point of departure is the sustainability of food systems. Let us be realistic and accept two fundamental principles; first, we have no right whatsoever to deny the future generations the dietary enjoyment we may experience today, and secondly, no food system whatsoever will be able to provide it beyond a certain limit.**  **What is dietary enjoyment? It is the pleasure we all derive from eating, and even aminals have their preferred food. Over the centuries, most cultures have developed their own cuisine, and it is considered to be a valued social good. Indeed, some countries are proud of it. This is a point that ‘food researchers’ have ignored as though they have a right to prescribe what others should eat just because their ‘suggested novel food’ is said to contain the right amount of the necessary nutrients. It may be so for them, but most of us do not care to eat calories, vitamine and minerals. In nearly all civilized societies, meal times are also a social occasion.**  **No holistic approach to our problem can ignore the importance of dietary enjoyment especially when it is purported to uphold right to food. Surely, we are talking here about the food someone wants to eat, and usually, it is that which is determined by one’s own food culture while one is free to try food from other known food cultures. Novel foods do not have any place in this category.**  **So, let us see how one may change a food culture to be sustainable and provide varied, wholesome and balanced diets to people with reference to their food culture. Such a food supply should be physically available and affordable to all. Our first concern then, is sustainability.**  **Sustainability depends on the adequate availability of ecosystem services to riase crops and domestic animals as well as natural food supplies like fish, mollusks and crustaceans, etc. These services include a salubrious climate, sufficient supplies of water and mineral nutrient, soil porosity, freedom from toxic materials in soil and water, etc.**  **Adequate ecosystem services depends on the equilibrium between the available ecosystem services and their usage by the living things (plants and animals). This presumes that the living things do not salinate, poison or cause erosion of the soil.**  **That equilibrium depends on the equilibrium between the rate at which the living use up those services and the rate at which it is returned to the environment through predation, death and saprophytism. This second equilibrium depends on the endemic biodiversity that obtains in a given locale.**  **Biodiversity has two components; its qualitative aspect reflect the number of species endemic to an area, while its quantitative component indicates the population size of each individual species found there.**  **Hence, our second equilibrium depends on not only on the number of species in an area, but also their population size. Should one of these two fall or rise beyond a certain limit, a deprivation of ecosystem services would ensue. This is why in some African animal sanctuaries elephants are culled annually, so that maximum number of protected species including elephants themselves may survive.**  **Therefore, it is time any policy framework with holistic pretentions should include human family planning as an issue of overwhelming importance. Recall that we have no right to deprive the future generations the dietary enjoyment and choice we have today, and that ‘novel foods’ are no substitute for the ‘real thing’.**  **My argument thus far advocates just and fair trade policies that promote sustainability of food systems. However, most of us procure food by purchasing it. Hence, while just and fair trade policies would not be effective unless they are implemented simultaneously with appropriate i.e., realistic and sustainable employment policies. This dual approach is essential to ensure the affordability of food.**  **Policy outline:**  **This outline sketches a distributed and recursively implemented policy framework, i.e. even though it is given under sector headings, it is distributed among every other relevant sector to ensure its holistic nature. A detailed description of this approach may be found in my contributions to GSOP conferences on soil pollution (2018) and soil erosion (2019) which were held under the ægis of FAO.**  **Environmental policies:**   1. **Take legally enforced actions to cut down the emission of ‘green house gases’, compel the safe disposal of chemical and radio-active waste and proper treatment of sewage and domestic refuse.** 2. **Similar action to halt the loss of forest and re-plantation of endemic flora in the denuded areas. Plantation of such trees along roads, around public buildings and growing fruit and nut trees in home garden wherever it is possible.** 3. **Actively discourage draining of wet lands, destruction of mangroves, etc.** 4. **Compel the reclamation of derelict sites rather than removal of soil’s green cover especially in urban areas.** 5. **Promote research to develop roofing materials and outside wall paint whose heat exchange properties are similar to those of earth’s natural green cover. This would make a significant difference to the extremes of temperature one experiences in every heavily built up area as well as to the rate of global warming.** 6. **Promote research on prevention of soil erosion and reclaiming polluted/salinated soils and undertake effective action for their reclamation..**   **Trade policies:**   1. **Institute the devolution of trade and rigourously prevent the formation of trade monopolies.** 2. **Ensure fair trade practices; neither the actual producer of goods or the provider of services nor the end-user should be subject to an unfair exchange.** 3. **In spite of the rhetoric to the contrary, no ‘developed’ nation actually has a ‘totally free trade’ policy. Active steps should be taken to prevent the spread of harmful internationalization on the traditional lines to developing countries in the guise of re-location of industry to ‘provide employment ‘ or to develop their ‘industrial base’.** 4. **Manufacture and sale of ‘food’ and beverages foreign to a country should be strictly controlled and advertising them should be banned. Please note that billions of aerated drinks consumed each day releases many hundred tons of Carbon dioxide into the air, and this is easily preventable.** 5. **An overall devolution of economy is necessary to prevent the growing gap between the rish and the poor and to make it dimish.** 6. **Legally enforced limit to profit, be it by the individual or the so-called ‘legal entities’.**   **Education policies:**   1. **Appropriate public education to increase people’s dietary competence in line with local food culture and against ‘fashionable’ and pseudo-glamourous foreign ‘food’ and beverages which are injurious to health.** 2. **Appropriate dietary education in all schools and in institutions that train health personnel. It must be noted that no ‘balanced diet’ can ever be scientifically prescribed for anyone person, because one’s nutritional vary according to one’s physical stage of development, climate, actual need for nutrients at a given time, racial factors, etc. As a result one’s daily nutritional needs vary from day to day.** 3. **Establishment of sufficient number of agriculture schools and on-the-job training centres for rural youth where appropriate and environment friendly practices are taught.** 4. **Inculcating into the public and especially to the younger generation that it is wrong to strive for unlimited profit without paying any attention to its environmental consequences and the deprivation it causes to hard-working but less competent people. The former places everybody in danger while the other could easily result in a break down in law and order, for when one has nothing to loose, it is difficult to expect one to respect laws that does not do any good to one. Societies without ethical norms are doomed to decline and decay as human history amply proves.** 5. **Public and formal education that underlines the vital importance of the agricultural pursuits, for apart from air and water, food is the third most crucial thing to life and without it all glittering words become merely academic.**   **Agriculture policies:**   1. **Encourage and promote multi-culture and local food culture while depreciating monoculture.** 2. **Support research into non-salinating fertilizers, chemical-free pest and weed control, and introduce vigourously the successful methods in those areas.** 3. **Support people to reclaim polluted/eroded areas through planting appropriate plants, building dikes, harvesting rain, etc.** 4. **Lead efforts to retain rural youth in situ by establishing farm cooperatives and sales outlets for their produce and family-owned small restaurants etc. This may be done among fishermen and those engaged in aquaculture.** 5. **Active promotion of farm cooperatives and sales outlets everywhere so that farmers may earn a decent living while the end-users will have a source of affordable wholesome food.** 6. **When possible, distribute fruit tree saplings to home owners at a reasonable price.** 7. **Recalling the high unemployment rates and low standard of education that often obtain in ‘developing’ countries, support appropriate technology and labour-intensive agriculture rather than resorting to high-tech methods which are expensive to buy and maintain. Lack of people willing to undertake agricultural pursuits is a global problem, and it contributes greatly to the spread of destructive monoculture, loss of bio-diversity among crops and household animals as well as to food monopolies. Farm cooperatives with less emphasis on mechanization seems to become an increasing necessity everywhere.** 8. **Undertake independent research to determine the long-term effects of biocide residues, genetically modified flora and fauna, ‘taste enhancers’ sweetners, food preservatives, etc., on us as well as our environment.** 9. **Construction of storage facilities at close to food production centres; these should not be ultra-modern, but rather appropriate for the area’s climate, easy to maintain with local resources and know-how, and provide protection against local agents destructive to food.** 10. **Establishment of small, simple and effective food preservation facilities close to the production centres; drying, salting, smoking, making conserves etc., can be efficiently carried out in most areas, which may provide employment for many people.**   **Transport policies:**   1. **Actively support railway and water transport and depreciate the use of road transport of food. Do please bear in mind the myth of ‘clean’ electric transport, because all too often the power used in city trains etc., is generated using fossile fuel out of sight from cities. Pollution out of sight should not be pollution out of mind.** 2. **Effective and appropriate local transport systems linked to the national transport network.** 3. **Paying careful attention to regular repair and maintenance. I have not mentioned energy policies because they are a secondary consideration as it becomes a need as it is needed in transport, agriculture, education, etc., but not needed just for itself. Therefore, appropriate energy elements should be an integral part of most policies.**   **Health policies:**   1. **Competence acquisition and work efficiency in food production and sales is influenced by one’s health. It is in this context the present policy segment is offered. Health personnel should be required to encouraged everybody to eat healthy food and shun the unhealthy things.** 2. **An expansion of adequately equipped health service units in agricultural areas manned by competent personnel should be undertaken.** 3. **Health authorities should depreciate expenditure on ‘prestige’ projects, and require the foreign donors to assist in providing basic health care to rural and remote areas., for funding them is often a problem.** 4. **Explore the possibility of foreign funding to retain health personnel at home on decent wages.**   **Economic and development policies:**   1. **Promote economic devolution and discourage private centralization of production and sales, especially of food. Multi-national food and cultivar ‘giants’ are no different from any other dictatorial centralized power apart from frank use of violence and pretensions to democracy.** 2. **Promote cooperative enterprise which is concerned with fair sharing of value exchanges; competition always ‘leaves somebody behind’ and it depends on unlimited consumption, something completely non-sustainable.** 3. **Development policies should reflect the two above policies.** 4. **Target development to rural areas and deprived parts of the cities, and they should strive to keep migration to cities more or less equal to leaving them.** 5. **No development that is not sustainable and fair should be undertaken. All sustainable endeavours are benign to our environment.** 6. **Greater emphasis should be put on projects to support family-owned and small holders everywhere.** 7. **Incentives should be given to growers of traditional crops and keep a variety of animal breeds.**   **Security policies:**   1. **As rms manufacture is under government control or supervision, it is incumbent upon the relevant governments to have a policy of strictly controlling and limiting arms sales so that more funds will be available in developing countries for the development of agriculture, health, etc.** 2. **Client governments should seriously consider limiting their purchase of arms in order to develop their food production and other essential services.** 3. **UN should initiate serious efforts to limit the need for conventional arms by every available means.** 4. **Much might be achieved if governments are willing to admit that country’s security is best served by promoting the well-being of its people rather than by arms. Deprivation breeds discontent and renders people open to dogmatic persuation as they have nothing to loose.** 5. **As excessive population makes sustainable cooperative development impossible, it has already become the greatest threat to global peace and stability. Apart from its ill effects on health, possibility of acquiring an appropriate education, enough food, shelter, etc., increasing abject poverty could be easily exploited by any religious or political demagogue with disastrous results. It is time to stop being complaisant and consider family planning as an urgent need globally.**   **Legal policies:**   1. **Ensure the laws are enforceable and are adequately enforced. It is better to have few just and enforced laws than thousands of wonderful statutes to which only lip service is paid.** 2. **Restrict economic competition and support its cooperative counterpart.** 3. **Require phasing out of trade monopolies, and support economic devolution.** 4. **Require the national governments to assert its authority in national economy, otherwise elections would be a joke and democracy a parody of it. Recall that the majority need to purchase food which is an economic transaction. No rational being could leave national nutrition and food security to multi-national concerns.** 5. **Restrict advertising of food and beverages; and when their deleterious effect on health, local food culture or agriculture is evident, they ought to be banned.** 6. **Undertake action to improve national and internatonal governance with a view to transform the economy from being competitive to cooperative.**   **This list of policy segments is not exhaustive; however, it point towards a change in our received values, both in economics and agriculture and sale of food. I will not uswe the word ‘distribution’, for food is distributed free of charge during disasters, by charities even in affluent countries. What we mean here is a commercial transaction i.e., sales. So, let us use the correct word.**  **As poor nutrition and food security is endemic in some non-affluent countries and their total population is far higher than that in other nations, we face a pragmatic difficulty when it comes to implementing a sufficient number of suggested policies. Political reluctance and lack of resources are the two main hindrances one would face.**  **So, it would be necessary undertake active initiatives at global and regional levels to facilitate their adoption at the national level. Regardless of individual economy, growing shortage of people able and willing to engage in agricultural pursuits is a global problem. In affluent countries, it has led to mechanized giant indurstrial farms where monoculture prevails and animals are raised and slaughtered under inhumane conditions. I hardly need to elaborate on the dire consequences such farming methods entail both to the environment and to food security. Our perception of food production as something only fit for village yokels has to be changed, and changed quickly.** |

1. **How would these Voluntary Guidelines be most useful for different stakeholders, especially at national and regional levels, once endorsed by CFS?**

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| **The present set of policy segments is neither complete nor is it comprehensive within each segment. However, they are adequate to illustrate my purpose, i.e., what generic approach may employmed to achieve our objective. Its usefulness at global, regional and local (national in this context) level may be summarized thus:**   1. **Revision of food systems in order to ensure adequate global nutrition and food security cannot be achieved in isolation. This applies to policy implementation at every level. High degree of coordinated actions in diverse areas is essential to our success. It is important to bear in mind that in different regions and countries what areas will be most relevant may vary considerably. For instance, in Western Europe, health, law and order is not as critical to the achievement of our goal as it may be in some other regions.** 2. **Certain policy segments are shared i.e., trade and employment policies influence food production as well as sale. Therefore, those policy domains should contain a policy segment to promote and support the latter two activities. Thus, each policy domain will contain one or more elements to enhance them in a fair and sustainable way.** 3. **Some supportive policy elements eg. Security can hardly be addressed by individual nations and require an international effort. Likewise, regional endeavours may be very useful in agricultural cooperation when they include countries whose food cultures have much in common. Selection of what approach is to be adopted, whether it ought to be global, regional or purely national depends on the range and scope of the issue one intends to resolve.** 4. **It would be unrealistic to think of global, regional or even national policies that could be applied as recommended from above. Thus, a global policy on implementation would have to be adopted to suit the regional conditions, which in turn would have to be tailored to meet the local i.e., the national requirements. Hence, one can only speak of a generic policy framework that may be elaborated and revised as required. At the national level, this may need re-formulation when there are regional differences, or indeed, local variations within a country. This mode of policy formulation and implementation represents a recursively implemented policy approach. Moreover, each policy has its supporting elements embodied in other relevant policy domain, hence, it is distributed.**   **I hope this may be of some use.**  **Best wishes!**  **Lal Manavado.** |