

## CFS47 - Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition

WHO intervention, 10 February 2021

WHO aligns itself with the Statement of UN Nutrition, and would like to make the following complementary remarks.

This statement is also supported by UNICEF.

WHO congratulates the Open Ended Working Group on Nutrition for its efforts and endurance led by Ambassador Hoozeveld in developing the Voluntary Guidelines.

The Voluntary Guidelines recognize that unhealthy diets are among the top risk factors for death and disability, and may contribute to the achievements of the global nutrition targets and the diet-related non-communicable disease targets endorsed by the World Health Assembly.

We commend that the Voluntary Guidelines address the policy fragmentation and their call for greater policy coherence across sectors giving due attention to the agriculture, nutrition and health interlinkages.

WHO praises the Committee on World Food Security for its ongoing dialogue with all actors as it is required to ensure the food sector produces, transforms, and markets foods that ensure affordable healthy diets for all.

This does not replace the need for regulatory action (such as on nutrition labelling, economic tools including taxation, subsidies and other incentives, and regulating marketing of foods, especially to children) as part of a comprehensive food systems approach for a successful food systems transformation.

In the context of the negotiation we have expressed the concern that, in the spirit of compromise the text of the Voluntary Guidelines does not fully reflect the recommendations of mandated international bodies and normative agencies. This is not going to be beneficial to public health.

Examples include among others

- removing recommendations on 'fiscal policies' or 'economic tools that may include taxes and subsidies' in the recommendations on improving availability and affordability of food that contributes to healthy diets
- removing the reference to "subsequent relevant WHA resolutions" in the description of efforts to support breastfeeding and implementation of the [Code of Marketing Breastmilk Substitutes](#);
- weakening the language to "avoid inappropriate marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children"
- the removal of reference to the elimination of use of antimicrobials for growth promotion

WHO encourages the use of the Voluntary Guidelines in conjunction with evidence-based standards, normative guidelines and recommendations, of mandated international bodies and normative agencies.

WHO confirms its continued commitment to contribute knowledge and advice to the Committee on World Food Security.

Thank you, Mr Chair