

Canadian comments on the Terms of Reference for the preparation of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition. Draft version for discussion (Doc No: CFS OEWG-Gender/2020/10/30/01)

General

- We are very pleased to see the excellent work that has been done for the development of the terms of reference for the preparation of the Guidelines on gender equality and women and girls empowerment in the context of food insecurity and nutrition.
- We strongly support the development of these Guidelines as it is essential to take into consideration gender equality, as women and girls are among the most affected by food insecurity. The issue of gender equality and women and girls' empowerment is of key importance for Canada, and we strongly believe that gender equality is a key factor of change, including for achieving food security.
- We suggest to integrate in a more systematic way women's empowerment (WE) when gender equality is mentioned, such as is reflected in the title. For example, WE could be added in par. 15.4 when identifying opportunities. We consider that WE is a critical element for achieving gender equality.
- In the same vein, we would recommend to add girls in a more systematic way throughout the document. For example, girls could be added to women empowerment, both in the title, and throughout the document. This would be consistent with the Agenda 2030 which recognizes that gender equality and women and **girls'** empowerment are crucial for the progress of all the goals and targets. Despite the fact that the particular challenges and discrimination faced by girls are acknowledged in the document (at paragraphs 10 and 15.8), this acknowledgement and the recognition of the key role that girls play in food security and nutrition is left out of the majority of the document. Girls face not only the same gender-specific barriers and challenges as women, but they can also be further disadvantaged because of their age.

Section A - Background and rationale

- We suggest to add a reference to the UN Food System Summit, since gender is identified as a cross-cutting lever of change, and also that the food systems approach language should be better integrated. For example, such a reference could be added in paragraph 3 where there is a mention of the impact of covid-19.

Section B – Objectives of the Guidelines

Gender transformative interventions

- In paragraph 12, we are very pleased to see the reference to gender-transformative interventions has been included.
- In paragraph 13 where it is question of policy coherence, we would suggest to add 'particularly within the UN System'. And some examples could also be provided, such as the UN System Model Policy on Sexual Harassment.
- In paragraph 14 where it is mentioned that the Guidelines will contribute to accelerating action by all stakeholders, including in the context of the different UN Decades, we consider that there should also be a reference to the upcoming UN Decade on Ecosystems Restoration co-led by UNEP and FAO, given the key role of women in climate action.
- Where there is a reference to family farming, we call for caution that it should not be used interchangeably with reference to smallholders, as family farmers are of different sizes and not only small-scale.

Section C - Scope section

- We find the section on the scope of the guidelines very comprehensive.
- In paragraph 15.3 where it makes reference to best practices and lessons learned we suggest to specify some relevant programmes by the RBAs, such as :
 - the RBA-UN Women Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment,
 - the EU-funded Joint RBA Programme on Gender-Transformative Approaches.
- In paragraph 15.4, where it is question of overcoming gender discrimination and structural barriers, we are pleased to see that barriers related to digital divide is recognized, as it is often forgotten while being an important barrier.
- In paragraph 15.4, it appears that the institutional barriers – in their broad sense – are not included, even though some examples are listed. We propose to include "institutional and" before "structural barriers", to include all institutional barriers without having to list them all.
- In paragraph 15.5 we support that reference is made to three aspects of disaggregated data (sex, gender and age), as age-disaggregated data is often lacking yet very important

to fully include girls.

- In paragraph 15.6, we are very pleased to see the recognition that women (and girls) are not a homogeneous group. Indeed, we know that women may face various forms of discrimination, based on multiple factors, and have different needs. That is why the approach of intersectionality is important. An intersectional approach enables to understand how women's overlapping identities — including race, class, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation — impact the way they experience oppression and discrimination. Intersectionality enables to recognize the multiple sources/factors of discrimination. Also, it would be useful to highlight some examples of the different groups of women: “rural women, adolescent girls, Indigenous women, etc”.
- In par. 15.7 regarding the gender-transformative approaches:
 - a) We suggest to include a reference to the measurement/monitoring and evaluation of gender equality and women empowerment, for example we think that the Gender Equality For Food Security (GE4FS) measure should be highlighted here
 - b) We recommend including language on harmful gender and social norms, as follows:

15.7 Advocate the use of transformative approaches that are able to tackle both the symptoms and the structural causes of gender inequality [ADD: , including harmful social/gender norms] , with the aim of achieving lasting change in terms of the power and choices women have over their own lives, rather than just temporary increases in opportunities.

Section E - Intended users

- In **paragraph 19**, we would **suggest to delete 'or affected by'** as it suggests that only some stakeholders may be affected by gender equality, while striving for gender equality has an impact on everyone:

'The Guidelines are intended for all stakeholders that are involved in addressing (~~or affected by~~) gender equality and women's empowerment'