

GUIDELINE FOR THE PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT TO IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE NEW WORK FOR CCNFSDU

Purpose

1. The following guideline is intended to assist the Codex Committee on Nutrition and Foods for Special Dietary Uses (CCNFSDU) to identify and prioritize new work.

Scope

2. Proposals for new work should fall within the terms of reference of CCNFSDU and typically address issues associated with nutritional aspects of all foods and/or issues concerning foods for special dietary uses. Proposals may regard the development of new Codex texts or the revision of existing Codex texts.

Process for Submitting Proposals for New Work

3. Proposals for new work (including revision of an existing text) should be submitted in a determined timeframe in response to a Codex Circular Letter (CL) before each session of CCNFSDU. This ensures that all proposals will be submitted within a deadline and all members have adequate time to consider them.

4. New work proposals must be submitted or supported by a Member and must contain three elements: (1) a discussion paper, (2) a project document (as per paragraph 5 of the guidelines), and (3) an assessment against the prioritization criteria, as defined in para. 6 and 7.

5. Proposals for new work should follow the process and provisions outlined in Section 2 Part 2, paragraph 12, of the *Procedural Manual* for proposals to undertake new work or revise a Standard.¹

6. Proposals need to be assessed using the criteria for the establishment of new work priorities outlined in Section 2 Part 7 (Criteria for the establishment of work priorities for general subjects) of the *Procedural Manual*, and their explanatory description below.

7. The explanatory descriptions in the table below have been developed to complement the new work criteria of the *Procedural Manual* for the specific purposes of CCNFSDU. They shall assist in classifying the scope of the work and the extent to which the proposed work impacts (positively and/or negatively), Codex Members in terms of public health, food safety, trade practices and global impact, and should be accompanied by a detailed rationale and supported by available scientific evidence and other validated data. In this framework, the criteria are also intended to assist the ad hoc Working Group in their reviewing process on a case-by-case basis (para. 13).

8. The submitter should provide an assessment based on the explanatory description of the prioritization criteria that contains all necessary information to support the ad hoc Working Group's rating process (para. 14). The submitter shall not perform a rating.

Prioritization Criterion	Explanatory Description	Rating (see para.14)
Impact on public health	Describe the target group(s) (e.g. infants, the elderly, patients, whole population) that would be affected by the proposed new work and describe the intended and unintended health impact on the target group(s), and on other groups, if applicable. For example, what is the potential of the proposed work to resolve, prevent, or significantly reduce a public health risk? The impact should be justified and supported by examples and available data, when possible or helpful.	High: (+/-) 6 points Medium: (+/-) 4 points Low: (+/-) 2 points Neutral: 0 points
Impact on food safety	Describe how the proposed new work would impact food safety (i.e. biological, chemical, or physical risks). The impact should be justified and supported by examples and available data, when possible or helpful.	High: (+/-) 6 points Medium: (+/-) 4 points Low: (+/-) 2 points

¹ Codex Alimentarius Commission Procedural Manual, Section 2 (Elaboration of Codex standards and related texts), Part 2 (Critical Review, Proposals to undertake new work or to revise a standard). The current version of the Procedural Manual applies.

Prioritization Criterion	Explanatory Description	Rating <small>(see para.14)</small>
		Neutral: 0 points
Impact on trade practices	<p>Describe how the proposed new work would impact global food trade and how this work might harmonize international standards and reduce barriers to fair trade.</p> <p>Potential impacts on product consumption should also be considered.</p> <p>The impact should be justified and supported by examples and available data, when possible or helpful.</p>	<p>High: (+/-) 3 points</p> <p>Medium: (+/-) 2 points</p> <p>Low: (+/-) 1 point</p> <p>Neutral: 0 points</p>
Global Impact	Describe how the proposed new work would be suitable for addressing a worldwide nutrition problem, as per the Codex mandate. The impact should be justified and supported by examples and available data, when possible or helpful.	<p>High: (+/-) 3 points</p> <p>Medium: (+/-) 2 points</p> <p>Low: (+/-) 1 point</p> <p>Neutral: 0 points</p>

Process for Compiling New Work Proposals

9. Proposals for new work received in response to the CL will be transmitted to the CCNFSDU host country Secretariat which will undertake an administrative check on whether the proposals received meet the basic requirements (step one to four of the decision tree).

10. The CCNFSDU host country Secretariat will prepare a summary document presenting the proposals for new work including all three elements as per para. 4. It will be distributed by the Codex Secretariat to Codex Members and Observers for their consideration.

11. The summary document will contain an “Inventory of CCNFSDU Proposals and Potential Future Areas of Work (all-time list)”, comprising of two sections. Section “A. Proposals” will include: “Part 1: Amendments / Revisions”, and “Part 2: New Work”, while Section “B. Potential future areas of work” will include “Part 3: Review of existing standards” and “Part 4: Emerging issues”. This document will include a comprehensive overview of all new topics that have been proposed to CCNFSDU and such topics that have been considered in the preceding years by the Committee including:

- requests from CAC or other Committees,
- identified needs for revision of existing texts under purview of the Committee,
- topics that were considered as priorities but postponed for various reasons (medium/long-term planning),
- topics that have not been supported.

Process for Prioritizing New Work Proposals

12. An ad hoc Working Group for the Establishment of CCNFSDU Work Priorities will meet prior to the first plenary session of CCNFSDU or in-between sessions, to develop recommendations for consideration by the Committee. The ad hoc Working Group will be co-chaired by the host country and another delegation.

13. The following Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the ad hoc Working Group are proposed:

a. Conduct a case-by-case review of every proposal for new work, including a review of the scope and rationale for clarity and the assessments submitted by the petitioning Member(s). Determine if the Working Group recommends that the proposal for new work be taken up by the Committee.

b. Rate the new work proposal(s). Rank the new work proposals according to their priority, when there are multiple new work proposals to consider.

c. Prepare a report containing the new work proposal(s) for presentation to the plenary to support CCNFSDU in evaluating and accepting of new work proposal(s)

14. In order to facilitate the ranking of the new work proposals, a rating system of high/medium/low/neutral shall be employed for each criterion, supported by the use of a (+/-) point system. Positive points shall be assigned for positive impacts, while negative points shall be assigned for negative impacts. A neutral rating (0 points) shall be assigned when a new work proposal is not expected to have any impact according to a particular criterion. The criteria related to health and food safety shall be assigned double the value to the

criteria related to trade practices and global impact to reflect their higher degree of importance (see table para. 8).

15. For each of the four criteria, a net impact will be calculated once the respective negative and positive impacts have been considered. A final score shall be calculated from the points awarded across all four criteria and will be used by the ad hoc Working Group to rank the new work proposals (per para. 13).

16. During the CCNFSDU plenary session, the ad hoc Working Group Chair shall introduce the recommendations for consideration of new work proposals to the Committee. The Committee will then accept or reject a proposal for new work or return it to the proposing party for additional information. Depending on the workload of CCNFSDU, the Committee may decide not to accept any new work proposals at a session. At the same time, the Committee should retain the option to bypass the prioritization process for immediate action, where circumstances and/or exceptional global situations so require.

17. The recommendation of the ad hoc Working Group will be considered by the Committee for progression through the Codex process in the usual manner.

Decision Tree: The following decision tree serves as a tool for the ad hoc Working Group to classify new work proposals.

DECISION TREE FOR THE PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF NEW WORK PROPOSALS FOR CCNFSDU

