



Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition

OEWG Meeting
(Hybrid meeting)

Chair's Summary

Doc No: Gender OEWG/2023/03/07/05

Date: 7 March 2023, 14.00 -17.00

Venue: Auditorium, WFP

Attendance: 34 member states and representatives of the CFS Advisory Group, in-presence and online.

1. Introductory remarks

The Chair welcomed the participants. He thanked them for their engagement and commitment to the finalization of the *Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition*.

The Chair mentioned the successful Friends of the Chair's (FoC) meeting on 8 February, which was convened at the request of Plenary. That meeting had been attended by more than 40 member states and many representatives from the Advisory Group. At the FoC meeting, the Chair's proposed approach and solutions for reaching consensus on the Guidelines had been discussed. The Chair addressed special thanks to the member states that had sent him comments after the meeting, which allowed to refine the proposed approach and solutions.

The Chair presented the **objectives of the meeting**, which were to discuss: (i) a renewed draft of the Guidelines; and (ii) the workplan to finalize the Guidelines for presentation at CFS 51.

The Chair recalled that an advance version in English of the renewed draft of the Guidelines had been circulated on 24 February. The **language versions** had been made available on 3 March on the CFS Website together with the **other background documents** of the meeting:

- The Table with proposed solutions to contentious issues that had already been discussed in the Friends of the Chair's meeting on 8 February, in all languages;
- The revised workplan for the finalization of the Guidelines for presentation at CFS 51;
- The track changes version of the renewed draft, with the proposed changes compared with the 28 July 2022 version.

The Chair informed the participants that the meeting was webcast and recorded, and invited participants' consent. He then presented the agenda and proceeded with the meeting as there were no questions or comments.

2. Presentation of the renewed draft of the Guidelines

The Chair presented the draft Guidelines. Changes were introduced in accordance with the principles and solutions proposed to address contentious issues. The document capitalized on the texts agreed at the end of the third round of negotiations on 28 July 2022. It also reflected a new approach taking into account the discussions with the delegations since July and during the 8 February FoC meeting, as well as the comments he received after this meeting. The Chair expressed confidence that the renewed draft represented a good basis for reaching consensus.

The main changes consisted of:

- **Changes in the structure of the Guidelines**
 - Section 3.3 "Elimination of all forms of violence, including gender-based violence, in the context of food security and nutrition", became Section 3.9;
 - Section 3.5 "Recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work", became Section 3.8.

The Chair clarified that the order of the sections did not intend to reflect priorities but tried to accommodate members' request to start with sections more directly relevant to food security, nutrition and food systems.

- **"Gender transformative approaches"** was adapted to reflect UN agreed language, without changing the status of the paragraphs ("Agreed ad ref." paragraphs remained agreed and "Pending agreement" paragraphs remained open).
- **Change of status of 11 paragraphs** that were "Agreed pending overall agreement on controversial gender language" to "Pending agreement".
- **A new principle was added in Part 2:** "Country ownership" to emphasize the importance of country ownership in the implementation of the Guidelines.

The Chair clarified the use of the colour codes in the renewed draft, which indicate the status of the paragraphs. "Agreed ad ref." paragraphs were indicated in green and "Pending agreement" paragraphs in yellow (with proposed solutions to contentious issues in red). No colour was used for "Pending agreement" paragraphs with no expected contentious issues.

3. Discussion: comments on the Guidelines

All constituencies confirmed their support to the Guidelines and to the process for finalizing them. They highlight that the Guidelines were essential to achieving the 2030 Agenda, food security and nutrition, and the transformation of food systems. They thanked the Chair for his extensive and continuous efforts to complete the process.

The renewed draft was generally recognized to be a positive step and a good basis for consensus. Some participants stressed the importance of building on the paragraphs that had been agreed at the end of the third round of negotiations in July 2022 for a successful process. Reopening paragraphs could threaten progress made on policies related to social protection and redistribution of work. Others reminded the audience that nothing was agreed until everything was agreed.

Participants stressed the need for a realistic and constructive approach, with flexibility from all members to accommodate different perspectives as there was no common one-size fits all solution. The voluntary nature of the Guidelines was expected to encourage flexibility. It was underlined that countries were responsible for implementing the Guidelines and country ownership was therefore important.

The deletion in the document of non-agreed language in UN Resolutions was appreciated but some noted that the document still included language that was not agreed by all members. The importance of translation and interpretation for a successful process was underlined.

Some noted that the Guidelines had lost some important elements on their view, for instance on intersectionality and patriarchy, but confirmed their commitment to their finalization. They stressed the importance of a meaningful and impactful document. The lack of recognition of non-cis-heteronormative persons as a target of discrimination was regretted.

Participants said that they were not in a position to provide detailed comments on the Guidelines as the document was being reviewed by capitals. They will send detailed comments as soon as they receive feedback.

4. Discussion: comments on the workplan

Participants reiterated their support to the process although some noted that the timeline was ambitious. There was also a suggestion by one member to plan for more negotiation sessions than currently envisaged. The Chair indicated that he saw value in a second OEWG meeting early May (5 May). He said he would continue to chair the process as no member had volunteered to date to take on this role. At the same time he reaffirmed the invitation for members to offer their facilitation support.

5. Conclusions and next steps

The Chair concluded by emphasizing that the working group was on track to succeed in reaching consensus, based on the discussion that took place. He also reiterated the fact that only UN agreed language in UNGA Resolution 76/140 had been used in the renewed draft.

The Chair invited participants to provide written comments on the draft Guidelines, **no later than 24 March**. The amended version (the Draft for Negotiations) would be circulated by 31 March after addressing comments made during this meeting and in writing afterwards. The **language versions** would be available by 15 May 2023.