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PER L'ALIMENTAZIONE E L'AGRICOLTURA
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Permanent Mission of the Holy See to FAO, IFAD and WFP

“CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women’s and Girls’ Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition”

Written comments – 24 March 2023

The Permanent Mission of the Holy See to FAO, IFAD and WFP has the pleasure to address the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) with the purpose to submit written comments on the draft Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women’s and Girls’ Empowerment in the context of Food Security and Nutrition and on the work plan presented by the Chair, H.E. Amb. Gabriel Ferrero, in view of the next meeting of the Open Working Group to be held in early May 2023.

In this regard, we would like to share the following comments.

1. General comments

The Holy See appreciates the constructive work carried out by the CFS, in particular through the leadership of its Chairs, and welcomes the progress of the work, the efforts deployed in order to propose alternatives to the controversial issues in the document, and hopes that a final consensus, respectful of the different positions, can be reached as soon as possible and in a positive manner, so as to step up concrete action in favor of women and girls in the context of food security and nutrition.

2. Specific comments

The Holy See appreciates the progress made on the text and shares the position to only use in the document a language that is universally agreed and non-controversial.

- a. Regarding the proposal to remove “gender transformative approaches” from the text, it would be more appropriate to refer “transformative” to “goals and targets” rather than to “approaches, programs and policies” and to use the phrase “gender-sensitive” in reference to “policies and programs”.
- b. In Part 1 - Introduction, the individual perspective of women is highlighted in great depth. It is felt that their collective function could also be emphasized, since women perform a very

important social function not only for “everyone” in general, but concretely for their families, their communities, the societies in which they live. That is why in para. no. 5, in the third line from the top, it could be written “*is also one of the most effective ways to improve food security and nutrition outcomes within the family, community, and society*”.

- c. In Part 2 - Core Principles that underpin the Guidelines, para. 17 is not entirely clear as intergovernmental agreements are mixed with resolutions, declarations, programs, decades. It would be advisable to subdivide the quoted material by type of document (whether agreement, declaration, resolution, or general recommendation, etc.) and cite them in chronological order, standardizing the citation criteria so as to include the full name of the document and the date of conclusion.
- d. In Part 2 - Core Principles that underpin the Guidelines, para. 20 “non-discrimination”, could replace in line no. 4 from the top “~~regardless of their gender~~” with “regardless of their sex”, since the international conventions deal with “discrimination based on sex” (i.e. CERD).
- e. In Part 2 - Core Principles that underpin the Guidelines: in para. 26 it is appreciated that there is no longer the reference to “intersectionality approaches”. In any case we suggest to replace “multidimensional approaches” with “human-centered approaches” and to replace, in the text of para. 26, in line no. 4 from the top “the Guidelines promote a ~~multidimensional and integrated approach~~” with “the Guidelines promote a human-centered approach”.
- f. In Part 3.5.2 - Policies and strategic approaches: in para. 69 (i) it is considered that the principle expressed in general terms protects more broadly the right to equal access to and control over natural resources. For this reason, it is recommended to replace the list “land, water, fisheries and forests, including through inheritance and divorce for all women and girls” with the phrase “**natural resources**”. To this respect, it is also worth underlining that the next paragraph, para. 69 (ii) already explicitly refers to the protection of women’s land tenure rights “independent of their civil and marital status”.



The image shows a blue circular official stamp. The text around the perimeter of the stamp reads "COMMISSIONE PERMANENTE DELLA SANTA SEDE PRESSO LA P.A.O.". In the center of the stamp is a logo featuring a globe and a figure. A handwritten signature in black ink is written over the stamp.