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**INTERGOVERNMENTAL WORKING GROUP FOR THE
ELABORATION OF A SET OF VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES TO
SUPPORT THE PROGRESSIVE REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT
TO ADEQUATE FOOD IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL FOOD
SECURITY**

Second Session

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**VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES TO SUPPORT THE PROGRESSIVE
REALIZATION OF THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD IN THE
CONTEXT OF NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY**

**Draft prepared by the IGWG Bureau for consideration
at the Second Session of the IGWG**

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Preface

In response to the invitation from Heads of State and Government contained in Paragraph 10 of the Declaration adopted at the 2002 World Food Summit: *Five Years Later*, the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations adopted the decision at its 123rd session to establish an Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG) with the following mandate: “to elaborate, with the participation of stakeholders, in a period of two years, a set of voluntary guidelines to support Member Nations’ efforts to achieve the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security”.

The purpose of these Guidelines is to effect the above mandate. The present document is the result of the work of the IGWG.

These Guidelines are a practical tool and are of a voluntary nature. They do not establish legally binding obligations for states or international organizations, nor is any provision in these Guidelines to be interpreted as amending, modifying or otherwise impairing rights and obligations under international law. These Guidelines do not address armed conflict and international humanitarian law. It should be borne in mind, however, that states have assumed important international obligations related to this subject matter under that body of law.

In developing these Guidelines, the IGWG has benefited from the active participation of international organizations, non-governmental organizations and representatives of civil society. Bearing in mind that implementation of these Guidelines will necessitate the participation of all members of society at large, civil society organizations and private business entities, these Guidelines envisage the cooperation of all sectors of society.

Part I: Introduction

BASIC INSTRUMENTS

These Voluntary Guidelines have taken into account relevant international instruments, including:

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25:

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 11:

1. The States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international cooperation based on free consent.

2. The States Parties to the present Covenant, recognizing the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, shall take, individually and through international cooperation, the measures, including specific programmes, which are needed:

(a) to improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, by disseminating knowledge of the principles of nutrition and

by developing or reforming agrarian systems in such a way as to achieve the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources;

(b) taking into account the problems of both food-importing and food-exporting countries, to ensure an equitable distribution of world food supplies in relation to need.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Article 2:

1. Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take steps, individually and through international assistance and cooperation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures.

2. The States Parties to the present Covenant undertake to guarantee that the rights enunciated in the present Covenant will be exercised without discrimination of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD AND FOOD SECURITY

1. Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. The four pillars of food security are availability, stability of supply, access and utilization.

2. Within the context of the obligations of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the right to adequate food is fully realized when every individual, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access to adequate food or the means of its procurement. In such circumstances, food is available in a quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of individuals, is free from unsafe substances, and is acceptable within a given culture. It is also accessible both economically and physically. Economic accessibility implies that personal or household financial resources associated with the acquisition of food for an adequate diet are sufficient and at a level such that the attainment and satisfaction of other basic needs are not threatened or compromised. Physical accessibility implies that adequate food is accessible to everyone, including physically vulnerable individuals. States Parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Covenant) are mindful of the need to respect, protect and fulfil the right to adequate food. States should respect existing access to adequate food by not taking any measures that result in preventing such access, and should protect the right of everyone to adequate food by taking steps so that enterprises and individuals do not deprive individuals of their access to adequate food. States should also fulfil (facilitate, provide) people's right to food in the following way. Facilitation means that states proactively engage in activities intended to strengthen people's access to and utilization of resources and means to ensure their livelihood, including food security.

3. States that are not Parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights are invited to consider that instrument in developing their policies and practices.

4. At the national level a rights-based approach to food security emphasizes the satisfaction of people's basic needs as a matter of right, rather than as one of benevolence, in which the obligations and responsibilities of all actors are spelled out. In this approach, people hold their governments accountable and are participants in the process of human development, rather than being passive recipients. A rights-based approach is not only concerned with the final outcome of abolishing hunger, but also proposes ways and tools by which that goal can be achieved. Application of human rights principles is integral to the process.

Part II: Enabling Environment

GUIDELINE 1: DEMOCRACY AND INDIVIDUAL FREEDOMS

1.1 States should safeguard a free, democratic and just society in order to provide a peaceful, stable and enabling economic, social, political and cultural environment in which individuals can feed themselves and their families in freedom and dignity.

1.2 All human rights are universal, indivisible, interrelated and interdependent. States should promote democracy, the rule of law, sustainable development and good governance, and promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms in order to empower individuals and civil society to make demands on their governments, devise policies that address their specific needs and ensure the accountability and transparency of governments and state decision-making processes in implementing such policies. States should in particular promote freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of information, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly and association.

1.3 States should also promote good governance as an essential factor for sustained economic growth, sustainable development, poverty eradication and the effective implementation of these Guidelines.

GUIDELINE 2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

2.1 In order to achieve the purpose of these Guidelines, states should promote broad-based economic development that is compatible with their food security policies.

2.2 States should promote adequate and stable supplies of food through a combination of domestic production and trade.

2.3 States are encouraged to consider adopting a twin track approach to hunger and poverty reduction. Such an approach entails, as a first track, direct and immediate measures to ensure access to adequate food as part of a social safety net. The second track entails investment in productive activities to improve the livelihoods of the poor and hungry in a sustainable manner. This requires, in particular, the development of appropriate institutions, functioning markets, a conducive legal and regulatory framework, and access by the poor to employment, productive resources and appropriate services.

2.4 States should pursue sound economic, agriculture, fisheries, forestry and land reform policies that will permit farmers, fishers, foresters and other food producers, particularly women, to earn a fair return from their labour, capital and management, and encourage conservation and sustainable management of natural resources including in marginal areas.

2.5 Where poverty and hunger are predominantly rural, states may wish to focus the second track on agricultural and rural development through measures to enhance the productivity of poor rural communities, conserve and protect natural resources, and invest in rural infrastructure, education and research. In particular, states should adopt policies that create conditions which encourage stable employment, especially in rural areas, including off-farm jobs.

2.6 In response to the growing problem of urban hunger and poverty, where appropriate, states may wish to focus in the second track on the promotion of investments aimed at enhancing the livelihoods of the urban poor.

2.7 Policies to promote food utilization should include the provision of basic services for the poorest and invest in human resources by ensuring access to basic education, basic health care, clean drinking water and adequate sanitation.

GUIDELINE 3: STRATEGIES

3.1 Depending on the specific situation of each country, states, in consultation with relevant stakeholders and pursuant to their national laws, may wish to adopt a national human-rights based strategy for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of food security.

3.2 This strategy could include objectives, targets, benchmarks and time frames, as well as actions to formulate policies, identify and mobilize resources, define institutional mechanisms, allocate responsibilities, coordinate the activities of different actors, and provide for monitoring mechanisms. As appropriate, such a strategy could address all aspects of the food system, including the production, processing, marketing and consumption of safe food. It could also address access to resources and to markets as well as parallel measures in other fields. Vulnerable groups and special situations such as disasters could be provided for in the strategy.

3.3 The elaboration of such a strategy could begin with a careful assessment of existing national legislation, policy and administrative measures and current programmes, and a systematic identification of existing constraints and the measures necessary to accomplish these ends. It could be followed by the definition and adoption of an agenda for change.

3.4 Where necessary, states that have not yet done so may consider adopting a national poverty reduction strategy that specifically addresses access to adequate food.

3.5 States, individually or in cooperation with relevant international organizations, may consider integrating a human rights perspective into their poverty reduction strategy. Due regard could be given to the need to ensure equality in practice between women and men and among other groups as a necessary requirement to raise the level of those who are traditionally disadvantaged above the poverty line.

3.6 States may consider in such strategies giving priority to providing basic services for the poorest, and investing in human resources by ensuring access to primary education for all, basic health care, clean drinking water and adequate sanitation, supporting basic literacy and numeracy programmes and ensuring access to justice.

3.7 States are encouraged to increase productivity of and to revitalize the agricultural sector including livestock, forestry and fisheries through special policies and strategies targeted at small-scale and traditional farmers in rural areas, and the creation of enabling conditions for private sector participation, with emphasis on human capacity development and the removal of constraints to agricultural production and marketing.

3.8 States are encouraged to take steps to engage in consultations at national and regional levels with civil society organizations and other key stakeholders, including small-scale and traditional farmers, the private sector, women and youth associations, aimed at promoting their active participation in all aspects of agriculture and food production.

3.9 These strategies should be transparent, inclusive and comprehensive, cut across national policies and programmes, combine short term and long term objectives, and be prepared and implemented in a participatory and accountable manner.

GUIDELINE 4: MARKET SYSTEMS

4.1 States are encouraged to seek, in accordance with their national law and priorities, to improve the functioning of their markets in order to promote both growth and sustainable development by stimulating the necessary conditions for mobilizing domestic savings, both public and private, by generating sustainable adequate levels of productive investment and by increasing human capacity.

- 4.2 States may wish to put legislation, policies, procedures and regulatory institutions in place to prevent uncompetitive practices in markets.
- 4.3 States may encourage the development of corporate social responsibility and the commitment of all market players to respect the progressive realization of the right of individuals to adequate food in the context of national food security.
- 4.4 Consumers should enjoy adequate protection against fraudulent market practices, misinformation or unsafe food.
- 4.5 States may promote the existence of small-scale local markets as these are instrumental to achieving poverty reduction and food security, particularly in rural areas.
- 4.6 States may wish to adopt measures to ensure that the widest number of individuals and communities, especially disadvantaged groups, can benefit from opportunities created by international agricultural trade, and take measures to minimise negative effects on food security by making substantial improvements in market access, reducing, with a view to phasing out, all forms of export subsidies; and making substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic support, in accordance with the WTO Agreement.
- 4.7 States should strive to ensure that food, agricultural trade and overall trade policies are conducive to fostering food security for all through a fair and market-oriented world trade system.
- 4.8 States should endeavour to establish, especially in developing countries, well-functioning internal marketing and transportation systems to facilitate better links within and between domestic, regional and world markets, and diversified trade.
- 4.9 States should promote technical assistance and encourage technology transfer consistent with international trade rules in particular to those developing countries needing it, to meet international standards, so that they are in a position to take advantage of new market opportunities

GUIDELINE 5: INSTITUTIONS

- 5.1 States may wish to put appropriate institutions and organizational structures into place to achieve the purpose of these Guidelines.
- 5.2 To this end, states may wish to ensure the coordinated efforts of relevant government ministries, agencies and offices. They could establish national intersectoral coordination mechanisms to ensure the concerted implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans and programmes. States are encouraged to involve relevant communities in all aspects of planning and execution of activities in these areas.
- 5.3 States may also wish to entrust a specific institution with overall responsibility for overseeing the application of these Guidelines. Such an institution could also ensure coordination among all other actors at the national, regional and local levels, and delegate authority to carry out these roles. In order to ensure transparency and accountability, the functions and tasks of this institution would need to be clearly defined and provision made for adequate monitoring mechanisms.
- 5.4 States should ensure that relevant institutions provide for full and transparent participation of the commercial sector and of civil society, in particular representatives of groups most affected by food insecurity.

GUIDELINE 6: LEGAL FRAMEWORK

6.1 States are invited to establish necessary domestic law possibly including constitutional or legislative review that facilitates implementation of these Guidelines, by way of either a right-to-food or other approaches.

6.2 States are invited to consider whether to include provisions in their domestic law, which may include their constitutions, bills of rights or legislation, to directly adopt a domestic legal right to adequate food or other food related rights. Administrative, quasi-judicial and judicial mechanisms to provide adequate, effective and prompt remedies may be envisaged.

6.3 States that have established a food related right as a justiciable right under their domestic law should consider developing means of informing the general public – and in particular victims of violations – of such right, of all available rights and remedies, and of available legal, medical, psychological, social, administrative and all other services to which they may have a right of access.

GUIDELINE 7: ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND ASSETS

7.1 States should facilitate sustainable, non-discriminatory and secure access and utilization of resources consistent with national law and protect the assets that are important for people's livelihoods. States should respect and protect the rights of individuals and groups with respect to access to and existing rights related to resources such as land, water, forests, fisheries and livestock without any discrimination. However, bearing in mind applicable international law, this should not be construed as a limitation on the rights of states to carry out land reforms in order to facilitate more equitable access to productive assets. Attention may be given to the special relationship of some groups such as pastoralists and indigenous people with natural resources.

7.2 States may wish to pay particular attention to the specific access problems of women and of vulnerable, marginalized and traditionally disadvantaged groups.

7.3 States may wish to promote agricultural research and development, in particular to promote basic food production with its positive effects and basic incomes to benefit small and women farmers, as well as poor consumers.

7.4 States should promote women's full and equal participation in the economy and for this purpose introduce and enforce gender-sensitive legislation providing women with secure and equal access to and control over productive resources including credit, land and water.

Guideline 7a: Labour

7.5 States should take measures to encourage sustainable growth in order to provide opportunities for work that provides remuneration allowing for an adequate standard of living for rural and urban wage earners and their families, and to protect self-employment. States should ensure primary education for all children, regardless of race, ethnicity or gender, facilitate access to financial services including micro credit, and promote additional training to facilitate access to labour markets. For states that have ratified the relevant instruments, working conditions should be consistent with the obligations they have assumed under the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and ILO Conventions.

Guideline 7b: Land

7.6 Bearing in mind that access to land is central to ensuring adequate access to food, states may consider taking action to enhance and defend the security of land tenure, especially with respect to poor and disadvantaged segments of society. As appropriate, states should consider establishing legal and other mechanisms that advance land reform to enhance access for the poor and women. Such mechanisms should also promote conservation and sustainable use of land.

Guideline 7c: Water

7.7 Governments should strive to improve the efficient use of water resources and promote their allocation among competing users in a way that gives due priority to the satisfaction of basic human needs and balances the requirement of preserving or restoring ecosystems and their functioning with domestic, industrial and agricultural needs, including safeguarding drinking water quality.

Guideline 7d: Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

7.8 States should consider specific national policies, legal instruments and supporting mechanisms to prevent the erosion of genetic resources for food and agriculture, including, as appropriate, for the protection of relevant traditional knowledge and equitable participation in sharing benefits arising from the use of these resources, and by encouraging, as appropriate, the participation of local and indigenous communities and farmers in making national decisions on matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources.

GUIDELINE 8: FOOD SAFETY AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

8.1 States should have procedures in place so that all food, whether freely available or sold on markets, is safe and consistent with national regulatory capacity.

8.2 States are encouraged to establish comprehensive and rational food-control systems that include risk analysis to ensure safety in the entire food chain.

8.3 States are encouraged to take action to streamline institutional procedures for food control and food safety at national level and eliminate gaps and overlaps in inspection systems and in the legislative and regulatory framework for food. States are encouraged to adopt scientifically based food safety standards, including standards for additives, contaminants, residues of veterinary drugs and pesticides, and microbiological hazards, and establish standards for packaging, labelling and advertising of food. They should base their food safety standards on international standards where these exist, except as otherwise provided for in the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement. States should take action to prevent contamination from industrial and other pollutants in the production, processing, storage, transport, distribution, handling and sale of food.

8.4 States may wish to establish a national coordinating committee for food to bring together both governmental and non-governmental actors involved in the food system and to act as liaison with the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission. States should consider collaborating with private actors in the food system, both by assisting them in exercising controls on their own production and handling practices, and by auditing those controls.

8.5 Where necessary, states should assist farmers and other primary producers to follow good agricultural practices, food processors to follow good manufacturing practices, and food handlers to follow good hygiene practices. States are encouraged to consider establishing food safety systems to ensure the provision of safe food to consumers.

8.6 States should ensure that education regarding safe practices is available for farmers, fishers and veterinarians in order that their activities neither lead to harmful residues in food nor cause harm to the environment. States should also take measures to educate consumers about the safe storage, handling and utilization of food within the household. States should collect and disseminate information to the public regarding food-borne diseases and food safety matters, and should cooperate with regional and international organizations addressing food safety issues.

8.7 States should adopt measures to protect consumers from deception and misrepresentation in the packaging, labelling, advertising and sale of food, and provide recourse for any harm caused by unsafe or adulterated food, including food offered by street sellers.

8.8 Developed states are encouraged to provide technical assistance to developing states for capacity building and training in food safety. When possible and appropriate, developing countries with more advanced capabilities in food security-related areas are encouraged to lend assistance to less advanced developing countries.

GUIDELINE 9: NUTRITION

9.1 States may wish to take measures to maintain, adapt or strengthen dietary diversity and healthy eating habits and food preparation, as well as feeding patterns, including breastfeeding, while ensuring that changes in availability and access to food supply do not negatively affect dietary composition and intake.

9.2 States may also consider taking steps, in particular through education, information and labelling regulations, to prevent over-consumption and unbalanced diets which may lead to ill nutrition, malnutrition and obesity.

9.3 States may wish to involve communities and local government in the design, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of flexible programmes to increase the production and consumption of healthy and nutritious foods, especially those that are rich in micronutrients. States may wish to promote gardens at both home and school as a key element in combating micronutrient deficiencies. States may also consider adopting regulations for fortifying foods to prevent and cure micronutrient deficiencies such as iodine, iron and Vitamin A deficiencies.

9.4 States may consider measures to support and encourage mothers to breastfeed. States may wish to disseminate information on the feeding of infants and young children which is consistent and in line with current scientific knowledge and take steps to counteract misinformation on infant feeding. States should consider with utmost care issues regarding breastfeeding and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection on the basis of the most up-to-date, authoritative scientific advice and referring to the latest WHO/UNICEF guidelines.

9.5 States may wish to consider establishing mechanisms to assess nutritional impact and take account of coping strategies in the event of natural disasters and complex emergencies as part of their efforts to target, design and implement appropriate nutrition strategies throughout relief and rehabilitation programmes.

9.6 States may wish to take parallel action in the areas of health, education and sanitary infrastructure, so that necessary services and goods become available to people to enable them to make full use of the dietary value in the food they eat and thus achieve nutritional well-being.

9.7 Taking into account that discrimination – whether based on gender or on any other grounds – is one of the most important obstacles in the achievement of adequate levels of nutrition at the household level, states may wish to adopt measures to eradicate sources of discriminatory practices.

9.8 States are invited to recognize that food is a vital part of an individual's culture and are encouraged to support individuals' practices, customs and traditions on matters related to food.

GUIDELINE 10: EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

10.1 States are encouraged to support investment in human resource development such as health, education, literacy and other skills training, which are essential to sustainable development, including agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development.

10.2 States are encouraged to strengthen and broaden basic education, especially for girls, women and other under-served populations.

10.3 States are encouraged to support higher education through strengthening developing country university and technical faculties of agriculture related disciplines and business to carry out both education and research functions, and engaging universities throughout the world in training developing country agriculturalists, scientists and businessmen at the graduate and post-graduate levels.

10.4 States should provide information to individuals to strengthen their ability to participate in policy-making decisions that may affect them, and to challenge decisions that threaten their rights.

10.5 Human rights education should be integrated into school curricula.

10.6 The media, religious leaders and civil society in general should be encouraged to promote knowledge about all aspects regarding the enjoyment of individuals' human rights. A wide range of methods, including the use of print media as well as rural radio, could be used to reach all members of society.

GUIDELINE 11: NATIONAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES

11.1 Consistent with the programme of action of the World Summit for Social Development 1995, interested developed and developing country partners are invited to allocate, on average, 20 percent of official development assistance and 20 percent of the national budget, respectively, to basic social programmes, including in areas relating to food security for vulnerable groups and to monitor these levels.

11.2 Regional and local authorities should be encouraged to include expenditure items for anti-hunger and food security purposes in their respective budgets.

11.3 States should ensure transparency and accountability in the use of public resources.

11.4 States are encouraged to promote basic social programmes and expenditures, in particular those affecting the poor and the vulnerable segments of society, and protect them from budget reductions, while increasing the quality and effectiveness of social expenditures. States should strive to ensure that budget cuts do not negatively affect access to adequate food among the poorest sections of society.

11.5 States are encouraged to establish an enabling legal and economic environment to promote and mobilize domestic savings and attract external resources for productive investment, and seek innovative sources of funding, both public and private, for social programmes.

Part III: Assistance

GUIDELINE 12: TARGETING VULNERABLE GROUPS

12.1 States are encouraged to identify groups particularly vulnerable to food insecurity along with the reasons for their food insecurity, in order to develop and identify measures to be implemented both immediately and progressively. States may wish to systematically undertake disaggregated analysis on the food insecurity, vulnerability and nutritional status of different groups in society, with particular attention to measuring social, religious, racial, cultural, political and any other form of discrimination that may manifest itself in greater food insecurity and vulnerability to food insecurity, or in a higher prevalence of malnutrition among specific population groups, or both.

12.2 In order to ensure effective targeting of assistance, so that no one who is eligible is excluded, or that those not in need of assistance are included, it is important that States establish eligibility criteria. Effective accountability and administrative systems are essential to prevent leakages and corruption. Factors to take into account include household and individual assets and income, as well as existing coping mechanisms. States may wish to give priority to channelling

food through women as a means of enhancing their decision-making role and ensuring that the food is used to meet the household's food requirements.

GUIDELINE 13: SAFETY NETS

13.1 States should consider, to the extent that resources permit, establishing and maintaining social safety and food safety nets to protect those who are unable to provide for themselves. As far as possible, and with due regard to effectiveness and coverage, states should consider building on existing capacities within communities at risk to provide the necessary resources for social safety and food safety nets to fulfil the progressive realization of the right to adequate food states may wish to consider the benefits of procuring locally.

13.2 The design of social and food safety nets will depend on objectives, budget, existing administrative capacity and local circumstances such as levels of food supply and local food markets. States should be encouraged to nonetheless ensure that they adequately target those in need and ensure universal access by those who meet the established eligibility criteria.

13.3 States are encouraged to take steps, to the extent that resources permit, so that any measure of an economic or financial nature, likely to have a negative impact on existing levels of food consumption, be complemented with provision for effective food safety nets.

13.4 In situations where it has been determined that food plays an appropriate role in safety nets, food assistance should bridge the gap between the nutritional needs of the affected population and their ability to meet those needs themselves. Any food should be provided with the fullest possible participation of beneficiaries, and be adequate in terms of quality, energy, protein content and micronutrient levels to satisfy the nutritional requirements of individuals.

13.5 Governments should consider accompanying food assistance used in safety net schemes to maximize benefits towards ensuring people's adequate access to and utilization of food. Essential complementary activities include access to clean water and sanitation, health care interventions such as de-worming and nutrition education activities.

GUIDELINE 14: INTERNATIONAL FOOD AID

14.1 States should review their food aid policies to support national efforts by recipient states to implement these Guidelines. In the broader context of food security policy, states are also encouraged to intensify their efforts to base their food aid policies on sound needs assessment that involve both recipient and donors and that target specially needy and vulnerable groups. In this context, states are encouraged to provide such assistance in a manner that takes into account the importance of food safety, local food production capacity, and the nutritional needs and culture of recipient populations.

14.2 International food-aid transactions, including bilateral food aid which is monetized, should be carried out in a manner consistent with the FAO Principles of Surplus Disposal and Consultative Obligations, the 1999 Food Aid Convention and the WTO Agreement on Agriculture, and should meet the food safety standards of the donor and recipient countries.

GUIDELINE 15: EMERGENCIES

15.1 In the case of natural or human-made emergencies states should provide food assistance to those in their territory in need and request international assistance if their own resources do not suffice.

15.2 States should put in place adequate and functioning mechanisms of early warning to prevent or mitigate the effects of natural disasters. Early warning systems should be based on international standards and cooperation, and on constant monitoring and reliable data. States

should take appropriate emergency preparedness measures, such as keeping food stocks or funds for the acquisition of food available for quick distribution.

Part IV: Accountability and Rule of Law

GUIDELINE 16: MONITORING, INDICATORS AND BENCHMARKS

16.1 States that have as a matter of national law or policy adopted a rights-based approach may wish to establish mechanisms to monitor the implementation of these Guidelines, in accordance with their capacity and by building on existing information systems and addressing information gaps.

16.2 Such states may wish to consider adopting a requirement for “Right to Food Impact Assessments”, both *ex ante* and *ex post*, in order to identify the impact of domestic policies, programmes and projects on such food related rights of the population at large and vulnerable groups in particular, and as a basis for the adoption of the necessary corrective measures.

16.3 Such states may also wish to develop a set of process, impact and outcome indicators, relying in the first instance on indicators already in use, so as to assess implementation of food related rights. They may wish to establish appropriate benchmarks to be achieved in the short, medium and long term, which relate directly to meeting poverty and hunger reduction targets as a minimum, as well as other national and international goals including those adopted at the World Food Summit and the Millennium Summit.

16.4 In such case, process indicators could be so identified or designed that they explicitly relate and reflect the use of specific policy instruments and interventions with outcomes consistent with the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national security. Such indicators could adequately capture the adoption and implementation of legal, policy and administrative measures, any discriminatory practices and outcomes, and the extent of political and social participation in the process of realizing the right.

16.5 States may wish, in particular, to monitor the food-security status of women and children and vulnerable groups and their nutritional status, including the prevalence of micro-nutrient deficiencies.

16.6 To the extent possible, the process of information gathering, management, analysis and interpretation, and dissemination should be highly participatory.

GUIDELINE 17: NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS

17.1 States that have as a matter of national law or policy adopted a rights-based approach and which have national human rights institutions or ombudspersons, may wish to include the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security in their mandates. States which do not have national human rights institutions or ombudspersons may wish to establish them. Human rights institutions should be independent and autonomous from the government.

17.2 States may wish to encourage stakeholders at large to participate in the monitoring of measures and policies.

Part V: International Framework

1. The international communities' commitment to the eradication of extreme hunger is clearly reflected in the target set at the World Food Summit to reduce the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015, and in the first Millennium Development Goal to, by the same year, reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

2. States have the primary responsibility for creating an economic and political environment that assures the food security of their citizens, involving for this purpose all elements of civil society. The international community and the UN system, including FAO, as well as other agencies and bodies according to their mandates, have important contributions to offer for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security.
3. Under article 56 of the Charter of the United Nations, “All Members [of the United Nations] pledge themselves to take joint and separate action in cooperation with the Organization for the achievement of the purposes set forth in Article 55”, which states that the United Nations shall promote, *inter alia* “higher standards of living”, “condition of economic and social progress and development”, “solutions to international economic, social, health and related problems” and “universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all”.
4. In accordance with Millennium Development Goal Number 8, technical cooperation, financial cooperation, including debt relief, and international trade are of particular importance to support the national effort to carry out the purpose of these guidelines.
5. Developed countries that have not done so should be encouraged to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as official development assistance (ODA) to developing countries and, as reconfirmed in the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries. Developing countries should be encouraged to build on progress achieved in ensuring that ODA is used effectively to help achieve development goals and targets, including the enhancement of national food security.
6. States should be encouraged to pursue external debt relief vigorously and expeditiously, in order to liberate resources that can then be directed towards national activities for combating hunger, consistent with attaining sustainable growth and development.
7. International trade creates possibilities for reducing hunger and poverty. States should strive to ensure that the poor and hungry have access to sufficient resources to seize these opportunities and that institutions and policies work in their favour.
8. States should take steps with a view to avoiding and refraining from any unilateral measure not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that would impede the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the potentially affected countries.
9. Food should not be used as a tool for political pressure.
10. International organizations are encouraged to cooperate with states in the implementation of these guidelines at the national level.
11. States and international organizations, including civil society organizations, are encouraged to respond to appeals for emergency assistance in a timely manner.