

DRAFT PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL GUIDANCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, HEALTHY DIETS AND SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

INTRODUCTION

The following general principles have been identified to assist the development of international guidance on human rights, healthy diets and sustainable food systems. The principles are non-exhaustive and based on international law, ethical frameworks and global political commitments

HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED

States have an obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the right to health, and other health-related rights, including the right to food. These rights, which are grounded in international law, require governments not to interfere with the enjoyment of the right, to protect the right from interference by others (including those with vested economic interests) and to provide and promote conditions in which the right can be fully realised, including through legislative, administrative and budgetary measures.

UNIVERSALITY AND INALIENABILITY

Human rights, including the right to health and to food, are universal and inalienable. All people everywhere in the world are entitled to them, and cannot voluntarily give them up.

INDIVISIBILITY

Human rights are indivisible. Whether of a civil, cultural, economic, political or social nature, they are all inherent to the dignity of every person. Consequently, they all have equal status as rights, and cannot be ranked, a priori, in a hierarchical order.

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

All individuals are equal and are entitled to their human rights without discrimination of any kind, such as on grounds of race, colour, sex, ethnicity, age, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, disability, property, birth or other status.

PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION

Every person and all peoples are entitled to active, free and meaningful participation in, contribution to, and enjoyment of civil, economic, social, cultural and political development in which human rights and fundamental freedoms can be realized. This implies broad-based multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary engagement to ensure a broad range of stakeholder views are

included, with adequate safeguards to avoid and manage potential and apparent conflicts of interests.

WHOLE-OF-GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP, ACCOUNTABILITY AND RULE OF LAW

States and other duty-bearers are answerable for the observance of human rights. In this regard, they have to comply with the legal norms and standards enshrined in human rights instruments. At the same time, healthy diets and sustainable food systems have their origins in laws and policies that operate in many sectors. An all-of-government approach is necessary, both to ensure that non-health sectors strategically implement policies that support healthy diets and sustainable food systems, and so that the health sector can learn more about how policies in these sectors impact on health, the enjoyment of the right to food, and other health-related rights.

EQUITY-, GENDER- AND LIFE-COURSE-BASED

States should pay particular attention to the needs of vulnerable groups, including children, women, the elderly and others who have disproportionately poorer access to a healthy diet or are at higher risk of malnutrition in all its forms, including by taking a gendered and life course approach.

SUSTAINABLE AND CLIMATE-CONSCIOUS

States have an obligation to implement policies and to provide and promote the conditions in which healthy diets, and the food systems that sustain them, can be enjoyed by future generations, without exhausting the resource base that our children and their children will rely upon, and the environments in which they will live.

COHERENCE AND ALIGNMENT WITH AGENDA 2030 AND OTHER GLOBAL AGENDAS

Guidance will be most useful if it is aligned with universal agendas such as Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, including zero hunger (SDG2), good health and well-being (SDG3) – including universal health coverage, sustainable production and consumption (SDG12), climate action (SDG13) and peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG16).