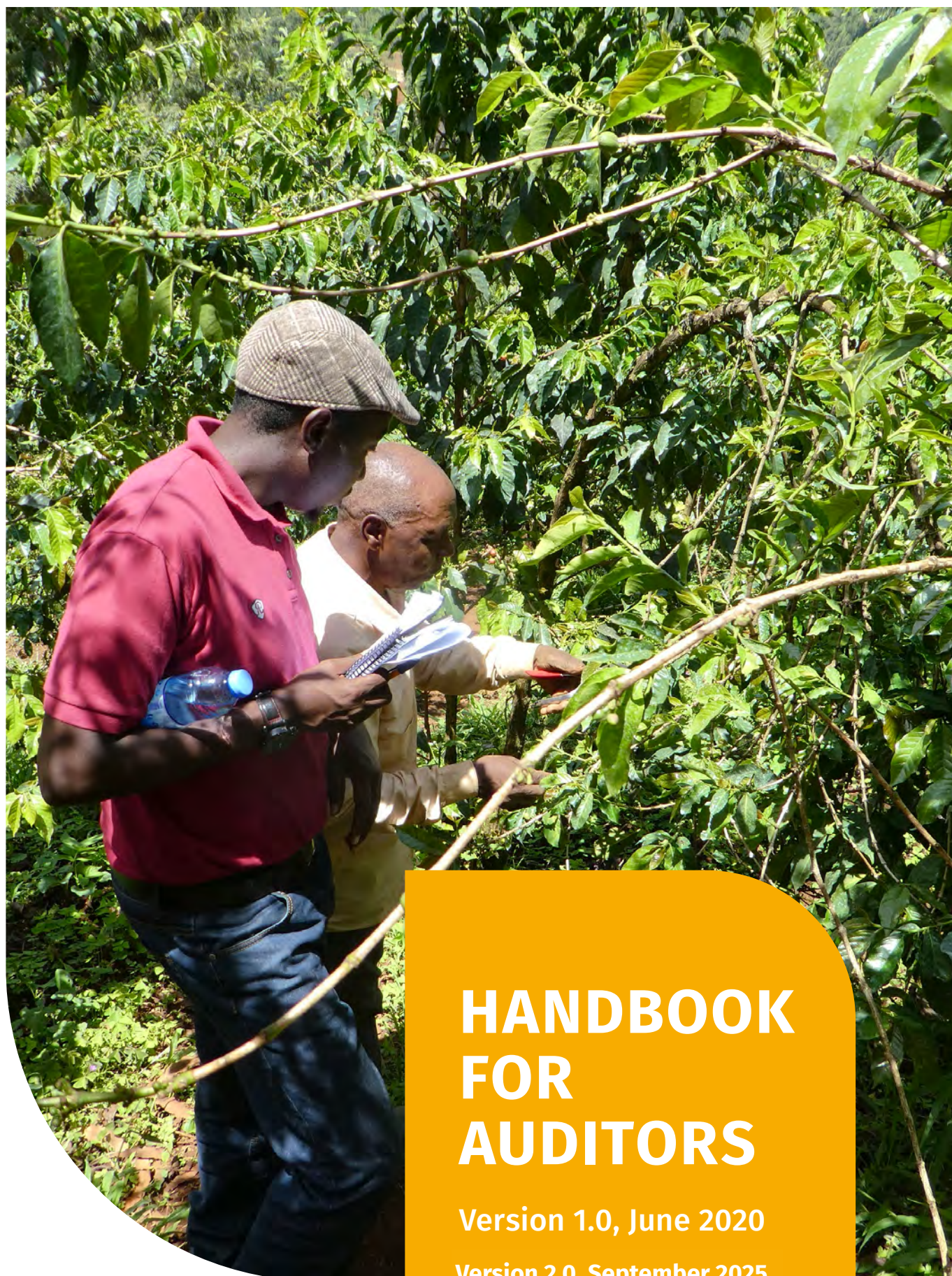




HANDBOOK FOR AUDITORS

Version 1.0, June 2020

Version 2.0, September 2025

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ABBREVIATIONS

CB	Certification Body
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CmiA	Cotton made in Africa
ESIA	Environmental Social Impact Assessment
FANTA	Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
FSS-QAT	Food Security Standard - Quick Assessment Tool
FSS	Food Security Standard
GM	Group manager
GRAS	Global Risk Assessment Services
IAF	International Accreditation Forum
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation (World Bank Group)
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IPM	Integrated Pest Management Techniques
ISCC	International Sustainability & Carbon Certification
ISEAL	International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance
NaFSA	National Food Security Assessment tool
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RSPO	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil
RtAF	Right to Adequate Food
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SH	Smallholder
SMETA	Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
UN	United Nations
UNCFAT	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VGGT	Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security
WFP	World Food Programme
WHH	Welthungerhilfe
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature
ZEF	Centre for Development Research of the University of Bonn

01 Introduction

Hunger and malnutrition persist in many countries that produce agricultural commodities for global markets. To date, food security has been seldom addressed in sustainability standards and certification schemes.

The Food Security Standard aims to address this deficit.

International demand for agricultural commodities is growing due to population growth, changes in consumption patterns and the current shift from petroleum-based to bio-based economies. More and more agricultural production is needed for food, feed, energy and industrial purposes, leading to increasing competition between uses. This can have adverse effects, particularly in food-insecure countries, as agricultural production for export can often compete with local food production while also encouraging labor exploitation, environmental pollution and resource depletion.

Importing countries are becoming more concerned about the environmental and social impacts that imported products have had in their countries of origin. In the last two decades, voluntary sustainability standards addressing environmental and social sustainability issues connected to the production of agricultural commodities have emerged. Sustainability standards and certification systems are recognized as valid instruments to address biomass sustainability issues. Nevertheless, the issue of food security has only been partially addressed, due to its complexity and the difficulty in allocating responsibility between individuals, the private sector and government.

The FSS provides a practical instrument for demonstrating that the “right to food” enjoyed by farm workers, small-holder farmers and communities impacted by agricultural production is respected. It is designed to be integrated in any existing sustainability standard in the agricultural sector and is applicable to all biomass types and uses, farm sizes and business types.

The FSS includes a set of Food Security Principles, Criteria and Indicators; a Handbook for Auditors; and the following three audit tools:

- Audit Procedure Tool
- National Food Security Assessment Tool (NaFSA)
- Local Food Security Quick Assessment Tool (FSS-QAT)

This Handbook aims to:

- Introduce auditors to the concept of food security and the conceptual framework of the FSS.
- Provide guidance on the audit process and the use of the FSS audit tools.

Following the introduction, Section 2 provides background information on the FSS and its design. It also explains the pillars and principles on which the criteria and indicators are based. Section 3 focuses on the applicable scope of the FSS. Section 4 describes how the FSS is implemented within the framework of sustainability certification. The audit process is then explained in Section 5. Section 6 presents the FSS audit tools and their use. Finally, Section 7 gives instructions about the preparation of the audit report.



The FSS is a joint initiative of WWF Germany, the Center for Development Research of the University of Bonn (ZEF) and the Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e. V. (WHH) with the financial support of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) via FNR (Fachagentur für Nachwachsende Rohstoffe).

02 Understanding the Food Security Standard



This section provides background information on the FSS and its design. It also explains the pillars and principles on which the FSS criteria and indicators are based.

2.1 BACKGROUND

The FSS consists of a number of principles and criteria rooted in the Human Right to Adequate Food (hereinafter referred to as the Right to Food), as enshrined in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, 1948)¹. These principles and criteria are also based on the obligations of the private sector regarding food security set forth by the ‘Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security’ (FAO, 2005) (hereinafter, the Right to Food Guidelines). The Right to Food Guidelines were adopted unanimously by all Member Nations of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations in November 2004. Although they are predominately directed at national governments, they also contain obligations for the private sector to respect and support the implementation of the Right to Food.

The FSS aims to help actors in the private sector to demonstrate their fulfillment of the internationally recognized Right to Food. In this way, the FSS does not impose new or more stringent obligations. Rather, it sets minimum requirements for demonstrating compliance with the Right to Food.

The Human Right to Adequate Food

The Right to Food not only relates to freedom from hunger and malnutrition. It also imposes obligations that aim to assure access to adequate and nutritious food so that people are able to feed themselves in a dignified manner. To implement and guarantee the Right to Food, various conditions must be met, including acceptable wages, adequate working conditions, access to education and functioning government institutions.

How is food security defined?

According to the FAO (2005) “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 FAO distinguishes between four pillars of food security: availability, stability of supply, access and utilization.

Box 1: FAO finds growth in undernourishment since 2015

Increasing global food insecurity and undernourishment

After decades of decline, the number of people suffering from undernourishment around the world started to increase in 2015. In 2018, more than 820 million people were undernourished (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, & WHO, 2019). Around 80% of them live in rural areas in Africa, Latin America and Asia. At the same time, several agricultural and forestry feedstocks imported by industrialized countries are produced in countries where the food security situation is severe.

¹ For more information on the background and conceptual framework for determining FSS criteria, see Mohr, et al (2015) and Mohr, et al (2016).

2.2 STRUCTURE

The FSS consists of five pillars, 17 principles, 35 criteria and 93 indicators.²

The FSS consists of five core pillars. Four of them corresponds to the FAO pillars of food security. The fifth pillar addresses additional cross-cutting aspects relevant to the Right to Food. The pillars are further concretized through principles that follow the Right to Food Guidelines. Some principles are relevant to more than one pillar. However, for practical purposes, each principle is allocated to a single pillar. The principles are operationalized through one or several criteria.

The criteria describe goals that must be achieved to ensure that the Right to Food is respected. The indicators provide concrete requirements to demonstrate that a goal is achieved.

Table 1 below gives an overview of the pillars, principles and criteria. The FSS pillars and their respective principles are briefly described in Sections 2.3.1 to 2.3.5. The full set of indicators is provided in Annex II. An example of how the individual parts of the FSS build on each other is shown in Annex I.

Table 1: Overview of FSS Pillars, Principles and Criteria

STABILITY	
1. Apply good governance and respect the rule of law	1.1 All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall comply with applicable national, regional and local laws and regulations and ratified international treaties.
	1.2 All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall be committed to respecting human rights in all operations and transactions.
2. Respect national food security and development strategies	2.1 The farm management/group manager shall endorse national strategies with regard to food security and these strategies shall not be contradicted by any business activities.
3. Mitigate natural and human-made disaster risks	3.1 Natural and human-made disaster risks shall be mitigated and procedures shall be in place to ensure a proper response to emergencies.
ACCESS	
4. Ensure market access and contribute to local development	4.1 Local value creation must be supported.
	4.2 Access to markets for local communities must not be reduced.
5. Safeguard long-term farm profitability and fair business conducts	5.1 The operation shall be economically viable in the long term.
	5.2 Fair, legal and transparent arrangements shall be implemented with all contract/ smallholder farmers and service providers.
6. Respect labor rights and ensure good working conditions	6.1 All workers shall be provided with written contractual agreements that are fair and legally valid.
	6.2 The farm management/smallholder shall pay all workers a decent wage and provide conditions of employment that respect legal requirements or collective bargaining agreements, whichever sets the higher standards.
	6.3 People involved in farm operations shall not be subjected to any form of discrimination based on race, color, gender, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, marital status, union membership, age or any other condition that could give rise to discrimination.
	6.4 Occupational safety and health conditions for workers shall adhere to recognized national and international standards.

² For further details see Food Security Standard: Principles, Criteria and Indicators (FSS, 2020a).

6. Respect labor rights and ensure good working conditions	6.5	The right of all personnel to form and join trade unions of their choice and to bargain collectively shall be respected.
	6.6	No forms of forced or trafficked labor shall be used.
	6.7	Children shall not be employed or exploited.
7. Provide training and capacity building	7.1	Training and capacity building focused on improving the agricultural livelihood of all farmers involved in the operation shall be provided.
8. Offer social safety nets	8.1	All people working for the operation shall have access to medical care.
	8.2	All people working for the operation shall have access to a provident fund, pension system or equivalent compensation.
AVAILABILITY		
9. Respect land rights	9.1	Existing land rights and land-use rights, including formal, informal and customary rights, shall be respected in accordance with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT). All decisions regarding land rights and land use rights, such as purchase, sale or valuation, shall be based on the free, prior and informed consent of all stakeholders.
10. Respect water rights and ensure that water quality and availability are maintained or improved	10.1	Existing water rights must be respected.
	10.2	Water quality and availability in the operation's area of influence shall be assessed.
	10.3	Water quality shall be maintained or improved.
	10.4	Local water availability shall not be negatively affected.
11. Implement sustainable agricultural practices	11.1	Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) shall be applied.
	11.2	Good practices shall be implemented for the storage, handling, use and disposal of chemicals (pesticides, fuels, fertilizers, etc.).
UTILIZATION		
12. Provide a setting for the safe utilization of food	12.1	All people working for the operation shall have access to clean and safe facilities.
	12.2	All people working for the operation shall be provided with access to potable water.
13. Guarantee good nutrition	13.1	Measures to improve access to adequate, safe, sufficient and affordable food for all people working for the operation shall be undertaken.
	13.2	Breastfeeding women shall be provided with adequate conditions to nurture their children.
CROSS-CUTTING		
14. Provide complaint and grievance mechanisms	14.1	Complaints and grievances mechanisms for workers, contract farmers, communities and stakeholders shall be implemented and maintained.
15. Respect women's rights and ensure gender equity	15.1	Women shall not experience discrimination and their rights must be respected.
16. Raise awareness for nutrition and support child education	16.1	Awareness regarding food security and nutrition shall be raised.
	16.2	All children living at the agricultural operation shall have access to quality primary school education.
17. Assess and monitor local food security	17.1	Awareness for the overall food-security situation in the area of influence of the operation must be demonstrated. Responsibility for impacts on food security in the area of influence of the operation shall be assumed.
	17.2	New agricultural operations or the expansion of existing operations must not have a negative effect on the food security situation within the operation's area of influence, and they must not impair the right to food at the national level.

2.3 FSS PILLARS AND PRINCIPLES

2.3.1 STABILITY

To be considered food secure, a population, household or individual must have access to adequate food at all times and must always be able to adequately process that food for consumption. Individuals must have the physical constitution required to benefit from available nutrients. The concept of stability is thus also relevant to the other pillars of food security. People should not risk losing access to food because of sudden shocks (e.g. extreme weather events like a drought or flood, or food and crop price volatility) or cyclical events (e.g. seasonal food insecurity) (FAO, 2006). Even if food intake is adequate for some period of the year, a person is still considered to be food insecure if he or she has inadequate access to food on a periodic basis or risks a deteriorating nutritional status. Adverse weather conditions and natural or human-made disasters, political instability, or economic factors (like unemployment, seasonal contracts or rising food prices), may impact food stability. Food stability therefore also requires good governance, respect for laws and development strategies that facilitate broadly shared economic progress.

Principle 1:

Apply good governance and respect the rule of law

Sustainability standards must necessarily build upon national laws and regulations. All national laws and regulations should be respected. Furthermore, the *Charter of the United Nations* and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which have been signed by nearly all countries worldwide, should be observed. Many of the FSS criteria pertain to issues regulated under domestic legislation and international treaties – for example, issues regarding social security, wages and workers' rights. Land rights are also important, as biomass operations often experience conflicts regarding unclear or mutually exclusive land rights or titles.

FOOD STABILITY REQUIRES GOOD GOVERNANCE, RESPECT FOR LAW AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES THAT FACILITATE BROADLY SHARED ECONOMIC PROGRESS.

Principle 2:

Respect national food security and development strategies

In food-insecure regions, agricultural production that is destined for export should respond to the overall development objectives of the country in terms of social, economic and environmental development. The farm management/group manager has an obligation to revise and adapt its activities to national strategies concerning food security, poverty and rural development, including national food security and agricultural strategies, poverty reduction strategy papers, national development plans and climate change adaptation plans. The business planning and strategies of the operation should not contradict or hinder the implementation of national food security and development strategies. Rather, in an ideal case, they should contribute to them.

Principle 3:

Mitigate natural and human-made disaster risks

Natural and human-made disasters can generate food insecurity shocks that affect workers, farmers and communities. The mitigation of both natural and human-made disasters is essential to protect food security for workers and farmers as well as ensure the economic sustainability of agricultural production.



2.3.2 ACCESS

Food access refers to the ability of individuals to obtain foods for a nutritious diet. Physical and economic access to food is determined by self-cultivation activities and/or the purchasing power of the population/household (i.e. based on employment, pensions, safety nets) as well as by the existence of appropriate transport and market infrastructure.

Principle 4:

Ensure market access and contribute to local development

This principle focuses on two aspects: First, on local economic activity to provide access to income (and hence also to food), including the responsibility of the farm management/group manager to support local jobs.

Second, it addresses access to the local market system and associated infrastructure. While this second aspect is generally a responsibility of the public sector, agriculture operations must ensure that market access is not reduced by their activities, i.e. in terms of the use of available infrastructure or property easements to enable access to markets.

Principle 5:

Safeguard long-term farm profitability and fair business conduct

When farms have a documented business model, including a strategy for the future, this reduces economic risks while supporting the long-term health of the business. It also prevents negative socio-economic impacts to workers, contract farmers, smallholders and the community in general. An abrupt stop to agricultural operations could have negative effects on local food security. This is particularly relevant when land use is focused on perennial crops. In addition, the business model should reflect the recommendations included in environmental and social impact assessments.



FOOD ACCESS REFERS TO THE ABILITY OF INDIVIDUALS TO OBTAIN FOODS SUITABLE FOR A NUTRITIOUS DIET.

Principle 6:

Respect labor rights and ensure good working conditions

All employees should have decent working conditions, a right that is also enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and in the fundamental conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Ensuring this right requires the avoidance of occupational accidents and disease; the prohibition of forced labor, child labor or discriminatory practices; and decent, fair remuneration to enable an adequate standard of living. It also should ensure workplace security, social protection, non-discrimination, equal opportunity and treatment, and freedom to express workplace concerns. Similarly, trade union rights, freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are crucial means of introducing, maintaining and defending just and favorable working conditions.

Principle 7:

Provide training and capacity building

Often, agricultural support is provided by national programs. However, private organizations are also expected to support training for contract farmers/smallholders. When communities live inside large and medium-size farms, the farm management has a direct responsibility to support them in agricultural capacity building, e.g. with training in good agricultural practice or integrated pest management. There should be a direct dialog with communities so that training and activities are jointly planned.

Principle 8:

Offer social safety nets

Providing social protection is essential for individuals and households to be protected against risks to their livelihoods, to ensure an adequate level of food consumption and to improve food security. The availability of medical care for accidents or work-related diseases and illnesses is important, as occupational accidents often lead to an inability to work, which may leave an individual without a means to purchase food. Ensuring the availability of retirement pensions is equally important for food security in old age.

2.3.3 FOOD AVAILABILITY

Food availability refers to the availability of food in a quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of individuals, free from adverse substances, and acceptable within a given culture. Food can be supplied through domestic production and imports, including, if necessary, food aid. Food availability is linked to the availability and use of natural resources. It necessitates respect for land rights, fair access to land and the sustainable management of natural resources.

Principle 9:

Respect land rights

For farmers, secure land tenure is a prerequisite for agricultural production geared to self-consumption as well as for income generation. This principle refers mainly to the FAO's Voluntary Guidelines on Tenure (VGGT). The guidelines aim to secure tenure rights and equitable access to land, fisheries and forests with respect to all forms of tenure: public, private, communal, indigenous, customary and informal. Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is a principle that should inform all land acquisition and resettlement processes, as well as all stakeholder engagement and consultation. In conjunction with the VGGT, the FAO published a technical guide that supports the identification of stakeholders, land rights holders and the FPIC implementation process (FAO, 2014). These documents are the touchstone for any land acquisitions or disputes in areas certified under the FSS.

Principle 10:

Respect water rights and ensure that water quality and availability are maintained or improved

The overuse and pollution of water resources can have strong adverse impacts on local food safety and security, foremost in water scarce regions, as water is needed for food production, food preparation and direct consumption. Farm operations must not impair the ability of local communities to use and access water resources. It must also be demonstrated that the farm's water use is not in conflict with the interests of the local community, even if use rights were duly awarded by the regional authority. As water rights often are coupled with land rights, the existence of legitimate land tenure rights is also essential in this context. The agricultural operation should not contaminate or harm groundwater, surface water or downstream water resources.

Principle 11:

Implement sustainable agricultural practices

This criterion demands compliance with Good Agricultural Practices. Food security strongly depends on the preservation and sustainable management of natural resources, which includes water management (as addressed by principle 10) and sustainable farming techniques.



**FOOD AVAILABILITY
REFERS TO THE
AVAILABILITY OF FOOD
IN A QUANTITY AND
QUALITY SUFFICIENT
TO SATISFY THE DIETARY
NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS.**

2.3.4 UTILIZATION

Food utilization refers to the conditions that allow for adequate food consumption in terms of quality and diversity. This includes, on the one hand, appropriate food preparation and food safety aspects. On the other hand, it covers access to clean water as well as adequate sanitation and health care relevant to achieve nutritional well-being in which all physiological needs are met. It emphasizes the importance of non-food inputs in food security (FAO, 2006).

Principle 12:

Provide a setting for the safe utilization of food

This principle focuses on providing conditions that enable safe food intake on the part of workers, smallholder farmers and communities. This includes supplying and ensuring access to clean drinking water for workers and smallholders, as well as providing decent accommodations, sanitary facilities and living and dining areas for workers, particularly on large farms. Furthermore, this principle addresses the prevention of biological or chemical contamination of water sources (e.g. through the spraying of pesticides). It also encompasses the avoidance of negative impacts from the use of pesticides to the health of workers and the local population (see also Principle 11).

Principle 13:

Guarantee good nutrition

All people involved in the operation (workers, farmers) must have the possibility to eat healthy and nutritious food in sufficient quantity and quality at all times. The farm management/group manager is obligated to ensure access to adequate, safe, sufficient and affordable food for workers and smallholder farmers in an environment where it is safe to prepare and consume. In practical terms, access to food can be provided through wages (e.g. with a canteen or shop providing nutritious food at affordable prices), or through support for agriculture geared toward self-consumption.

FOOD UTILIZATION REFERS TO THE CONDITIONS THAT ALLOW FOR ADEQUATE FOOD CONSUMPTION IN TERMS OF QUALITY AND DIVERSITY.



2.3.5 CROSS-CUTTING ELEMENTS

Cross-cutting elements are aspects contained in the Right to Food Guidelines that are not directly addressed by the four pillars of food security, but which are nevertheless important to its implementation. This section includes aspects such as education, participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment, the rule of law, women's rights, gender equity and the monitoring of food security.

Principle 14:

Provide complaint and grievance mechanisms

Farm managers have an obligation to provide adequate complaint and grievance procedures, both internally for employees and externally for impacted communities. The grievance mechanism must be directly coupled to a conflict resolution process. The monitoring and documentation of the procedure for submitted grievances must be demonstrated during the FSS audit.

Principle 15:

Respect women's rights and ensure gender equity

Non-discrimination and equality are fundamental human rights that also apply to the right to food. Any discrimination in access to food, or to the means of obtaining food (labor, land, credits, education, training, payments, etc.) constitutes a violation of the right to food. Women must be equally addressed and appropriately included in stakeholder processes, to make sure their voices are heard and respected.

Principle 16:

Raise awareness for nutrition and support child education

To be free from hunger and malnutrition, individuals must know how to maintain a nutritious diet and have the skills and capacity to produce or obtain food. Thus, access to education, including vocational training, is essential for the enjoyment of the right to food.

Principle 17:

Assess and monitor local food security

Evaluating adherence to this principle requires:

- a right to food ex-ante impact assessment, and
- an ex-post monitoring procedure.

The ex-ante impact assessment is an indispensable tool for addressing food and nutrition security, especially the possible negative impact of farm operations, before investments take place. Ideally, it consists of a three-part review:

- possible changes in the supply of food to the domestic market;
- changes to resource availability and efficiency of use; and
- physical displacement, changes in access to resources, and changes to compensation and income generation (FAO, 2012).

The second step involves the ex-post monitoring of possible impacts to:

- communities inside the production site,
- resettled communities due to the agricultural operation, and
- on communities within the area of influence of the agricultural operation.



03 Scope



The FSS is intended for use within the framework of a sustainability standard that has a multi-stakeholder approach and provides a verification system for independent, third party audits. A farm or group of farms is considered to respect the right to food at the local level if all FSS indicators are fulfilled.

This section describes in detail the scope of the FSS.

3.1 FOCUS ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

The FSS is focused on food security issues related to agricultural production. The entities that can be audited and are responsible for fulfilling FSS criteria and indicators are:

■ **Farm:** A farm is an agricultural operation where crops are cultivated sustainably, or where agricultural crop residues from sustainable cultivation occur. A farm is either defined as a distinct legal entity or as an organization managing an agricultural operation that is responsible for compliance with FSS requirements. All farm areas (including agricultural land, pasture, forest, and other areas), including any owned, leased or rented land, are subject to certification. The FSS focuses on all farm activities, including those outside of the physical boundaries of the farm (e.g. water abstraction).

■ **Group of farms:** Some sustainability standard systems allow agricultural producers to be subject to certification or verification as a group, represented by a group manager, following predefined conditions. The farms eligible for group assessment are defined by the requirements of the sustainability standards system (see Box 2).

The scope of the FSS is the whole farm (see number 1 above) and cannot be limited to only part of the cultivated surface. It covers all farm entities within a group subject to certification (see number 2 above) and not only part of them. All crops produced by the farm and on the related surfaces are subject to full compliance with the FSS.

Box 2: Information on group audits with FSS

FSS audit of a group of farmers

Within the framework of group sustainability certification/verification, all members of the group must fulfil the FSS requirements. The audit is conducted on a sample basis following the requirements of the applicable sustainability standards system. For group audits of large and medium size farms, the FSS audit is conducted for each farm using the “FSS Audit Checklist”. For group audits of smallholders, the “FSS Audit Checklist, Smallholders” applies (see Sections 5.9 and 6.2 for details).

The head office of the group manager of a smallholder group is always audited within a group audit by using the “FSS Audit Checklist, Group Manager”.



3.2 TYPES OF FARMS

To better address the differences between farms and types of businesses, the FSS distinguishes between:

- Large and medium size farms
- Smallholders

All FSS criteria apply to large/medium size farms and smallholders. However, the scope of some indicators has been adapted to take into account the particularities of smallholders in terms of land availability, number of workers, capital goods, management and organizational structures, etc. The result is an adapted version of the checklist called “Audit Checklist, Smallholders”. For the group manager, the Audit Procedure Tool includes a separate “Audit Checklist, Group Manager” that has to be used for a smallholder group audit.

The “Audit Checklist, Smallholders” is designed for auditing groups of smallholders, as defined by the applicable sustainability standards system. Further details on audit implementation are provided in Section [6.2.2](#).

3.3 WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

The FSS requirements concerning workers are applicable to all persons working on the farm based on the definition of workers set forth by the FSS (see glossary). People working on smallholder farms are also included.

3.4 COMMUNITIES IN THE FARM’S AREA OF INFLUENCE

Some of the FSS requirements are extended to communities potentially affected by farm operations, i.e. communities located within the area of influence of farm activities, including resettled communities. They have to be identified by the farm management/group manager prior to the FSS audit.

The FSS audit aims to assess the impact of farm operations on factors relevant to food security in these communities, including any mitigation measures. To this end, it is necessary to undertake stakeholder interviews.

To identify the farm’s **area of influence**, the farm management should build on the findings of ESIA or similar assessments. If the sustainability standards system does not require an ESIA or similar assessment, the farm management can build on any ESIA or similar assessment required by authorities or a third party (e.g. a bank or financial institution). If no assessment is available at all, impact zoning conducted by a recognized expert and based on a sound methodology – see, for instance, IFC Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability (2012) – must be used. In such a case, the auditor has to assess the reliability of the expert (see Annex III). The farm’s area of influence must be presented using a map, including geographic coordinates.

04 Implementing the FSS



This section describes how the FSS is implemented within the framework of a sustainability standards system.

4.1 FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The FSS is not a standalone system. It is designed for implementation and verification within the framework of a sustainability standards system. Benchmark results endorsed by the FSS are required to carry out the audit. Additional verification is only required for the gaps between the sustainability standard and the full set of FSS criteria and indicators.

Sustainability standard systems can integrate the FSS as part of their standards or offer the FSS as an add-on. In either case, the representatives of the sustainability standards system must request that the FSS audit be performed by certification bodies based on the procedures set forth in this handbook. A separate document defines requirements related to integrating the FSS into a sustainability standards system or offering it as add-on.

4.2 ABOUT FSS COMPLIANCE STATUS

Certification bodies can grant the status of “FSS compliant” to farms or group of farms (see also Section 3.1) that meet all FSS requirements (as laid down in the FSS criteria and indicators, see Annex II). It is forbidden to selectively apply individual criteria and/or indicators or use verification methods not contained in this handbook or the FSS Audit Procedure Tool. All handbook rules and indicators contained in the FSS Audit Procedure Tool must be fulfilled, even if they differ from the normal requirements and verification methods foreseen by the sustainability standards system under which the FSS is being implemented.

The FSS requirements (criteria and indicators) are the same for all types of farms. However, the manner of demonstrating compliance differs according to the type of farm, i.e. large/medium size farms or smallholder farms:

Large/medium size farms

In the case of individual farms, compliance is granted if the farm meets the requirements of the FSS according to the verification guidance specified in the FSS Audit Checklist (see Section 6.2 “Audit Procedure Tool”). For groups of farms to be granted FSS compliance, all members of the group have to meet the FSS requirements according to the

verification guidance specified in the FSS Audit Checklist (see Section 6.2 “Audit Procedure Tool”).

Smallholders

Smallholders can be granted compliance only as members of a group achieving FSS compliance. The group can be a mixed group (smallholders and large/medium size farms) or a smallholder group. In either case, the FSS compliance status can only be granted if:

- The group manager meets all FSS requirements according to the verification guidance for smallholder group managers set forth in “Audit Checklist, GM”.
- All members of the group seeking FSS compliance meet the FSS requirements. For smallholders, compliance is established using the verification guidance specified in the “Audit Checklist, SHs”.

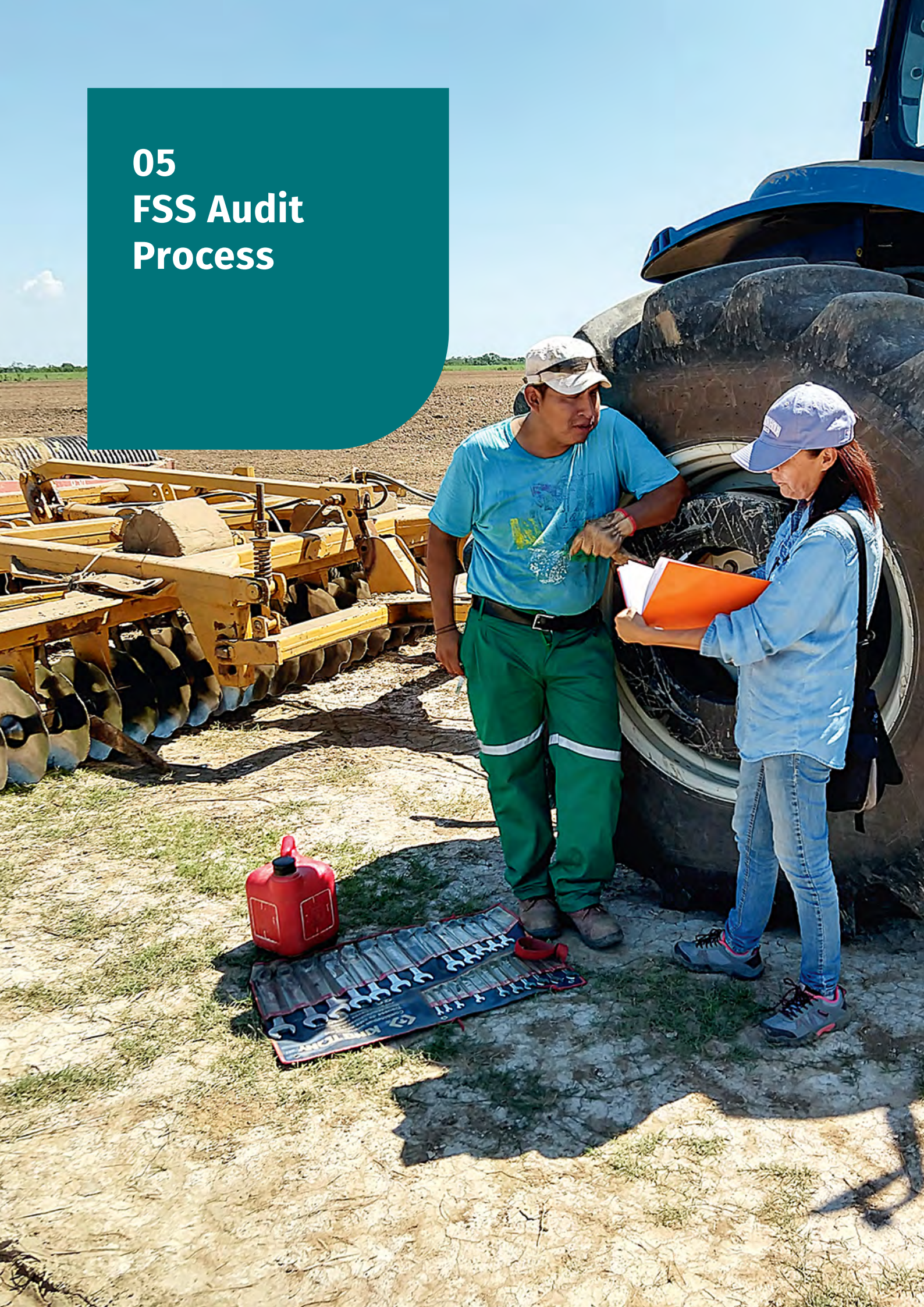
Compliance always has to be verified through an on-site FSS audit integrated into the audit of the sustainability standard. The sustainability standards system might issue a sustainability certificate/assurance statement that includes an FSS compliance declaration. Producers may provide this information to third parties by issuing a summary audit report.

Products originating from a production system holding the status of “FSS compliant” can be marketed as FSS compliant under the following chain of custody systems: mass balance (MB) and segregation (SEG).

4.3 TIMEPOINT OF COMPLIANCE VERIFICATION

The FSS requires verification of compliance to be carried out at a time in which most of farm operations are taking place (peak farm activity). This will ensure that most of the workers are present and that potential impacts to communities and mitigation actions can be visually verified. The first FSS audit and at least every second FSS audit must take place during the peak farm season. The auditor must take this into account when preparing the audit plan (see Section 5.4). This requirement applies equally to large/medium size farms as well as to smallholders.

05 FSS Audit Process



This section describes the relevant aspects to consider and procedures to follow in an FSS audit. The assessment of the production site must cover all principles, criteria and indicators included in the FSS.

Prior to carrying out an audit, the auditor should carefully read this handbook. The auditor must understand the design and purpose of the FSS, the different steps in the audit process, and the proper use of all audit tools.

The auditor should be aware that each production site and related food security situation is unique and that, consequently, the audit approach, including the interpretation of information and data, must consider the local context and food security at the regional level.

5.1 REGISTRATION OF THE AUDITEE

A farm management/group manager that would like to have a farm or group of farms audited based on the FSS needs place a request directly with an authorized certification body (CB) cooperating with a sustainability standards system that has incorporated or adopted the FSS. In some cases, sustainability standard systems may require that the request be submitted directly through their system. If the request is accepted, the farm management/group manager must undergo an audit that includes FSS requirements.

Prior to the audit, individual farms must provide a written and signed self-assessment of the farm, also known as a self-declaration. In the case of a group audit, each member of the group to be verified under the FSS must provide a self-declaration that is collected by the group manager and forwarded to the auditor. This is a prerequisite for an FSS audit.

The self-declaration must include, at a minimum, the farm's name and commercial name, physical address and country, name of the farm representative, size of the farm, units to be certified, type of produced crop, statement on

compliance with FSS criteria and permit for the external audit. The self-declaration must be submitted to the auditor prior to the audit by the farm management or group manager, respectively. A self-declaration template is provided by the sustainability standards system that incorporates the FSS (see an example of a template in Annex IV).

5.2 AUDITING PARTY REQUIREMENTS

The auditing party has to be an independent third-party certification body fulfilling the following requirements:

- 1)** recognized and cooperating with the sustainability standards system and
- 2)** accredited against ISO/IEC 17065, which establishes requirements for bodies operating a product standards system by a national accreditation body that is a member of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) or
- 3)** recognized by a competent public authority that is officially responsible for the recognition of CBs.

The auditor conducting the FSS audit shall fulfil the following requirements:

- 1)** Has been approved as an auditor by the sustainability standards system performing the FSS audit.
- 2)** Mandatory participation in FSS training before the first FSS audit is conducted. All auditors involved in an FSS audit have to take part in FSS training independent of their role during the audit.
- 3)** Technical knowledge and a good understanding of the activities of the entity undergoing the FSS audit and the social context in the area.
- 4)** Good proficiency in English, French or Spanish (depending on the FSS version being used) and working language

skills in the corresponding native/working language.

- 5) Personal and professional behaviour within the meaning of ISO 19011 (e.g. ethical, open-minded, diplomatic, observant, culturally sensitive, etc.). Auditors shall follow the six “principles of auditing” according to ISO 19011: integrity, fair presentation, due professional care, confidentiality, independence and evidence-based approach.
- 6) Proven experience and competency in conducting interviews with different stakeholder groups.
- 7) Auditors are not permitted to carry out any activities that may affect their independence or impartiality, and specifically must not carry out consultancy activities for the FSS entity certified. A minimum two-year period of non-involvement in consultancy activities for the auditee must be observed.
- 8) At least two years of working experience in the relevant occupational area; in all, at least three years of working experience.
- 9) At least 40 hours of audit training (e.g. according to ISO 19011).
- 10) Four complete sustainability audits for a total of at least 20 days of audit experience as an auditor-in-training under the direction and guidance of an auditor who is competent as an audit team leader. The audits need to have been completed within the last three consecutive years.
- 11) Three complete sustainability audits for a total of at least 15 days of audit experience, acting in the role of an audit team leader under the direction and guidance of an auditor who is competent as an audit team leader. The audits need to have been completed within the last three consecutive years.
- 12) Knowledge in the handling, evaluation and plausibility assessment of data sources.
- 14) Knowledge in social accountability verification as well as experience with relevant databases and chain of custody options.

Evidence of competence: completed studies at a university or technical college, or comparable qualification in the fields of sociology, agriculture, economics or environmental science.

5.3 AUDIT PREPARATION

The auditor is expected to carry out the following steps prior to the audit:

1) Integrate FSS requirements into the audit checklists of the sustainability standards system

The FSS must be used in combination with existing sustainability standard systems and therefore the audit should take place within the framework of sustainability standard system audits. In preparation for the audit, the requirements of the FSS that are not contained in the standard used by the system must be identified and integrated into the audit checklists of the sustainability standards system. Compliance with these requirements must be audited in addition to the regular standards of the system. Whenever the FSS is used, it must be assured that all FSS checklist criteria are covered during the audit.

2) Gather information about the farm/smallholder group operations and the auditee that is relevant for food security

This information includes:

- List of all contract farmers/smallholders that supplied material during the previous year.
- Description of the farm activities (e.g. type of crops, crop rotation, farm sizes, location, number of permanent and temporary workers).
- Description of the area of influence (map, including geo-coordinates), identifying affected communities.
- List of relevant stakeholders from the point of view of the farmer/producer, including contact details.
- Results of environmental, social or related impact assessments requested by the sustainability standards system.
- List of staff responsible within the farm management for ensuring compliance with FSS requirements.

3) Calculate the sample size of group members to be audited and select the respective farms (only applicable for the audit of a farm group)

The audit is conducted on a sample basis following the requirements of the applied sustainability standards system (see [Box 2](#) – Information on group audits with FSS).

4) Collect information about the national food security situation in the country

The FSS audit focuses on food security at a production site (farm) and its area of influence. However, before going into the field, it is important to become familiar with the national food and nutrition security situation and other factors relevant to the human right to adequate food, such as labor rights. For the purpose of collecting information and assessing the food security situation at the country level, the auditor shall use the National Food Security Assessment Tool (NaFSA), which is explained in detail in Section 6.1. The results of this assessment will help the auditor to identify topics that need special attention during the audit. To obtain a more detailed picture, the auditor might use additional sources of information. A list of suggested sources is provided in Annex IV.

5) Prepare for stakeholder and worker interviews

The verification of numerous FSS indicators requires consultation with stakeholders, farm workers and smallholder farmers. For instance, in the case of large/medium size farms:

- In indicator 11.2.3, interviews help to cross-check the information provided by the farm management on impacts to surrounding communities arising from pesticide use.
- Interviews in indicator 13.1.4 serve as an instrument for obtaining an overall picture of the food security situation and for judging whether the requirement has been met.

Before the audit, the auditor shall request from the farm/group management a list of potential key stakeholders to be interviewed. Prior to going into the field, the auditor must gain familiarity with the indicators that will be addressed during the interviews, and shall also make advance appointments with the key stakeholders, if possible. In this connection, the auditor must consider ahead of time any questions that might be necessary as part of the sustainability certification.

The time needed for the interviews should not be underestimated and must be taken into account in the overall audit plan. Guidance on selecting interviewees and how to conduct interviews is provided in Sections 5.6, 5.7 and 5.8.

5.4 AUDIT PLAN

The auditor is expected to plan and carry out the audit such that a meaningful level of assurance is obtained regarding compliance with FSS requirements (see Section 4.3). Fulfilling this requirement means that the audit must be sufficient in terms of its scope, design and implementation. The audit plan must clearly set forth the organization of the audit, a schedule of activities, the required participants and the locations to be visited. If an audit plan for the sustainability audit already exists, it needs to be modified to include any additional aspects required by the FSS. The proposed audit plan has to be submitted to the auditee and accepted prior to carrying out the audit.

The following aspects have to be considered when allocating time to the site assessment portion of the audit:

- The size of the farm sample (in the case of group audit) to be audited on-site
- The sample size of workers/farmers to be interviewed (see Sections 3.3, 3.4 and 5.6)
- The characteristics of the farm or group of farms (size and complexity, number of supplying farmers)
- The number of stakeholder interviews at the site/farm, in neighbouring communities and in the area of influence
- The geographic and political/governmental context, known community and workers' rights issues, risks, etc.



5.5 AUDIT EXECUTION

The on-site audit shall start with an opening meeting, during which the lead auditor shall: inform the auditee about the audit process; agree on logistics/scheduling for the assessment; confirm access to all relevant documents, field sites and personnel; confirm the confidentiality of the reported information; and agree on when the closing meeting will take place.

To carry out the audit, the auditor shall use the appropriate checklist contained in the FSS Audit Procedure Tool, i.e. for large/medium size farms, group managers or smallholders (see Sections 4.2 and 6.2 for more details).

The audit encompasses interviews, field observations and document verification. All documentation included in the evidence section of the checklist has to be made available to the auditor. The list below contains examples of requested document items:

- Organizational chart (responsibilities, functions, job descriptions)
- List of all farms with sizes in hectares, field use, yields, etc. (owned and leased land)
- Documents pertaining to land use and rights (land titles, contracts, land rights map)
- Self-declarations from all farms seeking to become FSS compliant
- Maps and geo coordinates for each farm and field, and for the overall operation

- Contracts/agreements and payment sheets for workers
- List of all suppliers and recipients having supplied and received materials during the previous year
- Documents on incoming and outgoing materials, including feedstocks, in addition to information on their region and country of origin, and, if applicable, measurement system conversions (e.g. pounds to kilograms)
- Written policy on Human Rights including Human Right to Food (in different languages for workers based on their language background)
- Impact assessment documents (if available)
- Minutes of stakeholder consultation processes (FPIC documents)
- Completed National Food Security Assessment (NaFSA)

The auditor has to conduct interviews at three different levels (see Figure 1 below): (i) interviews with workers/smallholders of the agricultural operation; (ii) interviews with representatives of the communities in the area of influence and any resettled community; and (iii) interviews with external stakeholders.

The following Sections 5.6, 5.7 and 5.8 provide details on the selection of interviewees, interview tools and interview procedures.

Figure 1: Information Providers by Level, Type and Information Requested

Level	Example information providers	■ Informs the auditor about ...
District Level	Health officer, official in charge of food security	Food security situation in the area of influence ■ Food availability, prices ■ Level of food insecurity, reasons for change ■ Relevant water & health issues
Community Level	Village head, worker, committee, farmer, leader, teacher, nurse	Food security situation in the villages within the area of influence ■ Food availability, prices, level of food insecurity ■ Income opportunities and adequacy ■ Relevant water & health issues
Individual Level	Worker, smallholder (& spouses)	Food security situation of the individual interviewee ■ Availability of food to buy and prices ■ Periods of food insecurity ■ Drinking water availability

5.6 INTERVIEWS WITHIN THE OPERATION – LARGE AND MEDIUM-SIZE FARMS

To assess conformity with FSS requirements, the auditor must interview the farm management and workers. The verification guidance in the Audit Checklist of the FSS Audit Procedure Tool (see Section 6.2.2) gives general guidance. See Annex VI for all indicators that require interviews with workers and external stakeholders.

The FSS puts special focus on interviews with workers. The term “worker” includes all people working in agricultural activities as well as ancillary staff such as cooks, security guards or drivers. It does not include people engaged in managerial or administrative roles. These interviews enable verification of conformity with several indicators including indicator 13.1.4, on the food security situation among workers and 12.2 on drinking water.

While conducting worker interviews, it is important to cross-check available documents to examine whether declarations are consistent with documentation, e.g. if documents assert that safety equipment was handed out.

5.6.1 Selecting participants for worker interviews

The auditor shall select a representative sample of workers in terms of number and category. The table below states the minimum number of worker interviews for an FSS audit based on SMETA (Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit)³.

The total number of people working in the farm operation (excluding management staff) determines the number of worker interviews to be conducted. For operations with less than 10 workers, the entire workforce shall be interviewed. The number of interviews shall increase in relation to the size of the operation’s workforce. The auditor is allowed to conduct group interviews with up to five participants on non-personal questions related to the checklist while QAT interviews are highly personal and therefore always conducted individually. The workers participating in group interviews can be additional ones or the same who were interviewed with QAT.

Worker categorization includes type of employment (permanent/temporary/ casual), type of work performed (e.g. hazardous work), gender, age, ethnic background. Each category must be represented proportionally to the total number of workers in each category.

Example 1: *If there is only one female worker at the farm, she must always be included in the interviews.*

Example 2: *If 50% of workers are temporary, the sample shall contain 50% temporary workers. If temporary workers are not present at the day of the audit, justification is to be provided, and their presence is to be ensured in the subsequent audit.*

Table 2: Calculation of the Number of Interviews with Workers (Based on SMETA)

Number of workers (excluding-managment)	Number of individual interviews	Approximate total time spent on interviews
1–100	10 or all workers if <10	5 hours
101–500	26	13 hours
501–1000	42	21 hours
1001–2000	52	26 hours
2000+	62	31 hours

³

<https://cdn.sedexglobal.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Publicly-available-SMETA-Best-Practice-Guidance-4-Pillar-5.0.pdf> (SEDEX, 2014).

Example 3: *On a farm with 240 workers (including 20 women), there are 200 field workers, 35 truck drivers and 2 cleaning staff. Hence, the interview sample of 26 workers may consist of 21 field workers including 2 women, 4 truck drivers and 1 cleaning staff.*

On average, an interview using checklist and QAT lasts around 30 minutes per worker and should be adjusted depending on interview process and results. If the interview involves translation, it will last longer.

In case of a group audit with several large farms, the farm sample size is defined by the regulation of the main standard (e.g. square root of all group members). For each of the farms to be audited as part of the sample, the number of worker interviews is calculated per individual farm using the SMETA table. Workers who are employed on a temporary basis by several farms, count for each farm separately – duplications are not deducted.

Example: *A group of 9 large farms is audited under one certificate. The farm sample defined by the main standard is the square root, hence 3 farms. For each of the 3 farms, the number of worker interviews per farm is calculated individually using the SMETA table. Sample farm 1 has 40 workers, hence 10 workers are interviewed. Farm 3 has 105 workers; hence 26 workers are interviewed and on farm 3 with a total of 56 workers, the number of worker interviews is again 10.*

5.6.2 Interview tools

When using FSS-QAT on the personal food security situation, group interviews are not allowed (see Section 6.3 and indicator 13.1.4).

Individual interviews with piece rate workers

If the operation employs piece rate workers, they must also be included in the interview sample. When piece rate workers are interviewed, the auditee must ensure that each worker is paid for the interview time to compensate for the loss of working time. The auditor shall provide her/his contact details to the interviewed workers, so the worker can contact her/him in case of grievances.

The result of the FSS-QAT is used to verify checklist indicator 13.1.4 on access to healthy and nutritious food and 12.2 on drinking water (see Section 6.3). For all other indicators, the auditor is expected to formulate questions according to the requirements in the respective indicator and keep written protocol of the interviews. Records are submitted to the certification body as part of the audit report but shall not be shared with the auditee.

5.6.3 Interview procedure

The auditor shall aim to maintain the anonymity of the interviewed workers and preserve the privacy of the interview. During the open meeting, the auditor should notify attendees that worker interviews will be anonymous and private. During worker interviews, the auditor shall prevent any disruptions. Supervisors shall not be present near the interview location. If anonymity cannot be guaranteed or interviews are disrupted, the auditor must pause. Workers' names shall not be recorded or passed to the management. The FSS-QAT questionnaire shall only be used in the context of individual interviews and results shall not be shared with the management.

5.7 INTERVIEWS WITHIN THE OPERATION – SMALLHOLDER GROUPS

To assess the conformity of smallholder groups, the auditor must interview the group manager, smallholders and their workers. The verification guidance included in the FSS Audit Procedure Tool (see Section 6.2.2) – specifically, the Audit Checklists for Group Managers and Smallholders gives general guidance.

Box 3: Stakeholder interviews with piece rate workers

5.7.1 Selection of smallholders and their workers

The auditor shall audit and interview smallholders based on the regulation determined by the sustainability system but at least the square root of all group members. Each smallholder shall be individually interviewed. If family members are involved in farm work, they can be interviewed and count as “smallholder” – one QAT for smallholders per farm is sufficient. The auditor is, however, free to increase the overall number of interviews as deemed necessary.

The auditor is responsible for obtaining a representative interview sample of all hired workers. Table 2 defines the minimum number of worker interviews based on the total number of hired workers within the group of farms. Admin staff at group management office is not included.

Example: A group of 250 smallholders counts 30 workers during harvest season, 28 are temporary workers, 2 workers are employed at group level for spraying. The farm sample defined by the main standard for a group audit is the square root of all farms. Hence, 16 smallholders will be audited and interviewed for FSS. In addition, 10 workers are interviewed, incl. 9 temporary pickers and 1 sprayer.

If not enough workers are present at the day of the audit, justification shall be provided. In addition, worker presence shall be ensured in the next audit.

5.7.2 Interview tools

The FSS-QAT questionnaire shall be used to assess indicator 13.1.4 on access to food (see Section 6.3) and 12.2 on drinking water. The smallholder and their family members (spouse, children) shall be interviewed using the QAT for smallholders while workers are interviewed with the QAT for workers.

For the other indicators, the auditor is expected to formulate questions according to the requirements set forth by each indicator.

5.7.3 Interview procedure

The auditor shall inform smallholders and workers that everything they say during interview will be kept anonymous and confidential. The auditor shall ensure that during the interviews with smallholders, no group manager or

management staff is present, and that no smallholders attend the worker interviews. During the interview, the auditor must prevent any disruptions. If the anonymity and privacy of the interviews cannot be guaranteed or if the interviews are disrupted, the auditor must stop the audit process. All interviews using the FSS-QAT must be individual interviews.

5.8 INTERVIEWS WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

External stakeholders within the farm’s area of influence also need to be interviewed to verify compliance with a number of the FSS indicators. These interviews help the auditor to better understand the situation within the area of influence. They also allow the auditor to cross-check information and documentation obtained from workers, contract farmers/smallholders and farm/group management staff. This section provides guidance on interview content, stakeholder selection and the interview process.

Interviews with stakeholders shall focus on:

- Food security topics identified as highly relevant (i.e. medium and high risk categories according to the results of the NaFSA Tool; see Section 6.1).
- The local food security situation. To this end, the FSS-QAT questionnaire for external stakeholders shall be used (see Section 6.3).
- Any other issues that require cross-checking with stakeholders (see Annex VI for an overview).

5.8.1 Selection of interviewees

The auditor shall select stakeholders at the community and district levels who have a good understanding of the food security situation of workers and/or contract farmers/smallholders as well as how the farm operation impacts communities in its area of influence.

The auditor has to interview at least six relevant external stakeholders from the district or community levels. Women shall be represented among the selected stakeholders whenever possible.

From the six relevant stakeholders, the following **five are a must:**

- 1) At the community level:** A school teacher/director or

pre-school staff. Usually such individuals have a good understanding of what is happening in the community and whether pupils arrive at school hungry.

- 2) **At the community level:** Village head or any leader of community organizations with a good understanding of the local food security situation and social and environmental issues affecting the community.
- 3) **At the community level/district level:** A doctor or nurse at the local/district health station/clinic who is well informed about hunger, undernourishment, malnutrition, diarrhea and related illnesses connected to food insecurity, including any changes over time.
- 4) **At the district level:** The official responsible for food security and nutrition at the district level (from the local government; may be from the agricultural or health department).
- 5) **At the district level:** Staff from an environmental or social NGO that works on the highest risk topic (category) derived from the national food security assessment (see Section 6.1), e.g. on water, labor rights, land rights, human rights or environmental protection.

The auditor shall choose the sixth interviewee based on outstanding uncertainties, information missing to complete the FSS audit, or topics identified as relevant at national level (see NaFSA in Section 6.1). In this connection, the auditor can choose a different interviewee from any of the same stakeholder groups listed above or from any of the additional groups suggested below:

At the district level:

- Labor unions and worker representatives
- Local/regional environmental agency
- Agencies or institutions in charge of implementing food security programs

Box 4: Additional requirement for stakeholder interviews in the case of resettled communities

If communities have been resettled due to the agricultural operation, two community representatives from each resettled community must be interviewed, in addition to the six stakeholders. These individuals must be knowledgeable about the food security situation of the community (e.g. the village head and a female representative of a community organization).

Box 5: How to choose stakeholders to interview at the community level

If there are several villages in the area of influence, the stakeholders at the community level shall come from at least two villages. Different villages should be chosen every year. If two or more districts are part of the area of influence, the government officials who are responsible for food security should be chosen from at least two districts. Also, the districts should be changed with

At the community level:

- A representative of local community-based organizations, such as a farmers' group, women's group, health group, water council or any other existing community group.
- If none of the aforementioned groups exist, a religious leader may also be sought.

The auditor shall use the list provided by the farmer/group manager (see Section 5.3) as a basis for selecting stakeholders. The auditor is expected to check whether key stakeholders are missed, and, if so, to add them to the list. The interviews should be scheduled well in advance of the site visit whenever possible.

5.8.2 Interview tools

The FSS-QAT questionnaire shall be used to assess indicator 17.1.1 (see Section 6.3). For the rest of the indicators, no questionnaires or guiding questions are provided. It is expected that the auditor formulate the questions according to the requirements set forth by each respective indicator.

5.8.3 Interview procedure

The interviews may be conducted in groups or individually, depending what makes sense in each respective setting and what is feasible. In countries that lack a culture encouraging open discussion, individual interviews may be preferable. The interviews shall be carried out in person. Only in exceptional cases may interviews be conducted via phone or using other communication technologies.

When the FSS audit is conducted for the first time for a given farm/group of farms, the stakeholder interviews must be conducted prior to the site audit, as they will provide important background information for later interviews with the farm management/group manager, contract farmers/smallholders, workers and communities. During subsequent audits, the auditor shall also strive to conduct stakeholder interviews prior to the site visit. If this requirement cannot be upheld for some reason, then interviews with stakeholders shall take place before the first third of the audit has been completed.

While the farm management/group manager can facilitate contact with external stakeholders as interviewees, they shall not be present during interviews. This requirement shall be explained by the auditor during the opening meeting.

5.9 AUDIT RESULTS

At the end of the audit, the Audit Checklist must be fully completed (see also Section 6.2). In case of non-conformities, the auditor shall communicate corrective measures and deadliness for their implementation to the auditee and document them in the Audit Procedure Tool under “6_Non-Conformities and Corrective Measures”. For each indicator with a non-conformity, the auditor shall list specific corrective measures and an implementation deadline. Typically, corrective measures will involve a need for supplemental or corrected documents, records, reports, protocols or other information necessary for FSS compliance. A corrective measure may also involve more significant worker-notification activities or investments, e.g. to improve or build new facilities. For example, if the audited site is non-conform with indicator 13.1.2 (“When workers have no possibilities to bring their own food or buy it nearby, workers shall be provided options to buy diversified and nutritious food at fair prices”), the corrective measure may require the establishment of an on-site dining area and food store within 40 days.

The table of “Non-Conformities and Corrective Measures” (see [table 10](#)) distinguishes between mandatory and voluntary corrective measures, the latter of which don’t have to be implemented; therefore, lacking an implementation deadline. In the case of voluntary corrective measures, the auditee is free to select the manner and scope of corrective action. While the auditor is responsible for proposing a voluntary corrective measure and its implementation, the auditee may choose an alternate method of fulfillment,

or the implementation of a different corrective measure.

Corrective measures can take place during the audit or afterwards. However, before the status of “FSS compliant” can be granted, all non-conformities must be corrected within the timeframe foreseen by the main sustainability standard (for example, within 40 days of the audit). Otherwise, the designation “FSS compliant” is not granted and the auditee is not allowed to describe itself as such.

The fulfillment of mandatory corrective measures must be verified and confirmed by the auditor prior to communicating FSS compliance to the sustainability standards system being implemented. The auditor shall decide whether the fulfillment of the corrective measures is to be checked via desk audit or on-site audit. The completed FSS Audit Procedure Tool has to be made available by the auditor to the certification body (CB) and the farm management of the audited agricultural operation. After internal review, it is sent by the CB to the sustainability standards system.

The auditor shall prepare an FSS audit report, including a public summary report based on the completed FSS Audit Procedure Tool (see [Section 7](#)). A sustainability certificate/assurance statement that additionally indicates FSS compliance can be issued by the relevant certification body only in the event of full compliance or after all corrective measures have been implemented. Evidence of FSS compliance is not demonstrated by a stand-alone FSS certificate/assurance statement, but rather as part of the certificate/assurance statement issued by the associated sustainability standards system.

Reporting the audit results of smallholder group audits

To award FSS compliant status to a smallholder group, FSS compliance must be fulfilled by the group manager and all smallholders in the sample audit. For example, if 2 out of 10 smallholders in the sample are non-compliant, non-conformities shall be handled following the same procedure used for large and medium size farms (see description above). If non-compliance cannot be resolved, one option would be to exclude the two deficient smallholders, double the audit sample, and perform the audit again. However, the requirements set forth by the sustainability standards system must be observed in this regard. The scope for compliance also includes requirements regarding workers and nearby communities (see also [Section 4.2](#)).

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06 FSS Audit Tools



This section explains in detail the purpose and structure of the audit tools. It also describes how to use them in the audit process.

6.1 NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY ASSESSMENT TOOL (NaFSA)

Before starting the field audit, it is important to understand the food and nutrition security situation and the implementation of the Right to Food in the audited country. This knowledge can be obtained by using the National Food Security Assessment (NaFSA) Tool.⁴ The collection of pre-audit information will provide important background insights for the audit about conditions, circumstances and risks related to food security and the Right to Food at the national level. Ideally, the food security assessment should be conducted at the district/province level where the audited farm is situated. However, the NaFSA tool only addresses the national level, as local data are often not available, accessible or up to date. This makes the application of a standardized tool difficult. However, it must be noted that the food security situation in the audited region might be better or worse than the assessed situation at the national level. To clarify the local food security situation, it is necessary to use the FSS-QAT questionnaire (see Section 6.3).

6.1.1 Objective

The purpose of the National Food Security Assessment is to identify potentially critical issues regarding food security and the realization of the Right to Food at the national level that are relevant for the FSS audit.

The National Food Security Assessment helps the auditor to:

- 1) get informed about the national food security situation;
- 2) become aware of potential problem areas threatening food security and the realization of the Right to Food; and
- 3) identify topics that may affect compliance with some FSS criteria.

The results of the NaFSA support the auditor in choosing relevant external stakeholders for administering the FSS-QAT questionnaire (see also Section 5.8). The NaFSA also identifies topics for discussion with internal and external stakeholders during the audit. The tool was designed to be quick and easy to use, using publicly available information from UN agency websites and other relevant institutions.

6.1.2 Structure

The NaFSA tool consists of 8 categories relevant for food security and the Right to Food, including a total of 27 indicators (see table 3). These categories are:

- 1) **Level of Food Insecurity:** This category indicates whether and how many people within the country are affected by undernutrition and hunger. It also includes aspects of acute food insecurity and food crisis warnings.
- 2) **Access to Water:** This category assesses access to drinking water and water scarcity.
- 3) **Level of Human Development:** This category addresses different aspects of human development, such as poverty levels, educational attainment, gender disparities and access to sanitation.
- 4) **Occurrence of Disasters:** This category evaluates the risk of natural or man-made disasters such as earthquakes, floods or violent conflicts, which can cause or aggravate food insecurity. It also considers the potential risks to food security posed by Climate Change (e.g. extreme weather events, prolonged drought or excessive rainfall).
- 5) **National Development Strategies:** This category assesses whether the government has strategies for nutrition and food security as well as economic development. These strategies are also referred to in the FSS indicators.

⁴ See NaFSA Tool (FSS, 2020b)

6) Functioning Governments: This category assesses whether the national government and relevant state authorities are functioning and to what extent the rule of law is respected.

7) Human Rights: This category assesses the national commitment to international conventions, guidelines and strategies regarding human rights, and especially the Right to Food.

8) Labor Rights: This category assesses whether there is a national commitment to the international labor rights conventions of the ILO (International Labour Organisation).

Table 3: Categories and Indicators of the NaFSA Tool

1. Level of Food Insecurity	1.1 Activity of the World Food Program 1.2 Presence of an Early Warning for Food Crisis 1.3 Presence of Extreme Food Anomalies 1.4 Level of Child Mortality 1.5 Presence of Undernourishment 1.6 Prevalence of Moderate or Severe Food Insecurity 1.7 Global Hunger Index
2. Access to Water	2.1 Water Scarcity 2.2 Number of People Using Safety Managed Drinking Water Services
3. Level of Human Development	3.1 Level of Human Development 3.2 Level of Gender Equity in Human Development 3.3 Number of People Using Safely Managed Sanitation Services 3.4 Percentage of Rural People Living Below the National Poverty Line
4. Occurrence of Disasters	4.1 Climate Risk 4.2 Physical Exposure of the Country to Natural Hazards 4.3 Occurrence of Violent Conflicts in the Country
5. National Development Strategies	5.1 Availability of a Development Policy and/or National Food Security Strategy 5.2 Availability of National Dietary Guidelines 5.3 Ratification of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources
6. Functioning Governments	6.1 Status of Democracy 6.2 Status of State Fragility
7. Human Rights	7.1 Ratification of Human Rights Treaties 7.2 Status of Human Rights Institutions 7.3 Recognition of the Right to Food in the National Legal Framework 7.4 Ratification of the International Convent on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
8. Labour Rights	8.1 Ratification of Fundamental, International Labour Conventions (ILO) 8.2 Ratification of International Labour Conventions regarding Governance (ILO)

6.1.3 Using the NaFSA tool

The auditor shall conduct the National Food Security Assessment prior to the audit. To complete the NaFSA, the auditor must enter country-specific data for the above categories in the provided Excel spreadsheet. Tracking down necessary data is simple, as each indicator includes links to websites where the required information can be found. Accordingly, **when using the tool, internet access is required**. Completing the NaFSA takes about one hour. The Excel spreadsheet explains where to obtain the required data and how to enter them into the spreadsheet. It also explains the obtained results (see Annex VII for a detailed description).

A risk level is automatically determined for each indicator based on the entered data. An overall risk level is then calculated for the respective category.

There are three risk levels for food security and the Right to Food:

- The result “*MODERATE RISK*” means no acute risk, but nevertheless a **likelihood** of threats to food security and the Right to Food.
- The result “*INCREASED RISK*” means that there is an **enhanced likelihood** of threats to food security and the Right to Food.
- The result “*HIGH RISK*” means that at national level there is a **substantial threat** to national food security and the Right to Food.

The *risk per indicator* informs the auditor about specific issues that may be also relevant at the local level where the audit takes place. The *risk per category* indicates whether broader topics, such as labor rights, are cause for concern at the national level. At the audit site, additional attention should be devoted to categories with increased and high risk levels, as there is an increased risk of these issues affecting compliance with some FSS criteria. The food security situation may also be poor near and around the audited production site, despite the finding of a good situation at the national level. Local conditions (for example, undernourishment, hunger, poverty, water availability, or natural disasters) can differ substantially from the national average. To help the auditor cross-check the situation at the production site and area of influence, the NaFSA tool provides a list of potential questions to be discussed at the local level with different stakeholders.

A summary of the risk levels of all categories is given in the sheet “*NaFSA_OverviewCategoryResults*”, which provides a quick overview of potential risks to the Right to Food. The completed NaFSA tool (i.e. completed Excel spreadsheets) forms part of the audit report.

6.2 AUDIT PROCEDURE TOOL

The Audit Procedure Tool⁵ is an instrument that guides the auditor through the full FSS audit process. One Audit Procedure Tool has to be completed for each audited farm. In the case of group audits of large and medium size farms, one tool must be completed per each farm in the sample. For group audits of smallholders, one tool is completed for the entire group.

6.2.1 Structure

The FSS Audit Procedure Tool takes the form of an Excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet is organized into nine sections. Each section corresponds to a different worksheet (WS):

- **WS 1_Content.** The content template is the first worksheet in the Excel file. It provides an overview of the sections in the Audit Procedure Tool and general information and guidance for the Auditor on its correct use. This part helps the auditor to avoid misunderstandings or misapplication of the Audit Procedure Tool (see [table 4](#)). Therefore, it must be read carefully.
- **WS 2_Basic Data.** The second worksheet is used to record all basic information related to the auditee (farm/smallholder, group manager), auditor, CB and the on-site audit. This information must be filled out by the auditor in the preparation phase or, if necessary, during the audit (see [table 5](#)). WS2 is subdivided into two sheets. Sheet 2.1 is to be completed by the auditor for every single large or medium size farm (regardless of whether it is audited individually or as part of a group), and for the group manager in the case of smallholder groups. Sheet 2.2 is to be used only for smallholder group audits to record the data of each of the smallholder farms in the sample. The auditor can add as many columns to the right as required.

5 See FSS Audit Procedure Tool (FSS, 2020c).

■ **WS 3_Audit Checklist.** This worksheet contains the Audit Checklist that must be used during the audit for large and medium size farms. It includes all FSS pillars, principles, criteria and indicators. In addition, it provides verification guidance and indications on evidence/documents that must be available to verify conformity. By completely filling out this worksheet the auditor can determine FSS compliance of the auditee (see [table 6](#)).

■ **WS 4_Audit Checklist GM.** This worksheet contains the Audit Checklist that must be used during the audit for the group manager of a smallholder group. It is organized like the checklist for large and medium size farms. The pillars, principles, criteria and indicators are the same. However, the verification guidance and the evidences/documents used to verify conformity are different from the ones contained in the checklist for large and medium size farms. They are focused on the management and guiding tasks of the group manager. By completely filling out this worksheet, the auditor determines FSS compliance for the manager of a group of smallholders (see [table 7](#)).

■ **WS 5_Audit Checklist SHs.** This worksheet contains the Audit Checklist that must be used during the audit for smallholders. It is organized like the checklist for large and medium size farms, and includes the FSS pillars, principles, criteria and indicators. While all criteria are relevant, a few indicators do not apply to smallholders. For the rest of the indicators, the manner of verifying compliance has been adapted to the particularities of smallholders. By completing this worksheet, the auditor can determine FSS compliance by the group of smallholders (see [table 8](#)).

■ **WS 6_SummFSS-QAT.** This worksheet summarizes the results of the interviews with workers and/or smallholders and the findings of the interviews with external stakeholders conducted during the on-site audit. Based on the interpretation of the conducted interviews with workers and/or smallholders (according to Section 6.3.4 of the handbook) the auditor must enter in Part A of the WS the total number of workers/smallholders for each of the three food security classifications (food secure, mild food insecurity, severe food insecurity) in the first table. Based on the findings of the interviews with external stakeholders, the auditor must record the perceived impact of the operation and farm management on food security in the area of influence; this information is recorded in Part B of the WS (see [table 9](#)).

■ **WS 7_Non-Conformities and Corrective Measures.**

This worksheet contains a table to report non-conformities with the FSS that were identified during the audit, including mandatory corrective measures. The corrective measures determined by the auditor indicate what to do and what to improve by a set deadline to achieve conformity with the FSS indicators, e.g. correction of documents or records, investment in equipment, modified working regulations, etc. An additional section of this worksheet allows the reporting of voluntary improvement measures and best practices. All non-conformities need to be corrected in order to comply with the FSS (see [table 10](#)), as described in Section 5.9 on Audit Results.

■ **WS 8_Document Checklist.** This worksheet contains the “Document Checklist for Easy Audit Preparation” for large and medium size farms, listing all necessary basic documents required by the FSS in order to help the farm prepare for the audit (see [table 11](#)).

■ **WS 9_Document Checklist GM.** The last worksheet contains the “Document Checklist for Easy Audit Preparation, Group Manager”. It is similar to the checklist for large and medium size farms, but it is particularly focused on documents that the manager of a smallholder group needs to prepare for the FSS audit (see [table 12](#)).



Table 4: Audit Content

 FSS FOOD SECURITY STANDARD FSS – Audit Procedure Tool – An initiative of   		
Contents		
V1.0		
Worksheet No.	Template	Description
1	Contents	Overview of audit procedure documents & indicators
2.1	Basic Data	Basic data of the FSS User (Large/medium size farm that is subject to the audit or group manager)
2.2	Basic Data, Smallholders (SHs)	Basic data of the FSS User (Smallholder farm that is subject to the group audit)
3	Audit Checklist	Verification of Indicators - Stability Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Access Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Availability Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Utilization Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Cross-cutting Pillar
4	Audit Checklist, Group Manager (GM)	Verification of Indicators - Stability Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Access Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Availability Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Utilization Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Cross-cutting Pillar
5	Audit Checklist, Smallholders (SHs)	Verification of Indicators - Stability Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Access Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Availability Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Utilization Pillar
		Verification of Indicators - Cross-cutting Pillar
6	SummFSS-QAT	Summary of results interview with workers and/or smallholders
7	Non-Conformities and Corrective Measures (CMs)	Table for listing explanations regarding identified non-conformities and corresponding corrective measures (relevant for all audit indicators marked with "no" in the column "conformity" in each audit checklist)
8	Document Checklist	List of required documents for easy audit preparation - Large/medium size farm
9	Document Checklist, Group Manager (GM) (SHs)	List of required documents for easy audit preparation - Group manager of SHs

Please read the auditor handbook carefully before using this audit procedure tool!

- These templates are to be used for certification/verification audits of large/medium size farms and smallholders (for individual certification/ verification in the framework of a group with sample audits).
- The user may not alter these templates in any way.
- This audit procedure tool contains nine worksheets.
- Worksheets 2.1 and 2.2 on “Basic data” have to be filled-in for each farm that is audited under FSS, either as an individual farm or as the member of a group. WS 2.1 is applicable to all large/medium size farms and group managers; WS 2.2 is applicable only for smallholder members of a group.
- The criteria and indicators of the five Food Security pillars are all mandatory. Each indicator represents a mandatory requirement.
- For all indicators, it is mandatory to mark the column “Conformity” with either “yes” (conformity) or “no” (non-conformity).
- For every “no” (non-conformity) the auditor must explain the decision in the column “Findings”. The reason for conformity or non-conformity has to be specified and explained under the column “Findings”. This column can also be used to report additional aspects of the analyzed indicator in relation to the audited site/system user.
- If an indicator is not applicable to a specific audit, the cell “N/A” under the “Conformity” column must be marked. The auditor must then justify the decision in the column “Findings” and move on to the next relevant requirement.
- Every “no” (non-conformity) requires the definition of corrective measures in worksheet 7. The number of non-compliant indicators must be stated. The implementation of corrective measures must be verified and confirmed by the auditor.
- If the audit is a group audit, worksheet 7 has to be filled-in for the group manager and for the smallholders separately. Non-Conformities and Corrective Measures can be summarized for the sampled smallholder group in one worksheet.
- For the audit of a large/medium size farm, worksheet “3_Audit Checklist” has to be used. For the audit of a smallholder group, the auditor must use the worksheet “4_Audit Checklist GM” for the group manager and worksheet “5_Audit Checklist SHs” for the smallholder group. It is not necessary to provide the audit checklist for each smallholder in the sample. However, the auditor is expected to describe in the column “Findings” her/his judgement, providing details regarding individual farms in the group, if needed.
- Worksheet “6_SummFSS-QAT” must be filled-in with information and results based on the interviews conducted with the FSS-QAT during the audit.
- Worksheets 6 and 7 have to be printed and signed by the respective persons.

Table 5: Audit Basic Data

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FSS
– Audit Procedure Tool –



Basic Data – Large/Medium Size Farm or Group Manager (GM)

V1.0

1.0. Certification Body					
1.1.	Name of certification body				
2.0. FSS User (Large/medium size farm that is subject to the audit or group manager)					
2.1.	Name of farmer/group manager				
2.2.	Address of the farm management/group management				
2.3.	Street				
2.4.	Street no.				
2.5.	Postal code				
2.6.	Place				
2.7.	Country				
2.8.	Geo-coordinates of farm management/group manager office: Latitude in decimal degrees (Example: 50.941218)				
2.9.	Geo-coordinates of farm management/group manager office: Longitude in decimal degrees (Example: 6.958337)				
2.10.	Sustainability standards system in which the FSS is integrated (e.g. UTZ, ISCC, RSPO, etc.)				
2.11.	Are other sustainability standards system(s) used?	☐ yes ☐ no			
2.12.	(This includes systems currently in use or used within 12 months of audit.)				
2.13.	If yes, please specify the name(s) of the other system(s)				
2.14.	What is the version of the sustainability standards system being used for the current audit?				
2.15.	Name of employee responsible for implementing sustainability standards system				
2.16.	Title				
2.17.	Last name				
2.18.	First name				
2.19.	Phone				
2.20.	E-mail				
2.21.	Scope to be audited	☐ Large/medium size farm ☐ Group Manager (GM)			
2.22.	Is the farm being certified individually or audited as a member of a group of farms?	☐ Individually certified ☐ Audited as member of a farm group			
2.23.	Sustainability System Registration Number / Membership Number (of the system user registered to be certified)				
3.0. Audit Data					
3.1.	Name of auditor(s)				
3.2.	Place of the audit				
3.3.	Date of the first sustainability audit including FSS (Please use the format: dd.mm.yyyy)				
3.4.	Date of re-certification/review audit including FSS (Please use the format: dd.mm.yyyy)				
3.5.	Duration of the audit (in hours, in digits)				
3.6.	Name(s) of farm representative(s) present during the audit				
3.7.	Is the farm using relevant service providers or sub-contractors?	☐ yes ☐ no			
3.8.	Name(s) of relevant service providers/sub-contractors (e.g. logistic providers, plant protection service providers, etc.)				
3.9.	Sustainable output material(s)				
3.10.	Are crop residues handled, processed, sold or claimed under the certification system?	☐ yes ☐ no			
4.0. Specific Information					
4.1.	Do smallholders exist under farm management/group management?	☐ yes ☐ no			
4.2.	How many smallholders are under contract?				
4.3.	Size of smallholder farm on average (in ha)				
4.4.	Did land use change take place after January 2008?	☒ yes ☐ no			
4.5.	Total size of farm (in ha)				
4.6.	Crop details (for crops harvested during the 12-month period prior to the audit)				4.7. Required for crops to be delivered as sustainable:
4.8.		4.9.	4.10.	4.11.	4.12.
		Field size per crop (in ha)	Total amount per crop (in mt)	Month and year of sowing/ planting	Month and year of harvesting
		List all cultivated crops, not only the crops to be delivered as sustainable			

Table 6: Audit Checklist



FSS
– Audit Procedure Tool –

An initiative of



EXCERPT

Audit Checklist

V 1.0

COMPLIANCE INFORMATION			
Status of Compliance:		No, non-compliance with FSS!	
Conformity:		0	
Non-Conformity:		0	
Not Applicable:		0	
No.	Criteria	Indicator	Verification guidance
Stability Pillar			
Principle 1: Apply good governance and respect the rule of law			
1.1	All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall comply with applicable national, regional and local laws and regulations and ratified international treaties.		Verify the existence of an internal system and/or process that guarantees compliance with applicable local, regional and national laws and regulations and ratified international treaties. Ensure that processes for legal compliance also actively involve contract farmers/smallholders, service providers and contractors. Laws and ratified international treaties include but are not limited to: (1) The rights of local communities and indigenous groups (2) Land rights/land tenure (3) Health and safety and the rights of workers (4) Rights of all workers (permanent, temporary, casual, self-employed) (e.g. regarding overtime work, paid holiday/leave, sick and parental leave) (5) Tax payment obligations (6) Free-trade agreements (7) Environmental and social impact assessments (8) Soil conservation and management, soil fertility (e.g. application of fertilizers, manure and plant protection products; contamination of soil) (9) Water conservation and management (e.g. abstraction, use and discharge of irrigation water; protection of water bodies) (10) National and international protected areas The farm management should be familiar with the relevant legislation and remain informed on changes in legislation. Changes to the law and a brief assessment of their impacts on workers, contract farmers/smallholders, service providers and contractors have to be recorded for monitoring purposes in the system. Interview the farm management, contract farmers/ smallholders, service providers and contractors, workers' representatives and workers.
		1.1.1 A documented system for ensuring legal compliance by the farm management/group manager/contract/smallholder farmers, service providers and contractors shall be implemented and maintained.	Verify that farm management is aware of its responsibilities according to applicable laws when directly engaged. The farm management should be able to demonstrate the participation of relevant stakeholders (worker representatives, employees, contract farmers/smallholders, etc.) in regular meetings held at least once a year. Worker representatives, workers, contract farmers/smallholders, service providers and contractors should be able to demonstrate in interviews awareness of relevant legislation.
		1.1.2 All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall be aware of the law and regulations and comply with them.	The farm management must demonstrate that a no-corruption policy has been implemented and that all contracts and/or agreements include a clause referring to the no-corruption policy. Verify the farm management can demonstrate that decision processes are managed to avoid bribery, conflicts of interest and fraudulent practices. Check for evidence of training sessions on bribery practices and risks related to bribery, conflicts of interest, corruption and fraudulent practices. Check for evidence that the training sessions regularly take place and that workers and management participate. Inspect policy documents and training material and verify that contents reflect measures for avoiding bribery, conflicts of business interest and fraudulent practices. Interview farm management staff, trainers, contract farmers/smallholders, service providers, contractors, workers' representatives and workers to confirm the existence and implementation of the no-corruption policy.
1.2	All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall be committed to respecting human rights in all operations and transactions.	1.2.1 A written policy, in a language understood by all parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities, shall make a commitment to human rights, including the human right to food, in all operations and transactions, and this policy shall be made available and communicated to all parties involved in the operation.	Check whether management and worker representatives have signed and visually displayed – at least in office areas – a written commitment to human rights, including the human right to food, in all operations and transactions. Ask for documentation on the implementation of the policy in a language understood by all parties. Conduct an interview with workers and management (separately) to verify policy implementation. The manager must know the human rights declaration. The implementation of the policy must be documented and communicated to all levels of the workforce and operations.
			Documentation of due diligence process, compliance with local, regional and national laws and ratified international treaties, procedure for maintaining the system for ensuring legal compliance (including evidence of appointment of responsible persons in charge). Interviews with farm management, contract farmers/ smallholders, service providers and contractors, worker representatives and workers. Documentation of anti-corruption policy, contracts (with workers and service providers), documentation of due diligence process, declaration of compliance with applicable laws, organisational commitment to human rights and policies, training documentation (contents and agenda, trainer name and qualification, minutes, list of participants, and materials). Interviews with the farm management staff, trainers, contract farmers/smallholders, service providers and contractors, worker representatives and workers confirm the existence and implementation of the no-corruption policy. Documentation of written policy on human rights including Human Right to Food in different languages, as well as integration in organisational process (contracts, general documentation). Interviews with farm management staff, trainers, contract farmers/smallholders, service providers and contractors, worker representatives and workers in order to confirm the existence and implementation of the human rights declaration.
			Training contents and agenda; trainer name and qualifications; training records, participants, materials. Interviews with worker representatives, workers, contract farmers/smallholders, service providers and contractors.
			Documentation of anti-corruption policy, contracts (with workers and service providers), documentation of due diligence process, declaration of compliance with applicable laws, organisational commitment to human rights and policies, training documentation (contents and agenda, trainer name and qualification, minutes, list of participants, and materials). Interviews with the farm management staff, trainers, contract farmers/smallholders, service providers and contractors, worker representatives and workers confirm the existence and implementation of the no-corruption policy.
			Documentation of written policy on human rights including Human Right to Food in different languages, as well as integration in organisational process (contracts, general documentation). Interviews with farm management staff, trainers, contract farmers/smallholders, service providers and contractors, worker representatives and workers in order to confirm the existence and implementation of the human rights declaration.

Table 7: Audit Checklist, Group Manager



FSS
– Audit Procedure Tool –



EXCERPT

Audit Checklist Group Manager
V 1.0

No.	Criteria	Indicator	Verification guidance	Evidence/ Documents required	Findings	COMPLIANCE INFORMATION		
						Status of Compliance:	Yes	No
						No, non-compliance with FSS!		
						Conformity: 0		
						Non-Conformity: 0		
						Not Applicable: 0		
								N/A
Stability Pillar								
Principle 1: Apply good governance and respect the rule of law								
			Verify that the GM has prepared an overview of local, regional and national laws and regulations and ratified international treaties that are applicable to the activities of SHs. There must be an updated physical or virtual repository that indicates how these laws and regulations are interpreted and how the SHs should follow them in ongoing operations to ensure compliance. Changes to the law must be recorded for tracking purposes. Legal compliance procedures should actively involve GM staff, service providers and contractors. Laws and ratified international treaties with which the GM must comply include: (1) Rights of local communities and indigenous groups (2) Land rights/land tenure (3) Health and safety laws (4) Rights of all workers (permanent, temporary, casual, self employed) (e.g. overtime work, paid holiday, sick and parental leave) (5) Free trade agreements (6) Environmental and impact assessment requirements (7) Land conservation management, soil fertility (relative to e.g. application of fertilizers, manure, plant protection products, contamination and accumulation of hazardous substances in soils) (8) Soil conservation management of hazardous substances in soils (9) Water conservation and management (relating to e.g. abstraction, use and discharge of irrigation water, protection of water bodies) (10) National and international protected areas The GM should be familiar with relevant legislation and should be aware of changes to legislation. Verify that the GM periodically provides training/information sessions and training material relevant to legal compliance to its staff and SHs. These sessions should be conducted at least every two years, or whenever the law is significantly updated. Interview the GM, SHs, service providers and contractors.			Documentation of due diligence process; of compliance with local, regional, and national laws; and of procedure for maintaining system to ensure legal compliance, including appointment of individual(s) responsible for compliance.		
1.1	All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall comply with applicable national, regional and local laws and regulations and ratified international treaties.	Check if the GM provides periodic training/information sessions and training material on legal compliance to its staff, SHs, service providers and contractors. The sessions should be scheduled at least every two years thereafter, or when law is significantly amended. When a service provider/contractor starts to provide services, and at least every two years thereafter, or when law is significantly amended. Workers, SHs, service providers and contractors should demonstrate awareness of relevant legislation during interviews.	Check if the GM is aware of its responsibilities under applicable laws when directly engaged. Check if the GM provides periodic training/information sessions and training material on legal compliance to its staff, SHs, service providers and contractors. The sessions should be scheduled at least every two years thereafter, or when law is significantly amended. When a service provider/contractor starts to provide services, and at least every two years thereafter, or when law is significantly amended. Workers, SHs, service providers and contractors should demonstrate awareness of relevant legislation during interviews.	Documentation of regular stakeholder meetings, including signed list of participants, documentation of training content and agenda, trainer name and qualification, signed list of participants, training records, training materials. Interviews with workers, SHs, service providers and contractors.				
		1.1.2 All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall be aware of the law and regulations and comply with them.	Verify that the GM has implemented a no-corruption policy and that all contracts and/or agreements include a clause referring to the no-corruption policy. The GM should prepare, communicate, and sign the policy. The GM must demonstrate that a system is in place to avoid corruption, bribery, conflicts of interest, and fraudulent practices in its activities as a group manager and in its interaction with SHs. There shall be evidence of regular training and information sessions being held for the GM's staff and SHs regarding the avoidance of unethical practices and risks related to fraudulent practices and corruption prevention. These sessions should be conducted when the SH join the group or start to provide services, and at least every two years thereafter.	Non-corruption policy, contracts (workers, providers, services), documentation of due diligence process, declaration of compliance with applicable laws, and documentation of training content and agenda, trainer name and qualification, signed list of participants, training records, training materials. Interview with relevant GM staff, trainers, SHs, service providers, contractors, and workers.				
		1.1.3 A system to ensure the prevention of all forms of bribery, conflicts of interest and fraudulent practices shall be implemented and maintained.	Inspect the training material and verify that the contents address avoidance of bribery, conflicts of business interest and fraudulent practices. Interview the GM's staff, trainers, SHs, service providers and contractors and workers to confirm findings.					
		1.2.1 A written policy, in a language understood by all parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities, shall make a commitment to human rights, including the human right to food, in all operations and transactions. And this policy shall be made available	Confirm that GM has prepared, signed and displayed a written policy of commitment to human rights, including the human right to food, in all operations and transactions. The implementation of this policy must be documented and communicated to all SHs, staff and workers. Ask for documentation concerning the nationalities of employed workers and SHs supplying materials and products, and verify that the written policy is available in a language understood by all parties. Check if the GM has provided training, informational events and/or time for awareness-raising group work sessions on the human rights and the human right to food to its staff and SHs. There must be evidence that the training takes place regularly (i.e. upon joining the	Documentation of written policy on Human Rights, including Human Right to Food, in different languages; evidence of integration in business practices (contracts, general documentary), documentation of training content and agenda, trainer name and qualification.				
1.2	All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall be committed to respecting human rights in all operations and transactions.							

Table 8: Audit Checklist, Smallholders



FSS – Audit Procedure Tool –

An initiative of



EXCERPT

Audit Checklist Smallholders

V 1.0

COMPLIANCE INFORMATION								
Status of Compliance:				No, non-compliance with FSSI				
Conformity:				0				
Non-Conformity:				0				
Not Applicable:				0				

No.	Criteria	Indicator	Verification guidance	Evidences/ Documents required	Findings		Conformity	
					Yes	No	N/A	
Principle 1: Apply good governance and respect the rule of law								
Stability Pillar								
Principle 1: Apply good governance and respect the rule of law								
1.1	All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall comply with applicable regional and national laws and regulations and ratified international treaties.	1.1.1 A documented system for ensuring legal compliance by the farm management/group manager, contract/smallholder farmers, service providers and contractors shall be implemented and maintained.	n/a	n/a				
		1.1.2 All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall be aware of the law and regulations and comply with ratified international treaties.	Verify the SH is aware when inquired of responsibilities arising from applicable laws and how to comply them.	Training attendance documents, informational materials.				
		1.1.3 A system to ensure the prevention of all forms of bribery, conflicts of interest and fraudulent practices shall be implemented and maintained.	Review evidence that SH has participated in training and information sessions organized by GM.	Training attendance documents, informational materials.				
		1.1.4 A written policy, in a language understood by all parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities, shall make a commitment to human rights, including the human right to food, in all operations and transactions, and this policy shall be made available and communicated to all parties involved in the operation.	Ask the SH directly whether he/she has formally acknowledged and accepted the GM's human rights policy. Check whether the SH has signed the policy and whether a written version of the policy in an appropriate language is on file.	Signed copy of the policy in relevant language, training materials.				
1.2	All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall be committed to respecting human rights in all operations and transactions.		Review evidence that SH has participated in training and information sessions organized by GM.					
Principle 2: Respect national food security and development strategies								
2.1	The farm management/group manager shall endorse national strategies with regard to food security and these strategies shall not be contradicted by any business activities.	2.1.1 The management staff shall be aware of the overall food security situation in the country.	n/a	n/a				
		2.1.2 All relevant and applicable national and local strategies connected with food security shall be well known and not contradicted.	n/a	n/a				
Principle 3: Mitigate natural and human-made disaster risks								
3.1	Natural and human-made disaster risks shall be mitigated and procedures shall be in place to ensure a proper response to emergencies.	3.1.1 Natural and human-made disaster risks in the area of influence of the operation have been identified. Relevant governmental emergency/contingency plans are known.	Ask the SH about potential natural and human-made disasters in the region (e.g. droughts, floods, earthquakes, wildfires, landslides, tsunamis, volcanos, tornados, hurricanes, or pest infestations). Verify the SH can demonstrate awareness of major risks.	n/a				
		3.1.2 A contingency and risk mitigation plan for the farm and its area of influence has been developed and implemented. This plan shall be in line with existing government plans and appropriate for addressing local risks.	Verify the SH has participated in risk management training and meetings devoted to developing a risk mitigation plan. Confirm SH is aware of the existing plan and can implement measures based on the associated risk level. Confirm SH informs workers about risk situation and management, including contents of risk mitigation plan.	Contingency and risk mitigation plan provided by GM. Training materials.				
			Talk to SH workers to confirm findings.	Interviews with SH and workers.				
Access Pillar								
Principle 4: Ensure market access and contribute to local development								
4.1	Local value creation must be supported.	4.1.1 Measures to support local value creation and close income gaps in the area of influence of the operation shall be identified in a consultation process with relevant stakeholders and implemented.	Verify SH participation in the GM's consultation process dedicated to identifying and planning measures to increase local value creation. Visually inspect the site and ask SH if he/she supports the implementation of agreed-upon measures on farm or within farm's area of influence. Ask whether GM provides financial support or other assistance.	Documentation of financial support from GM, if applicable. Interviews with SH and/or representatives of benefited communities.				
4.2	Access to markets for local communities must not be reduced.	4.2.1 The time and effort required for local communities to access food markets must not be negatively influenced by farm's operations.	Interview SH and/or beneficiaries of value creation measure. Check for formal/informal easements/routes within the farm that are used by the community. Visually verify they are not blocked. Interview members/representatives of local community to confirm findings.	Visual inspection of implemented measure. Visual inspection of site/farm.				
Principle 5: Safeguard long-term farm profitability and fair business conduct								
5.1	The operation shall be economically viable in the long term.	5.1.1 A business or management plan shall be available, implemented, and regularly reviewed and updated, and shall include plans and measures to support the long-term economic viability of the operation.	Verify the SH can present a business/management plan or, alternatively, can at least explain the revenue/expense calculations that justify the financial viability of he/she's farm in the current economic situation. Verify SH can demonstrate participation in GM training. Also, verify SH can provide written or verbal cost-benefit calculations and actions for maintaining or improving economic viability.	Business/management plan or written cost calculation, training materials.				

Table 9: FSS-QAT – Summary of the Interview Results

FSS-QAT - Summary of interview results		
V1.0		
Based on your interpretation of the interviews conducted with workers and/or smallholders (according to Section 6.3.4 of the handbook), enter the total number of workers/smallholders falling under each food security classification.		
Part A: Summary of Interview Results		
Food Security Category in FSS-QAT	Number of Workers	Number of Smallholders
Food secure		60
Mild food insecurity		6
Severe food insecurity		3
Total number of interviewed workers/smallholders	0	69
Percent of food secure workers/smallholders (%)	0%	87%
Percent of workers/smallholders with mild food insecurity (%)	0%	9%
Percent of workers/smallholders with severe food insecurity (%)	0%	4%
<i>The percentages in the grey cells are calculated automatically based on the number of workers and Smallholders in each food security category.</i>		
Based on your interviews with external stakeholders, including your final judgement regarding each stakeholder and their perceptions of the impact exerted by the operation and farm management on food security in the area of influence, enter your findings below.		
Part B: Findings on Interviews with External Stakeholders		
	Number of External Stakeholders Answering "Yes"	Number of External Stakeholders Answering "No"
The operation negatively affects local food security		
Place, Date, Signature of Auditor		

Table 10: Audit Non-Conformities and Corrective Measures

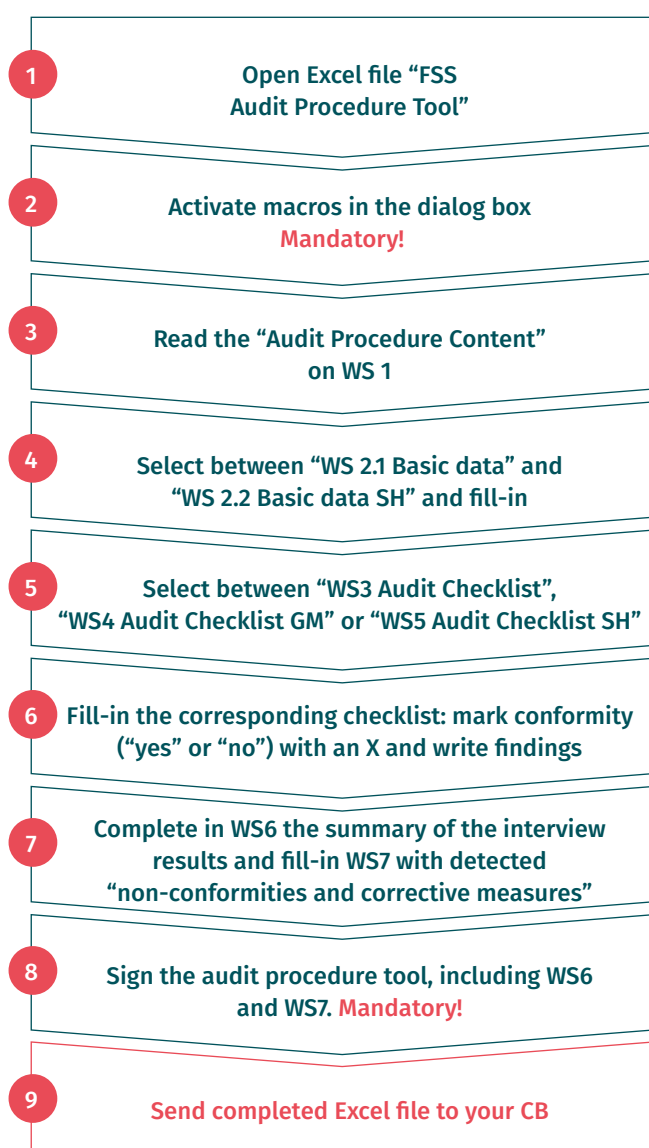
Non-Conformities and Corrective Measures						
V1.0						
Name of farm / group manager / smallholder: _____						
Farm address: _____						
Mandatory Improvement Measures						
No.	Indicator number	Non-Conformity/Finding	Corrective Action/Measure	Implementation deadline (e.g. 40 days)	Measure implemented?	
					No	Yes
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
...						
Voluntary Improvement Measures and Best Practices						
No.	Indicator number	Finding	Voluntary Improvement Measure	Fully implemented	Partially implemented	Not (yet) implemented
1						
2						
3						
...						
Place, Date, Signature of Auditor			Place, Date, Signature of Farm Management			

6.2.2 Using the FSS Audit Procedure Tool

The FSS Audit Procedure Tool is used to conduct on-site farm audits, both in the case of individual verification and for a sample audit when group verification is sought. For group audits of large/medium size farms, one Audit Procedure Tool has to be completed for each farm in the sample. When auditing a group of smallholders, one completed Audit Procedure Tool is required for the whole group. WS_4 (Audit Checklist, GM) is completed for the group manager and WS_5 (Audit Checklist, SHs) is completed for the entire group of smallholders included in the sample. However, note that the information recorded in the basic data sheet has to be provided separately for each smallholder.

The figure beneath illustrates the 9 step process the auditor is expected to follow for successful use of the FSS Audit Procedure Tool.

Figure 2: 9-Step Process for Using the FSS Audit Procedure Tool as an Auditor



Follow these 9 steps to use the tool correctly:

- **Step 1:** Open the Excel file "FSS Audit Procedure Tool".
- **Step 2:** The start page and first worksheet (WS1) of the Excel file is the "Content" template. Read the information provided in WS1 carefully.
- **Step 3:** Start to fill in the second worksheet (WS2) "Basic Data". All parts of WS2 must be filled in. Use WS 2.1 for large/medium size farms and group managers and WS 2.2 for smallholders.
- **Step 4:** There are three types of Audit Checklists. WS3 (Audit Checklist) for large and medium size farms; WS4 (Audit Checklist, GM) for smallholder group managers; and the WS5 (Audit Checklist, SHs) for smallholders. Select one of the three Audit Checklists depending on the type of auditee and farm size.

All three Audit Checklists are organized in a similar manner:

- 1) The FSS pillars represent the superordinate category.
- 2) The FSS principles are featured as horizontal rows in the checklist. They describe specific aspects of each pillar.
- 3) Below the principles, going in the checklist from left to right, there are dedicated columns for criteria, indicators, verification guidance, evidence/documents, findings and conformity. The conformity column is subdivided into "yes" for conform, "no" for non-conform and "N/A" for not applicable.
- 4) Each criterion can be supported by one or multiple indicators. For every indicator there is a single verification guidance, a single set of evidence, unique findings, and only one conformity assessment.

All information on the right side of the column "indicator" refers to the respective indicator. The auditor must carefully read the requirements expressed in the indicator and mark in the last column on the right side of the checklist whether the farm is in conformity with that indicator. To support the auditor in making a decision, the checklist provides:

- 1) The column "Verification Guidance", which concretely indicates what the auditor has to verify and how.
- 2) The column "Evidences/Documents required", which lists the documents needed to demonstrate conformity.

■ **Step 5:** Fill-in the Audit Checklist WS3, WS4, or WS5 with findings and conformity information.

- When conformity with an indicator is achieved, the auditor shall mark the “yes” cell under “conformity” with an “X”.
- When conformity with an indicator is not achieved, the auditor shall mark the “no” cell with an “X”.
- The reason for the decision of conform or non-conform has to be specified and explained under the column “Findings”. This column can also be used by the auditor to report on particular aspects of the analyzed indicator.
- If an indicator is not applicable for a specific audit, the auditor shall indicate the reason in the column “Findings”. In this case, the cell under the column “N/A” shall be marked with an “X”. The option “not applicable” shall only be used in exceptional cases.

After filling in the checklist, the box “Compliance Information” at the top right of each of the three Audit Checklists provides an overview of conformity with the different indicators. The box includes four results, indicating general compliance with the FSS and the number of conform, non-conform and non-applicable indicators. Overall compliance with the FSS is automatically displayed and highlighted in green if all Audit Checklist indicators are marked as conform. If this is not the case, non-conformity will be indicated with a red background. If an indicator is marked “N/A” it is still counted as conform and displayed in the “Compliance Information” box as such.

Compliance with the FSS is achieved when all indicators are fulfilled.

■ **Step 6:** Once the interviews with workers, smallholders and stakeholders are finished, WS6 (“SummFSS-QAT – Summary of the interview results”) in the Audit Procedure Tool must be completed. Enter the numbers of workers and/or smallholders in each of the three food security categories according to the FSS-QAT results in Part A. Furthermore, in Part B of the WS enter the number of external stakeholders who perceived the farm/group of farms operation as having an impact on food security in the area of influence. Percentages per category are calculated automatically in the sheet. Detailed guidance for completing WS6 is provided in Section [6.3.4](#).

■ **Step 7:** If the findings lead to non-conformity with an indicator, this has to be reported in WS7 (“Non-Conformities and Corrective Measures”). The corrective measures to be implemented for achieving indicator conformity must be reported in this worksheet as well. The correction of non-conformities through the implementation of corrective measures shall be marked with an X under “measure implemented” as “yes” or “no”. Additional voluntary improvement measures and best practices can also be reported in WS7.

In case of a smallholder group audit, one WS7 has to be filled-in for the group manager, and one additional sheet must be used for the sampled smallholders.

■ **Step 8:** The auditor shall print WS7 and sign it in the designated area below the tables for corrective measures with his/her name, location and the date. The farm management/group manager must also sign the sheet with a name, location and the date. In addition, the auditor shall print and sign the WS6 in the designated area with his/her name, location and the date.

■ **Step 9:** The auditor must provide the final version of the Audit Procedure Tool in digital form to the CB, together with the printed and signed non-conformity document(s) and FSS-QAT summary WS. After internal review, the CB then provides these documents to the sustainability standards system applying the FSS.

The FSS audit usually takes place within the framework of a farm audit under the requirements of a sustainability standards system (e.g. ISCC, RSPO, CmiA, Rainforest Alliance). Systems offering FSS verification are advised to incorporate FSS requirements into their own audit procedures (or similar audit tools). In absence of an integrated procedure, the auditor can directly verify compliance with the FSS by using the original FSS Audit Procedure Tool and the benchmarking results.

Use of Audit Checklists for Managed Smallholder Groups

The term “farm” refers to a broad range of agricultural operations differing in terms of land availability, number of workers, capital goods, and management and organizational structures. The FSS has a general scope applicable to all types of farms. However, the Audit Procedure Tool has been adapted for the more vulnerable category of farmers – the smallholders – who are organized into smallholder groups managed by a group manager.

WS4 (Audit Checklist, GM) and WS5 (Audit Checklist, SHs) in the Audit Procedure Tool have been developed to allow the auditing of smallholders who have been organized into a group, such that management functions have been transferred to a group manager (see Section 3.2). It is normal practice for sustainability standards to adapt audit requirements for smallholders. While the criteria and indicators are unchanged, the responsibility for compliance has been divided for most of the indicators between the group manager and smallholders. The separate checklists also provide specific verification guidance and evidences/documents tailored to group managers and smallholders.

The group manager is responsible for developing policies and procedures in consultation with the smallholders and, in addition, for implementing training programmes required by the FSS or considered necessary for FSS compliance.

For each indicator that requires training, a first training session shall be carried out within 6 months of the SH joining the group or beginning to provide agricultural products. Afterward, training shall take place every year or every two years (as indicated in the verification guidance of the Audit Checklist, GM). If there are relevant changes in the training content (e.g. new requirements or changes in regulations, laws or technologies) training sessions should be carried out earlier than stated in the verification guidance (see Annex VII for a list of indicators requiring training).

Generally, smallholders in a group are responsible for attending training sessions and implementing measures required for compliance based on guidance provided by a group manager.

The auditor must complete the Audit Checklist, SHs for the whole sample of smallholders audited on-site. In the “Findings” column, the auditor is expected to provide details on the reasons for compliance or non-compliance.

6.2.3 Document Checklist for Easy Audit Preparation

WS8 (Document Checklist) is designed for use by both auditee and auditor. It helps the auditee to identify in advance the documents and evidence they need for a successful audit and assure their availability for the site audit (see table 11). WS8 also helps the auditee to prepare for the audit, organize necessary documents, and know their location. While the use of WS8 is voluntary, experience has shown that it is helpful for auditees, as going through the Audit Checklist (WS3) and identifying the

evidence required can initially overwhelm farm administrative staff, leading to denial of the FSS application. WS8 can also be used by auditors for initial audit preparation and engagement with the customer. The checklist is available for anyone interested or involved in the FSS verification process. WS9 contains a similar document checklist (Document Checklist, GM) with listed documents relevant and aligned with group managers of smallholder groups (see table 12).

Table 11: FSS Document Checklist for Easy Audit Preparation

EXCERPT



FSS
 – Audit Procedure Tool –

An initiative of




Key Document Checklist for Easy Audit Preparation

V1.0

Farm name: _____

Address: _____ Date and Signature: _____

No.	Required documents, information, evidence	Document name / findings	Available?	
			No	Yes
1	Registration number with sustainability standard			
2	Latest signed terms of use of sustainability standard			
3	Field list with hectare sizes, use, yields, etc. (owned and leased land)			
4	Maps and geocoordinates for each field + total operation			
5	Land (-use) rights documents (land titles, contracts, land rights map)			
6	Documentation of agreements on land (-use) rights			
7	Notified contracts for leased land			
8	List of all suppliers and recipients having supplied and received material during the previous year			
9	Documents on incoming and outgoing material, including feedstock, region and country of origin and if applicable the conversion factor			
10	Business or management plan (if applicable)			
11	Organizational chart (positions, job descriptions/responsibilities)			
12	Operating license			
13	Self-declarations on compliance with FSS requirements from group members (if applicable)			
14	Completed National Food Security Assessment (NaFSA)			

Table 12: FSS Document Checklist for Easy Audit Preparation, Group Manager

EXCERPT



FSS
 – Audit Procedure Tool –

An initiative of




Key Document Checklist for Easy Audit Preparation, General Managers (GM)

V1.0

Group Manager Name: _____

Address: _____ Date and Signature: _____

No.	Required documents, information, evidence	Document name / findings	Available?	
			No	Yes
1	Registration number with sustainability standard			
2	Latest signed terms of use of sustainability standard			
3	Field list with hectare sizes, use, yields, etc. (owned and leased land)			
4	Maps and geocoordinates for each field + total operation/group			
5	Land (-use) rights documents of SHs (land titles, contracts, land rights map)			
6	Documents of negotiated agreements on land (-use) rights by SHs			
7	List of all suppliers and recipients having supplied and received material during the previous year			
8	Operating license			
9	Documentation of due diligence for compliance with local, regional and national laws (including compliance by farmers)			
10	Self-declarations on compliance with FSS requirements from group members (if applicable)			
11	Completed National Food Security Assessment (NaFSA)			
12	Written policy on Human Rights including Human Right to Food (in different languages)			
13	FAO documents (food-based dietary guidelines, Guiding Principles for Responsible Contract Farming)			
14	Employment contract templates for SHs			

6.3 THE FSS QUICK ASSESSMENT TOOL (FSS-QAT)

6.3.1 Objective

The FSS-QAT (Food Security Standard – Quick Assessment Tool)⁶ is a survey tool consisting of a set of questionnaires developed to quickly and reliably assess the local food security situation among farmers, workers and communities in the farm's area of influence, including any resettled communities.

The specific objectives of the FSS-QAT are:

- (i) To verify that food security of workers and smallholder farmers is ensured.
- (ii) To verify that the food security situation does not deteriorate in the area of influence, including resettled communities, because of the agricultural operation.

The FSS-QAT also helps to identify whether the food security situation of farmers, workers or communities has changed and the key drivers of such change, i.e. the audited agricultural operation or external factors. External factors that affect the food security situation may be extreme weather events such as drought or floods, or other disturbances such as food or crop price fluctuations or social unrest. As these factors are usually not caused by agricultural operations, they are in general not considered the responsibility of the farm management/group manager/smallholder.

6.3.2 Understanding the FSS-QAT questionnaires

Information about food security is to be collected at the individual level of workers and/or smallholders and from external stakeholders, i.e. from communities in the area of influence, any resettled communities, and from experts at the district level (see also Sections 5.5 to 5.8). The gathering of information from different levels provides a more comprehensive picture of local food security while also enabling information obtained from individual interviewees to be cross-checked. Information gathering at one or two levels may not be enough for a confident assessment of the food security situation, as crucial facts may be overlooked.

The FSS-QAT is a set of very short questionnaires (1½ to 2 pages) that address the four pillars of food security. The FSS-QAT tool is built on the “Food Insecurity Experience Scale” (FIES), an international tool developed by the FAO to measure food insecurity. The tool has proven capable of detecting food insecurity even in countries where food insecurity and undernourishment levels are low.⁷

There are three questionnaire types: one for workers (independent of whether they are permanent, temporary, seasonal or casual), one for smallholders, and one for external stakeholders. The FSS-QAT questionnaires **must** be used and filled by the auditor.

The purpose and content of each questionnaire varies slightly depending on who is interviewed. The sections below (6.3.2.1 to 6.3.2.4) explain the questionnaires in detail; Section 6.3.2.4 explicitly describes the survey questions drawn from FIES.



⁶ See FSS – Quick Assessment Tool (FSS, 2020d).

⁷ The FIES is also used as an indicator for the globally ratified Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). More information can be found under: <http://www.fao.org/in-action/voices-of-the-hungry/fies/en/>.

6.3.2.1 About the FSS-QAT questionnaire for workers

The purpose of this questionnaire is to appraise the level of food security experienced by all types of workers (permanent, seasonal, temporary, casual) and to use it as verifier for indicator 13.1.4. It also helps to cross-check the need for additional income options, as requested in indicator 4.1.1. All questions only refer to the time period of employment at the farm operation; in the case of small-holders, this may only be a few days.

The FSS-QAT has to be applied to individual workers. No group interviews are allowed. **All** workers selected in the sample must be interviewed. See Section 5.6 for guidance on selecting workers.

FSS-QAT questionnaire for workers (permanent, temporary, casual, seasonal), with explanations

Oral consent to interview given: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒	Explanation
1. Where do you live while being employed?	☐ On the certified farm ☐ In nearby community/village	Important to know for understanding where workers get their food and water from, also relevant for sanitation, living quarters etc.
2. Are you hired directly by the farm/operation or by a subcontractor/agency?	☐ By farm/operation ☐ By a subcontractor/agency	Under the FSS, subcontracted workers have the same rights as directly hired farm workers; however, in reality they often differ. This may help to contextualize the responses.
3. Are you hired for specific tasks (short term), for a longer period (one to several months, e.g. for a harvest) or are you permanent employee?	☐ Short term (a few days each time) ☐ Medium term (one to several months, or several contracts) ☐ Permanent (indefinite contract)	Relevant for labor criteria but also for food security questions. Permanent labor should never be worried about their food security situation or restrict their food intake, while it this may occur for temporary, seasonal or casual labor when their contracts end.
Please advise the interviewee that the following questions refer only to the length of time of his/her EMPLOYMENT AT THE AUDITED FARM		
4. Where do you usually get your food from?	☐ Bought in the area/village (e.g. shop/market/neighbours) ☐ Food provided by employer ☐ Shop on farm	Questions 4–6 serve several purposes: (i) To verify the stable availability of food (quantity and prices). High prices or limited availability might indicate that the interviewee may be affected by food insecurity. (ii) To cross-check the information provided by the employer and to understand the linkage to the operation – if food is provided, it has to be sufficient, safe and nutritious and at acceptable prices (see also next question).
5. Is there all year round enough food available at <u>decent</u> prices for purchase <u>nearby</u> (market, village/farm shop, neighbours)?	☐ Yes, readily available ☐ Somewhat available or at high prices ☐ Not always available or at <u>very</u> high prices	(iii) If food is bought on markets, income must be high enough to cope with price fluctuations. If there is not enough food/ extreme prices, you have to check whether the farm/operation is responsible (e.g. overpriced farm shop; or all land is used by the farm/operation and workers have no means to grow food).
6. Are key food items (i.e. staple foods) currently less available or more expensive than they were during the same period last year? If yes, why?	☐ No, same amount/same price ☐ Yes, less food available/very expensive → If yes, please explain why:	Question 6 is also there to identify whether food availability is changing over the long term due to the audited farm/operation.

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒	Explanation
7. Can you ALWAYS consume the number of meals typical in the country/region?	☐ Yes ☐ No	This is an introductory question and cross-check for the next block. You need to know beforehand from external stakeholders what the typical number of meals is in GOOD times.
Please ask the following questions exactly as phrased (and do not ignore some text as you will get wrong answers) This is the so-called FIES survey module (Food Insecurity Experience Scale). See Section 6.3.2.4 for a detailed explanation to each question. It is important to ask every question as written and be aware of the different meanings of each question. Do not invent your own questions; based on our experience, questions invented by the interviewer are often misleading and fail to capture the fine differences between each question. Translations in over 200 languages are available online (see also Section 6.3.2.4).		
8. For the time you had a work contract in the past 12 months <u>at the certified farm</u> (i.e. <u>the days you worked there</u>), was there a time when, because of <u>lack of money or other resources</u>,...: a) You were worried you would not have enough food to eat? b) You could not eat healthy and nutritious food though you would have liked to? c) You ate only a few kinds of foods? d) You had to skip a meal? e) You ate less than you thought you should? f) Your household ran out of food? g) You were hungry but did not eat? h) You went without eating for a whole day?	a) ☐ Yes ☐ No b) ☐ Yes ☐ No c) ☐ Yes ☐ No d) ☐ Yes ☐ No e) ☐ Yes ☐ No f) ☐ Yes ☐ No g) ☐ Yes ☐ No h) ☐ Yes ☐ No	This is a key part of the questionnaire and needs to be asked with patience and tactfulness. It focuses on access to food. Dieting based on religious practices or personal preferences is not to be considered here and does not count toward non-compliance. For interpretation regarding compliance, see Section 6.3.4.
9. Do you have always drinking water available – while working? – at living area (home, farm house)	☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Yes ☐ No	All workers should have access to potable water and the situation should not get worse. Check whether the auditee might be responsible if the answer is no and would need to take corrective action. Safe drinking water is important for a person to be food-secure. The operation is always responsible during work time and when providing living quarters to the workers. However, the operation is not responsible if the worker lives independently in a village.
10. Do you have sufficient breaks for drinking water at work or are you allowed to consume water any time you like to?	☐ Yes ☐ No	Drinking enough water while doing farm work is very important for the health and well-being of the worker, especially with hard work and hot weather, and has to be ensured by the operation.
11. Do you have sufficient options for decent food consumption (breaks, cleanliness, food diversity)?	☐ Yes ☐ No Comments:	See respective FSS criteria and their verification guidance. For the Right to Food, a safe, clean and dry location to eat food also needs to be offered. Breaks are needed for the well-being and health of the workers. Food should be diverse and of good quality to maintain work capacities.

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒	Explanation
12. Do you have options to wash your hands with soap a) before eating? b) after having used the toilet?	a) ☐ Yes ☐ No b) ☐ Yes ☐ No	Washing one's hands with soap is important for avoiding diseases that affect food security (like diarrhea). This question applies to time spent at work.
13. For temporary, seasonal, casual workers: What are your work/ income options after the contract ends? Are you worried that you may lack sufficient food after the contract ends?	Please note: ☐ Yes ☐ No	This is to understand whether the operation needs to strengthen efforts to provide additional income options for their temporary, seasonal and casual workers.
14. Are you worried that you may lack sufficient food after the contract ends?	Please note: ☐ Yes ☐ No	This is to understand whether the operation needs to strengthen efforts to provide additional income options for their temporary, seasonal and casual workers.
Please ask at the end of the interview if there are further concerns in regard to food security and the employment situation.	The questionnaire aims to cover all relevant issues. However, since each farm and operation is different, this enables the interviewee to add topics that are relevant for their food security situation but were so far not addressed.	
Do not forget to ask further questions to cross-check compliance with other FSS criteria.	The FSS-QAT concentrates only on key food security topics, but there are more FSS indicators requiring interviews with workers. Therefore, do not forget to ask questions regarding the other FSS indicators. Also remember to cross-check the issues if the national food security assessment (NaFSA) indicated an increased or high risk.	
To be completed privately by the interviewer:	Do not ask the worker these questions. Rather, fill in the answers yourself.	

Gender of the interviewee: ☐ Female ☐ Male

Name of farm/operation: _____

Do you trust the information provided by the interviewee?

☐ Yes ☐ Difficult to judge ☐ No

Date of interview: _____ (dd/mm/yyyy)

Unique number to identify worker (continuous series; for personal safety): _____

Interpretation of interview result:

- ☐ No food insecurity
☐ Mild food insecurity
☐ Severe food insecurity

Gender is important to show that a sufficient number of women were interviewed.

The question about trustfulness is important as sometimes the interviewee does not reply honestly, is afraid to say the truth, or hopes to benefit from certain answers. Skewed information is a problem. You need to find another interviewee if the information is not perceived as reliable.

Do not write down any names of the workers to protect their identity as much as possible.

Please follow the explanation provided in the Section 6.3.4 to judge whether the worker is food secure or not. This is relevant for determining compliance with indicators 13.1.4 and 17.1.2. The data should also be entered into the Audit Procedure Tool.

6.3.2.2 About the FSS-QAT questionnaire for smallholders

The purpose of the questionnaire for smallholders is to understand the level of food security experienced by smallholders and to use it as verifier for indicator 13.1.4.

The FSS-QAT has to be applied to all smallholders selected in the sample (see Section 5.7). If the smallholder has workers, all of them have to be interviewed, using the questionnaire for workers described in Section 6.3.2.1.

FSS-QAT questionnaire for smallholders, with explanations

Oral consent to interview given: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒	Explanation
1. What is your total farm size (cropped area)?	1. _____	To understand how big the smallholders are and estimate also the number of workers they may employ.
2. How large is the area of the certified crop?	2. _____	
3. To whom do you sell the certified crop?	☐ Certified group manager/operation/processor (cooperative, mill,...) ☐ On the normal market (trader, mill,...)	This affects the crop prices and total income, but also the contracts the smallholders have with the group manager.
4. How many people live in your household who are financially depending on you?	_____ people	This is needed to get a rough idea whether the income is enough given the family size.
5. What is your yearly income from the certified crop (roughly)?	_____	This information also helps to judge how far the crop and other on- and off-farm incomes are away from a living income.
6. How much income do you generate from other farming activities (roughly)?	_____	This information also helps to judge how far the crop and other on- and off-farm incomes are away from a living income.
7. How much do you earn outside farming (roughly)?	_____	This information also helps to judge how far the crop and other on- and off-farm incomes are away from a living income.
8. Which crops do you grow for your own consumption?	Please list crops:	To understand dependency on the certified crop and the total farm setting in regard to food security... is all food always purchased or is some/all produced on farm?
9. For how many months does your own food storage last?	Months _____	
10. Do you grow vegetables, have fruit trees or use wild plants for home consumption?	☐ Yes ☐ No	This can be important for diversified and healthy diets.

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a 	Explanation
11. Is there all year round enough food for purchase available at decent prices (e.g. in village, community, neighbours...)?	☐ Yes, readily available ☐ Somewhat available or at high prices ☐ Not always available or at <u>very</u> high prices	Questions 11–12 serve several purposes: (i) To verify the stable availability of food (quantity and prices). High prices or limited availability might indicate that the interviewee may be affected by food insecurity. i. (ii) If food is bought on markets, income must be high enough to cope with price fluctuations. If there is not enough food/extreme prices, you must check whether the group manager is responsible and could do something (e.g. all farmers converted to a certified non-food crop and neglect their own food production. Hence, they are heavily dependent on the certified crop prices). The group manager should address this through training, e.g. through supporting crop diversification. ii. Question 12 is also there to identify whether food availability is changing over the long term due to the certified farming operations. If this happens, the group manager should think about possible solutions.
12. Are key food items (i.e. staple foods) currently less available or more expensive than during the same period last year? If yes, why?	☐ No, food prices roughly the same ☐ Yes, less food available or MUCH more expensive → If yes, please explain why:	
13. Do you always have drinking water available?	☐ Yes ☐ No	All smallholders should have access to potable water and the situation should not get worse. Check whether the group manager needs to take corrective action. Safe drinking water is important for a person to be food-secure.
14. Did drinking water availability and/or quality change in the past year?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
15. If it changed, what are possible reasons?	List reasons for change:	
16. Can you ALWAYS consume the number of meals typical in the country/region?	☐ Yes ☐ No	This is an introductory question and cross-check for the next block. You need to know beforehand from external stakeholders what the typical number of meals is in GOOD times.
17. What is your typical main meal composition in good times (food abundance)?	Describe meal:	This question helps to clarify what the smallholders mean when considering Q19. First, it is necessary to find out what a usual meal looks like, including the amount of fruit, vegetables, meat, eggs and dairy products consumed. If food diversity is relatively good and then reduced (e.g. no more meat, vegetables, or cheese), the consequences are less severe than in the case of low food diversity at the outset, given the potential aggravation of existing nutritional deficits.
18. What is your typical main meal in hard times (i.e. income scarcity), if this happens?	Describe meal if applicable:	See explanation Q17
Please ask the following questions exactly as phrased (and do not ignore some text as you will get wrong answers)	This is the so-called FIES survey module (Food Insecurity Experience Scale). See Section 6.3.2.4 for a detailed explanation to each question. It is important to ask every question as written and be aware of the different meanings of each question. Do not invent your own questions; based on our experience, questions invented by the interviewer are often misleading and fail to capture the fine differences between each question. Translations in over 200 languages are available online (see also Section 6.3.2.4).	

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒	Explanation
19. During the last 12 months, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources,....: a) You were worried you would not have enough food to eat? b) You could not eat healthy and nutritious food though you would have liked to? c) You ate only a few kinds of foods? d) You had to skip a meal? e) You ate less than you thought you should? f) Your household ran out of food? g) You were hungry but did not eat? h) You went without eating for a whole day?	a) ☐ Yes ☐ No b) ☐ Yes ☐ No c) ☐ Yes ☐ No d) ☐ Yes ☐ No e) ☐ Yes ☐ No f) ☐ Yes ☐ No g) ☐ Yes ☐ No h) ☐ Yes ☐ No	This is a key part of the questionnaire and needs to be asked with patience and tactfulness. It focuses on access to food. Dieting based on religious practices or personal preferences is not to be considered here and does not count toward non-compliance. For interpretation regarding compliance, see Section 6.3.4.
If any of questions 19d-19h were answered with yes:		
20. Did the food shortage happen the first time or is it regular?	First time _____ Regular _____	This is a cross-check question. To be FSS compliant, smallholders should not experience regular food shortages. Only food shortages happening for the first time may be acceptable, provided the group manager is aware of them and takes immediately corrective action, and if there is a realistic option to ensure and restore the food security of the farmers within the normal timeframe for corrective measures (e.g. 40 days).
21. What are the reasons for the food shortage?	Reasons:	
Please ask at the end of the interview if there are further concerns in regard to food security or any other observation in regard to the audited operation and group management.	The questionnaire aims to cover all relevant issues. However, since each smallholder and farm operation is different, this enables the interviewee to add topics that are relevant to the food security situation but were so far not addressed.	
Do not forget to ask further questions to cross-check compliance with other FSS criteria.	The FSS-QAT concentrates only on key food security topics, but there are other FSS indicators requiring interviews with workers. Therefore, do not forget to ask questions regarding the other FSS indicators. Also remember to cross-check the issues if the national food security assessment (NaFSA) indicated an increased or high risk.	
To be completed privately by the interviewer:	Do not ask the worker these questions. Rather, fill in the answers yourself.	

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a 	Explanation
Do you trust the information provided by the interviewee? ☐ Yes ☐ Difficult to judge ☐ No Gender of the interviewee: ☐ Female ☐ Male Date of interview: _____ (dd/mm/yyyy)		Information about gender is important to show that a sufficient number of women were interviewed. The question about trustfulness is important as sometimes the interviewee does not reply honestly, is afraid to say the truth, or hopes to benefit from certain answers. Skewed information is a problem. You need to find another interviewee if the information is not perceived as reliable.
Unique number to identify smallholders (continuous series; for personal safety): _____ Interpretation of interview result: ☐ No food insecurity ☐ Mild food insecurity ☐ Severe food insecurity		Do not note down any names of the smallholders in order to protect their identity as much as possible. Please follow the explanation provided in Section 6.3.4 to judge whether the smallholder is food secure or not. This is relevant for determining compliance with indicators 13.1.4 and 17.1.2. The data should also be entered into the Audit Procedure Tool.

6.3.2.3 About the FSS-QAT questionnaire for external stakeholders

The questionnaire for external stakeholders has several purposes:

- 1) To better understand and cross-check the local food security situation experienced by workers and small-holders. This aims to compensate for the limited number of workers/farmers interviewed during the audit.
- 2) To understand the food security situation of the communities in the farm's area of influence, including resettled communities.
- 3) To understand whether the agricultural operation is responsible for changes in the local food security situation or whether these are due to external events. It also serves to verify indicators 17.1.1 and 17.1.2.

All interviewed **external stakeholders** must be knowledgeable about the village or area of influence. They must also possess knowledge related to food security. The auditor is required to administer the FSS-QAT questionnaire to at least six external stakeholders at the district or village level.⁸ In the case of resettled communities, at least two additional external stakeholders per community must be interviewed. More information regarding external stakeholder interviews, including selection guidelines, is provided in Section 5.8 "Interviews with external stakeholders".

Name of the interviewee: _____

Function/Role (Explanation: according to Section 5.8.1, e.g. school teacher, village head, etc.): _____

Organization/employer (if the individual is representing this entity in the interview): _____

Location (area, community) represented: _____

Date of interview: _____ (dd/mm/yyyy)

Oral consent to interview given: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please make sure that you ask as much as possible about the communities/villages in the area of influence – including potentially resettled communities!

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒	Explanation
1. Are you representing/talking about one or several communities?	☐ One ☐ Several	
2. What is roughly the number of people (households, workers, patients,...) you are representing/talking about?	_____ Number of households/farmers/workers/pupils/etc.	To understand better how representative the respondent is for the area of influence.
3. Are you or members of your family engaged in any activities with the operational unit?	☐ Yes ☐ No → If yes please list activities or relationship:	Question 3 is necessary to be aware of potential conflicts of interest.
4. Do people in this area/community still grow their own food (at least partially)? If not, why not?	☐ Yes ☐ No → Please list why not:	To understand the dominance of the certified crop and the dependence of people on it and to know whether people still have the option (enough land) to grow their own food. It may also be that the audited farm/operation uses all the land and people have no chance to grow their own food, and may fully depend on employment at the farm/operation.

⁸ The requirement of six external stakeholders only applies if no resettlement took place. Otherwise, at least two additional interviews per resettled community must be performed.

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a 	Explanation
5. Was the local food production affected by unusual, extreme weather events in the last 12 months?	☐ Yes ☐ No	Lower food production will affect food availability, prices and stocks. This may affect farmers' and communities' food security (but is outside of the responsibility of the certified operation).
6. Is there all year round enough food available at <u>decent</u> prices for purchase <u>nearby</u> (market, village shop, neighbours,...)?	☐ Yes, readily available ☐ Somewhat available or at high prices ☐ Not always available or at very <u>high</u> prices	Questions 5–7 serve several purposes: (i) To verify the stable availability of food (quantity and prices). High prices or limited availability might indicate that the area of influence and possibly also workers may be affected by food insecurity. (ii) If food is bought on markets, income must be high enough to cope with price fluctuations. If there is not enough food/extreme prices, you have to check whether the certified farm/operation is responsible for this and/or could do something (e.g. if all farmers have converted to a certified non-food crop and thus neglect their own food production. This makes them heavily dependent on certified crop prices).
7. Have key food prices (e.g. for staple foods) or their availability changed beyond typical fluctuations in the past year?	☐ Yes ☐ No	To identify whether food availability is changing over the long term due to the certified farm/operations. If this happens, the farm or group management should think about possible solutions.
8. If changes occurred, can you explain why?	→ Please list reasons:	
9. How do people in the community generate income? a) Only with agriculture (+livestock), forestry, fishing b) Only through jobs (casual, permanent) or self-employment/small business (e.g. craftsman, shop) c) A mixture of agriculture and employment	☐ a) Majority ☐ a) Around half ☐ a) Some ☐ b) Majority ☐ b) Around half ☐ b) Some ☐ c) Majority ☐ c) Around half ☐ c) Some	To understand income sources and cross-check farm/operation activities for local value creation. To understand whether the farm or group management may need to become additionally active to support its workers with income-generating activities.
10. Are these income sources sufficient to fulfill the basic needs of the households (e.g. health, education in addition to food)?	☐ A large majority can cover their needs ☐ Around half of the people manage ☐ The majority cannot cover needs	
11. Do all households in the area always have drinking water available (at an acceptable distance)?	☐ Yes ☐ No	The drinking water situation should not get worse because of the audited farm/group of farms. In the event of deterioration, check whether the farm or group management would need to take corrective action. Safe drinking water is important for a person to be food-secure.
12. Did drinking water availability and/or quality change in the past year?	☐ Improved ☐ Remained the same ☐ Deteriorated	
13. If it changed, what are possible reasons?	Reasons for change:	

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a 	Explanation
14. What is the typical composition of a main meal consumed by a worker/farmer in good times (food abundance)?	Describe meal:	This question helps to later set the workers'/smallholders' meals in a local context, and better understand their food security situation.
15. What is the typical composition of a meal consumed by a worker/farmer in hard times/ during income shortages?	Describe meal:	This question helps to later set the workers'/smallholders' meals in a local context, and better understand their food security situation.
16. Can you roughly guess how many households ate less diverse (healthy) meals or reduced the quantity consumed per meal?	☐ All ☐ Many ☐ Around half ☐ Some ☐ Hardly any/none ☐ Cannot estimate	To cross-check the FIES survey module of smallholders and understand the food security situation in the area of influence.
17. What is the typical number of meals people consume in the region if there is plenty of food?	_____ meals	This question helps to set the number of workers'/smallholders' meals in a local context, and better understand their food security situation if numbers deviate. This question also provides the background for the following questions.
18. Can you roughly guess how many households ate less than the typical number of meals in the past 12 months because they lacked food?	☐ All ☐ Many ☐ Around half ☐ Some ☐ Hardly any/none ☐ Cannot estimate	To cross-check the FIES survey module of smallholders and understand the food security situation in the area of influence.
19. Has the number of households that ate less food or skipped meals changed since last year and how?	☐ Improved ☐ Remained the same ☐ Deteriorated	To monitor changes regarding food security in the area of influence.
20. Are there regularly food shortages in the communities/area?	☐ Yes ☐ No	To understand the food security situation in the area of influence, to monitor changes and understand reasons. This is important to identify what caused the shortage and who is responsible: e.g. the operation/farm or group management or external factors like a drought.
21. If yes, how long do they usually last?	Month starting _____ Month ending _____	
22. Did people in the area experience a food shortage over the past 12 months or are they currently experiencing one?	☐ Yes ☐ No	
23. What are reasons for the food shortage(s)?	Reasons:	

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒	Explanation
24. Are there any frequent health problems like diarrhea or similar which affect the food security of people in the community? If yes, which?	☐ Yes ☐ No → Please list which:	This block serves to identify whether agricultural practices and farm management (incompliance with some FSS criteria) affect the health situation, and, as a consequence, the food security situation, of the people in the area of influence. For example, pesticide application near water can lead to contaminated drinking water, and diarrhea.
25. Do you think these health problems may be caused by the farming activities in the area? For example, the spraying of pesticides, causing respiratory problems.	☐ Yes ☐ No	
26. If yes, do you have any idea who is responsible?	☐ Audited farm(s)/operation ☐ Other farms ☐ Not sure	
27. Can you successfully raise grievances and problems in the communities with the certified operation/ manager/farmers / mill... regarding a) food security? b) other issues?	a) ☐ Yes ☐ No b) ☐ Yes ☐ No	This is an entry question for the section on grievances, which all external stakeholders should be asked.
28. Can you observe positive or negative changes due to the certified crop production in the surrounding communities compared to last year(s)?	Please list key ones:	This helps again to monitor the impacts of the certified farm/operation. Impacts can be positive or negative, leading to better or worse food security. It is important to ask openly to see whether any site specific issue arise that were not yet addressed.
For health staff only:		
29. Can you estimate the percent of <u>undernourished</u> people in the area of influence?	____ % or ☐ All ☐ Many ☐ Around half ☐ Some ☐ Hardly any/none	This information is only known and managed by health staff. No exact numbers are needed but a good understanding is important to know the local food security situation and be able to track changes. The presence of stunting (low height for age) and wasting (low weight for height) indicates severe levels of food insecurity. Anemia is another significant nutritional problem, among others. If such problems are on the rise in the area of influence, the farm or group management should take action to address the issue, e.g. by holding special training sessions.
30. Are this year significantly more children stunted (low height for age) and/or wasted (low weight for height) than last year?	☐ More ☐ Same ☐ Less	
31. Are more or less malnourished and anemic children and mothers coming to the health clinic/post?	☐ More ☐ Same ☐ Less	
32. What are reasons?	Please list reasons:	

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒	Explanation
Please ask if there are further concerns regarding food security or any other observation in regard to the audited operation, farm or group management. Please cross-check other relevant FSS criteria as well.		The questionnaire aims to cover all relevant issues. However, since each farm/operation is different, this enables the interviewee to add topics which are relevant to their food security situation but were so far not addressed. Do not forget to ask questions regarding other FSS indicators for which interviews are needed – the FSS-QAT only concentrates on key food security topics. Also, remember to cross-check the issues if the national food security assessment (NaFSA) indicated an increased or high risk.
For use by the interviewer only – Interpretation of interview result: The operation negatively affects local food security ☐ Yes ☐ No		Please judge based on the provided answers whether the operation negatively affects food security in the area of influence. This is relevant for determining compliance with indicator 17.1.2. The data should also be entered into the Audit Procedure Tool.

6.3.2.4 The “Food Insecurity Experience Scale” survey module in the FSS-QAT

Questions 8a–8h in the workers questionnaire (Section 6.3.2.1) and questions 19a–19h in the smallholders questionnaire (Section 6.3.2.2) are based on the “Food Insecurity Experience Scale” (FIES). The FIES was developed by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and measures the severity of food insecurity as experienced by individuals or households in a way that is comparable across countries. The questions have been translated into over 180 languages. For more details and translations, please see: <http://www.fao.org/in-action/voices-of-the-hungry/using-fies/en/>.

The FIES measures food insecurity along a continuous scale of severity, ranging from mild food insecurity to severe food insecurity. Mild food insecurity exists when people worry about running out of food. As a result, they typically cut back in terms of quality and variety. When food insecurity becomes more severe, people start reducing meals sizes and/or skipping meals. The experience of hunger is the highest level of severity.

The FIES questions are the key component of the FSS-QAT used to identify food insecurity among workers and smallholders. The meaning of each question is explained below.

Explanations to questions 8a–8h of the FSS-QAT for workers and questions 19a–19h of the FSS-QAT for smallholders (FIES survey module⁹ in FSS-QAT):

The statement “because of lack of money and other resources” means that in addition to lacking money to buy food, “other resources” to procure food are also insufficient (including home cultivation, small livestock breeding for sale or personal consumption, barter, trade, fishing, hunting or gathering). In this section, it is very important to ensure that responses concern the time period during which the individual was employed at the farm/operation. Temporary, seasonal and casual workers in particular may experience periods of food insecurity while not employed. However, when they are actively employed by the operation, they must have access to sufficient food.

⁹ The explanations are taken from the following FIES document: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-be898e.pdf>.

Question	Explanation
Qa. You were worried you would not have enough food to eat because of a lack of money or other resources?	This question refers to a state of being worried, anxious, apprehensive, afraid or concerned that there might not be enough food. This is the mildest level of food insecurity.
Qb. You were unable to eat healthy and nutritious food because of a lack of money or other resources?	While the definition of “healthy” and “nutritious” varies between countries, people usually have a good understanding of adequate food consumption in this regard. This question asks the respondent whether he or she was not able to obtain foods he/she considers healthy or good for oneself, foods that make him/her healthy, or those that make for a nutritious and balanced diet (because there was not enough money or other resources to get food.) The answer depends on the respondent’s own opinion of what they consider to be healthy and nutritious foods, not what dietary guidelines state. This question refers to the quality of the diet and not the quantity of food eaten.
Qc. You ate only a few kinds of foods because of a lack of money or other resources?	Eating only a few kinds of food usually indicates less diverse diets and hence a potential deficit in macro- or micro-nutrients. Often, at this stage, fruits, vegetables and meat are reduced so people lack needed protein, vitamins and minerals. The question asks if the respondent was forced to eat a limited variety of foods, the same foods, or just a few kinds of foods every day because there was not enough money or other resources to obtain food. <i>The implication is that the diversity of foods consumed would likely increase if the household had better access to food.</i> This question refers to the quality of the diet and not the quantity of food eaten.
Qd. You had to skip a meal because there was not enough money or other resources to get food?	This question inquires about the experience of having to miss or skip a major meal (for example, breakfast, lunch or dinner depending on the norm for the number and times of meals in a culture) that would normally have been eaten (because there was not enough money or other resources to obtain food.) This question refers to insufficient food quantity.
Qe. You ate less than you thought you should because of a lack of money or other resources?	Eating less food than you think you would need indicates in most cases a deficit in macro- or micro-nutrient intake, even if they did not skip a meal. This question inquires about eating less than what the respondent considered they should, even if they did not skip a meal (because the household did not have money or other resources to get food). The answer depends on the <u>respondent’s own opinion</u> of how much they think they should be eating. This question refers to the quantity of food eaten and not the quality of the diet.
Qf. Your household ran out of food because of a lack of money or other resources?	This question refers to any experiences when there was actually no food in the household because they did not have money, other resources or any other means to get food.
Qg. You were hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money or other resources for food?	This question asks about the physical experience of feeling hungry, and specifically, feeling hungry and not being able to eat enough. It does not refer to special diets to lose weight or fasting for health or religious reasons.
Qh. You went without eating for a whole day because of a lack of money or other resources?	This question asks about a specific behaviour – not eating anything all day (because of a lack of money and other resources to get food).

6.3.3 How to use the FSS-QAT

Each question included in the FSS-QAT questionnaires has been carefully selected and tested. **It is important to ask each and every question in the questionnaire and not to skip questions.** Some questions may sound similar or aim at similar objectives. Field testing has shown that information needs to be gathered from different perspectives, as the interviewee may forget certain details, omit information he or she views as unimportant, or deliberately avoid uncomfortable topics. More questions allow the interviewer to gather more and better information about the real situation. Since food security is a complex topic, several questions need to be asked to be sure about the result and causes.

The FSS-QAT questionnaires were explained in Section 6.3.2. Print-ready versions for use in the field are included in Annex IX. It is important to keep in mind that the food security situation of smallholders and communities may differ between the harvest and growing seasons. In the case of annually harvested crops, usually more food is available during the harvest season and for a couple of months afterward than during the cultivation/growing period. During the growing season, food shortages may occur if last year's income has already been spent and food stocks are already diminished. Therefore, it is important to keep seasonal fluctuations at the community level in mind when evaluating changes to food security.

Under **no circumstances** shall the names of workers or smallholders who experience food insecurity be revealed to the farm or group management. Confidentiality must

be preserved to avoid potential job loss, exclusion from the group, shaming or other forms of reprisal.

It is important to judge whether the interviewee's answers can be trusted. Sometimes interviewees will not reply honestly because they are afraid to speak the truth (and thus casting everything in a deceptively positive light). In other cases, interviewees will be untruthful because they hope to receive benefits (e.g. smallholders who state they are hungry in hopes of outside support). This type of skewed information is a problem. In such cases, the auditor should carry out an additional interview with the same type of interviewee.

6.3.4 Interpreting results of the interviews to verify compliance and data entry

The [Table 13](#) below describes the types of findings an auditor can expect from using the questionnaires and how to interpret them to assess compliance with the respective FSS indicator. [Table 13](#) provides the auditor with guidance for making a decision regarding compliance or non-compliance. The auditor might choose to diverge slightly from these guidelines based on his/her personal assessment, field experience or by crosschecking different interviews. In such a case, justification for the decision taken shall be included in the audit report.

To assess compliance with FSS indicator 13.1.4, a difference is drawn between being food secure and experiencing mild or severe levels of food insecurity (Box 7).

Box 7: How to distinguish between mild and severe food insecurity

What is food secure? What are mild and severe levels of food insecurity in FSS-QAT?

To consider a worker or smallholder food secure, all FSS-QAT questions from 8b–8h (worker) or 19b–19h (smallholder) have to be answered with a “no”.

If the first question (concerning worry about food security; see questions 8a and 19a) is answered with “yes”, but the worker or smallholder still counts as food secure (as all other responses are “no”), this should be interpreted as a warning sign.

The food insecurity level is seen as “mild” when a worker responds to the FSS-QAT questions 8b and/or 8c with “yes”, i.e. that she/he could not eat

healthy/nutritious food or only ate a few kinds of food. The food insecurity level is seen as “mild” for smallholders when the interviewee responds to the FSS-QAT questions 19b and/or 19c with “yes”, i.e. that the interviewee could not eat healthy/nutritious food or only ate a few kinds of food.

The food insecurity level is classified as “severe” if the interviewee responds to one or more of the FSS-QAT questions 8d–8h (for workers) or 19d–19h (for smallholders) with a “yes”, i.e. either that he/she skipped a meal or ate less, was hungry and did not eat, and/or ran out of food in the household.

The interviews with external stakeholders are used to assess compliance with FSS indicator 17.1.2. The auditor is expected to evaluate the answers of the stakeholders and include in the questionnaire his/her judgment, i.e. whether the operation negatively affects the food security in the area of influence or not.

In all questionnaires, the auditor must fill in his/her judgment in the field “Interpretation of interview result” included in the section “For use by the auditor only”. Once the interviews are completed, WS6 (“SummFSS-QAT – Summary of the interview results”) in the Audit Procedure Tool must be completed.

Instructions for completing WS6 “SummFSS-QAT – Summary of the interview results”

Sum up the total number of workers and/or smallholders at each food security level, (i.e. food secure, mild/severe food insecurity) based on the FSS-QAT interview results and complete the respective fields in Part A of WS6. The worksheet automatically calculates the percentage of workers/smallholders in each group. An example of a completed WS6 is shown in the following table.

Table 13: Example of a Filled-in Audit Procedure Tool regarding the FSS-QAT Interview Results

FSS – Audit Procedure Tool –		
FSS-QAT - Summary of interview results		
V1.0		
Based on your interpretation of the interviews conducted with workers and/or smallholders (according to Section 6.3.4 of the handbook), enter the total number of workers/smallholders falling under each food security classification.		
Part A: Summary of Interview Results		
Food Security Category in FSS-QAT	Number of Workers	Number of Smallholders
Food secure	60	60
Mild food insecurity	2	6
Severe food insecurity	0	3
Total number of interviewed workers/smallholders	62	69
Percent of food secure workers/smallholders (%)	97%	87%
Percent of workers/smallholders with mild food insecurity (%)	3%	9%
Percent of workers/smallholders with severe food insecurity (%)	0%	4%
The percentages in the grey cells are calculated automatically based on the number of workers and smallholders in each food security category.		
Based on your interviews with external stakeholders, including your final judgement regarding each stakeholder and their perceptions of the impact exerted by the operation and farm management on food security in the area of influence, enter your findings below.		
Part B: Findings on Interviews with External Stakeholders		
	Number of External Stakeholders Answering "Yes"	Number of External Stakeholders Answering "No"
The operation negatively affects local food security	1	5
Place, Date, Signature of Auditor		

Using the interview results to assess compliance

The data calculated in WS6 are used to assess compliance with indicators 13.1.4 and 17.1.2. The instructions for the assessment are described in Table 14 below.

Table 14: Guideline for FSS-QAT Interview Results and Consequences for Indicators 13.1.4 and 17.1.2

Interviewee type and level of food security	Conformity with indicator	Corrective measures	Additional comments
Workers (any type, independent of the size of the agricultural operation, working for smallholders or larger farms)			
No worker indicates any level of food insecurity	Conformity with 13.1.4	N/A	
One or more workers indicate mild food insecurity	Two cases: Case 1: If 5% or less workers experience mild food insecurity: Conformity with 13.1.4. Case 2: If >5% of workers experience mild food insecurity: Non-conformity with 13.1.4	Case 1: Should be listed under audit observations and voluntary corrective measures apply. Case 2: Mandatory corrective measures need to be implemented following the rules of the standard (e.g. within 40 days)	
One or more workers indicate mild food insecurity	Non-conformity with 13.1.4	Corrective measures need to be implemented following the rules of the standard (e.g. within 40 days)	
Smallholders			
No food insecurity	Conformity with 13.1.4	N/A	
One or more smallholders indicate mild food insecurity	Two cases: Case 1: If 5% or less workers experience mild food insecurity: Conformity with 13.1.4. Case 2: If >5% of workers experience mild food insecurity: Non-conformity with 13.1.4	Case 1: Should be listed under audit observations and voluntary corrective measures apply Case 2: Mandatory corrective measures need to be implemented following the rules of the standard (e.g. within 40 days)	
One or more smallholders indicate severe food insecurity	Non-conformity with 13.1.4	Mandatory corrective measures need to be implemented following the rules of the standard (e.g. within 40 days)	Corrective measures should be carefully reviewed concerning whether they are sufficient, as severe food insecurity is difficult to solve. In the following audit, there should be a special focus on this issue.
Area of influence (independent of farm size and operation type)			
No external stakeholder reports negative changes in local food security due to the operation	Conformity with 17.1.2	N/A	

Interviewee type and level of food security	Conformity with indicator	Corrective measures	Additional comments
Only one external stakeholder reports that the operation negatively affects local food security	The auditor has to judge whether food security is affected by operation or not. The auditor decides about conformity with 17.1.2	Depends on auditor's decision.	Additional stakeholder interviews may help to reduce uncertainty. The auditor has to write a comment in the audit report justifying the decision. Please note: external stakeholders may indicate that the food security situation in the area of influence has deteriorated due to reasons outside the responsibility of the farm management (e.g. because of drought). In this case, the farm management is considered compliant with 17.1.2.
Two or more external stakeholder report that the operation negatively affects local food security	Non-conformity with 17.1.2	Case 1: If the auditor can clearly identify that the decrease in local food security is caused by the operation, mandatory corrective measures need to be implemented following the rules of the standard (e.g. 40 days). Case 2: If the auditor cannot clearly identify that the decrease in local food security is caused by the operation, the farm management must, as a mandatory corrective measure, engage an independent expert to conduct a causal analysis. If the farm management is found responsible in the study, the farm management has to take the necessary measures to address food security before the next audit.	Please note: external stakeholders may indicate that the food security situation in the area of influence has deteriorated due to reasons outside the responsibility of the farm management (e.g. because of drought). In this case, the farm management is considered compliant with 17.1.2.
Resettled communities (if applicable)			
No external stakeholder reports negative changes in local food security due to the resettlement	Conformity with 17.1.2	N/A	
Only one external stakeholder reports negative changes in local food security due to the resettlement	The auditor has to judge whether food security is affected by the operation or not. The auditor decides about conformity with 17.1.2	Depends on auditor's decision.	Additional stakeholder interviews may help to reduce uncertainty. The auditor has to write a comment in the audit report justifying the decision. Please note: external stakeholders may indicate that the food security situation in the area of influence has deteriorated due to reasons outside the responsibility of the farm management (e.g. because of drought). In this case, the farm management is considered compliant with 17.1.2.

Interviewee type and level of food security	Conformity with indicator	Corrective measures	Additional comments
Two or more external stakeholder report negative changes in local food security due to the resettlement		Case 1: If the auditor can clearly identify that the decrease in local food security is caused by the resettlement, mandatory corrective measures need to be implemented following the rules of the standard (e.g. 40 days). Case 2: If the auditor cannot clearly identify that the decrease in local food security is caused by the operation, the farm management must, as a mandatory corrective measure, engage an independent expert to conduct a causal analysis. If the farm management is found responsible in the study, the farm management has to take the necessary measures to address food security before the next audit.	Please note: external stakeholders may indicate that the food security situation in the area of influence has deteriorated due to reasons outside the responsibility of the farm management (e.g. because of drought). In this case, the farm management is considered compliant with 17.1.2.

6.3.5 Submission of completed questionnaires

The filled-out questionnaires must be scanned and attached to the audit report submitted to the certification body, but they should not be included in the audit report provided to the auditee (farm/group manager).

07 FSS Audit Report



Audit reports are used to communicate the results of the audit.

The FSS foresees two audit reports: a comprehensive report and a summary version.

7.1 COMPREHENSIVE AUDIT REPORT

The comprehensive audit report consists of the completed Audit Procedure Tool (based on the scope of the audit), the completed NaFSA Tool and the FSS-QAT questionnaires.

The comprehensive audit report is prepared by the on-site auditor and submitted to the responsible CB for internal review. Following its review, the CB sends the approved report to the relevant sustainability standards system. Once the sustainability standards system has checked the completeness and correctness of the report, FSS compliance can be granted. It is up to the sustainability standards system to decide how FSS compliance is to be communicated as part of the sustainability certificate/assurance statement. In any event, the FSS summary audit report, including the respective audit details, must be made publicly available – for example, at the homepage of the sustainability standards system.

One comprehensive audit report must be prepared for each farm that is audited on-site. When large/medium-size farms are audited as part of a sample of farms, the rule of one audit report per farm also applies. When auditing a smallholder group, a single comprehensive audit report can be prepared for all smallholders in the sample. Only the basic information contained in WS2 must be provided for each smallholder included in the sample. If a large/medium size farm and a group of smallholders are audited together under one farm management/group manager, the auditor must prepare one audit report for each smallholder group and one for each large/medium size farm audited.

The copy of the comprehensive audit report submitted to the auditee (farm management/group manager) **shall not include** the FSS-QAT questionnaires.

7.2 SUMMARY AUDIT REPORT

The FSS summary audit report is a shortened and summarized version of the comprehensive audit report. It provides an overview of the results of the audit for a farm or smallholder group. The summary audit report is generated by the auditor directly after the audit and then sent to the CB for verification. Following its review, the CB sends the approved summary audit report to the relevant sustainability standards system. The summary audit report has to be issued for every user of a sustainability standards system audited against the FSS – that is, for each individually audited farm or smallholder group. Similar to the comprehensive audit report, it is prepared for all smallholders included in the sample audit as a single report for the group, with the exception of the basic information provided in WS2, which must be provided for each smallholder in the sample.

The summary audit report serves to further enhance and support the transparency of FSS compliance statement and functions as a source of information for stakeholders. The summary audit reports shall be made publicly available – for example, at the homepage of the sustainability standards system using the FSS.

The FSS summary audit report shall include at least the following information:

- Agricultural operation name, address, legal form (e.g. Limited Liability Company or Cooperative), number of farms and size (number of employees and revenue; in the case of smallholders, only the estimated number of workers by type of employment, i.e. permanent, temporary, seasonal or casual)

Information that shall be included if not already provided in the regular audit report of the sustainability standards system:

- Certification number of the sustainability system
- CB name and auditor name(s) and contact details
- Date of audit
- Period of validity for the audit finding (start and end date)
- Year of first FSS audit
- Description of scope certified
- General description of potential compliance issues
- Results of the NaFSA tool
- Description of the area of influence, including a map and a list of communities in the area
- Total number of farms under FSS
- Sample size (for group audit only)
- Number of interviewed farmers, workers and stakeholders based on FSS-QAT
- Audit results: number of FSS requirements assessed (incl. number of not applicable indicators), number of non-conformities and corrected non-conformities, number of mandatory corrective and voluntary improvement measures, implementation status, best practices

The FSS does not request a specific format for the summary audit report nor does it define how FSS information is to be integrated into the existing audit reports of the sustainability standards system. The summary audit report shall indicate overall compliance or non-compliance with the FSS. The CB is responsible for the correctness of the information provided in this document.



GLOSSARY

Term	Definition/Explanation
Accreditation Body	Organization responsible for assessing and accrediting certification bodies in line with ISO Guide 17011:2004. Such accreditation should be done by members of the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) by the bodies referred to in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 765/2008 or by bodies having a bilateral agreement with the European Co-operation for Accreditation.
Auditee	The entity that is subject to an audit and is seeking or holding a certificate/assurance statement.
Area of influence	The area affected by farm operations that is beyond the production site. It may be upstream and/or downstream of the production site and include the wider catchment, watershed, coastal/ocean zone, airshed, soil structure and horizons or buffer zones; an offsite resettlement zone; and areas that are culturally significant or used for livelihood activities. The area of influence is identified via methodologies used in environmental and social impact assessments.
Assurance statement	Document issued to confirm that specific requirements related to a product, process, system, person or body are fulfilled. Equivalent to a certificate issued by a certification system.
Biomass	The mass of all living organisms in a particular area, per unit of surface or volume. In the context of the FSS, biomass refers to any agricultural product or residues for any purpose, i.e. food, feed, energy, fiber or biomaterial.
Certification Body (CB)	An independent body that is recognized by the competent authority (national public authority) or by an accreditation body to conduct audits according to the sustainability standard system and cooperates with this system.
Certification system	A certification system is a standard system (see definition below in the glossary) with an assurance program that results in the issuance of a certificate following an audit. Certification systems are mainly developed using a multi-stakeholder approach and include independent third-party verification of the sustainability criteria, stipulated in the system documents. The whole certification process is usually based on accreditation standards (e.g. ISO 17021, 17065). These standards ensure separation between evaluation and certification.
Community	A local group of people living and/or working within the area of influence of the operation, including traditional temporary resource users such as hunters and gatherers, pastoralists and traditional fishermen.
Contract Farmer	Farmers selling and delivering produced raw materials according to purchase contracts (including oral agreements) with downstream actors in the supply chain (e.g. first gathering points, cooperatives, processors). Contract farmers are usually provided with inputs (physical inputs, loans and extension services) for the establishment and maintenance of their crops. In return, they are obliged to sell their harvests to the downstream actor, from which borrowed capital and interest are recovered. Contract farmers can have large or medium size farms or be smallholder farmers.
Evidence/ Documents required	Documentation, data or in-field observations gathered by the auditor to support the finding of conformity or non-conformity with each indicator.
Farm	An agricultural operation (small, medium or large size farm, including plantations and estates) where agricultural crops, livestock or trees are cultivated, or where agricultural crop residues from cultivation occur. The entire land area of the farm (agricultural land, pasture, forest and other land areas), including any land that is owned, leased or rented, is subject to FSS verification.
Farm management	The farm management is the legal entity or natural person that owns or rents the land and is the contracting party for the workers. The farm management is in charge of managing the production site and corresponding operation subject to an FSS audit. The farm management is responsible for demonstrating compliance with the requirements contained in the FSS. In the context of smallholders, the role of the farm management for FSS purposes is assumed in part by the smallholder and in part by the group manager.

Term	Definition/Explanation
Food access	The Right to Adequate Food is realized when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement (jobs, self-employment, pensions, safety nets, etc. or land and productive resources to produce their own food).
Food availability	In the context of the Human Right to Food, availability refers to the availability of food of a quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of individuals, free from adverse substances, and acceptable within a given culture, supplied through domestic production or imports and, if necessary, by food aid.
Food safety	Assurance that food will not cause harm to the consumer when it is prepared and/or is eaten according to its intended use, i.e. the avoidance of food-borne illnesses due to physical, chemical or biological contamination. Food safety issues can affect health directly by making people ill (primary disease pathway) and indirectly by influencing people to change their food consumption behaviour (secondary consumption pathway).
Food security	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. ¹⁰
Food stability	To be food secure, a population, household or individual must have access to adequate food at all times. They should not risk losing access to food or water as a consequence of sudden shocks (e.g. an economic or climatic crisis) or cyclical events (e.g. seasonal food insecurity). The concept of stability can therefore refer to both the availability and access pillars of food security.
FSS – Quick Assessment Tool (FSS-QAT)	A tool for quickly determining whether the food security of workers, farmers or communities is threatened by the activities of the operation.
FSS Audit Procedure Tool	The Audit Procedure Tool is the primarily tool used during an FSS on-site audit. Ideally, it should be integrated into the audit procedure provided by the sustainability standards system. It is an Excel Workbook that is subdivided into nine sections.
Group manager	The person, group of people or organization responsible for managing the group and ensuring compliance with the FSS by all group members. This can be a processing unit (mill, ginnery, etc.), an organization, a cooperative or an individual farm. The group manager holds the certificate/assurance statement for the group and has to be audited within a group certification/verification process.
Living income	Living income is the net annual income required for a household in a particular place to afford a decent standard of living for all members of that household. Elements of a decent standard of living include: food, water, housing, education, healthcare, transport, clothing, and other essential needs, including provision for unexpected events. ¹¹
Living wage	The remuneration received for a standard workweek (or work month) by a worker in a particular place sufficient to afford a decent standard of living for the worker and her or his family. Elements of a decent standard of living include food, water, housing, education, healthcare, transport, clothing, and other essential needs, including provision for unexpected events. ¹²
Managing staff	Employees working in departments such as human resources, marketing, finance, etc. on a higher working level than farm/production workers and reporting directly to the operations management. The category of managing staff also includes the general manager, business manager or other individuals who exercise operational or managerial control over, or who directly or indirectly conduct, the day-to-day operation of an organization.
National Food Security Assessment Tool (FSS-NAFSA)	A tool used to generate information on the national food security situation in a given country and to identify factors that might negatively impact food security, the realization of the Human Right to Food or compliance with FSS criteria during an audit.

¹⁰ FAO (1996/2004).

¹¹ ISEAL Alliance (2018).

¹² ISEAL Alliance (2018).

Term	Definition/Explanation
Non-conformity	An identified occurrence of non-conformance or non-fulfillment of a requirement, identified as part of an assessment/audit. Incidents of non-conformity need to be corrected by a specific date or within a determined time frame, as defined by the sustainability standard, otherwise no FSS compliance is possible. Synonym: non-compliance. ¹³
Nutrition	Nutrition is the intake of food, considered in relation to the body's dietary needs. Good nutrition – an adequate, well balanced diet – is a cornerstone of good health. Poor nutrition can lead to reduced immunity, increased susceptibility to disease, impaired physical and mental development, and reduced productivity.
Operation	Encompasses all activities connected with agricultural production at a given production site. It also includes activities outside the production site if they are also directly connected to agricultural production (e.g. transport of harvested products, water intake, etc.).
Piece rate	Piece rate pay occurs when workers are paid by the unit performed (e.g. the number of tee shirts or bricks produced) instead of being paid on the basis of time spent on the job. ¹⁴
Production site	The geographical location at which the physical production of the agricultural commodity takes place, e.g. farmland, as defined through geocoordinates and/or a physical address.
Resettled community	A local community that is relocated or moved to another area, region or part of the country due to any activity connected with the agricultural operation of the farm.
Restricted timeframes	Specific time frames to constrain the time of day and/or season in a year for the application of pesticides, e.g. only in the early morning or late evening to avoid solar radiation; not in the dry season; low lateral winds for effective application; only when specific temperature or humidity conditions are given.
Right to Adequate Food	The Right to Adequate Food was first formally recognized as a human right by the United Nations in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948, as a part of the right to a decent standard of living. ¹⁵ It is further defined in Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1976).
Right to Food Guidelines	The “Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security”, also known as the Right to Food Guidelines, is a document that was adopted by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations in 2004, with the aim of guiding states to implement the right to food. While not legally binding, it sets forth states' obligations to the right to food under international law.
Smallholder	A farmer that produces agricultural products on a small scale according to the definition used by the sustainability standards system, under which framework the FSS is included or added on.
Self-declaration	A signed statement issued by a farm, on behalf of itself, to attest its self-determined conformance with a standard required for an audit. All types of farms seeking verification under the FSS have to provide a self-declaration. The self-declaration reports the name and trading name of farm, address, size of the farm, type of produced crop, statement on compliance with the FSS criteria and grants permission for an external audit.
Sexual and other forms of harassment	Behaviour of one person or group towards a person that annoys, troubles, embarrasses or humiliates that person. Harassment, whether sexual or otherwise, includes any systematic and/or continuing actions and behaviors that cause mental or emotional suffering, including threats, demands, insults, unwanted contact without a reasonable purpose, offensive sexual attention or suggestions, or unwanted touching.

¹³ (ISEAL Alliance, 2018).

¹⁴ (ILO, 2020).

¹⁵ (FAO, Right to adequate food, 2017c).

Term	Definition/Explanation
Sustainability standard	A standard that addresses the social, environmental or economic practices of a defined entity, or a combination of these. ¹⁶ For practical purposes, the term “sustainability standard” is sometimes used in this document to refer to the whole standard system (see definition below).
Standard system	The collective of organizations responsible for the activities involved in the implementation of a standard, including standard-setting, capacity building, assurance, labeling, monitoring and evaluation.
Verification	Confirmation, through the provision of objective evidence, that specified requirements, criteria and indicators have been fulfilled. ¹⁷
Verification guidance	Information to guide and assist the auditor in verifying whether the requirements of each FSS criteria and indicator have been fulfilled.
Voluntary Guidelines on Tenure (VGGT)	The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT) promote secure tenure rights and equitable access to land, fisheries and forests with respect to all forms of tenure: public, private, communal, indigenous, customary and informal (FAO 2012).
Worker	The FSS understands “worker” as any person working on the operation, excluding managerial or administrative staff. This definition includes those engaged in agricultural activities and in ancillary tasks, e.g. cooks, security guards and drivers. Workers can be permanent, temporary, seasonal or casual. The definition of permanent and temporary workers varies from country to country. For the purpose of the FSS, the following definitions based on ILO are used: – Permanent worker/employee: Worker holding an explicit or implicit employment contract of unlimited duration which gives him or her basic remuneration that is not directly dependent upon the revenue of the unit for which he or she works. – Temporary employment: Contractual employment arrangements between one employer and one employee characterized by a limited duration or a pre-specified event to end the contract. – Seasonal workers are employed for fixed but limited periods related to fluctuations in demand for labor at different times of the year. – Casual worker: A worker who works occasionally and intermittently. Such workers are employed for a specific number of hours, days or weeks. They are not normally entitled to the same terms and conditions of employment as ordinary workers (e.g. they would not usually get sick or holiday leave). Workers can be employed or self-employed. They can have been contracted directly by the farm management or through subcontractors.
Young worker	Person aged 15–18 years for whom certain rules apply regarding working hours and the type of work to be carried out (see ILO Convention 138).

¹⁶ ISEAL Alliance (2014).

¹⁷ ISEAL Alliance (2018).

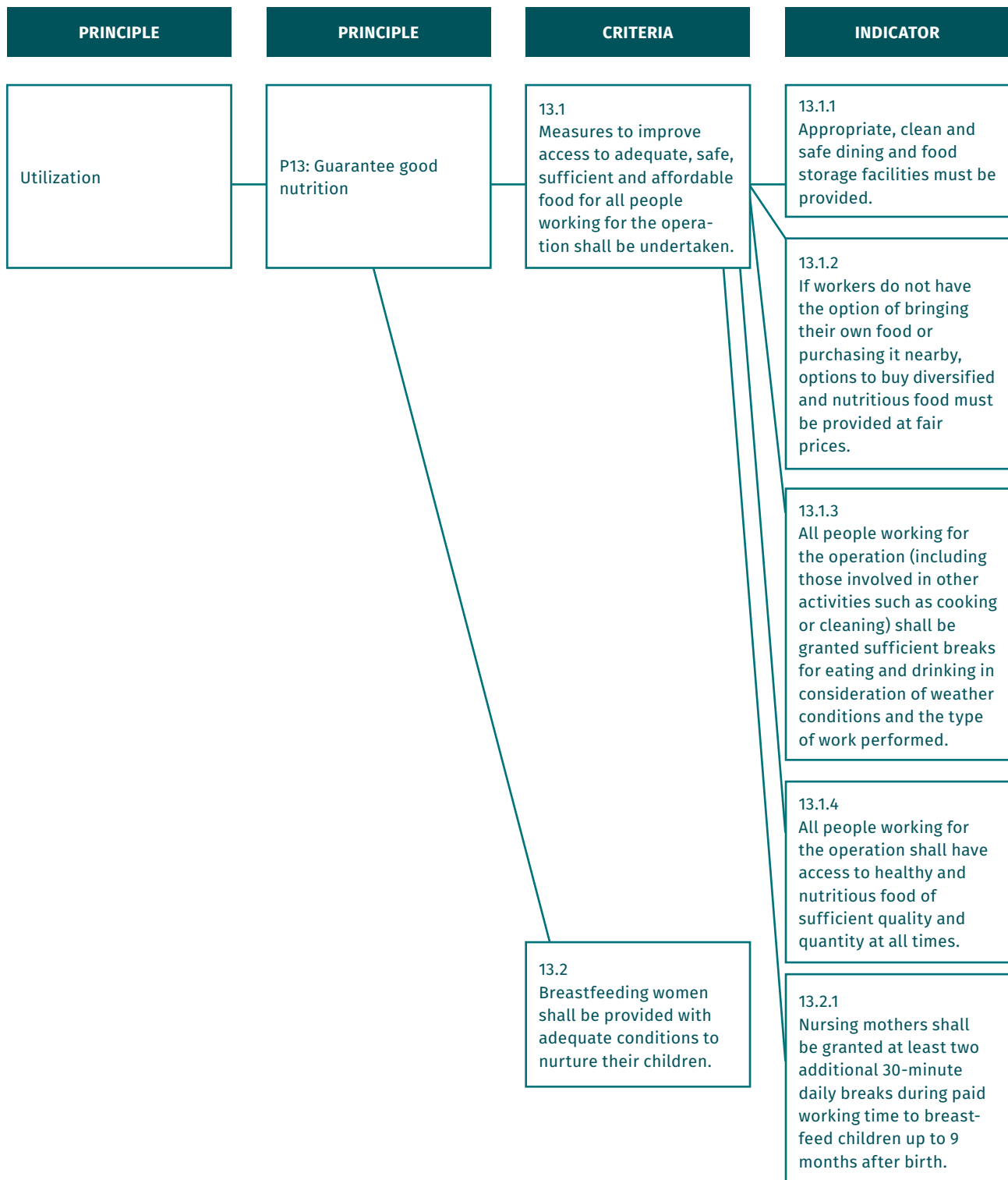
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ANNEX

Annex I: The structure of the FSS explained¹⁸



¹⁸ Based on FSS Principles, Criteria and Indicators (2020).

Annex II: List of FSS indicators¹⁹

No.	FSS indicator
1.1.1	A documented system for ensuring legal compliance by the farm management/group manager, contract/smallholder farmers, service providers and contractors shall be implemented and maintained.
1.1.2	All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall be aware of the law and regulations and comply with them.
1.1.3	A system to ensure the prevention of all forms of bribery, conflicts of interest and fraudulent practices shall be implemented and maintained.
1.2.1	A written policy, in a language understood by all parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities, shall make a commitment to human rights, including the human right to food, in all operations and transactions, and this policy shall be made available and communicated to all parties involved in the operation.
2.1.1	The management staff shall be aware of the overall food-security situation in the country.
2.1.2	All relevant and applicable national and local strategies connected with food security shall be well known and not contradicted.
3.1.1	Natural and human-made disaster risks in the area of influence of the operation have been identified. Relevant governmental emergency/contingency plans are known.
3.1.2	A contingency and risk mitigation plan for the farm and its area of influence has been developed and implemented. This plan shall be in line with existing government plans and appropriate for addressing local risks.
4.1.1	Measures to support local value creation and close income gaps in the area of influence of the operation shall be identified in a consultation process with relevant stakeholders and implemented.
4.2.1	The time and effort required for local communities to access food markets must not be negatively influenced by farm's operations.
5.1.1	A business or management plan shall be available, implemented, and regularly reviewed and updated, and shall include plans and measures to support the long-term economic viability of the operation.
5.2.1	Written contracts/agreements formulated in a language understood by all parties shall be in place and co-signed copies shall be made available to all parties. In the case of group contractual arrangements (e.g. cooperatives), all members shall have a copy. Agreement/contracts shall clearly define: – price/quality parameters, – exit arrangements, and – compensation measures in the event of farm/group manager bankruptcy.
5.2.2	The prices paid to contract farmers/smallholders must be fair. In the case of smallholders, the prices shall be based on living income estimates, when they are available for the region. If no living income estimates are available, prices shall be set following the FAO Guiding Principles for Responsible Contract Farming.
5.2.3	Agreed-upon payments to farmers/smallholders shall be made in a transparent and timely manner.
6.1.1	Workers shall have written employment contracts. Employment contracts shall be in a language understood by all parties, signed by the worker and employer, and include at least the following: job description; working hours; pay rate; overtime regulations; social benefit entitlements and deductions; annual paid leave; maternity leave; protection of the worker from loss of pay in the case of illness, disability or accident; and a notice period for termination that is the same as the notice period for the employer.
6.2.1	All workers shall receive at least a living wage in line with the estimations for the country or region made by the Global Living Wage Coalition (if available). If no living wage has been calculated for the country or region, then wages shall at least fulfil legal regulations (government regulated minimum wages), industry minimum standards or collective bargaining agreements (whichever sets the highest standard).
6.2.2	If payments are calculated by piecework (i.e. based on production rather than hours) or by task, the pay rate must allow workers to earn at least the wage set in line with Indicator 6.2.1, based on regular (legal) working hours under average conditions. Information about this pay rate must be transparent and available to all workers and worker's organizations.
6.2.3	Working hours, leave and additional benefits shall comply with, or exceed, applicable statutory regulations, sector minimum standards or collective bargaining agreements (the conditions most beneficial to workers should apply).
6.2.4	It shall be demonstrated that no deductions from wages are made unless they are permitted by national laws or fixed by a collective bargaining agreement. If deductions from wages are made for any provided service, the amounts deducted must be fair and in line with the actual costs incurred, and deductions shall not be used as a disciplinary mechanism.
6.2.5	It shall be demonstrated that workers are not requested to bring their own protective equipment, uniforms or tools.
6.2.6	Workers shall be paid at regularly scheduled intervals (at least monthly) and in a legal tender.

¹⁹ See FSS (2020a).

No.	FSS indicator
6.2.7	Payments shall be documented with a payslip containing all relevant information and in a language understood by all parties.
6.2.8	Permanent employment relationships shall be used for all core work performed in the operation. Temporary, seasonal and casual (day labour) must be limited to jobs that are temporary, seasonal or occasional/intermittent, and not used to avoid the obligations of permanent employment.
6.3.1	An equal opportunities policy that identifies relevant/affected groups shall be made available and publicly communicated.
6.3.2	Awareness shall be raised regarding equal opportunity as part of regular training activities.
6.3.3	Workers shall not be subjected to any form of discrimination in hiring, pay, benefits, access to training, promotion, termination, retirement or any other aspect of employment, based on race, color, gender, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, marital status, union membership, age or any other condition that could give rise to discrimination.
6.3.4	Contract farmers/smallholders shall not be subjected to discrimination in contracts, payments, access to training or any other aspect of the business relationship, based on race, color, gender, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, marital status, union membership, age or any other condition that could give rise to discrimination.
6.4.1	A health and safety policy appropriate to the type and size of the operation, and which applies to all people working for the operation, shall be adopted and follow ILO Convention 184 (Safety and Health in Agriculture) or national laws (if they are more stringent).
6.4.2	All people working for the operation shall be provided with health and safety training specific and relevant to the task performed. Training shall cover: – Work-related health and safety risks – Preventative measures for minimising those risks – Work-related risks to the environment and/or society – The proper transport, storage and handling of hazardous substances and waste – Accident and emergency procedures and measures, including the interpretation of labels, markings, signs, and other safety relevant audio and/or visual signals (see Indicator 6.4.3)
6.4.3	Emergency and accident procedures appropriate for the operation shall be made available and periodically updated based on records of work-related accidents (see Indicator 6.4.4).
6.4.4	Records of all work-related accidents shall be kept.
6.4.5	First aid and emergency response material shall be available in sufficient quantity (i.e. readily available and accessible to workers) and in sufficient quality (i.e. up-to-date, periodically inspected and appropriate to address relevant hazards and risks) at all sites, including mobile facilities and in the vicinity of agricultural sites. Designated people on the farm shall be knowledgeable as to the presence and use of such equipment.
6.4.6	Personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be provided to all people working for the operation to protect them from all occupational health and safety hazards associated with their respective tasks (e.g. use of agrochemicals or power tools).
6.5.1	A policy recognising freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining shall be made available and explained to all workers in languages that they understand. If the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining is restricted under domestic law, alternative means of independent and free association and bargaining for all personnel shall be provided.
6.5.2	Workers shall have the right to establish and join worker organizations based on their own free choice, without influence or interference by the farm management/group manager/smallholder.
6.5.3	Worker organizations shall operate without interference or influence by farm management, the farm owner or group manager.
6.5.4	Members of workers' organizations shall be provided with time needed to fulfil their tasks, whether during or outside regular working hours. Workers exercising this right should not be discriminated against or suffer repercussions.
6.6.1	All work shall be performed voluntarily and the following practices shall be prohibited: – Retention of identity documents or passports – Payment of recruitment or training fees – Contract substitution – Involuntary overtime – Lack of freedom of workers to quit – Penalties for termination of employment – Debt bondage – Withholding of wages – Restrictions to freedom of movement

No.	FSS indicator
6.7.1	A formal policy for the protection of children, including child-labor prohibition and remediation provisions, shall be in place and implemented.
6.7.2	Any type of paid or unpaid work by a child under the age of 15 shall be prohibited. The only exception shall be work by children on family smallholdings within own community, and this shall only acceptable under adult supervision and when it does not interfere with the child's schooling or put his or her health at risk.
6.7.3	Young persons shall only be employed in non-hazardous work, and protective restrictions shall be in place for such work.
7.1.1	A training and capacity building program that is addressed at all farmers involved in the operation shall be implemented and available. This program must be developed in consultation with farmers to ensure its contents are tailored to their needs.
8.1.1	All people working for the operation shall have sufficient and adequate medical care. Their families shall also have access to medical care if this is required by domestic law.
8.1.2	All people working for the operation shall have access to appropriate healthcare in the event of work-related illness or injury. These individuals shall have access to free transportation to the nearest hospital or on-site medical facility during working hours. In the event permanent on-site medical support is provided, equipment and training should be adequate to deal with accidents and acute poisoning. All people working for the operation shall have occupational accident insurance coverage.
8.1.3	A policy shall be in place regarding regular sick leave and leave caused by employment injury. This policy must ensure that workers are protected from being dismissed during temporary sick leave. It must also guarantee the worker some form of income during sick leave. Sick leave should not count towards annual holiday leave. The policy should, at a minimum, adhere to domestic regulations.
8.2.1	All people working for the operation shall have a provident fund or pension scheme. If national legislation has more stringent requirements, then this legislation must be adhered to. If pension arrangements cannot be provided to a subset of workers, e.g. migrant or temporary/seasonal workers, these workers must receive equivalent compensation.
9.1.1	Existing land rights and land-use rights, including formal, informal and customary rights, shall be assessed prior to the first audit, including FSS verification. Such an assessment shall also be conducted prior to acquisition/rental of land, and – in the case of contract farming or group certification – when new contract farmers or group members are added.
9.1.2	It shall be demonstrated that there are legal, customary land-rights or land-use rights for the operation. For the period from 2012 onward, it must be demonstrated that the land-rights or land-use rights were obtained based on 'free, prior and informed consent' (FPIC) and following negotiated agreement with affected parties.
9.1.3	Land under legitimate dispute shall not be used for operations until such disputes have been settled through free, prior and informed consent and negotiated agreements with affected parties. Maps of an appropriate scale showing the extent of recognised legal, customary or use rights must be developed in a participatory process that involves affected parties (including neighbouring communities, when applicable, and relevant authorities).
9.1.4	Traditional and customary land use rights shall be respected. Against this backdrop, the use of the land by pastoralists, indigenous people, artisanal fishers and other comparable users must be allowed. This shall exclude any illegal hunting, illegal fishing or illegal collection of products.
9.1.5	There has been no forced or involuntary physical or economic displacement, resettlement or relinquishment of land rights for the purpose of agricultural production. Extra-judicial intimidation or harassment by contracted security forces shall be also prohibited. There shall be no evidence that the operation has instigated violence.
9.1.6	In any negotiations, all relevant information shall be available to all affected parties in appropriate forms and languages, including impact assessments, proposed benefit sharing and associated legal arrangements.
9.1.7	When negotiating communities' land or land-use rights, these communities must be represented through institutions or representatives of their own choosing, including legal counsel.
10.1.1	Downstream and groundwater users shall be identified and existing formal or customary water rights determined. The potential impacts of the operation on such rights shall be evaluated and documented.
10.1.2	Water rights must be obtained through legal means. All existing formal or customary water rights, including the rights of pastoralists, indigenous people, artisanal fishers and other comparable users shall be respected and protected. Free prior and informed consent shall be obtained from impacted parties prior to the acquisition of new or existing rights.
10.1.3	Water resources under legitimate dispute shall not be used until such disputes have been settled through agreement with affected stakeholders based free, prior and informed consent.

No.	FSS indicator
10.2.1	Water resources potentially affected both within and outside of the farm shall be identified, and key risks and challenges shall be assessed.
10.3.1	Measures to contain effluents and avoid runoff and leaching, as well as to prevent pollution and siltation of surface and ground water, shall be implemented.
10.3.2	The quality of potentially affected water bodies and of all drinking water sources in the area of influence of the operation shall be periodically monitored based on the results of a risk assessment (see Indicator 10.2.1). The results must show that water quality is being maintained or improved.
10.4.1	Situations of water scarcity shall not be created and long-term water availability shall not be affected.
10.4.2	Important water-related areas, including wetlands, affected by the operation shall be protected, restored (if damaged) and always maintained.
10.4.3	Impacts on water availability within the area of influence of the operation, including water sources for human consumption, shall be assessed and regularly monitored.
10.4.4	When irrigation is performed, effective action shall be taken to ensure that water is efficiently used and that water scarcity is not aggravated (see Indicator 10.4.1).
11.1.1	Soil erosion shall be prevented or minimized through the design of the agricultural production site and sustainable practices shall be used to enhance soil health.
11.1.2	Practices to protect the soil structure, including the prevention of compaction, as well as to maintain or enhance soil organic matter at the production site, shall be implemented.
11.1.3	Practices to maintain and improve the soil nutrient balance while taking into account soil conditions and crop needs and reduce nitrate pollution shall be implemented.
11.1.4	Producers of annual crops shall practise crop rotation.
11.1.5	Integrated Pest Management techniques (IPM) that are adequate for the target crop to reduce the development of pest populations and minimise risks to human health and the environment shall be implemented and monitored.
11.1.6	Records of pesticide use shall be maintained, including, at a minimum, documentation of the reason for use; the name of the pest treated; the product designation, including active ingredients; the amount applied per hectare; the location, date, and target crop; and the number of applications.
11.2.1	None of the chemicals recorded in the WHO's 1a, 1b and 2 lists, the Rotterdam Convention or in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants shall be used. Pesticides included in the PAN list of highly hazardous pesticides under the categories H330 (fatal if inhaled) and/or with long term effects according to the EU GHS classification are also prohibited.
11.2.2	Manufacturer's safety instructions for the storage, handling, use and disposal of chemicals shall be followed.
11.2.3	Pesticides shall be used in accordance with proven methods that minimize risk and do not harm the environment, communities, people working for the operation, women or children. No pesticides shall be used in or near water sources or protected areas.
11.2.4	No work with pesticides shall be undertaken by young workers or pregnant or breast-feeding women. These individuals must be offered alternative work.
12.1.1	Accommodations (including collectively used accommodations like dormitories and living areas), sanitary facilities (e.g. toilets, portable WCs, showers) and kitchen/dining/food storage areas, provided to people working for the operation and their families shall be designed, built and maintained to meet basic needs, to comply with legal requirements, and to ensure safe and healthy conditions. Toilet paper or bidet shower and soap shall be made available in all sanitary facilities.
12.2.1	All people working for the operations shall have access to potable water.
13.1.1	Appropriate, clean and safe dining and food storage facilities must be provided.
13.1.2	If workers do not have the option of bringing their own food or purchasing it nearby, options to buy diversified and nutritious food must be provided at fair prices.
13.1.3	All people working for the operation (including those involved in other activities such as cooking or cleaning) shall be granted sufficient breaks for eating and drinking in consideration of weather conditions and the type of work performed.

No.	FSS indicator
13.1.4	All people working for the operation shall have access to healthy and nutritious food of sufficient quality and quantity at all times.
13.2.1	Nursing mothers shall be granted at least two additional 30-minute daily breaks during paid working time to breastfeed children up to 9 months after birth.
14.1.1	A documented system for dealing with complaints and grievances voiced by workers, contract farmers, communities and stakeholders shall be implemented and maintained. The system shall allow resolution of disputes in an effective, timely and appropriate manner while also ensuring the anonymity of complainants and whistle-blowers, when requested. This mechanism shall have the following characteristics: – The mechanisms are communicated and made easily accessible to workers, contract farmers, communities and stakeholders. Special consideration shall be given to illiterate people. – Procedures shall be in place to ensure that anyone can confidentially communicate grievances or complaints without risk of reprisal or intimidation. – The system shall ensure anonymity of complainants and whistle-blowers – The dispute-resolution mechanism shall be based on negotiations between affected parties and decisions shall be agreed to by the vast majority of negatively affected workers/contract farmers/community members/stakeholders. – Any complaint or grievance must be acknowledged and dealt with in an effective and timely manner. – Records of all complaints and grievances must be kept, including steps taken to address them and the outcome of the process.
15.1.1	All workers shall receive the same payment and benefits for the same work scope, regardless of gender.
15.1.2	All women shall have the possibility to articulate and communicate their concerns and ideas through a dedicated gender representative or committee. Confidentiality must be granted if desired.
15.1.3	In all stakeholder consultation processes, including the FPIC, women must be appropriately included (proportionally represented) and their voices equally heard and respected.
15.1.4	A policy to prevent sexual harassment and all other forms of harassment or violence shall be implemented and communicated at all levels of the workforce, including contract farmers and service providers. This shall include a procedure concerning where complaints are received, how complaints are handled, which remedial actions are performed and how the process is documented.
15.1.5	Workers shall be granted at least eight weeks of maternity leave with compensation consistent with national laws or not less than 2/3 of regular pay, whichever is higher, not including annual leave, and in the absence of any loss or privilege on account of such leave. The employment contract of a woman during her pregnancy or maternity leave shall not be terminated, except on grounds unrelated to the pregnancy or birth of the child. National legislation must be adhered to if it provides more stringent requirements.
15.1.6	Policies must be in place to ensure that women working for the farm operation are protected while pregnant. This includes specific procedures relating to their safety, such as protection against physical, chemical or biological agents that could cause harm. Pregnant women shall not work excessive hours and shall be provided with rest periods as appropriate. Legal requirements have priority, if they exceed the requirements laid down in this standard.
16.1.1	A training program that focuses on improving food and nutrition security shall be provided to all people working for the operation. At a minimum, this training must cover proper nutrition and healthy diets. Other aspects of the training should be determined in collaboration with the target group.
16.1.2	In regions with a high risk of food insecurity, training programs for communities within the area of influence shall be supported. These programs shall focus on improving food and nutrition security. The type of support provided must be defined in consultation with local communities and/or authorities.
16.2.1	It shall be demonstrated that all children living directly at the agricultural operation or in accommodations provided to workers and their families attend at least primary school.
17.1.1	Awareness for the food security situation in the area of influence of the operation must be demonstrated. Any change in the food security must be registered and causes identified.
17.1.2	The food and nutrition security situation of communities in the area of influence of the operation does not deteriorate due to the operation.
17.2.1	Prior to starting or expanding operations, potential impact of planned activities on local and national food security must be assessed. It must be demonstrated that these operations will not have negative effects on national food security. Mitigation measures to ensure that local food security does not deteriorate within the area of influence of the operation must be implemented.

Annex III: Definition of a “Recognized Expert” and Judging Expertise for Determining the Area of Influence

Definition of “recognized expert”

A “recognized expert” is an independent third party who is not part of the farm/group management or communities that may be located in the area of influence. The individual should be well-educated in social or environmental sciences with at least 2 years of working experience. The individual should be able to prove his or her expertise with relevant educational certifications and/or degrees. The expert should have knowledge about the area/country in question and sector in which the farm/group of farms operate so that he or she can carry out a suitable assessment to determine the area of influence using a sound methodology.

The auditor can assess the reliability of the expert by verifying his or her certificates/degrees and working experience. The auditor must know common methods for defining an area of influence be able to assess the chosen methodology, including its application and results. The auditor must decide if the results are verifiably correct and valid.

Annex IV: Example FSS Self-Declaration for Large/Medium Size Farms and Smallholders

Print-ready versions of both self-declarations are provided in the following pages.

Important:

- This document must be **provided by farms** audited under the FSS.
- When auditing a group of farms, the self-declaration should be completed by **each individual member of the group**, not only by the farms included in the sample.
- This self-declaration should be completed, signed and presented directly to the auditor or forwarded to the group manager (in the case of group audits).

Name of farmer	
Trading name of farm	
Address of the farm management (street, street no., postal code, place, country)	
Geo-coordinates of farm management (latitude and longitude in decimal degrees)	
Total size of farm (in ha)	
Cultivated crops (list all cultivated crops, not only the crops to be delivered as sustainable)	
Land title (yes/no), type of title	

Please mark the applicable box:

No.	Required documentation and information	Confirmed	
		Yes	No
1	All farm activities comply with the FSS criteria and indicators.		
2	Documentation is available to prove compliance with FSS requirements. The relevant documents are available at the FSS website (www.foodsecuritystandard.org) and from the sustainability standards system cooperating with the FSS.		
3	There is compliance with all 17 FSS principles.		
4	Good governance is applied, and the rule of law is respected.		
5	National food security and development strategies are respected.		
6	Natural and human-made disaster risks are mitigated.		
7	Market access and contribution to local development is ensured.		
8	Long-term farm profitability and fair business conduct is safeguarded.		
9	Labor rights are respected and good working conditions ensured.		
10	A training and capacity building program is provided.		
11	Social safety nets are offered.		
12	Land rights are respected.		
13	Water rights are respected, and it is ensured that water quality and availability are maintained or improved.		
14	Sustainable agricultural practices are implemented.		
15	A setting for the safe utilization of food is provided.		
16	Good nutrition is guaranteed.		
17	Complaint and grievance mechanisms are provided.		
18	Women's rights are respected, and gender equity ensured.		
19	Awareness for nutrition is raised and child education supported.		
20	Local food security is assessed and monitored.		

I hereby confirm that all legal obligations are being met and that my operations on all owned and leased land comply with FSS requirements*. Furthermore, I grant permission for auditors from certification bodies or the FSS to verify compliance with FSS requirements at my premises.

Evidence of the above-mentioned requirements are available and can be provided during the audit and upon request. In the event certain requirements are not met (e.g. documentation is not available or complete), I am obligated to additionally fill in the separate non-conformity list and to define corrective actions.

Place, Date: _____

Signature (farmer): _____

FSS Self-declaration**Large/medium size farm**

Name of farmer

Address of the farm management
(street, street no., postal code, place, country)

No.	Non-conformity/finding	Corrective action	Deadline for implementation	Confirmed	
				Yes	No
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					

The identified non-conformities must be corrected before the FSS audit takes place.
Otherwise this self-declaration is not valid.

Place, Date: _____

Signature (farmer): _____

(Please ensure that this page is filled in and signed if there are non-conformities.)

Important:

- This document has to be provided by **all smallholders** of the group that is audited under the FSS standard, not only by the sample smallholders.
- This self-declaration should be completed, signed and forwarded to the group manager.

Name of smallholder	
Address of the farm management (street, street no., postal code, place, country)	
Geo-coordinates of SH building (latitude and longitude in decimal degrees)	
Total size of SH farm (in ha)	
Cultivated crops (list all cultivated crops, not only the crops to be delivered as sustainable)	
Total amount per crop (in mt)	
Land title (yes/no), type of title	

Please mark the applicable box:

No.	Required documentation and information	Confirmed	
		Yes	No
1	All farm activities comply with the FSS criteria and indicators.		
2	Documentation is available to prove compliance with FSS requirements for smallholders. This includes the following documents: Training attendance documents and information material, copies of official policies (human rights, equal opportunities, health and safety, policy on freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, protection of children, prevention of sexual harassment and other forms of violence), contingency and risk mitigation plan, business/management plan (written cost calculations), contract/agreement with GM and payment calculations, purchase agreements, payment slips, records of payment documents, contracts from workers, workers register, work schedules, documentation of sick leave or other forms of leave, list of purchased protective equipment and documentation of functionality test of worker-owned equipment, complaints and grievances procedures and records of them, emergency and accident procedures, list of work-related accidents and emergencies, contract/agreement with medical care service provider, insurance documents, protocols of medical visits, pension/fund documents or equivalent compensation documents and evidence of payments, documented FPIC process, legal documents of land tenure, land rights and land-use rights, land compensation contracts, conflict resolution procedure, land rights map, cadastral land registers, planting maps, water management plan, irrigation plan, documentation of improved agricultural practices, protocols of water quality check, water quality monitoring plan, list of fertilizers/pesticides/chemicals used and records on application, crop rotation plan, pest management plan, documented IPM activities, universal safety instructions for chemical usage, documents on restricted time frames, guidelines/checklist on daily diet by GM, documentation of maternity leave times, reports on observed food insecurity (see also "evidences/documents required" column in SH audit checklist in FSS Tool)		
3	There is compliance with all 17 FSS principles.		
4	Good governance is applied, and the rule of law is respected.		
5	National food security and development strategies are respected.		
6	Natural and human-made disaster risks are mitigated.		
7	Market access and contribution to local development is ensured.		
8	Long-term farm profitability and fair business conduct is safeguarded.		
9	Labor rights are respected and good working conditions ensured.		
10	A training and capacity building program is provided.		

No.	Required documentation and information	Confirmed	
		Yes	No
11	Social safety nets are offered.		
12	Land rights are respected.		
13	Water rights are respected, and it is ensured that water quality and availability are maintained or improved.		
14	Sustainable agricultural practices are implemented.		
15	A setting for the safe utilization of food is provided.		
16	Good nutrition is guaranteed.		
17	Complaint and grievance mechanisms are provided.		
18	Women's rights are respected, and gender equity ensured.		
19	Awareness for nutrition is raised and child education supported.		
20	Local food security is assessed and monitored.		

I hereby confirm that all legal obligations are being met and that I comply with FSS requirements for smallholders*. Furthermore, I grant permission for auditors from certification bodies or the FSS to verify compliance with FSS requirements at my premises.

Evidence of the above-mentioned requirements are available and can be provided during the audit and upon request. In the event certain requirements are not met (e.g. documentation is not available or complete), I am obligated to additionally fill in a separate non-conformity list and to define corrective actions.

Place, Date: _____

Signature (smallholder): _____

* FSS requirements and relevant documents are available at the FSS website (www.foodsecuritystandard.org) and from the sustainability standards system cooperating with the FSS.

FSS Self-declaration

Non-conformities/ corrective actions, smallholder (SH)

Name of smallholder

Address of smallholder
(street, street no., postal code, place, country)

No.	Non-conformity/finding	Corrective action	Deadline for implementation	Confirmed	
				Yes	No
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					

The identified non-conformities must be corrected before the FSS audit takes place.
Otherwise this self-declaration is not valid.

Place, Date: _____

Signature (farmer): _____

(Please ensure that this page is filled in and signed if there are non-conformities.)

Annex V: Additional Sources of Information and Data to Prepare the FSS Audit

To conduct an adequate audit, auditors must gather information about the region/country and its food security conditions prior to the audit. Some of this information is used to carry out the National Food Security Assessment (NaFSA). The websites of international organizations (e.g. FAO, WFP, IFAD, WHO, and other UN agencies) are one potential source of general information. Such websites often provide reports, analysis and statistics about current food security issues and developments at the country level. Country profiles or surveys developed by OECD, FAO or other UN agencies are also good sources of information. These reports offer economic, political and social data, including information related to food security.

The auditor can additionally consult online tools such as GRAS, which enables the analysis of land use and land-use change; the monitoring of indigenous and protected areas through satellite-based maps; and the assessment of a number of social indices.

The table below provides potential information and data sources related to food security and hunger at the global and national/regional levels. In addition, the final part of the table lists tools and studies that can support the identification of food insecure areas and interpretation of food-security data.

Table 15: Additional Sources of Information and Data for Verifying Compliance with FSS Principles

Title	Publisher	Content	FSS Principles
Global Information and Data Sources			
Global Food Security Index	The Economist Group Intelligence Unit	The Global Food Security Index considers the core issues of affordability, availability, and quality across a set of 113 countries. The index is a dynamic quantitative and qualitative benchmarking model, constructed from 28 unique indicators, that measures these drivers of food security across both developing and developed countries. ²⁰	10, 12, 13
Global Hunger Index	IFPRI, WHH, Concern Worldwide	The Global Hunger Index (GHI) is designed to comprehensively measure and track hunger globally and by country and region. Calculated each year by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the GHI highlights successes and failures in hunger reduction and provides insights into the drivers of hunger. ²¹	1, 2, 17
Human Development Index	UNDP	The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of average achievement in key dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life (life expectancy at birth), being knowledgeable (education dimension by mean of years of schooling and expected years) and a decent standard of living (gross national income per capita). Interactive country profiles available incl. HDI, IHDI, GDI, GII and MPI. ²²	7, 12, 13, 16
Food Price Index	FAO	The FAO Food Price Index is a measure of the monthly change in international prices for a basket of food commodities. It averages five commodity group price indices (Cereal Price Index, Vegetable Oil Price Index, Dairy Price Index, Meat Price index, Sugar Price Index), weighted with the average export share of each group in 2002-2004. The Index includes 23 commodities. It allows the possible impact of global price changes on vulnerable developing countries to be determined. ²³	3, 6
Global Slavery Index	Walk Free Foundation	The Global Slavery Index provides a map, country by country, of the estimated prevalence of modern slavery, together with information about the steps each government has taken to respond to this issue. This information allows an objective comparison and assessment of both the problem and adequacy of the response in 167 countries. ²⁴	1, 7
Child labor	UNICEF	The table contains data on child labor as a percentage of children aged 5-14 years (by sex, place of residence and household wealth quintile) for each country. ²⁵	1, 7

²⁰ <http://foodsecurityindex.eiu.com/Country>.

²¹ <http://www.ifpri.org/topic/global-hunger-index>.

²² <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi>.

²³ <http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/>.

²⁴ <https://www.globalslaveryindex.org/index/>.

²⁵ <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-labour/>.

Title	Publisher	Content	FSS Principles
The Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS)	FANTA	Provides a simple and user-friendly approach for measuring the impacts of development food aid programmes on the access component of household food insecurity. The guide includes a standardized questionnaire and data collection and analysis instructions. The HFIAS is composed of a set of nine questions that have been used in several countries and appear to distinguish food insecure from food secure households across different cultural contexts. The information generated by the HFIAS can be used to assess the prevalence of household food insecurity (access component) and to detect changes in the food insecurity situation of a population over time. ²⁶	10, 12, 13
SDG Indicators Database	UN	The Global SDG Indicators Database provides access to indicators and statistical data of the sustainable development goals to monitor progress, inform policy and ensure accountability for all stakeholders. – Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) – Prevalence of undernourishment, stunting and malnutrition – Agriculture orientation index for government expenditures – Indicator of food price anomalies ²⁷	All
Gross Domestic Product	OECD	Gross domestic product (GDP) at market prices is the expenditure on final goods and services minus imports: final consumption expenditures, gross capital formation, and exports less imports. ²⁸	2, 3
The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World	FAO/WHO/ UNICEF/IFAD/ WFP	Actual report concerning current status and monitoring efforts to food security and nutrition in the world within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals. Includes analyses of how food security and nutrition are related to progress on other SDG targets as well as detailed country data for different topics (see annex of the document). ²⁹	10, 12, 13
National and Regional Information and Data Sources			
SDG Country Profiles	SDSN, Bertelsmann Stiftung	Provides individual Index and Dashboards for each country in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals with a detailed list of indicators and data for each goal. ³⁰	All
OECD Country Surveys	OECD	An Economic Survey is published every two years for each OECD member country and for some countries that are not OECD members, such as China, Russia and Brazil. There is also a separate survey of the euro area. It includes economic data about each country with a wide range of policy areas including labor markets, competition, innovation, human capital, financial markets, sustainable development, social security, taxation, health care and public spending. ³¹	All
FAOSTAT Country Indicators	FAO	The FAOSTAT database delivers datasets for different topics, e.g. production, food balance, population, food laws and also food security. It also has detailed country indicators prepared for all countries worldwide. ³²	All
Food Balance Sheets	FAO	Food balance sheets provide essential information on a country's food system through three components: – Domestic food supply of the food commodities in terms of production, imports, and stock changes. – Domestic food utilization which includes feed, seed, processing, waste, export, and other uses. – Per capita values for the supply of all food commodities (in kilograms per person per year) and calories, protein, and fat content. Annual food balance sheets show the trends in the overall national food supply, disclose changes that may have taken place in the types of food consumed, and reveal the extent to which the food supply of the country is adequate in relation to nutritional requirements. ³³	5, 10, 11, 12, 13

26 <https://www.fantaproject.org/monitoring-and-evaluation/household-food-insecurity-access-scale-hfi-as>.

27 <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>.

28 <https://data.oecd.org/gdp/gross-domestic-product-gdp.htm>.

29 https://www.unicef.org/publications/files/State_of_Food_Security_and_Nutrition_in_the_World_2017.pdf.

30 <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yvgzn5o4t19xigc/AACaTlUCxuwAe46z7Mj7iGg8a?dl=0>.

31 <http://www.oecd.org/eco/surveys/>.

32 <http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#country>; <http://www.fao.org/faolex/country-profiles/en/>.

33 <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/fbs/en/>.

Title	Publisher	Content	FSS Principles
Voluntary National Reviews	UN	Each country page includes, when available, voluntary national reports, statements, and videos of UN high-level political forum sessions. The voluntary national reviews (VNRs) aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. ³⁴	All (except 8, 14)
Statistical Offices		For example, the German Federal Statistical Office Not available in all countries but in many.	All
Ministry of Agriculture		Not available in all countries but in most.	5, 10, 11
National development plans		Not available in all countries.	All
Tools and Studies			
GRAS	GRAS	GRAS provides reliable information on ecological and social risks related to biomass of agricultural or forestry origin and directly supports auditors carrying out sustainability risk assessments for certification audits. ³⁵	4, 5, 7, 10
FSS Country Studies	WHH	Only during project/pilot phase!	All

³⁴ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>.

³⁵ <https://www.gras-system.org>.

Table 16 reports the set of FAO statistical indicators related to food security. The data referring to the indicators are mostly available in full at the FAOSTAT database and can be easily consulted for free to further support the verification process of the FSS. We recommend using these country-level indicators to get a more precise and quantitative overview of the food security situation in a country prior to the audit.

Table 16: FAO Food Security Indicators

FAO Food Security Indicators
AVAILABILITY
Average dietary energy supply adequacy
Average value of food production
Share of dietary energy supply derived from cereals, roots and tubers
Average protein supply
Average supply of protein of animal origin
ACCESS
Rail lines density
Gross domestic product per capita (in purchasing power equivalent)
Prevalence of undernourishment
Prevalence of severe food insecurity in the total population
Depth of the food deficit
STABILITY
Cereal import dependency ratio
Percent of arable land equipped for irrigation
Value of food imports over total merchandise exports
Political stability and absence of violence/terrorism
Per capita food production variability
Per capita food supply variability
UTILIZATION
Access to improved water sources
Access to improved sanitation facilities
Percentage of children under 5 years of age affected by wasting
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are stunted
Percentage of children under 5 years of age who are overweight
ADDITIONAL USEFUL STATISTICS
Total population
Number of people undernourished
Number of severely food insecure people
Minimum Dietary Energy Requirement (MDER)
Average Dietary Energy Requirement (ADER)
Coefficient of variation of habitual caloric consumption distribution
Skewness of habitual caloric consumption distribution
Incidence of caloric losses at retail distribution level
Dietary Energy Supply (DES)
Average fat supply

The FAO has allocated its own Food Security Indicators to each pillar, further supporting the FSS verification process.³⁶

36 <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs/ess-fadata/en/#.Wh7Xw0yX9Bw>.

Annex VI: Example Calculation for Wages Based on Piecework (Fictional Data)

Relevant factors:

- Amount of harvested material/product in pieces or in weight (g, kg, t)
- Fixed price/rate for material/product per piece or in weight (g, kg, t)
- Quality
- Comparison of work under normal and difficult conditions (on steep slopes, during bad weather, cutting on high trees, etc.)
- Comparison to legal wage/living wage
- Payment time (per day, week, month)

General formula:

Amount harvested x fixed price/rate = payment

→ The regular rate of pay for an employee paid on a piecework basis is obtained by dividing the total earnings by the total number of hours worked. The employee is entitled to an additional 1.5 times this regular rate for each hour of overtime, plus the full piecework earnings.

Total earnings/total number of hours worked = regular rate of payment
 + 50% of regular rate per overtime hour
 + full piecework earnings

Pay item	Pay rate \$	WAOT
Fresh fruit bunches	1.5	0.25
Sugarcane	0.75	0.5

Pay item	Regular hrs (per week)	OT hrs (per week)	Pieces/weight	Pay Rate \$	Payment \$
Fresh fruit bunches	38	4	50 pcs	1.5	75
Sugarcane	10	--	20 kg	0.75	15
Total piecework	48			1.25	90
WAOT		4		0.5	3.46
TOTAL					93.46

Regular payrate: $90/48 = 1.73 \text{ \$/hr}$
 WAOT: $1.73 * 0.5 = 0.865 \text{ \$/OT hr}$
Living wage rate: $1.80 \text{ \$/hr}$
 $48 * 1.80 + 4 * 1.80 * 1.5 = \underline{\underline{\$97.20}}$

Annex VII: List of Indicators Requiring Interviews with Workers and/or External Stakeholders³⁷

No.	Indicator	Workers (Staff)	External Stakeholders
1.1.1	A documented system for ensuring legal compliance by the farm management/group manager, contract/smallholder farmers, service providers and contractors shall be implemented and maintained.	x	
1.1.2	All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall be aware of the law and regulations and comply with them.	x	
1.1.3	A system to ensure the prevention of all forms of bribery, conflicts of interest and fraudulent practices shall be implemented and maintained.	x	
1.2.1	A written policy, in a language understood by all parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities, shall make a commitment to human rights, including the human right to food, in all operations and transactions, and this policy shall be made available and communicated to all parties involved in the operation.	x	
3.1.1	Natural and human-made disaster risks in the area of influence of the operation have been identified. Relevant governmental emergency/contingency plans are known.		x community representatives, local authorities and local NGOs
3.1.2	A contingency and risk mitigation plan for the farm and its area of influence has been developed and implemented. This plan shall be in line with existing government plans and appropriate for addressing local risks.	x	x local authorities, community representatives and local NGOs
4.1.1	Measures to support local value creation and close income gaps in the area of influence of the operation shall be identified in a consultation process with relevant stakeholders and implemented.	x	x community representatives
4.2.1	The time and effort required for local communities to access food markets must not be negatively influenced by farm's operations.	x	x representatives of the local community and community members, guards
5.1.1	A business or management plan shall be available, implemented, and regularly reviewed and updated, and shall include plans and measures to support the long-term economic viability of the operation.		x agricultural service providers
5.2.1	Written contracts/agreements formulated in a language understood by all parties shall be in place and co-signed copies shall be made available to all parties. In the case of group contractual arrangements (e.g. cooperatives), all members shall have a copy. Agreement/contracts shall clearly define: – price/quality parameters, – exit arrangements, and – compensation measures in the event of farm/group manager bankruptcy.	x	x service providers
5.2.2	The prices paid to contract farmers/smallholders must be fair. In the case of smallholders, the prices shall be based on living income estimates, when they are available for the region. If no living income estimates are available, prices shall be set following the FAO Guiding Principles for Responsible Contract Farming.	x	
5.2.3	Agreed-upon payments to farmers/smallholders shall be made in a transparent and timely manner.	x	
6.1.1	Workers shall have written employment contracts. Employment contracts shall be in a language understood by all parties, signed by the worker and employer, and include at least the following: job description; working hours; pay rate; overtime regulations; social benefit entitlements and deductions; annual paid leave; maternity leave; protection of the worker from loss of pay in the case of illness, disability or accident; and a notice period for termination that is the same as the notice period for the employer.	x	

37 Based on FSS Audit Procedure Tool (FSS, 2020c).

No.	Indicator	Workers (Staff)	External Stakeholders
6.2.1	All workers shall receive at least a living wage in line with the estimations for the country or region made by the Global Living Wage Coalition (if available). If no living wage has been calculated for the country or region, then wages shall at least fulfil legal regulations (government regulated minimum wages), industry minimum standards or collective bargaining agreements (whichever sets the highest standard).	x	
6.2.3	Working hours, leave and additional benefits shall comply with, or exceed, applicable statutory regulations, sector minimum standards or collective bargaining agreements (the conditions most beneficial to workers should apply).	x	
6.2.4	It shall be demonstrated that no deductions from wages are made unless they are permitted by national laws or fixed by a collective bargaining agreement. If deductions from wages are made for any provided service, the amounts deducted must be fair and in line with the actual costs incurred, and deductions shall not be used as a disciplinary mechanism.	x	
6.2.5	It shall be demonstrated that workers are not requested to bring their own protective equipment, uniforms or tools.	x	
6.2.6	Workers shall be paid at regularly scheduled intervals (at least monthly) and in a legal tender.	x	
6.2.7	Payments shall be documented with a payslip containing all relevant information and in a language understood by all parties.	x	
6.3.1	An equal opportunities policy that identifies relevant/affected groups shall be made available and publicly communicated.	x	
6.3.2	Awareness shall be raised regarding equal opportunity as part of regular training activities.	x	
6.3.3	Workers shall not be subjected to any form of discrimination in hiring, pay, benefits, access to training, promotion, termination, retirement or any other aspect of employment, based on race, color, gender, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, marital status, union membership, age or any other condition that could give rise to discrimination.		x representatives from the local community and local NGOs
6.3.4	Contract farmers/smallholders shall not be subjected to discrimination in contracts, payments, access to training or any other aspect of the business relationship, based on race, color, gender, religion, political opinion, national extraction, social origin, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, marital status, union membership, age or any other condition that could give rise to discrimination.	x	x local community representatives and local NGOs
6.4.1	A health and safety policy appropriate to the type and size of the operation, and which applies to all people working for the operation, shall be adopted and follow ILO Convention 184 (Safety and Health in Agriculture) or national laws (if they are more stringent).	x	
6.4.2	All people working for the operation shall be provided with health and safety training specific and relevant to the task performed. Training shall cover: – Work-related health and safety risks – Preventative measures for minimising those risks – Work-related risks to the environment and/or society – The proper transport, storage and handling of hazardous substances and waste – Accident and emergency procedures and measures, including the interpretation of labels, markings, signs, and other safety relevant audio and/or visual signals (see Indicator 6.4.3)	x	
6.4.3	Emergency and accident procedures appropriate for the operation shall be made available and periodically updated based on records of work-related accidents (see Indicator 6.4.4).	x	
6.4.4	Records of all work-related accidents shall be kept.	x	x clinic or hospital staff

No.	Indicator	Workers (Staff)	External Stakeholders
6.4.5	First aid and emergency response material shall be available in sufficient quantity (i.e. readily available and accessible to workers) and in sufficient quality (i.e. up-to-date, periodically inspected and appropriate to address relevant hazards and risks) at all sites, including mobile facilities and in the vicinity of agricultural sites. Designated people on the farm shall be knowledgeable as to the presence and use of such equipment.	x	
6.4.6	Personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be provided to all people working for the operation to protect them from all occupational health and safety hazards associated with their respective tasks (e.g. use of agrochemicals or power tools).	x	
6.5.2	Workers shall have the right to establish and join worker organizations based on their own free choice, without influence or interference by the farm management/group manager/smallholder.	x	
6.5.3	Worker organizations shall operate without interference or influence by farm management, the farm owner or group manager.	x	
6.6.1	All work shall be performed voluntarily and the following practices shall be prohibited: – Retention of identity documents or passports – Payment of recruitment or training fees – Contract substitution – Involuntary overtime – Lack of freedom of workers to quit – Penalties for termination of employment – Debt bondage – Withholding of wages – Restrictions to freedom of movement	x	x communities' representatives and other stakeholders e.g. local NGOs
6.7.1	A formal policy for the protection of children, including child-labor prohibition and remediation provisions, shall be in place and implemented.	x	
6.7.2	Any type of paid or unpaid work by a child under the age of 15 shall be prohibited. The only exception shall be work by children on family smallholdings, and this shall only be acceptable under adult supervision and when it does not interfere with the child's schooling or put his or her health at risk.	x	x stakeholders from schools, kindergartens, social NGOs
6.7.3	Young persons shall only be employed in non-hazardous work, and protective restrictions shall be in place for such work.	x	x external stakeholders
7.1.1	A training and capacity building program that is addressed at all farmers involved in the operation shall be implemented and available. This program must be developed in consultation with farmers to ensure its contents are tailored to their needs.	x	
8.1.1	All people working for the operation shall have sufficient and adequate medical care. Their families shall also have access to medical care if this is required by domestic law.	x	x local health care centers, social NGOs
8.1.2	All people working for the operation shall have access to appropriate healthcare in the event of work-related illness or injury. These individuals shall have access to free transportation to the nearest hospital or on-site medical facility during working hours. In the event permanent on-site medical support is provided, equipment and training should be adequate to deal with accidents and acute poisoning. All people working for the operation shall have occupational accident insurance coverage.	x	x local health care centers
8.1.3	A policy shall be in place regarding regular sick leave and leave caused by employment injury. This policy must ensure that workers are protected from being dismissed during temporary sick leave. It must also guarantee the worker some form of income during sick leave. Sick leave should not count towards annual holiday leave. The policy should, at a minimum, adhere to domestic regulations.	x	x trade unions, social NGOs
8.2.1	All people working for the operation shall have a provident fund or pension scheme. If national legislation has more stringent requirements, then this legislation must be adhered to. If pension arrangements cannot be provided to a subset of workers, e.g. migrant or temporary/seasonal workers, these workers must receive equivalent compensation.	x	x trade unions, social NGOs

No.	Indicator	Workers (Staff)	External Stakeholders
9.1.1	Existing land rights and land-use rights, including formal, informal and customary rights, shall be assessed prior to the first audit, including FSS verification. Such an assessment shall also be conducted prior to acquisition/ rental of land, and – in the case of contract farming or group certification – when new contract farmers or group members are added.		x community representatives, regional administrations, local NGOs
9.1.2	It shall be demonstrated that there are legal, customary land-rights or land-use rights for the operation. For the period from 2012 onward, it must be demonstrated that the land-rights or land-use rights were obtained based on 'free, prior and informed consent' (FPIC) and following negotiated agreement with affected parties.		x community representatives, regional administrations, local NGOs
9.1.3	Land under legitimate dispute shall not be used for operations until such disputes have been settled through free, prior and informed consent and negotiated agreements with affected parties. Maps of an appropriate scale showing the extent of recognised legal, customary or use rights must be developed in a participatory process that involves affected parties (including neighbouring communities, when applicable, and relevant authorities).	x	x regional administration, NGOs
9.1.4	Traditional and customary land use rights shall be respected. Against this backdrop, the use of the land by pastoralists, indigenous people, artisanal fishers and other comparable users must be allowed. This shall exclude any illegal hunting, illegal fishing or illegal collection of products.	x	x regional administration, NGOs
9.1.5	There has been no forced or involuntary physical or economic displacement, resettlement or relinquishment of land rights for the purpose of agricultural production. Extra-judicial intimidation or harassment by contracted security forces shall be also prohibited. There shall be no evidence that the operation has instigated violence.		x local authorities, community representatives, local NGOs
9.1.7	When negotiating communities' land or land-use rights, these communities must be represented through institutions or representatives of their own choosing, including legal counsel.		x community members
10.1.2	Water rights must be obtained through legal means. All existing formal or customary water rights, including the rights of pastoralists, indigenous people, artisanal fishers and other comparable users shall be respected and protected. Free prior and informed consent shall be obtained from impacted parties prior to the acquisition of new or existing rights.		x local representatives, community leaders, local authorities, NGOs
10.1.3	Water resources under legitimate dispute shall not be used until such disputes have been settled through agreement with affected stakeholders based free, prior and informed consent.	x	x local authorities, NGOs
10.2.1	Water resources potentially affected both within and outside of the farm shall be identified, and key risks and challenges shall be assessed.		x community leaders, farmers/workers and families, local authorities, fishers and other people living in the area, environmental authorities, NGOs
10.3.1	Measures to contain effluents and avoid runoff and leaching, as well as to prevent pollution and siltation of surface and ground water, shall be implemented.	x	x community representatives, environmental authorities, NGOs
10.3.2	The quality of potentially affected water bodies and of all drinking water sources in the area of influence of the operation shall be periodically monitored based on the results of a risk assessment (see Indicator 10.2.1). The results must show that water quality is being maintained or improved.		x environmental authorities, water governance and quality responsible
10.4.1	Situations of water scarcity shall not be created and long-term water availability shall not be affected.	x	x community members, affected persons, local initiatives and authorities, NGOs

No.	Indicator	Workers (Staff)	External Stakeholders
10.4.2	Important water-related areas, including wetlands, affected by the operation shall be protected, restored (if damaged) and always maintained.		x environmental authorities, local authorities and community representatives, environmental NGOs
11.1.1	Soil erosion shall be prevented or minimized through the design of the agricultural production site and sustainable practices shall be used to enhance soil health.	x	
11.1.3	Practices to maintain and improve the soil nutrient balance while taking into account soil conditions and crop needs and reduce nitrate pollution shall be implemented.	x	
11.1.4	Producers of annual crops shall practice crop rotation.	x	
11.1.5	Integrated Pest Management techniques (IPM) that are adequate for the target crop to reduce the development of pest populations and minimise risks to human health and the environment shall be implemented and monitored.		x agricultural extension services or service providers
11.2.3	Pesticides shall be used in accordance with proven methods that minimize risk and do not harm the environment, communities, people working for the operation, women or children. No pesticides shall be used in or near water sources or protected areas.	x	
11.2.4	No work with pesticides shall be undertaken by young workers or pregnant or breast-feeding women. These individuals must be offered alternative work.	x	x Medical staff in local health care centers
12.1.1	Accommodations (including collectively used accommodations like dormitories and living areas), sanitary facilities (e.g. toilets, portable WCs, showers) and kitchen/dining/food storage areas, provided to people working for the operation and their families shall be designed, built and maintained to meet basic needs, to comply with legal requirements, and to ensure safe and healthy conditions. Toilet paper or bidet shower and soap shall be made available in all sanitary facilities.	x	
12.2.1	All people working for the operations shall have access to potable water.	x	
13.1.1	Appropriate, clean and safe dining and food storage facilities must be provided.	x	
13.1.2	If workers do not have the option of bringing their own food or purchasing it nearby, options to buy diversified and nutritious food must be provided at fair prices.	x	
13.1.3	All people working for the operation (including those involved in other activities such as cooking or cleaning) shall be granted sufficient breaks for eating and drinking in consideration of weather conditions and the type of work performed.	x	
13.1.4	All people working for the operation shall have access to healthy and nutritious food of sufficient quality and quantity at all times.	x	x local doctor or nurse, community leaders, NGOs
13.2.1	Nursing mothers shall be granted at least two additional 30-minute daily breaks during paid working time to breastfeed children up to 9 months after birth.	x	

No.	Indicator	Workers (Staff)	External Stakeholders
14.1.1	A documented system for dealing with complaints and grievances voiced by workers, contract farmers, communities and stakeholders shall be implemented and maintained. The system shall allow resolution of disputes in an effective, timely and appropriate manner while also ensuring the anonymity of complainants and whistle-blowers, when requested. This mechanism shall have the following characteristics: –The mechanisms are communicated and made easily accessible to workers, contract farmers, communities and stakeholders. Special consideration shall be given to illiterate people. –Procedures shall be in place to ensure that anyone can confidentially communicate grievances or complaints without risk of reprisal or intimidation. The system shall ensure anonymity of complainants and whistle-blowers –The dispute-resolution mechanism shall be based on negotiations between affected parties and decisions shall be agreed to by the vast majority of negatively affected workers/contract farmers/community members/stakeholders. –Any complaint or grievance must be acknowledged and dealt with in an effective and timely manner. –Records of all complaints and grievances must be kept, including steps taken to address them and the outcome of the process.	x	x community representatives
15.1.1	Interview female workers and workers belonging to sexual minorities and their representatives.	x	
15.1.2	All women shall have the possibility to articulate and communicate their concerns and ideas through a dedicated gender representative or committee. Confidentiality must be granted if desired.	x	
15.1.3	In all stakeholder consultation processes, including the FPIC, women must be appropriately included (proportionally represented) and their voices equally heard and respected.		x female community representatives, female stakeholders, NGOs
15.1.4	A policy to prevent sexual harassment and all other forms of harassment or violence shall be implemented and communicated at all levels of the workforce, including contract farmers and service providers. This shall include a procedure concerning where complaints are received, how complaints are handled, which remedial actions are performed and how the process is documented.	x	
15.1.5	Workers shall be granted at least eight weeks of maternity leave with compensation consistent with national laws or not less than 2/3 of regular pay, whichever is higher, not including annual leave, and in the absence of any loss or privilege on account of such leave. The employment contract of a woman during her pregnancy or maternity leave shall not be terminated, except on grounds unrelated to the pregnancy or birth of the child. National legislation must be adhered to if it provides more stringent requirements.	x	
15.1.6	Policies must be in place to ensure that women working for the farm operation are protected while pregnant. This includes specific procedures relating to their safety, such as protection against physical, chemical or biological agents that could cause harm. Pregnant women shall not work excessive hours and shall be provided with rest periods as appropriate. Legal requirements have priority, if they exceed the requirements laid down in this standard.	x	
16.1.1	A training program that focuses on improving food and nutrition security shall be provided to all people working for the operation. At a minimum, this training must cover proper nutrition and healthy diets. Other aspects of the training should be determined in collaboration with the target group.	x	
16.1.2	In regions with a high risk of food insecurity, training programs for communities within the area of influence shall be supported. These programs shall focus on improving food and nutrition security. The type of support provided must be defined in consultation with local communities and/or authorities.	x	x community leaders, local authorities, NGOs
16.2.1	16.2.1 It shall be demonstrated that all children living directly at the agricultural operation or in accommodations provided to workers and their families attend at least primary school.	x	x parents/families, community members
17.1.2	The food and nutrition security situation of communities in the area of influence of the operation does not deteriorate due to the operation.		x community members, experts

Annex VIII: List of Indicators Requiring Training³⁸

No.	Indicator
1.1.2	All parties involved in the agricultural operation and related activities shall be aware of the law and regulations and comply with them.
1.1.3	A system to ensure the prevention of all forms of bribery, conflicts of interest and fraudulent practices shall be implemented and maintained.
2.1.2	All relevant and applicable national and local strategies connected with food security shall be well known and not contradicted.
4.1.1	Measures to support local value creation and close income gaps in the area of influence of the operation shall be identified in a consultation process with relevant stakeholders and implemented.
6.3.2	Awareness shall be raised regarding equal opportunity as part of regular training activities.
6.4.2	All people working for the operation shall be provided with health and safety training specific and relevant to the task performed. Training shall cover: – Work-related health and safety risks – Preventative measures for minimising those risks – Work-related risks to the environment and/or society – The proper transport, storage and handling of hazardous substances and waste – Accident and emergency procedures and measures, including the interpretation of labels, markings, signs, and other safety relevant audio and/or visual signals (see Indicator 6.4.3)
6.4.3	Emergency and accident procedures appropriate for the operation shall be made available and periodically updated based on records of work-related accidents (see Indicator 6.4.4).
6.4.5	First aid and emergency response material shall be available in sufficient quantity (i.e. readily available and accessible to workers) and in sufficient quality (i.e. up-to-date, periodically inspected and appropriate to address relevant hazards and risks) at all sites, including mobile facilities and in the vicinity of agricultural sites. Designated people on the farm shall be knowledgeable as to the presence and use of such equipment.
7.1.1	A training and capacity building program that is addressed at all farmers involved in the operation shall be implemented and available. This program must be developed in consultation with farmers to ensure its contents are tailored to their needs.
11.1.5	Integrated Pest Management techniques (IPM) that are adequate for the target crop to reduce the development of pest populations and minimise risks to human health and the environment shall be implemented and monitored.
11.2.3	Pesticides shall be used in accordance with proven methods that minimize risk and do not harm the environment, communities, people working for the operation, women or children. No pesticides shall be used in or near water sources or protected areas.
16.1.1	A training program that focuses on improving food and nutrition security shall be provided to all people working for the operation. At a minimum, this training must cover proper nutrition and healthy diets. Other aspects of the training should be determined in collaboration with the target group.
16.1.2	In regions with a high risk of food insecurity, training programs for communities within the area of influence shall be supported. These programs shall focus on improving food and nutrition security. The type of support provided must be defined in consultation with local communities and/or authorities.

³⁸ Based on FSS Audit Procedure Tool (FSS, 2020c).

Annex IX: Explanations for Filling in the NaFSA Tool

The NaFSA Excel file explains how to find data sources and also specifies which data to extract. Data must be entered by hand. Non-numerical entries feature a dropdown menu. The data are derived from online databases, most of which are tables or maps; the link is provided to each database. Once the required data are entered, a risk level classification appears. An example of how to fill in the Excel sheet for two indicators is presented in the following pages:

Figure 3.1: Data access: click on the link in the column “Data access” and follow it to the website

2. Access to Water					
Indicator	Data access	Procedure for risk determination	Instructions for data entry	ENTER DATA HERE!!	Risk level
2.1 Water Scarcity	http://www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2017/05/2013_scarcity_graph_2.png	Identify the audit country and region on the map . Enter the corresponding classification regarding water scarcity into the field of data entry.	Choose from dropdown menu in the field "Enter data here"		NO DATA

Figure 3.2: Finding the data: follow the instructions given in the column “Procedure for risk determination” to find the dataset/ website that features the desired data. Look for the requested data.

2. Access to Water					
Indicator	Data access	Procedure for risk determination	Instructions for data entry	ENTER DATA HERE!!	Risk level
2.1 Water Scarcity	http://www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2017/05/2013_scarcity_graph_2.png	Identify the audit country and region on the map . Enter the corresponding classification regarding water scarcity into the field of data entry.	Choose from dropdown menu in the field "Enter data here"		NO DATA

Figure 3.3: Data entry: enter the data in the column “Enter data here” according to the specifications given in the column “Instructions for data entry”. Data entry within the NaFSA tool is done in two ways: NUMERICAL or via DROPDOWN menu. How to enter data via the dropdown menu is presented here: In the upper figure, the dropdown menu is not visible. Middle figure: the control field (small arrow) becomes visible by clicking on the respective cell. Lower figure: when clicking on the small arrow, the dropdown menu appears, allowing an answer to be selected. After confirming the data (press “Enter”), a risk level is automatically shown. How to enter numerical data is explained in the next figure.

2. Access to Water					
Indicator	Data access	Procedure for risk determination	Instructions for data entry	ENTER DATA HERE!!	Risk level
2.1 Water Scarcity	http://www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2017/05/2013_scarcity_graph_2.png	Identify the audit country and region on the map . Enter the corresponding classification regarding water scarcity into the field of data entry.	Choose from dropdown menu in the field "Enter data here"		NO DATA

2. Access to Water					
Indicator	Data access	Procedure for risk determination	Instructions for data entry	ENTER DATA HERE!!	Risk level
2.1 Water Scarcity	http://www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2017/05/2013_scarcity_graph_2.png	Identify the audit country and region on the map . Enter the corresponding classification regarding water scarcity into the field of data entry.	Choose from dropdown menu in the field "Enter data here"		NO DATA
				little or no scarcity approaching physical scarcity physical scarcity economic scarcity not estimated	

2. Access to Water					
Indicator	Data access	Procedure for risk determination	Instructions for data entry	ENTER DATA HERE!!	Risk level
2.1 Water Scarcity	http://www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2017/05/2013_scarcity_graph_2.png	Identify the audit country and region on the map . Enter the corresponding classification regarding water scarcity into the field of data entry.	Choose from dropdown menu in the field "Enter data here"	little or no scarcity	MODERATE RISK
				little or no scarcity approaching physical scarcity physical scarcity economic scarcity not estimated	

Figure 3.4: Enter NUMERICAL data by typing them into the data entry field. Use exactly the number of decimals described in the field "Instructions for data entry".

2. Access to Water					
Indicator	Data access	Procedure for risk determination	Instructions for data entry	ENTER DATA HERE!!	Risk level
2.2 Number of People Using SafelyManaged Drinking Waters Services	https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/	In the list of indicators at the middle of the page, navigate to INDICATOR 6.1.1 PROPORTION OF POPULATION USING SAFELY MANAGED DRINKING WATER SERVICES. (GOAL6>TARGET 6.1> INDICATOR 6.1.1) and open it by clicking on the "+". Tick the box PROPORTION OF POPULATION USING SAFELY MANAGED DRINKING WATER SERVICES BY URBAN/RURAL and view the data by clicking on SHOW TABLE above the list of indicators. The respective table is then shown below the list of indicators. A more convenient table can be downloaded via the Download Excel button below the table displayed. Within the table, identify the audit country in the column "country". In the row of the respective country, identify the most recent data entry in the respective annual column (e.g. 2015) and enter it into the field of data entry. If "rural" data are specifically for the country, use the "rural" Data.	NUMERICAL (range 0 to 100) one decimal	80.1	MODERATE RISK

Figure 3.5: After successfully entering the data, an explanation about the meaning of the data appears in the last column.

2. Access to Water						
Indicator	Data access	Procedure for risk determination	Instructions for data entry	ENTER DATA HERE!!	Risk level	Explanation
2.1 Water Scarcity	http://www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2017/05/2013_scarcity_graph_2.png	Identify the audit country and region on the map. Enter the corresponding classification regarding water scarcity into the field of data entry.	Choose from dropdown menu in the field "Enter data here"	physical scarcity	HIGH RISK	Water resources are scarce and/or hard to access. There is a high risk of water not being sufficiently available on site.
2.2 Number of People Using SafelyManaged Drinking Waters Services	https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/	In the list of indicators at the middle of the page, navigate to INDICATOR 6.1.1 PROPORTION OF POPULATION USING SAFELY MANAGED DRINKING WATER SERVICES. (GOAL6>TARGET 6.1> INDICATOR 6.1.1) and open it by clicking on the "+". Tick the box PROPORTION OF POPULATION USING SAFELY MANAGED DRINKING WATER SERVICES BY URBAN/RURAL and view the data by clicking on SHOW TABLE above the list of indicators. The respective table is then shown below the list of indicators. A more convenient table can be downloaded via the Download Excel button below the table displayed. Within the table, identify the audit country in the column "country". In the row of the respective country, identify the most recent data entry in the respective annual column (e.g. 2015) and enter it into the field of data entry. If "rural" data are specifically for the country, use the "rural" Data.	NUMERICAL (range 0 to 100) one decimal	80.1	MODERATE RISK	Safe drinking water is a basic element for food security. In the country, the vast majority of people uses safely managed drinking water. On site, there might be a minor risk of health problems due to unsafe water .

Figure 3.6: Result per category: the overall risk level for the category is displayed below the corresponding indicators. Additionally, the potential risk at the local level is determined. Suggestions for questions to ask internal and external stakeholders are provided to help identify whether the category is also a local problem or not.

2. Access to Water						
Indicator	Data access	Procedure for risk determination	Instructions for data entry	ENTER DATA HERE!!	Risk level	Explanation
2.1 Water Scarcity	http://www.unwater.org/app/uploads/2017/05/2013_scarcity_graph_2.png	Identify the audit country and region on the map . Enter the corresponding classification regarding water scarcity into the field of data entry.	Click onto the field in the column "Enter data here" and choose from dropdown menu that appears when you click the small arrow	physical scarcity	HIGH RISK	Water resources are scarce and/or hard to access. There is a high risk of water not being sufficiently available on site.
2.2 Number of People Using SafelyManaged Drinking Waters Services	https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/	In the list of indicators at the middle of the page, navigate to INDICATOR 6.1.1 PROPORTION OF POPULATION USING SAFELY MANAGED DRINKING WATER SERVICES. (GOAL6>TARGET 6.1>INDICATOR 6.1.1) and open it by clicking on the "+". Tick the box PROPORTION OF POPULATION USING SAFELY MANAGED DRINKING WATER SERVICES BY URBAN/RURAL and view the data by clicking on SHOW TABLE above the list of indicators. The respective table is then shown below the list of indicators. A more convenient table can be downloaded via the Download Excel button below the table displayed. Within the table, identify the audit country in the column "country". In the row of the respective country, identify the most recent data entry in the respective annual column (e.g. 2015) and enter it into the field of data entry. If "rural" data are specifically for the country, use the "rural" Data.	NUMERICAL (range 0 to 100) one decimal	80.1	MODERATE RISK	Safe drinking water is a basic element for food security. In the country, the vast majority of people uses safely managed drinking water. On site, there might be a minor risk of health problems due to unsafe water .
Result of Category 2 - Access to Water	INCREASED RISK					
!!! REGARDLESS OF THE RESULTS OF THE INDICATORS FOR CATEGORY 2 !!! The potential risk at the local level regarding access to water is formulated below.						
Potential risk at local level	Access to or availability of water might be aggravated. Safely managed drinking water services might be not available on site.					
Suggestions for questions to be asked during the audit	Are water and land for food production accessible for the local population? Do local communities own enough land to produce food crops if desired? Does the local population have access to clean drinking water? Do land right conflicts occur? Were communities resettled for the operation? Is water deviated, damned or polluted and does it affect downstream communities? Are water resources owned, managed and operated by the state or privately? Is irrigation common in the area and if so, is the water source regenerating and not affecting local communities? Are international companies involved in tapping on land and water resources?					

Annex X: Print Versions of the FSS-QAT

The following pages contain print versions of the FSS-QAT questionnaires.

FSS-QAT Questionnaire for workers (permanent, temporary, casual, seasonal)

Oral consent to interview given: Yes ____ No ____

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒
1. Where do you live while being employed?	☐ On the certified farm ☐ In nearby community/village
2. Are you hired directly by the farm/operation or by a subcontractor/agency?	☐ By farm/operation ☐ By a subcontractor/agency
3. Are you hired for specific tasks (short term), for a longer period (one to several months, e.g. for a harvest) or are you permanently employed?	☐ Short term (a few days each time) ☐ Medium term (one to several months, or several contracts) ☐ Permanent (indefinite contract)
Please advise the interviewee that the following questions refer only to the length of time of his/her EMPLOYMENT AT THE AUDITED FARM	
4. Where do you usually get your food from?	☐ Bought in the area/village (e.g. shop/market/neighbours) ☐ Food provided by employer ☐ Shop on farm
5. Is there all year round enough food available at decent prices for purchase nearby (market, village/farm shop, neighbours)?	☐ Yes, readily available ☐ Somewhat available or at high prices ☐ Not always available or at very high prices
6. Are key food items (i.e. staple foods) currently less available or more expensive than in the same period last year? If yes, why?	☐ No, same amount/same price ☐ Yes, less food available/very expensive → If yes, please explain why:
7. Can you ALWAYS consume the number of meals typical in the country/region?	☐ Yes ☐ No
Please ask the following questions exactly as phrased (and do not ignore some text as you will get wrong answers)	
8. For the time you had a work contract in the past 12 months at the certified farm (i.e. the days you worked there), was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources,....:	
a) You were worried you would not have enough food to eat?	a) ☐ Yes ☐ No
b) You could not eat healthy and nutritious food though you would have liked to?	b) ☐ Yes ☐ No
c) You ate only a few kinds of foods?	c) ☐ Yes ☐ No
d) You had to skip a meal?	d) ☐ Yes ☐ No
e) You ate less than you thought you should?	e) ☐ Yes ☐ No
f) Your household ran out of food?	f) ☐ Yes ☐ No
g) You were hungry but did not eat?	g) ☐ Yes ☐ No
h) You went without eating for a whole day?	h) ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒
9. Do you have always drinking water available a) while working? b) at living area (home, farm house)	a) ☐ Yes ☐ No b) ☐ Yes ☐ No
10. Do you have sufficient breaks for drinking water at work or are you allowed to consume water any time you like to?	☐ Yes ☐ No
11. Do you have sufficient options for decent food consumption (breaks, cleanliness, food diversity)?	☐ Yes ☐ No Comments:
12. Do you have options to wash your hands with soap a) before eating? b) after having used the toilet?	a) ☐ Yes ☐ No a) ☐ Yes ☐ No
For temporary, seasonal, casual workers:	
13. What are your work/income options after the contract ends?	Please note:
14. Are you worried that you may lack sufficient food after the contract ends?	☐ Yes ☐ No

Please ask at the end of the interview if there are further concerns in regard to food security and the employment situation. Do not forget to ask further questions to cross-check compliance with other FSS criteria.

Space to note any comments:

To be completed privately by the interviewer:

Gender of the interviewee: ☐ Female ☐ Male

Name of farm/operation: _____

Do you trust the information provided by the interviewee? ☐ Yes ☐ Difficult to judge ☐ No

Date of interview: _____ (dd/mm/yyyy)

Unique number to identify smallholders (continuous series; for personal safety): _____

Interpretation of interview result:

- ☐ No food insecurity
☐ Mild food insecurity
☐ Severe food insecurity

FSS-QAT questionnaire for smallholders

Oral consent to interview given: Yes ____ No ____

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒
1. What is your total farm size (cropped area)?	_____
2. How large is the area of the certified crop?	_____
3. To whom do you sell the certified crop?	☐ Certified group manager/operation/processor (cooperative, mill,...) ☐ On the normal market (trader, mill,...)
4. How many people live in your household who are financially depending on you?	_____ people
5. What is your yearly income from the certified crop (roughly)?	_____
6. How much income do you generate from other farming activities (roughly)?	_____
7. How much do you earn outside farming (roughly)?	_____
8. Which crops do you grow for your own consumption?	Please list crops:
9. For how many months does your own food storage last?	_____
10. Do you grow vegetables, have fruit trees or use wild plants for home consumption?	☐ Yes ☐ No
11. Is there all year round enough food for purchase available at decent prices (e.g. in village, community, neighbours...)?	☐ Yes, readily available ☐ Somewhat available or at high prices ☐ Not always available or at <u>very</u> high prices
12. Are key food items (i.e. staple foods) currently less available or more expensive than during same period last year? If yes, why?	☐ No, food prices roughly the same ☐ Yes, less food available or MUCH more expensive → If yes, please explain why:
13. Do you always have drinking water available?	☐ Yes ☐ No
14. Did drinking water availability and/or quality change in the past year?	☐ Yes ☐ No
15. Do you always have drinking water available?	☐ Yes ☐ No
16. Did drinking water availability and/or quality change in the past year?	☐ Yes ☐ No
17. If it changed, what are possible reasons?	List reasons for change:
18. Can you ALWAYS consume the number of meals typical in the country/region?	☐ Yes ☐ No

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒
19. What is your typical main meal composition in good times (food abundance)?	Describe meal:
20. What is your typical main meal in hard times (i.e. income scarcity), if this happens?	Describe meal if applicable:
Please ask the following questions exactly as phrased (and do not ignore some text as you will get wrong answers)	
21. During the last 12 months, was there a time when, because of lack of money or other resources,....:	
a) You were worried you would not have enough food to eat?	a) ☐ Yes ☐ No
b) You could not eat healthy and nutritious food though you would have liked to?	b) ☐ Yes ☐ No
c) You ate only a few kinds of foods?	c) ☐ Yes ☐ No
d) You had to skip a meal?	d) ☐ Yes ☐ No
e) You ate less than you thought you should?	e) ☐ Yes ☐ No
f) Your household ran out of food?	f) ☐ Yes ☐ No
g) You were hungry but did not eat?	g) ☐ Yes ☐ No
h) You went without eating for a whole day?	h) ☐ Yes ☐ No
If any of questions 19d-19h were answered with yes:	
22. Did the food shortage happened the first time or is it regular?	☐ First time ☐ Regular
23. What are the reasons for the food shortage?	Reasons:

Please ask at the end of the interview if there are further concerns in regard to food security or any other observation in regard to the audited operation and group management.

Do not forget to ask further questions to cross-check compliance with other FSS criteria.

Space to note any comments:

To be completed privately by the interviewer:
Gender of the interviewee: ☐ Female ☐ Male
Name of community: _____
Do you trust the information provided by the interviewee? ☐ Yes ☐ Difficult to judge ☐ No
Date of interview: _____ (dd/mm/yyyy)
Unique number to identify farmer (continuous series; for personal safety): _____
Interpretation of interview result:
☐ No food insecurity
☐ Mild food insecurity
☐ Severe food insecurity

FSS-QAT questionnaire for external stakeholders

Name of the interviewee: _____

Function/role (e.g. school teacher, village head, etc.): _____

Organization/employer (if individual is representing this entity): _____

Location (area, community) represented: _____

Date of interview: _____ (dd/mm/yyyy) Oral consent to interview given: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Please make sure that you ask as much as possible about the communities/villages in the area of influence – including potentially resettled communities!

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒
1. Are you representing/talking about one or several communities?	☐ One ☐ Several
2. What is <i>roughly</i> the number of people (households, workers, patients,...) you are representing/talking about?	_____ Number of households/farmers/workers/pupils/ etc.
3. Are you or members of your family engaged in any activities with the operational unit?	☐ Yes ☐ No → If yes please list activities or relationship:
4. Do people in this area/community still grow their own food (at least partially)? If not, why not?	☐ Yes ☐ No → Please list why not
5. Was the local food production affected by unusual, extreme weather events in the last 12 months?	☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Is there all year round enough food available at <i>decent</i> prices for purchase <i>nearby</i> (market, village shop, neighbours,...)?	☐ Yes, readily available ☐ Somewhat available or at high prices ☐ Not always available or at <u>very</u> high prices
7. Have key food prices (e.g. staple foods) or their availability changed beyond typical fluctuations in the past year?	☐ Yes ☐ No
8. If changes occurred, can you explain why?	Please list reasons:
9. How do people in the community generate income? a) Only with agriculture (+livestock), forestry, fishing b) Only through jobs (casual, permanent) or self-employment/small business (e.g. craftsman, shop) c) A mixture of agriculture and employment	a) ☐ Majority ☐ Around half ☐ Some b) ☐ Majority ☐ Around half ☐ Some c) ☐ Majority ☐ Around half ☐ Some
10. Are these income sources sufficient to fulfill the basic needs of the households (e.g. health, education in addition to food)?	☐ A large majority can cover their needs ☐ Around half of the people manage ☐ The majority cannot cover needs
11. Do all households in the area always have drinking water available (at an acceptable distance)?	☐ Yes ☐ No
12. Did drinking water availability and/or quality change in the past year?	☐ Improved ☐ Remained the same ☐ Deteriorated
13. If it changed, what are possible reasons?	Reasons for change:
14. What is the typical composition of a main meal consumed by a worker/farmer in good times (food abundance)?	Describe main meal elements:
15. What is the typical composition of a meal consumed by a worker/farmer in hard times/during income shortages?	Describe main meal elements:

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒
16. Can you roughly guess how many households ate less diverse (healthy) meals or reduced the quantity consumed per meal?	☐ All ☐ Many ☐ Around half ☐ Some ☐ Hardly any/none ☐ Cannot estimate
17. What is the typical number of meals people consume in the region if there is plenty of food?	_____ meals
18. Can you roughly guess how many households ate less than the typical number of meals in the past 12 months because they lacked food?	☐ All ☐ Many ☐ Around half ☐ Some ☐ Hardly any/none ☐ Cannot estimate
19. Has the number of households that ate less food or skipped meals changed since last year and how?	☐ Improved ☐ Remained the same ☐ Deteriorated
20. Are there regularly food shortages in the communities/ area?	☐ Yes ☐ No
21. If yes, how long do they usually last?	Month starting _____ ending _____
22. Did people in the area experience a food shortage over the past 12 months or are they currently experiencing one?	☐ Yes ☐ No
23. What are reasons for the food shortage(s)?	Reasons:
24. Are there any frequent health problems like diarrhea or similar which <i>affect the food security</i> of people in the community? If yes, which?	☐ Yes ☐ No ➔ Please list which:
25. Do you think these health problems may be caused by the farming activities in the area? <i>For example, the spraying of pesticides, causing respiratory problems</i>	☐ Yes ☐ No
26. If yes, any idea who is responsible?	☐ Audited farm(s)/operation ☐ Other farms ☐ Not sure
27. Can you successfully raise grievances and problems in the communities with the certified operation/manager/ farmers/mill... regarding a) food security? b) other issues	a) ☐ Yes ☐ No b) ☐ Yes ☐ No
28. Can you observe positive or negative changes due to certified crop production in surrounding communities compared to last year(s)?	Please list key ones:

Please ask the questions below:	Please mark the answer with a ☒
For health staff only:	
29. Can you estimate the percent of undernourished people in the area of influence?	☐ % or ☐ All ☐ Many ☐ Around half ☐ Some ☐ Hardly any/none
30. Are this year significantly more children stunted (low height for age) and/or wasted (low weight for height) than last year?	☐ More ☐ Same ☐ Less
31. Are more or less malnourished and anemic children and mothers coming to the health clinic/post?	☐ More ☐ Same ☐ Less
32. What are reasons?	Please list reasons:

Please ask if there are further concerns regarding food security or any other observation in regard to the audited operation, farm or group management. Please cross-check other relevant FSS criteria as well.

For use by the interviewer only – Interpretation of interview result:	
The operation negatively affects local food security	☐ Yes ☐ No

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