**Item 07 – GRI Sector Standards Project for Food and Beverages – Working group terms of reference**

**For GSSB information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>27 January 2022</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meeting</td>
<td>10 February 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>GRI Sector Standards Project for Food and Beverages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>This document sets out the terms of reference for the Working Group for the GRI Sector Standards Project for Food and Beverages. Where there is content that needs to be added or confirmed at the commencement of the project, it is highlighted in yellow.</td>
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</tbody>
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This document has been prepared by the GRI Standards Division and is made available to observers at meetings of the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB). It does not represent an official position of the GSSB. Board positions are set out in the GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards. The GSSB is the independent standard setting body of GRI. For more information visit [www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org).
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Contact

Email: Food@globalreporting.org

For more information: visit the [project webpage] and sign up here to receive regular updates.
Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference outline the mandate of the Working Group for the GRI Sector Standards Project for Food and Beverages (Food and Beverages Working Group), including its selection and appointment, primary objectives and time commitments.

Background

The Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB), GRI’s independent standard-setting body, has identified the food and beverages sector as a priority sector for developing a GRI Sector Standards (Sector Standards).

The objective of sustainability reporting using the GRI Standards is to provide transparency on how an organization contributes or aims to contribute to sustainable development. The GRI Standards enable an organization to publicly disclose its most significant impacts on the economy, environment, and people, including impacts on human rights, and how the organization manages these impacts.

Sector Standards provide information for organizations in a given sector about their likely material topics. Sector Standards also contains a list of disclosures for organizations in the sector to report information about their impacts in relation to each likely material topic. They are designed to enhance transparency and accountability of organizations, and informed decision-making by stakeholders.

The primary objective of GRI Sector Standards Project for Food and Beverages is to develop a Sector Standard that improves the sustainability reporting of food, beverages, and tobacco organizations, making reporting more complete and consistent across the sector. It will be carried out following the GSSB Due Process Protocol.

See the [project proposal] for more information.

Mandate of the Food and Beverages Working Group

Sector Standards are developed using multi-stakeholder expertise, authoritative intergovernmental instruments, and other relevant evidence. The Food and Beverages Working Group is to contribute their expertise to the development of a Sector Standard for food and beverages. The overall work of the Working Group should support sustainability reporting as promoted by the GRI Sustainability Reporting Standards (GRI Standards).

Scope of work

The Food and Beverages Working Group will be responsible for developing a Sector Standard for the food and beverages sector, for the consideration of the GSSB. Within the context of the GRI Sector Program, the food and beverages sector is defined as described in the [project proposal].

The Food and Beverages Working Group will be tasked with providing recommendations on:

- The context of the food and beverages sector in relation to sustainable development, including relevant Sustainable Development Goals and international instruments and agreements.
- The likely material topics for organizations in food processing, beverages manufacturing and tobacco manufacturing, based on the sector’s significant impacts on the environment, economy and people, including human rights;
- The description of these impacts and authoritative references that evidence these impacts;
- The disclosures from GRI Topic Standards that are relevant for organizations from the food and beverages sector to report on each likely material topic;
Additional reporting that is recommended for disclosure by organizations in the food and beverages sector. Additional sector reporting is only included when the Topic Standards do not provide disclosures that sufficiently reflect the impacts associated with the sector.

The Food and Beverages Working Group may also provide recommendations on:

- The scope, key and name of the Sector Standard;
- Considerations that may be relevant to Sector Standards for related sectors;
- Revisions or updates to other GRI Standards.

Impacts identified within this project for which no GRI Standard exists will be assessed and prioritized by the GSSB for future GRI Standards development.

Responsibilities of other entities

The Standards Division is responsible for:

- Overall project management and ensuring compliance with the GSSB Due Process Protocol;
- Facilitating, providing logistical support and preparing materials for Working Group meetings;
- Maintaining an online collaboration platform for the Working Group;
- Engaging with the GSSB and other GRI Governance bodies;
- Engaging other experts and interested parties in a peer review and on an as needed basis;
- Coordinating public exposure of the draft Sector Standard, including collecting and summarizing feedback for consideration by the Working Group;
- Undertaking research to support the development of the Sector Standard; and
- Drafting the content of the Sector Standard.

The Standards Division will draft the Sector Standard and other relevant deliverables in accordance with the recommendations of the Working Group. The content of the Sector Standard will be drafted in accordance with template and house rules for terminology, style and presentation. The Working Group will not be responsible for editing the stylistic and grammatical presentation of deliverables. Such edits will be undertaken by the Standards Division to ensure consistency with existing GRI documents.

The GSSB votes on the approval of a draft of the Sector Standard for public exposure and the final content of a Sector Standard. The GSSB will review the drafted contents and may ask the Food and Beverages Working Group to conduct further research and/or develop the draft recommendations further. Working group members should be committed to support the revision of draft contents in addition to the development of these contents. Further information on the role and authority of the GSSB can be found in the GSSB Due Process Protocol.

Additional considerations

The development of the Sector Standard is to be carried out within the existing structure and template of the GRI Standards, including preserving the hierarchy, coherence and implementation approach of the GRI Standards. The content of Sector Standards must be in line with the in accordance model outlined in GRI 1: Foundation 2021.

The Food and Beverages Working Group should aim to develop topic descriptions that are clear, consistent, and focused on impacts from a sustainable development perspective. Content should also seek to be in line with key authoritative inter-governmental instruments (such as instruments of the United Nations, the International Labour Organization, and the OECD) and consider the content of other business and human rights reporting frameworks, such as the UN Guiding Principles Reporting Framework.
The discussions of the Working Group are confidential but any recommendations made by the Working Group to the GSSB will be publicly available in accordance with the GSSB Due Process Protocol.

GRI will hold the copyright of any deliverables associated with the project.

**Composition of the Food and Beverages Working Group**

It is anticipated that the Working Group will have up to 15 members. The Working Group will aim to have at least one person drawn from each of the constituencies on which the membership of the GSSB is based: business enterprises, investment institutions, labor, civil society, and mediating institutions.

In addition, geographical, gender and cultural diversity will be considered. There can only be one representative per organization in the Working Group.

**Table 1: Descriptions of constituencies represented on the Working Group**

| Business enterprise | a) An enterprise (other than a mediating or investment institution) that has been established in order to generate a profit for the benefit of its investors or owners; or  
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>b) An organization representing the collective interests of those falling into category 'a'.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investment institution</td>
<td>An enterprise that is primarily concerned with the direct or indirect, long-term investment of funds in business – including, but not limited to, asset owners, asset managers, development banks, exchanges, ratings agencies and market information brokers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor</td>
<td>An organization established independently of employers and governments to represent the interests of workers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society</td>
<td>An organization established in order to promote or secure a public good relating to sustainability (environmental, social and governance) and that does not fall into any of the categories defined above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediating institution</td>
<td>An individual or organization that provides goods and/or services associated with the reporting process and derives benefit from doing so.</td>
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</table>

A GSSB sponsor(s) may join Working Group meetings.

**Selection criteria**

In accordance with the GSSB Due Process Protocol, members of the Working Group are appointed by the GSSB. The principal criterion for selecting the Working Group is relevant knowledge and experience of a broad range of sustainable development issues for the food and beverages sector. Members must be able to ability to participate in Working Group meetings held in English and provide written English feedback when requested.

In addition, the following criteria will be considered:

- relevant knowledge of sustainability reporting for the sector;
- familiarity with the needs of users of sustainability reports;
- related experience with multi-stakeholder initiatives;
- understanding of and willingness to work in a consensus-based, multi-stakeholder working group.
Working Group commitments

Working Group members are expected to:

- act in an individual capacity, exclusively in the public interest, and according to due process as defined in the GSSB Due Process Protocol;
- review the materials provided by the Standards Division in advance of Working Group meetings, in order to be able to actively participate;
- provide timely feedback on documents or other materials distributed by the Standards Division;
- work in the manner that aims at achieving consensus.

The development of the Sector Standard for food and beverages is expected to take up to 20 months following the appointment of the Working Group. See the timeline included in Appendix 1.

Working Group members commit to attending approximately 25 hours of meetings and reviewing the draft Sector Standard a minimum of three times during that period. Working Group members also commit to plan sufficient time to prepare for meetings, review other materials and engage in supplementary content creation methods. It is estimated that this may result in up to 50 hours of time commitment across the project (excluding any necessary travel time).

Meetings and other engagement methods will vary depending on the needs of the Working Group and the project. Commonly used methods include full group meetings in-person and virtually, sub-group workshops, and use of digital content creation platforms. The use of these methods will also take into account any travel restrictions or risk factors related to Covid-19.

Virtual meetings are normally held between 1.00-2:30 pm Central European Time (CET), so that members in most time zones can join. This will be adjusted based on the final geographical representation of the Working Group.

In the event of an in-person meeting, Working Group members will be asked to attend a two-day meeting in Amsterdam (excluding travel time).

See appendix 1 for the proposed meeting schedule and an itemized time commitment.

Public communications protocol

Public communication on issues related to the activities of the Working Group and the development of the GRI Standards is the responsibility of the GSSB. Working Group members may publically express their personal opinions and views but may not speak on behalf of the Working Group, GSSB or GRI.

The names and bios of members will be published on the GRI website. Members are welcome to publicize their participation in, and the activities of the Working Group, in channels such as press releases or on social media. Members are asked to work with the Standards Division or GRI’s communication team to coordinate any such activity ahead of time.

Working Group members are advised to use the following when referring to their participation in this process:

"[name of member] has been appointed by the Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB), GRI’s independent standard setting body, to serve on a Working Group to produce a Standard for the food and beverages sector."
How to apply

Once the open call is launched, all interested experts will be able to nominate themselves to be part of the Food and Beverages Working Group, by submitting their CV and the application form to food@globalreporting.org.
Appendix 1. Proposed project timeline

[To be completed prior to Working Group recruitment. The commencement date of this project has not been determined and is subject to resource availability. The project timeline will be based on the estimated duration outlined in the project proposal.]
Appendix 2. Meeting schedule

[To be determined prior to Working Group recruitment. The following text outlines the typical approach to Working Group meetings but the type and schedule of meetings will be determined based on the timing of the commencement of the project, the travel limitations anticipated at that time, and the outcomes of the pilot projects.]

The following table outlines the minimum number of meetings expected to occur throughout the course of the project. Engagement as a Working Group is currently predicted to be completely virtual as it is anticipated that international travel and in-person meetings may still be challenging. If this changes, an in-person meeting may be planned and replace some virtual engagements. In this case, the Working Group will be provided with sufficient notice and scheduling will be subject to member availability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Time commitment</th>
<th>Approximate date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working Group meeting 1</td>
<td>2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Group meeting 2</td>
<td>2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-group meetings</td>
<td>1.5-hour virtual sub-group meeting</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Group meeting 3</td>
<td>4-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Group meeting 4</td>
<td>2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Group meeting 5</td>
<td>2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Group meeting 6</td>
<td>2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Group meeting 7</td>
<td>2-hour virtual meeting + 2 hours review of preparatory materials</td>
<td>TBC</td>
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In addition to the meetings listed above, it is expected that the Working Group will participate in a survey following Working Group meeting 1, review the draft Sector Standard in-full three times, twice prior to the public exposure and once following, and participate in stakeholder engagement activities during the public exposure period and to support the launch of the Standard as relevant.