

We will look into a framework of principles and criteria for just transitions in food systems.

Core Principles

Equity and Inclusion:

A just transition must prioritize the needs of all stakeholders, including smallholder farmers, rural communities, Indigenous peoples, and agricultural workers, ensuring that the costs and benefits are shared fairly.

Ecological Sustainability & Resilience:

The transition should advance ecological regeneration, respect planetary boundaries, and enhance the resilience of food systems to climate change.

Good Livelihoods:

A just transition aims to create decent work and equitable livelihoods through new food systems and supply chains.

Rights-Based Approach:

Protecting human rights, including the right to food and nutrition, and correcting injustices is fundamental to a just transition.

Inclusivity in Process:

The process itself must be equitable, with strong emphasis on participation and the incorporation of all stakeholder perspectives, especially those of historically marginalized communities.

Key Criteria

Meeting Nutritional Needs:

Ensuring everyone has access to nutritious food while staying within ecological limits.

Promoting Agroecology:

Employing farming practices that support natural ecosystems, rather than relying on agrichemicals.

Respecting Traditional Knowledge:

Integrating indigenous and traditional knowledge into modern agricultural strategies to foster sustainability and cultural heritage.

Systemic Change:

Recognizing that isolated measures are insufficient and requiring systemic changes across policies, regulations, and economic models.

Addressing Vulnerabilities:

Identifying and mitigating the unique vulnerabilities of different groups, such as women, Indigenous peoples, and low-income communities, to ensure they are not left behind.

Building Peace:

Transitioning towards food systems that do not exacerbate food insecurity or conflict.

Accountability:

Ensuring robust regulations and enforcement mechanisms are in place to prevent and compensate for any adverse impacts of the transition.

Climate mitigation activities are urgently needed in food systems, but can have damaging social, environmental, economic, and health impacts.

Consequently, food system transitions can cause significant side effects across and beyond food systems, aggravating existing inequalities and unsustainabilities, causing new ones, or hampering equal engagement in the transition itself.

Thus, justice questions stand at the core of assessing decarbonization pathways and policies and must link to other sectors as well:

Who bears the costs and who enjoys the benefits of the transitions?

Can transitions be inclusive, leaving no one behind?

We examine the establishment and purpose of general principles and food system-specific criteria for just transition.

Gender Mainstreaming & Just Food Transition

- How can gender equality contribute to a sustainable food transition?
- What barriers exist for women's participation in agroecological initiatives and sustainable agriculture?
- **Why is it important to apply a gender perspective when designing food policies?**
- Which best practices have been implemented in Nordic and Baltic countries for integrating gender into food strategies?
- How does engaging vulnerable groups (women, youth, migrants) impact food system sustainability?
- **What role do municipalities play in ensuring a fair and inclusive food transition?**

1. From Policy to Practice (Gunilla Andersson, Malmö City & Anna Bruun Mansson, Malmö University)

“Malmö is seen as a pioneer in sustainable urban development. How can public meal programs and urban farming policies be designed not only to be environmentally green, but also to reduce and redistribute the unpaid care work around food — which still falls mainly on women?”

2. The Grassroots Perspective (Laura Maria Rajala & Patrik Björehag)

“From your grassroots experience, what is the single biggest barrier to integrating a gender perspective into local food initiatives? And can you share one concrete example where such an initiative truly empowered women or shifted gender roles?”

3. Defining and Measuring "Just" (Panel, all speakers)

“When we talk about a ‘just food transition,’ participation numbers are not enough. What deeper indicators should we look at — for example, redistribution of decision-making power, access to resources, or recognition of women’s knowledge?”

4. Scaling Up (Gunilla Andersson, Malmö City + Nordic Council perspective if relevant)

“Malmö has strong local initiatives — but how can cities like Malmö influence national or Nordic policies so that gender mainstreaming becomes a requirement in all food and agricultural strategies?”

5. The Role of Knowledge Institutions (Anna Bruun Mansson & Panel)

“Universities often research these issues, but how can they move into co-creating real solutions? For example, what role can they play in developing toolkits and training with municipalities and civil society to mainstream gender in food systems?”

1. From Policy to Practice

“Can Malmö’s ‘green’ food policies also tackle the invisible care work around meals — still mostly done by women?”

2. The Grassroots Perspective

“What is the single biggest barrier to making food projects gender-equal — and where have you seen it actually work?”

3. Defining and Measuring "Just"

“Beyond numbers, how do we know a food transition is truly just — especially for women’s power and voice?”

4. Scaling Up

“Malmö leads locally — but how can cities push national and Nordic policies to make gender action plans non-negotiable?”

5. The Role of Knowledge Institutions

“Universities study gender and food — but how can they step up as co-creators of real tools and training for change?”

Guidebook Methodologies & Best Practices

- Which successful methodologies are currently being used in your organization?
- How can these methodologies be adapted for different target groups (schools, universities, communities)?
- What practical exercises are most effective in changing dietary habits?
- How can local communities be involved in sustainable food transitions?
- What criteria should define a “best practice” for inclusion in the guidebook?

Transition to Plant-Based Food

1. What are the key factors influencing society’s readiness to shift to plant-based diets?
2. What role do educational campaigns and university programs play in this transition?
3. What social and cultural barriers exist to large-scale adoption of plant-based diets?
4. How can producers be encouraged to expand plant-based product offerings?
5. Which examples of successful plant-based transitions can be highlighted from the Nordic region?

Hosting Sustainable Events

- What minimum environmental requirements should be implemented for sustainable events?
- How do you select food suppliers to minimize the carbon footprint of an event?
- Which waste management strategies work best for events?
- How can participants be informed and engaged about sustainability principles before and during events?
- Is it possible to make a sustainable event economically viable?

Sharing Nordic-Baltic Best Practices

What are the main similarities and differences in approaches to sustainable food across Nordic and Baltic countries?

Which initiatives have been most effective in your country and why?

How can successful practices be adapted from one region to another?

How can youth and educational institutions be more involved in sustainable food processes?

What are the main obstacles to stronger cross-country collaboration in the region?

Working Groups – Guidebook Development

What format of information would be most useful for the guidebook (case studies, diagrams, checklists)?

How can we ensure the methodologies are applicable across different countries?

Which core topics must be included in the guidebook (nutrition, education, logistics)?

How should we measure the effectiveness of practices included in the guidebook?

What process should be established for updating the guidebook over time?