



UNITED NATIONS
FOOD SYSTEMS COORDINATION HUB

Synthesis Report

Regional Preparatory Meetings
for the UN Food Systems Summit +2
Stocktaking Moment

2023



SYNTHESIS REPORT

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(June 2023)



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The UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment

The UN Secretary-General committed in his Chair Summary and Statement of Action on the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit (UN FSS) to convene "a global stocktaking meeting every two years to review progress in implementing the outcomes of this process and its contributions to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda."

The UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment (UNFSS+2) will be held in a world that has substantially changed from what it was during the UN FSS, due to a number of pre-existing and ongoing issues, including, but not limited to, the triple planetary crisis, the cost of living crisis and the impacts of conflicts on food systems.

This meeting is convened by the UN Secretary-General, hosted by the Government of Italy in collaboration with the Rome-based Agencies of the United Nations – the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) – the United Nations Food Systems Coordination Hub, and the wider United Nations system. The UNFSS+2 will take place in Rome, Italy from 24 to 26 July 2023, at the premises of the FAO headquarters.

The Regional Preparatory Meetings

In preparation for the UNFSS+2, the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, in collaboration with the UN Regional Commissions and other regional partners, organized a series of five regional preparatory meetings. These meetings served as a platform for the sharing of experiences, good practices, and lessons learned in regional National Convenors' efforts to follow up on the UN FSS, including through the operationalization and implementation of their [national pathways](#). In addition, participants were invited to identify priority actions and key messages for the region, to be synthesized in the form of a short technical report.

The regional preparatory meetings provided an overview of countries' progress, challenges, and key priorities leading up to the UNFSS+2. They facilitated discussions among stakeholders to evaluate efforts and identify challenges.

By engaging in these consultations, National Convenors and other stakeholders contributed to building a collective understanding of progress made and identified areas for improvement for each region. They also shaped the vision and roadmap of the UNFSS+2 and informed the development of its detailed programme.

The regional preparatory meetings took place in Niamey (27 February 2023), Beirut (13 March 2023), Geneva (28 March 2023), Bangkok (30 March 2023), and Santiago de Chile (25 April 2023) with the participation of around 800 people. They were attended by National

Convenors, representatives of the UN system and regional bodies, civil society and private sector representatives, academia, youth, and other stakeholders.

These five regional preparatory meetings were complemented by the 4th Global Conference of the One Planet network's (10YFP) Sustainable Food Systems (SFS) Programme, which took place in Hanoi, Viet Nam on 24-27 April 2023. The 350 conference participants provided important inputs for the preparation of the UNFSS+2. They emphasised that food systems transformation is crucial for addressing multiple challenges, including food insecurity, malnutrition, climate change, and biodiversity loss. The meeting stressed the importance of linking short-term actions with long-term strategies and adopting a holistic approach to governance and policy-making of food systems.

Outcomes of the Regional Preparatory Meetings

The meetings produced five reports that identified priority actions and key messages for each region. These key messages can be accessed on [the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub's website](#). Below are some of key messages from the five regions.

Key Messages and Priorities across All Regions

- **The UNFSS+2** should be action-oriented and help to maintain the momentum of food systems transformation, express a sense of urgency and a need for acceleration, and provide valuable opportunities for peer learning and inspiration.
- **Regional collaboration and South-South Cooperation**, including through the UN systems and the ecosystem of support, can help bridge gaps and strengthen collective learning and action through UN agencies and regional institutions.
- **Policy coherence and coordinated actions** through whole-of-government approaches are essential to address the interconnected challenges and provide intersectoral synergies within food systems.
- **Collaboration and partnerships** can produce a synergetic impact on food systems transformation. An inclusive approach is needed to bring on board key players including governments, parliamentarians, civil society, private sector, and the science community.
- **Building sustainable and resilient food systems** is critical for improving social and economic outcomes for people and the planet and addressing challenges such as climate change, conflict, and pandemics. This should be taken into account within, and beyond, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.
- **Adopting nature-based solutions** offers a positive approach to simultaneously supporting food systems, protecting the environment, and enhancing food security. These solutions involve utilizing and restoring natural ecosystems and biodiversity to address various the challenges faced by food systems.
- **Health and nutrition considerations** should be an integral part of the design and the transformation of food systems.
- **Inclusive and equitable food system transformation** that prioritizes the active involvement of women, youth and indigenous communities, are key to addressing the needs of vulnerable groups, promoting social justice, and creating a sustainable and fair future for all.
- **Women are key actors in every part of food systems**, as farmers, processors, wage-workers, traders, and consumers. Empowering women and achieving gender equality can support food systems transformation.

- **Financing** plays a critical role in driving food systems transformation by supporting the necessary investments and initiatives. To effectively transform food systems, a combination of increased public and private sector investment is needed, as well as ensuring that finance is accessible for smallholders.
- **International Financial Institutions (IFIs)** are key to accelerating the generation of finance by addressing the priorities outlined within national pathways. This includes avenues such as the Official Development Assistance (ODA), blended finance, and green and blue bonds.
- **Data for decision-making and monitoring progress** towards transformation is crucial for assessing the impact of interventions on communities, the environment, and the economy, in order to manage trade-offs and leverage synergies.
- **Enhancing research and development** can better support agricultural innovation, increase productivity, and transform food systems.
- **National procurement and the empowerment of local producers** are pivotal actions that contribute significantly to the transformation of food systems.
- **Continued strong advocacy with all stakeholders is key** to securing political and decision-makers' support.

Examples of Specific Key Messages and Regional Priorities

Below are examples of key messages from the different regions.

Africa

- Recognizes the strong link between food systems transformation, political, and macroeconomic stability.
- Emphasizes the importance of using regional architecture such as the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) to support food systems transformation.
- Seeks to build on the opportunities created through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to accelerate agricultural sector growth, resilience, and regional cooperation.
- Highlights that while national financing is crucial for food systems transformation, it should be complemented by financing from resource partners.

Arab Region

- Highlights the interdependency between food security and nutrition, and political stability.
- Notes COP28 as an opportunity to elevate the link between food systems transformation and the climate agenda, building on COP27.
- Commits to leveraging the power of legislation and the role of Parliamentarians to support the transformation.

Europe and Central Asia

- Emphasizes that the lack of sufficient and sustainable financing poses a significant hurdle in advancing national food systems pathways in certain regions.
- Welcomes the budgeting tool currently being developed by IFAD and the World Bank, as a means of helping countries better understand their needs and areas with the highest return on investment.
- Considers repurposing agriculture supports and incentives to be more conducive to the aim of transformation.
- Emphasizes that monitoring frameworks should constitute an important component of implementation efforts.

Asia and the Pacific

- Prioritizes balancing domestic needs and trade. Countries aspire to promote local production for local consumption while simultaneously transitioning from subsistence-led farming to market-led and/or export-oriented agrifood systems to pursue income growth and build resilience.
- Places a focus on promoting sustainable and healthy diets, including through social and behavioural change communication (SBCC), capacity building, media, and initiatives such as nutrition labelling and homegrown feeding programmes.

Latin America and the Caribbean

- Welcomes the significant strides made in the region in transforming food systems, but notes that progress requires continued technical assistance to translate national pathways into actionable measures. Implementing these pathways can have positive impacts on food security, poverty reduction, and health outcomes.
- Emphasizes that developing frameworks for the generation of evidence and measuring progress is crucial for monitoring the 2030 Agenda.
- Highlights that financing, including microcredit, plays a crucial role in supporting national efforts and empowering small producers and women farmers. Social protection must focus on vulnerable populations to address income gaps.
- Considers agroecology, local knowledge, and technology as important components. The solidarity economy, consumer associations, civil society organizations, and cooperatives can further contribute to national efforts.

Progress Made on the Transformation of Food Systems

- Since the conclusion of the Food Systems Summit in 2021, countries have actively engaged in developing their national pathways. So far, 121 members have submitted national pathways.
- Countries are taking comprehensive and systemic approaches to integrating these pathways into national strategies.
- Many countries have updated their national pathways to address emerging challenges and adapt to new realities.
- National dialogues and institutional platforms are being established to oversee progress following the UN FSS, enhancing understanding of trade-offs and synergies between different actions and SDGs.
- Many countries and institutions are participating actively in Food Systems Coalitions according to their needs and comparative advantages.

- National strategies and pathways have evolved to include comprehensive measures that prioritize the protection and support of all farmers. These measures aim to ensure their pivotal role in fostering sustainable and resilient food systems, while also preserving ancestral knowledge and promoting the development of innovative and environmentally friendly methods of food production. Several countries are adopting strategies for strengthening local food systems- this includes sustainable agricultural practices, developing food value chains, supporting blue transformation, and improving access to finance and technology.
- Countries are taking different actions to enhance productivity and access to food. Cited good practices for producer supports include crop insurance, measures to reduce post-harvest losses, promotion of Indigenous foods, policies prioritizing gender equality and women's empowerment, repurposed agricultural supports, natural resource management, and the modernization of agricultural systems, as well as expanded school meals programmes.
- Food environment regulations are key. Regulatory frameworks are being developed to enhance consumer education and empowerment through different measures such as food labelling which contributes to reducing the consumption of ultra-processed food and towards achieving food security and nutrition objectives.

Persisting Challenges for Food Systems Transformation

While there are common goals and themes across regions, each has its specific challenges, opportunities, and priorities that require tailored approaches and actions to transform their respective food systems.

- **Climate change:** The effects of climate change is considered a serious threat and disrupter of food systems across all regions. Extreme weather events, shifting rainfall patterns, and rising temperatures pose substantial risks to agricultural productivity and all pillars of food insecurity and malnutrition. On the other hand, about a third of all human-caused greenhouse gas emissions are linked to food. Agricultural activities, including livestock production, deforestation as a result of agricultural land expansion, and the use of synthetic fertilizers, contribute to greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Conflicts and political and economic instability:** The COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and the global cost of living crisis are some examples of the serious challenges that disrupt food systems and undermine efforts towards implementing national pathways and developing strategies.
- **Access to adequate financing:** The current economic crisis is putting additional pressure on many countries, in particular developing countries. Many face challenges in securing adequate financing for their food systems, especially low-income countries.
- **Rising food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition:** Food systems are not currently supporting food security and nutrition objectives in many countries.
- **Inequality:** Growing inequalities within and between countries pose a threat to food systems. Vulnerable populations face additional risks and usually suffer from higher levels of poverty and food insecurity, including as a result of the cost-of-living crisis, which is forcing the most vulnerable people in society to reduce their consumption of healthy, nutrient-dense foods.

In addition to these mutual challenges, the regional preparatory meetings identified important regional specific concerns:

- **Africa:** Multiple global shocks have impacted on the process of transforming food systems. The region has experience impeded access to agricultural inputs, including fertilizers, which has resulted in an increase in the cost-of-living and the return to a siloed approach. Macroeconomic instability, a large debt burden, limited access to finance and limited technical capacities are major challenges to food systems transformation in the region.
- **Arab Region:** The region suffers from insufficient productivity, high population growth, natural resource depletion- including land and water scarcity- and high import dependency. This has impacted the levels of food insecurity and malnutrition in the region.
- **Europe and Central Asia:** Access to adequate and sustainable finance is the primary challenge for many countries in advancing their national food systems pathways.
- **Asia and the Pacific:** The rising price of food and raw materials, limited and degrading natural resources, lack of awareness and capacity for sustainable agriculture practices, and aging farmers are specific challenges in this region.
- **Latin America and the Caribbean:** Inadequate access to agricultural inputs, inequality, and the high cost of healthy diets are the main challenges faced by this region in the process of transforming their food systems.