



UN Food Systems Summit 2021 "Nepal towards an equitable, resilient and sustainable food systems"



Nepal's National Pathways for Food Systems Transformation

Pathways were developed based on the evidence /outcomes from the three national and seven provincial food systems dialogues organized from June to August 2021. Key focus was given on overall context of the food system issues and underlying causes for weak food system, specifically related to five actions tracks (objectives) of UN Food Systems Summit and policy on right to food and food sovereignty. Further, existing programmes, policies, opportunities and comparative advantages; vision (proposition) developed for next ten years for each Action Tracks and Policy; and global learning, scientific evidence and outcomes of UNFSS action tracks were considered. Food system governance was one of the key elements considered as well. These pathways guide the actions, intentions and commitments of the stakeholders to transform the food system by 2030.

Action Track 1: Ensuring safe and nutritious food for all

Proposition: Increased agriculture productivity and develop sustainable food chain for affordable, safe, healthy, and nutritious diet to improve levels of nutrition, ensure all people to be well nourished and healthy and achieve zero hunger.

Pathway: Ensure **policy coherence** (especially of the agriculture, food security and nutrition, education and health) and **food governance**. Furthermore, encourage **farmers/youth to engage in agricultural sector to intensify the production of affordable, safe, healthy and nutritious food** for all people in a sustainable way.

Key elements of Pathways: One of the important aspects were to harmonize existing relevant policies for synergy and improved governance through the value chain. Food governance was identified as a key to ensure fair pricing of the products, strong supply chain and quality of food.

Action for 3 years

- Harmonize agriculture, food and nutrition and health and other sectoral policies, and set up accountable food governance mechanism through the implementation of Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act to create an enabling environment for promoting local food production systems.
- Increase investment in agricultural research, extension and education to develop and disseminate agricultural technologies as per the diverse climatic condition and need of the stakeholders.
- Operationalization of food banks, and conservation and utilization of local crops/commodities that have high nutrition.
- Set up a strong food security information management system at different levels to strengthen evidence-based agriculture, food security, and nutrition planning. Conserve and utilize local crops/commodities that have high nutrition.
- Expand irrigation coverage, and develop infrastructures like roads, storage and processing.
- Develop gender friendly pre/post-harvest technology and improve quality agri-input supply and product marketing systems involving private sectors.
- Integrate crops-vegetables with aquaculture and Animal Husbandry for small-scale farmers and increase dietary diversity and value addition.
- Education and awareness raising programs for the consumption of nutrient rich foods.
- Restructuring research and extension system to address the needs of the farmers and value chain actors for nutrition and food security.

- Ensure infant and children nutrition by enhancing access to breast feeding through policy/programmes and enacting Breast Milk Substitutes Act, levying additional taxes for unhealthy foods and regulation for unhealthy food marketing.
- Ensure proper nutrition for Old-age generation including food bank for them at different levels; food safety, hygiene and nutrition, food fortification focusing more on biofortification to enrich nutrition, and food composition database preparation.
- Digitization of agriculture practices (digital agriculture extension, marketing etc), and capacity building in agriculture, nutrition, and food safety at all levels of governance.
- Recognize the role of private sectors in food production/value addition and engage/involve them.
- Adopt Quality Assurance and Quality Certification system for the products through adopting Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) etc.

Action Track 2: Shifting to sustainable consumption patterns.

Proposition: Enabling, inspiring and motivating people to enjoy healthy and sustainable consumption options; Slashing food loss and waste; and transitioning to a circular economy through advancing in technological, environmental, economic, social, regulatory, and institutional fronts.

Pathway: Set up **regulatory mechanisms** to effectively monitor the quality of foods and **educate people** to consume healthy and nutritious local food, reduce food loss/waste, and promote, protect and support for breastfeeding practices.

Key elements of Pathways: Strong regulatory mechanism is identified as an important element for promoting healthy food products, regulating market and influence consumer behaviour. Awareness raising among the value chain actors is crucial to reduce food loss and waste.

Action for 3 years

- Develop nutrient profiling model and nutrient profiling-based taxation on food.
- Marketing control - regulation of misleading advertisement of unhealthy packaged foods and other low grade ready to consume foods.
- Update/develop the age specific Food-based dietary guidelines (FBDGs) considering the issues of environment, food waste, affordability, local foods etc.
- Front-of-pack labelling (FOPL) also containing information on trans fatty acids-ecolabelling/traffic light labelling and mandatory labelling with on pack visuals.
- Raising awareness of improved choices and stimulating demand for nutrient-rich foods.
- Update national guideline of Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition (MIYCN) to create maternal baby friendly environment at workplace, health system, public places and community setting.
- Monitor the implementation of Breastmilk Substitute Act; increase maternity and paternity protection to at least 6 months with full salary.
- Invest in lactation management skills and competencies for health care workers and establish human milk banks in Kathmandu and provincial hospitals.
- School nutrition program- Promote healthy diet, healthy eating behaviour and knowledge through school education.
- Promote local diverse foods in public gathering and as snack in official meetings.
- Subsidize and incentivize the farming of nutrient-dense local crop and landraces.
- Infrastructure development and maintaining cold chain to reduce on-farm and post-harvest losses.
- Develop technologies and mandatory guidelines for post-harvest handling of foods to reduce food loss and waste and monitor food safety.
- Policy and interventions to minimize antibiotics and chemical pesticides residue in foods.

- Develop framework for the private sector engagement in producing healthy foods, popularizing healthy dietary pattern.
- Provisioning start-up funding for promising Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) producing and marketing healthy foods.
- Mobilize civil society and youth in promoting healthy food habits.
- Develop National food security and nutrition framework with clear delineation of roles of different government and enhance capacity of institutions for improving governance.

Action Track 3: Boosting nature-positive production

Proposition: Protect natural ecosystems from new deforestation and conversion for food and feed production; manage sustainably existing food production systems; restore degraded ecosystems and rehabilitate soil function for sustainable food production.

Pathway: Adopt **agroecosystem based resilient planning** and **revitalization of indigenous food systems**, and make concerted efforts on **conserving and utilizing the biodiversity** and nature by improving the value of nature positive food system.

Key elements of Pathways: Resilience development priority should be integrated right from the beginning of the planning. Nepal has a unique mountain food system, and it is crucial to revitalize this system to increase biodiversity and make it sustainable.

Action for 3 years

- Development and adoption of Climate resilient agriculture and food system.
- Integrated Sustainable Land Management by enforcement of Land use Act (2019) and Land Use Policy (2015) at Agroecosystem and Landscape based planning.
- Revitalization of local indigenous food system and social system through agroecological /organic farming.
- Improvement of soil health through legume rotation, conservation agriculture.
- Value chain development of local crops /commodities based on green technologies/regenerative agriculture practices in partnership with private sector.
- Integrated Management of Crops - livestock-forestry/ pastureland with focus on agroforestry /integrated farming systems through revitalization of indigenous regenerative production system.
- Investment on food-water-energy-biodiversity-health nexus for improved and healthy agroecosystems.
- Empowering and build the capacity of farmers and institutions by bringing private sector investment in research and development, including indigenous and local knowledge and good practices.
- Establish and communicate a comprehensive agricultural information, knowledge, database and services systems through effective community based and private sector driven extension system.
- Reorient and apply community forestry concept to Forests based food production & restoration of degradation ecosystems.
- Research investment in green, climate smart, resilient, and regenerative technologies, and innovations.
- Conservation & sustainable use of agrobiodiversity by promoting site specific crops, commodities & NUS (neglected and underutilized species).

Action Track 4: Advancing equitable livelihoods

Proposition: Developing inclusive and diverse food systems that contribute to the elimination of poverty and food and nutrition insecurity by creating jobs, raising incomes across food value chains; protecting and enhancing cultural and social capital; reducing risks for the poorest and increasing value distribution.

Pathway: Invest on R&D and innovation in agriculture sector to **diversify the food systems** and promote value chain; **develop entrepreneurship skills of small and commercial farmers including SMEs** to raise their income and improve their livelihoods and address the problem of food insecurity leaving no one behind.

Key elements of Pathways: Increased investment on R&D and innovation has to be key to diversify and promote the productivity and income of all the stakeholders engaged in the value chain.

Action for 3 years

- Categorize farmers, producers, issuance of farmers ID and provision of categorized services and incentives.
- Implement land use policy to ensure to inclusive tenure and user rights for women, small holders and poor.
- Implement policies, guidelines, procedures for equitable access to water, employability within food systems, and targeted provisions.
- Formalization of agriculture sector jobs to ensure regular employments, fix wage rates without gender discrimination, assurance of decent work.
- Partnership with private sector in promoting agriculture-based production, enterprising, marketing and reaching services to marginalized.
- Capacity strengthening of all actors in use of IT, infrastructure development in both on farm and off farm employment sectors to diversify economic opportunities for women, youth, poor.
- Research and evidence-based planning based on needs, priorities and demands of consumer and market.
- Improvement conservation, promotion and registration of indigenous seeds.
- Robust monitoring and evaluation of program, grant and any other support that are entitled to women, youth and small holders.
- Prepare inclusive communication strategy to raise awareness on local and nutritious foods.
- Diversify food system, innovate culinary arts and promote processing industries for high value industrial crops.
- Strengthen producers, vendors, market actors and consumers in the decision-making of rural food system transformation.
- Define inter-connected initiatives linking with income generation, safety net, health e.g., breastfeeding, school meal programs, tourism etc.
- Capacity building and skill enhancement, easy access to production inputs for SME's growth and market explorations as well crisis responsive actions.
- Support youths to engage in profitable niche-based competitive local produce for both domestic and export markets.
- Promote inclusive governance in food system in both production resource management as well as market governance to benefit by all specially of women, poor and vulnerable communities, and
- Execute programs to ensure right to employment, work-place safety, equal pay for equal work, better health, and choice of livelihoods options specially for women, youth, poor, and marginalized groups.

Action Track 5: Building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks, and stresses

Proposition: Developing inclusive and equitable food systems to ensure that all people within a food system are empowered to prepare for, withstand, and recover from instability and participate in a food system that, despite shocks and stressors, delivers food security, nutrition, and equitable livelihoods for all.

Pathway: Ensure **longer-term investments on developing the resilient food system** and community to withstand shock and stresses to promote sustainable and equitable livelihoods for all.

Key elements of Pathways: Resilience building requires longer term engagement, investments and capacity strengthening. Hence, the actions need to be focused towards strengthening the capacity of community and institutions to better adapt and make them resilient against the shocks and stresses.

Action for 3 years

- Effective implementation of land use policy and legal framework, agro-met services/advisory.
- R&D on resilient technology (including local crops and soil management), proper water management and irrigation technologies.
- Strengthen supply chain system, multi-sectoral approach to enhance resilience.
- Proper coordination mechanism between the 3 spheres of government and stakeholders.
- Food security monitoring system (NeKSAP) in place for vulnerability and mapping of affected people.
- Provision of vulnerability card to the vulnerable community, evidence-based decision-making.
- Preparedness, response and recovery mechanism in place, expansion of insurance coverage.
- Mainstreaming resilience into sectoral programming; develop risk informed programme, building resilience for food system, agroforestry.
- Fair price shops in food insecure areas, food storage and stocking of food including supplementary/therapeutic food for emergency, strengthen food distribution system.
- Prevention and management of malnutrition.
- Link Prime Minister (PM)/ Chief Minister (CM) employment programmes to Food Systems, Social protection system in place, re-settlement of people living in vulnerable areas to safe area.
- Maintain food storage and food bank for emergency situation (Local govt to take responsibly).

Action Track 6: Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act- a legal framework for sustainable food systems in Nepal

Proposition: Referring to the overarching legal document developed based on the constitutional provision, Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act (2018), is considered as a legal framework. Hence, this Act and related policies are the key to strengthen food system governance and accountability and transform food system that is resilient, equitable and sustainable.

Pathway: Develop **coherent policies and strategies in line with the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act**, and prioritize **implementing the Act through the approval of Bylaws** and comprehensive **orientation to the stakeholders to ensure accountable food governance** at all federal structure for achieving resilient, equitable and sustainable food systems.

Key elements of Pathways: Rights based approach to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition is an appropriate strategy. Implementation of Right to food and food sovereignty act provides a legal framework to improve and strengthen the governance and policy coherence.

Action for 3 years

- Set up and strengthen institutional architecture at 3 spheres of govt. (based on Act, policy, strategies, etc).
- Develop Bylaws on Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act and implement them for advancing food system and food governance.
- Orientation to people's representative and farmers about the law, policies and programmes.
- Coordination mechanism to regulate the law and guidelines, strengthen governance and accountability.
- Formulation of provincial Act and regulations.
- Implement farmers' identification card.
- Strong legal coordination mechanism between local, provincial, and federal government.
- Ensuring policy /programme coherence in agriculture, food security and nutrition; build synergies.
- Adequate financing to the Province and Local levels based on their performance on the implementation of Act, and relevant policies.
- Implementation of 15th Plan, Periodic Plans, and localization of SDGs with priority.
- Invest on setting up a mechanism for systematic data collection, analysis, and management for strengthening the evidence-based policy making.