

Stakeholders' Contribution Document

UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment

“Shadow Report to the UNFSS+2”

4 July 2023

Summary

In preparation for the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment (UNFSS+2), the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub invited stakeholders to participate in a survey in order to gather valuable insights regarding stakeholder experiences in implementing and supporting food systems transformations leading up to the UNFSS+2. The results of the survey were analyzed and a draft report was produced by an independent author. The draft report was peer-reviewed by the Hub's Stakeholders Engagement and Networking Advisory Group (SENA Group) through a series of meetings. The SENA group provided revisions to the report and finalized the content. This report is submitted to the UNFSS+2 as the “Stakeholders Contribution Document” or “Shadow Report to the UNFSS+2”.

The stakeholders were asked to provide their inputs and opinions on the following aspects.

- **The Stakeholders' contribution to the UN FSS follow up:** The survey results revealed that every stakeholder has played a valuable role in driving food systems transformation. Organizations of Women, Indigenous Peoples, Youth and Producers have been active in awareness raising and capacity development of their constituencies supporting them to improve their livelihoods through safe food production, agro-processing, including livestock production. Indigenous Peoples groups have contributed with knowledge and wisdom as to the land generally and agriculture specifically. NGOs and academic institutions brought valuable expertise to better understand food systems issues and provide solutions. Business and industry have taken steps to implement the Business Declaration signed by 220 executives as part of the UN Food System Summit, with support from business membership organizations.
- **Positive actions taken by countries, the UN System and the Ecosystem of Support to meaningfully engage stakeholders in the FSS follow up:** Cases of strong collaboration between different groups have been reported. These include collaborations between private sector actors with state actors in areas as sustainable agricultural production and nutrition. Collaboration of youth organizations with government actors to fight hunger through local production, participation of women organizations in national planning dialogues, as well as country level multi-stakeholder collaboration to develop a common perspective on food systems transformation have been reported.
- **Persistent challenges faced by Stakeholders and areas that need improvement.** In general, resource allocation and management and coordination at both the national and local levels and with the UN have been identified as persistent challenges. The responses also indicated a fragmented vision for food system at the national level as well as challenges to identify government contacts for food systems transformation. Stakeholders, especially those whose constituencies are often marginalized insisted that there is a necessity for increased resource

allocation. Stakeholders noted that government priorities change dramatically from one administration to the next, thus hampering food system transformation priorities. Women, particularly women smallholders, should be better represented and resources better allocated to meet their needs. Stakeholders noted that women farmers do not receive the same level of attention as their male counterparts in terms of policy and accessing commercial markets. Indigenous knowledge and wisdom along with support for Indigenous Peoples generally require resource commitments. The respondents noted that local governments often lack the technical expertise or the funding necessary to actively support food system transformation initiatives. They underlined that resource constraints include infrastructure deficits, which also can impede progress. At the same time, access to publicly available data and its integration in decision-making needs to be strengthened to unlock public, private, and non-profit tools, services and investments.

- **Stakeholders' opinion on how to link the UNFSS+2 to other global initiatives and other global processes.** While all of the stakeholders believed that food systems transformation should be linked to global agendas, they had different views on the extent to which such linkages should occur. Many argued that effective linkages should occur if agendas are streamlined. There was a general belief that the UNFSS+2 can provide an opportunity to assess progress towards achieving the SDGs related to food security, climate action, and sustainable development and that linking the UNFSS+2 to other global initiatives can enhance synergies, amplify impact, and promote collective action towards common goals. Other stakeholders felt that global agendas need to be effectively linked in different ways. They noted that food systems transformation cross-pollinates the SDGs and is intertwined with climate change and biodiversity. At the same time, there was a sense among some stakeholders that there were “too many” summits. Stakeholders underlined the need for a “more holistic approach” to the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs. Their critique of the current global agenda was that while there was a great deal of emphasis on integration and coordination, a more consistent effort was required to monitor and report the progress of governments and other stakeholders in strengthening the food system and achieving the SDGs.
- **Priority actions planned by Stakeholders for the two years after the UNFSS+2.** Stakeholders shared a wide range of priority activities they plan to undertake in the next two years to support food systems transformation in their respective countries. These include but are not limited to: commitments to promoting sustainable agricultural production, biodiversity preservation, home food production, and circular agriculture; strengthening the organization of food system workers, especially women; advocacy for national-level educational programmes such as agroecology initiatives; strengthening partnerships with other actors, implementing advocacy programmes to raise awareness among policymakers about the challenges faced by family farmers; promote innovation and strengthen technology adoption to reduce environmental impact of food production.
- **Recommendations for other actors and Stakeholders.** Stakeholders shared a number of recommendations such as: encouraging scientific research and ensuring it is translated into practical solutions, as well as including Indigenous Peoples' issues and farmer-driven approaches in research efforts; for the UN system to establish direct channels of communication with stakeholders at the national level and provide funding for policy implementation and projects. Governments are urged to create mechanisms for increased engagement with NGOs, particularly Indigenous Peoples' groups, and to support graduate programmes focused on food systems. Ensuring farmers/producers' access to climate finance, co-ownership of climate initiatives, and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises in developing business plans to

facilitate access to finance have also been seen as essential steps. Gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women were constantly asked by the stakeholders.

The analysis of the responses and further consultation with the Hub's SENA Group indicate that in order to support the National Pathways for sustainable food systems transformation, there is a need to develop a multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral architecture. Such an architecture, for example, would not only acknowledge the need for greater resource allocation but also provide a process for addressing such needs. Such architecture should entail and accomplish the following 3 main aspects:

1. Better "food systems transformation governance" at country level
2. Recognize equity as a cross-cutting key dimension of food systems transformation
3. Articulate linkages with other global agendas, not only at the global level, but at the country level.

For the Stakeholders the UNFSS+2 is expected to serve as a forum to share knowledge, good practices, scalable solutions and expertise with the ultimate objective to ensure everyone has access to healthy and affordable food. Additionally, Stakeholders believe that the UNFSS+2 should provide a comprehensive assessment of the current state of global food systems, taking into account diverse perspectives, challenges, and opportunities of the different food systems actors. Respondents considered important for the UNFSS+2 to help finding ways to phase out unsustainable food systems practices, avoid food waste, in particular postharvest loss, ensure grassroots organizations' voices are heard, and that the role of all stakeholders, including women farmers, women informal workers, Youth, Indigenous Peoples, Farmers/Producers, the Private Sector, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, NGOs and the Scientific and Technological Community in sustainable food systems transformation is highlighted.

Stakeholders also hope that the UNFSS+2 will be successful in mobilizing resources for the implementation of the SDGs as they relate to food system transformation and that the UNFSS+2 would result in workable recommendations that will facilitate the implementation of enabling policies and thus pave the way for the development of concrete work plans for food systems transformation at international, regional, local and community levels.

I. Introduction and background

Food represents more than just sustenance; it embodies culture and is essential for the survival of billions of people worldwide. Each day, we engage in the critical activities of producing, harvesting, processing, and transporting food to both markets and our homes, before consuming it. Informed by availability and accessibility, we make choices about what to eat. These daily routines form the bedrock of our lives, cultures, economies, and our connection with the natural world. Equally as important, food instils hope, with women and young people often playing pivotal roles in fostering food systems that unite families, communities, and nations in harmony with nature.

As the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 entered its third year, it is evident that many of the world's food systems are alarmingly fragile and fall short of ensuring adequate food for all. Hunger is resurging, impacting nearly three billion people, which accounts for nearly half of the global population. A healthy and balanced diet remains financially out of reach for these individuals. Meanwhile, malnutrition in all its forms, including obesity, has become deeply entrenched, resulting in far-reaching negative consequences for health, education, gender equality, and the economy. Poverty and significant inequality further exacerbate the drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition, compounded by factors such as conflict, climate extremes, and economic volatility.

Our current food system is vulnerable. Climate change and biodiversity loss have increasingly harmful effects on food production and local producers. The recent report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) highlights that, unless global greenhouse gas emissions are halved in the next decade, temperatures exceeding 1.5°C and 2°C above pre-industrial levels will be surpassed during the 21st century, intensifying the challenges faced by food systems.¹

Recent findings indicate that food systems contribute up to more than one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions and are the primary driver of biodiversity loss.² Globally agriculture accounts for over 70 percent of freshwater use.³ However, it is crucial to recognize sustainable food production systems equally as an integral part of the solution to these pressing issues. We do have the potential to nourish a growing global population while safeguarding our planet. With adequate and appropriate financing, food and agriculture systems can drive 20% of the emissions reductions needed to reach the 2050 climate goals and generate USD 4.5 trillion in new market opportunities each year.

Considering these immense challenges, in 2021 the United Nations has convened a diverse array of stakeholders, engaging tens of thousands of individuals from local to global levels, on a transformative journey known as the United Nations Food Systems Summit (UN FSS). The "Solutions Summit," showcased proposals for catalyzing transformative action towards achieving the SDGs by 2030.

¹The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change; AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023; <https://www.ipcc.ch/ar6-syr/>

² Crippa, M., Solazzo, E., Guizzardi, D. et al. Food systems are responsible for a third of global anthropogenic GHG emissions. *Nat Food* 2, 198–209 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s43016-021-00225-9> and <https://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1379373/icode/>; Benton, T., Bieg, C., Harwatt, H. et al. Food systems impacts on biodiversity loss. Three levers for food system transformation in support of nature. Research Paper. Chatham House. February 2021. Available at: https://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/2021-02/2021-02-03-food-system-biodiversity-loss-benton-et-al_0.pdf;

³ FAO. Water for Sustainable Food and Agriculture. A report produced for the G20 Presidency of Germany. Rome, 2017. <https://www.fao.org/3/i7959e/i7959e.pdf>

As a follow-up to the Summit, the UN Secretary-General has committed in his Chair Summary and Statement of Action on the UN Food Systems Summit to convene *“a global stocktaking meeting every 2 years to review progress in implementing the outcomes of this process and its contributions to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.”* The first Stocktaking Moment, UNFSS+2, will occur from 24 to 26 July 2023 hosted by Italy, in collaboration with the Rome-based UN Agencies (FAO, IFAD, WFP), the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, and the wider UN System. The aim is to provide opportunities for countries to report on progress made at the national level since the UN Food Systems Summit and their contributions to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda – despite a current global context that has substantially changed since 2021.

The UNFSS+2 is committed to multi-stakeholder participation and dialogue across all communities and stakeholders. The UN Food Systems Coordination Hub engages widely with food systems stakeholders to ensure a robust follow up to the UN FSS to support the 2030 Agenda through food systems transformation. It established the Stakeholder Engagement and Networking Advisory (SENA) Group to engage with and advise the Hub over time, with self-nominated focal points of priority constituencies (stakeholders) as defined in the UN SG Statement of Action, particularly Youth, Indigenous Peoples, Producers, Women, and the Private Sector.

In preparation for the UNFSS+2, the Hub invited stakeholders to complete a survey⁴ capturing their journey to the UNFSS+2 and what they have been doing to implement or support food systems transformations.

In particular, this survey aimed to:

- Highlight the steps the organizations/stakeholder groups have taken to support the implementation of the National Pathways and other actions related to food systems transformation as a follow up to the UN FSS;
- identify views on the FSS follow-up including positive actions taken, persistent challenges, and linkages to other global initiatives and
- collect stakeholders’ expectations from the UNFSS+2 and their recommendations on the way forward, including their own priority actions.

The results of the survey were analyzed and a draft report was produced by an independent author. The draft report was peer-reviewed by the Hub’s Stakeholders Engagement and Networking Advisory Group (SENA Group) through a series of meetings. The SENA group provided revisions to the report and finalized the content.

This report is submitted to the UNFSS+2 as the “Stakeholders Contribution Document” or “Shadow Report to the UNFSS+2”.

Structure of the report

This report is divided into five main sections.

- The introduction and background section describes the problems and potential solutions associated with food systems and the SDGs and gives a short narrative of the UN FSS.

⁴ For the survey questions, see annex 1.

- The second section highlights activities the organizations/stakeholder groups have taken to support the implementation of the National Pathways and other actions related food systems transformation as follow up to the UN FSS, including good practices.
- The third section examines stakeholders' opinions on positive actions taken by countries, the UN System, and the Ecosystem of Support to meaningfully engage stakeholders in the FSS follow up. The section also addresses stakeholders' views on persisting challenges and areas that need improvement regarding meaningfully engaging stakeholders in the FSS follow up by countries, the UN System, and the Ecosystem of Support.
- The fourth section includes stakeholders' opinion on how to link the UNFSS+2 to other global initiatives, such as the 2023 SDG Summit, the 2024 Summit of the Future, the COP and other global processes.
- The fifth section examines priority actions the organizations/stakeholder groups are planning to take during the next two years to support the implementation of food systems transformation in their country. Additionally, it includes Stakeholders' proposals and recommendations on what should be done after the UNFSS+2 in order to ensure the different stakeholder groups effectively participate in and contribute to the UN FSS follow up actions in support of and aligned with countries' food systems transformations and related global and regional initiatives.

II. Stakeholders' Contributions to the follow up actions of the UN FSS

This section highlights activities the organizations/stakeholder groups have taken to support the implementation of the National Pathways or/and other actions related to food systems transformation as follow up to the UN FSS.

Each stakeholder brings important contributions to the food systems transformation journey. Moreover, each stride forward represents a diversity of emphasis, skills and aspiration and often the actions of one stakeholder have a positive impact on others.

Stakeholders made remarkable contributions in various environments. Many of their contributions came in the form of information-sharing, capacity building, and advocacy. In some cases, this took place at the local and regional levels. In other cases, advocacy occurred at the level of national governments, UN agencies, and regional integration organizations.

Organizations of Women, Indigenous Peoples, Youth and Farmers/Producers have been active in awareness raising and capacity development of their constituencies supporting them to improve their livelihoods through safe food production, agro-processing, including livestock production, reduction and management of food waste, the use of sustainable agricultural practices and organic food production, certification and good nutrition practices through setting up nutrition clubs, for example. These groups have been playing an important role in mobilizing and organizing their members and communities, enhancing their capacities so that they can better advocate for their own needs. Some of these stakeholders have played an important role in organizing and/or contributing to UNFSS consultations at various levels and have also joined and contributed to the work of UNFSS Coalitions. Youth-led initiatives and partnerships have helped to enhance food access, promote regenerative agriculture practices, and foster social justice within the food system. In all, young people and youth organizations have played a pivotal role as change agents seeking to shape inclusive and resilient food systems.

Businesses have taken steps to implement the Business Declaration⁵ signed by 220 executives as part of the UN Food System Summit, with support from business membership organizations. Business and Industry Stakeholders reported the incorporation of clean technology in their own practices, supporting NGOs and other business service organizations in technology development and transfer, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, postharvest handling of farm produce, natural resource management, yield increase fertilizer efficiency, and in general improving food supply chains. Engaging with farmer networks, organizing roundtables with them to better understand their challenges and foster stronger relationships between them and the business and industry sectors, and supporting smallholder ecosystem solutions (e.g., switching to agroforestry) through carbon credit were also among the positive actions taken by this stakeholder group. Similarly, to the Youth, Indigenous Peoples, and Women, several Business and Industry stakeholders have also been part of some of the coalitions launched by the UNFSS.

The Science and Technological Community brought examples of supporting national food system processes to allow for the national follow up on the UNFSS. These included the development of a systemic scientific guideline to support the implementation of the national pathway towards sustainable food systems transformation and support to the setting up of a national citizens' council for food policy and food system transformation. They have also played an important role in promoting sustainable agricultural practices, sustainable management of water resources; climate risk analysis, resilience and adaptation, renewable energy use and agricultural water management through training and research.

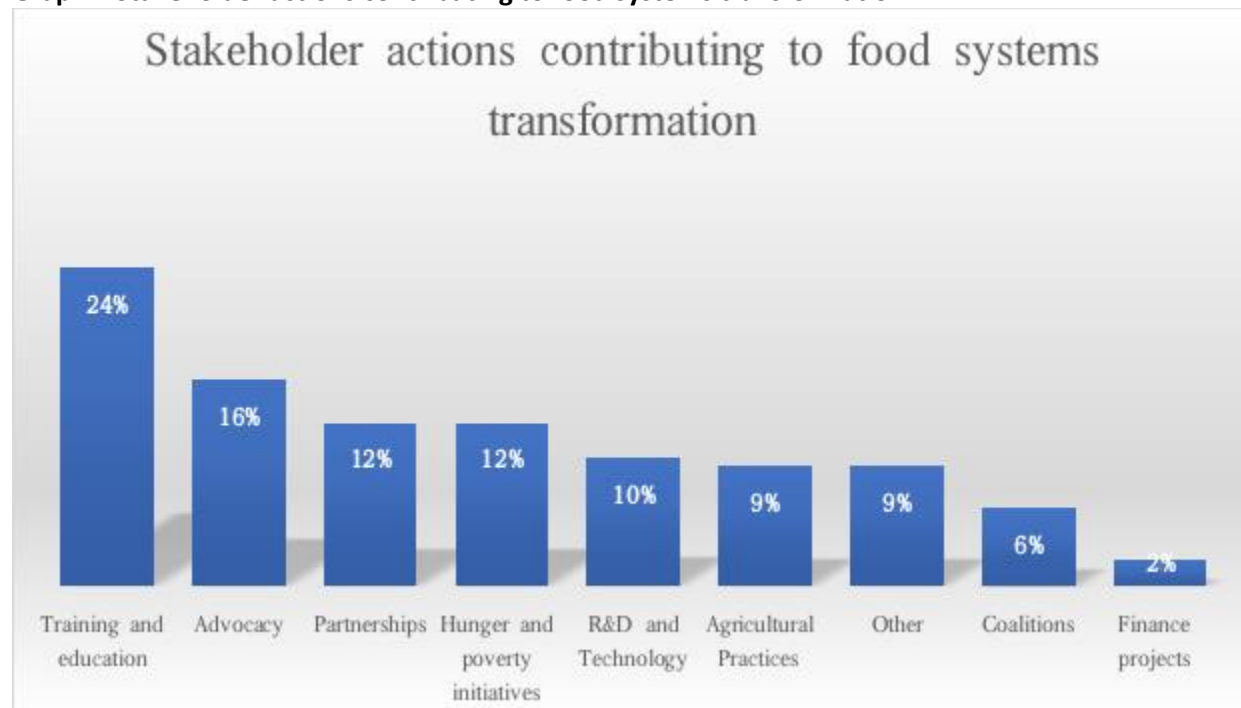
The range of NGO activities reported is ample and includes everything from providing out of-date supermarket food to local communities to urban agriculture to coordinating smallholders and assisting them on food security issues by providing training in smart agriculture technologies and climate change resilience practices among others. Several work in the field of extreme poverty and food insecurity eradication and women's and youth empowerment. Others shared examples of their work in promoting plant-based diet, working with school canteens to promote healthy diet among school children as well as supporting the preparation of voluntary national progress reports on SDG progress or building the evidence-base about food systems through scientific research. In many cases, stakeholders lent additional support to other stakeholder groups.

⁵ The Business Declaration covers 6 categories of business action as follows:

- **Scale science-based solutions** that focus on the transition towards sustainable food and agriculture business models that allow millions of farmers to adopt regenerative and climate-smart agricultural practices to achieve net-zero and nature positive food systems.
- **Provide investments in research and innovation** to support food systems transformation across the value chain from seeds, fertilizers, farming, processing, selling, trading, transporting, and consumption of food, ensuring all farmers have access to digital technologies and innovations.
- **Contribute to improved livelihoods and wellbeing** across food value chains by strengthening decent work and income opportunities in line with the SDGs and promote living income and wages for farmers and workers everywhere.
- **Incentivize consumers as agents of change** to create demand for sustainably produced, high-quality animal, plant-based, and alternative proteins, as part of healthy and nutritious diets that are accessible and affordable for all.
- **Create transparency** by integrating environmental and social risks and impacts in governance, through the principles of true value of food, or other relevant audited sustainability indicators and reporting in line with emerging ESG standards to provide greater clarity to capital markets.
- **Ensure an equitable transformation** for people everywhere with access to training and employment opportunities as practices and demands shift.

Graph 1 provides a quick overview of the main actions Stakeholders have taken to support the UNFSS follow-up process, as reflected in the survey responses.

Graph 1 Stakeholder actions contributing to food systems transformation



III. Stakeholders' view on the Food Systems Summit follow-up

As part of the survey, stakeholders were asked their opinion on positive actions taken by countries, the UN System, and the Ecosystem of Support to meaningfully engage stakeholders in the FSS follow up. Additionally, they were asked about persisting challenges and areas in need of improvement in the FSS follow up by countries, the UN System, and the Ecosystem of Support.

Positive actions taken

There have been some cases of strong collaboration between the different stakeholder groups. For example, Farmers/Producers mentioned good collaboration with youth organizations in increasing youth involvement in farming, scaling up agribusiness agricultural enterprises and adopting agroecological sustainable agricultural practices and collaboration with academia and the UN System. The Business and Industry Stakeholders reported some examples of good collaboration with international and intergovernmental organizations including the UN System, global NGOs and farmer networks as well as research centres to promote good agricultural practices, develop climate resilient crops and support actions to improve nutrition of school children. Women groups reported examples of collaboration with multilateral organizations, the private sector and local authorities in the areas of training of women farmers in climate-smart agriculture and agribusiness practices, for example, and

awareness raising. Youth groups collaborated with the UN to enhance awareness and build capacities in relation to sustainable food system transformation. NGOs also reported cases of good collaboration with the UN, for example in the framework of the preparation of the FAO White Paper on Indigenous Food Systems or regarding their contributions to various UN conferences, like the UN Water Conference. From the survey responses, the Scientific and Technological Community appears to have enjoyed a great deal of collaboration and support among various actors, including national and local governments, the UN System, and the Ecosystem of Support. Such collaborations included awareness raising and capacity building activities, as well as assuming a key role in developing guidance for the implementation of national food systems pathways and setting up national multistakeholder consultation structures to help citizens, the civil society, the business sector and knowledge institutes to express their perspectives and interests regarding food systems transformation. Collaborating with small- and medium-sized enterprises was described as positive by stakeholders.

Box 1. Examples of positive actions taken by stakeholders to engage with other stakeholder groups

Nisshin Seifun Group, a private sector actor, based in Japan, noted strong collaboration with research institutions for the development of wheat with versatile cultivation characteristics and weather resistance. Tetra Pak, a global supplier of systems for the processing, packaging and distribution of foods worked with Kenya's National Council for Nomadic Education, an agency under the Ministry of Education, to provide a nutritious 'super porridge' to 5,000 school children in parts of Kenya where malnutrition rates are high. The MENA Youth Network partnered with the World Food Forum to run capacity-building and consultation sessions about agrifood systems transformations. The group drafted policy documents detailing the top policy priorities for the region according to youth and experts from that region. Meanwhile the Green Agriculture Youth Organisation in Zambia has collaborated with that country's Ministry of Community and Child Development to fight hunger in rural areas by providing seedlings. In Nigeria, the Women Environmental Programme (an NGO) partnered with the Benue State Agricultural Development Board for the training of farmers on climate-smart agriculture. The World Farmers' Organization collaborates with FAO to engage together through the follow-up mechanisms of the UN Food Systems Summit.

Collaborations have in several cases involved not just bilateral cooperation but multiple stakeholders:

- National trade Union of over 2.5 million poor self-employed women workers in the informal economy in India, "Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA)" has partnered with public and private sector organizations, academia as well as multi-lateral organizations to build the technical and technological capacity of over 200,000 agricultural workers including small and marginal farmers, sharecroppers, leased farmers and landless laborers, to strengthen their access to quality agro-inputs at affordable rates, digital finance as well as markets. SEWA has helped informal sector women workers organize into their own agri-business enterprise called RUDI - completely owned and managed by over 250 000 small and marginal farmers, as well as engage in a food processing initiative called "Kamala", thus generating decent and dignified livelihood opportunities for women in food systems as well as integrating them at all stages in the food systems and bringing them voice and visibility as well as validity to their work.
- The World Business Council on Sustainable Development collaborates with a number of partners (FAO, UNEP, the German Agency for International Cooperation, The International Rice Research Institute and the Sustainable Rice Platform) through the Sustainable Rice Landscapes Initiative, an innovative multistakeholder coalition aiming to accelerate the transition to sustainable rice.

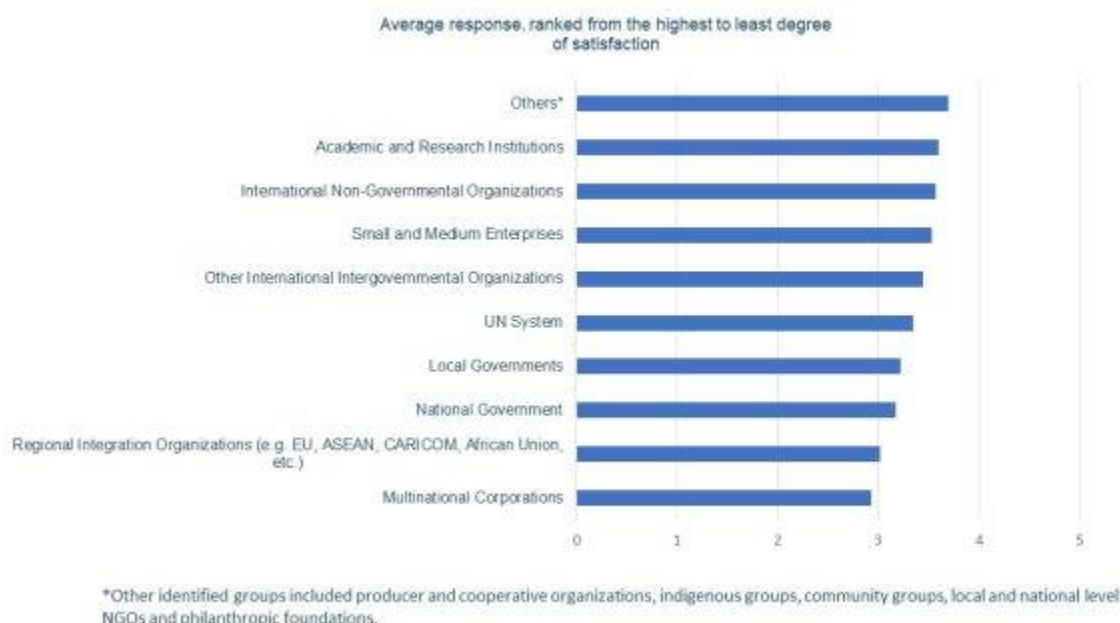
- In preparation for the UN Food System Summit follow up, FoodFIRST brought stakeholders from the 'Dutch Diamond' (government, businesses, research institutions and civil society organizations) together to jointly develop their perspectives on how the global and the Dutch community of knowledge institutions, private sector actors, banks, civil society and government, can effectively contribute to food systems transformation.
- Narasingh Choudhury Autonomous College in Jajpur, India, for example, noted that as a stakeholder they received support from various International NGOs while also receiving status as an UN-accredited organization due to their technical expertise.
- The Pan-African Farmers Organization has reported good collaboration in the framework of the implementation of the *Farmers' Organizations for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific Programme* (FO4ACP) funded by the EU, the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, and IFAD to strengthen the institutional and operational capacities of farmers' organizations in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific countries.
- IntelliDigest, a purpose driven business organization, works with FAO, WFP, UNEP, IFAD and CGIAR to deliver quarterly webinars educating stakeholders across the food system on food systems sustainability. They also collaborate with the national bank to provide youth trainings.
- The Union of Hungarian Women (UHW) gave good examples of collaboration with several other actors at different levels, including their national government, the UN System as well as private business. The UHW is a member of several government committees, dealing with families, the elderly and the underprivileged. The organization also has strong cooperation with the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, including for the celebration of World Food Day every year. They also work with Corteva Agrisciences on a training programme for rural women entrepreneurs.

(end of box 1)

Challenges

The chart below details the satisfaction levels of the stakeholder groups responding to the survey when considering whether their perspectives have been considered by other actors since the UNFSS in 2021. Generally, stakeholders expressed an average satisfaction level between 3 and 3.5 out of 5 regarding their interaction with different actors. While this may indicate good collaboration between stakeholders, more can be done. Independently of the overall average, stakeholders seem to be more satisfied with their interaction with producer and cooperative organizations, Indigenous Peoples groups, community groups, local, national-level and international NGOs and philanthropic foundations as well as academic and research institutions and less with multinational corporations and regional integration organizations.

Graph 2. Stakeholders' satisfaction on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 indicating highest satisfaction), with the extent to which each of the listed actors considers the perspectives and views of the responding stakeholder organizations and involve them in their work related to food systems transformation.



In general, resource allocation and management and coordination at both the national and local levels and with the UN remain persistent challenges. Stakeholder responses indicate evidence of a lack of coordination and leadership displayed by national governments. Some noted that there were still challenges in terms of identifying government contacts for food systems transformation. Women groups stressed that women farmers do not receive the same level of attention as their male counterparts not only in terms of policy and acts but also in accessing the commercial market. Other respondents underlined the need for more engagement with the UN system in terms of policy guidance, research, and technical assistance needs. Infrastructure deficits also play a role as a constraint to progress. The lack of strong food value chain infrastructure in rural areas represents barriers that hinder the contribution of farmers, especially smallholders, to sustainable food systems.

In particular, although there have been instances of successful collaboration between national governments and various stakeholders, these tend to be isolated cases and stakeholders believe that engagement with national actors has been limited and governance at that level is inadequate. Challenges identified include changes in government priorities and political will, the absence of a clear communication plan to involve farmer groups, especially women producers, the lack of funding and recognition for grassroots organizations, the absence of participatory approaches in designing National Pathways and national policies, general lack of resources devoted to Indigenous Peoples as relates to food systems issues and difficulties in identifying government contacts for food systems transformation. Excessive bureaucracy was also mentioned as a weakness that impedes collaboration. Moreover, regulatory frameworks that impede local food and organic farm input production were cited as

challenges. Some Stakeholders observed that food systems are not adequately represented in National Determined Contributions (NDCs). Finally, it was noted that national government and the parliament have strong hesitation to adapt scientific recommendations especially when it comes to the “urgency to act.”

While the lack of good governance was also mentioned at the local government level, stakeholders indicated that their relationships with local governments while still mixed, have gradually improved. Nevertheless, local governments sometimes lack decision-making power and sufficient funding for supporting implementation efforts. Smaller producers and their associations note the difficulties in obtaining financial support on both the national and local levels. The feeling among these organizations is that the size of their farming operations works to their disadvantage in terms of resource allocation. One respondent put it bluntly: *“They don’t recognize us because we are startups and backyard farmers.”* A general need is emerging in terms of generating sector-specific knowledge, developing appropriate standardized metrics and reporting practices, and coordinating across the food system value chain to tackle the lack of investments in the agri-food sector.

Women stakeholders were more forthright in their criticism. One group noted that especially at the local level, decisions to support women farmers are still very much impacted by issues of “machismo” which to a great extent influence gender roles and consequently women's capabilities to exercise their rights, in particular to access education, training and employment. They noted that regardless of any statements to the contrary, at the national level there needs to be an overall recognition that women and men are equal within the agricultural sector and therefore women are entitled to the same rights.

Some NGOs noted that collaboration between NGOs and research institutions/academics can be limited due to differences in priorities, resources, and organizational cultures. This makes it difficult for some organizations to access the knowledge and expertise of research institutions and to effectively apply research findings in NGO work.

Challenges to engaging multinational corporations included a perceived unwillingness to collaborate with non-profit groups and local enterprises, along with an associated lack of interest in addressing the concerns of Indigenous Peoples.

Some stakeholders pointed out that international non-governmental organizations typically undertake project-based and time-bound activities in countries, which does not align with the long-term programming needs of communities and grassroots organizations.

At the UN System level, several stakeholders expressed that information, especially with regard to collaboration, is not easily accessible. There were also concerns that UN agencies did not sufficiently highlight Indigenous Peoples' issues⁶. Contradictory messaging was also noted by stakeholders: they asserted that some UN agencies promote sustainable food systems while others appeared to endorse unsustainable practices. Business and Industry stakeholders also noted that it is often unclear how the private sector can engage with and contribute to the FSS follow up. Overall, engaging with the UN System appeared to be a challenge for all Stakeholders.

⁶ It is important to note that there were no survey responses from Indigenous Peoples' Stakeholders from the Arctic Region. Nevertheless, Stakeholders acknowledge that this important food system that relies on hunting, fishing and ad harvesting deserves better understanding and attention as a critical food system.

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Bureaucracy, lack of coordination and information about ways of possible collaboration were also thought to be issues when it came to regional integration organizations as well.

Persistent challenges identified by stakeholders for engaging with other actors^{7/8}



IV. Linking food systems transformation to global agendas

While all of the stakeholders believed that food systems transformation should be linked to global agendas, they had different views on the extent to which such linkages should occur. Many argued that effective linkages should occur if agendas are streamlined.

There was a general belief that the UNFSS+2 can provide an opportunity to assess progress towards achieving the SDGs related to food security, climate action, and sustainable development and that linking the UNFSS+2 to other global initiatives can enhance synergies, amplify impact, and promote collective action towards common goals. It can help identify gaps, challenges, and opportunities for

⁷ National government, local governments, UN System, regional integration organizations, other international intergovernmental organizations, international non-governmental organizations, multinational corporations, small and medium-size enterprises, academic and research institutions.

⁸ Merged responses, size representing relative occurrence of the challenges. Colors refer to specific actors with which the challenge is associated. The full survey question was: 'Based on your experience, which are the persisting challenges for your organization to effectively engage with the following actors (National Government, Local governments, UN System, Regional Integration organizations, Other international intergovernmental organizations, International Non-Governmental organizations, Multinational Corporations, Small and Medium Enterprises, Academic and Research Institutions). Please provide a short description of the challenges for each actor you have worked with, or you wish to work with.'

integrating food systems transformation into the broader sustainable development agenda. The feeling was that there were synergies with the SDG Summit and that UNFSS+2 can inform and contribute to the discussions and outcomes of the SDGs. By highlighting the interconnections between food systems and other development goals, such as poverty eradication, gender equality, and environmental sustainability, UNFSS+2 can help shape strategies and commitments for the SDG implementation and review process.

Stakeholders also believed that there should be strong collaboration with the 2024 Summit of the Future so as to address future challenges and shape transformative pathways. The UNFSS+2 is well-positioned to provide insights into what has worked, what hasn't, and what needs to be done to achieve sustainable development. Doing so should facilitate discussions on the long-term implications of food system transformation and the integration of sustainable and inclusive practices into future development strategies.

Integration with Conference of the Parties (COP) and other global climate processes was also considered to be critical given the close relationship between food systems and climate change. The UNFSS+2 can assess the impact of food production, land use, and agricultural practices on greenhouse gas emissions and climate resilience. The Stocktaking Momentum's findings can inform climate-related discussions, policies, and commitments, emphasizing the crucial role of food systems in climate action. Therefore, by highlighting the role of food systems in climate mitigation and adaptation, the UNFSS+2 can contribute to discussions on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, building resilience, and promoting sustainable land use practices.

Linkages with other global agendas was seen to be valuable as well. By aligning with other global processes, including trade and development, nutrition, biodiversity conventions, regional summits and regional food systems fora, human rights frameworks, and peacebuilding initiatives, the UNFSS+2 can foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, and collective action towards sustainable food systems.

Others felt that global agendas need to be effectively linked in different ways. They noted that food systems transformation cross-pollinates the SDGs and is intertwined with climate change and biodiversity. *"Therefore, we would encourage to make food systems an integral part of these conferences and include key outcomes of the UNFSS+2 into the follow-up events"*. The discussions and outcomes should also be actionable by the other UN discussions. It was stressed that *global discussions should build on each other* and ensure that there is a systems approach to finding solutions.

At the same time, there was a sense among some stakeholders that there were "too many" summits. Stakeholders underlined the need for a "more holistic approach" to the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs. Their critique of the current global agenda was that while there was a great deal of emphasis on integration and coordination, a more consistent effort was required to monitor and report the progress of governments and other stakeholders in strengthening the food system and achieving the SDGs.

The creation of a Conference of Parties (COP) for Indigenous Food Systems to address climate change, biodiversity loss, forced migration, and other pressing issues was also recommended.

Others felt that the ecosystem of global agendas should be expanded to encompass the activities of other international bodies, particularly the World Trade Organization.

Respondents generally did not articulate how various global agendas should be linked to the food systems transformation agenda at the country level.

V. Recommendations and way forward

Respondents were asked what priority actions they planned to take during the next two years to support the implementation of food systems transformation in their country. They were also asked for recommendations on what should be done after the UNFSS+2 in order to ensure stakeholder participation and contribution to FSS follow up actions in support of and aligned with countries' food systems transformations and related global and regional initiatives.

Priority actions planned by Stakeholders

Stakeholders shared a wide range of priority activities they plan to undertake in the next two years to support food systems transformation in their respective countries.

Indigenous Peoples, Women, and Youth expressed their commitment to promoting sustainable agricultural production, biodiversity preservation, home food production, and circular agriculture. They also aim to mobilize members into cooperatives to facilitate access to public schemes, state land, and water resources. Additionally, their focus includes strengthening the organization of food system workers, especially women, and both formal and informal, promoting the consumption of forgotten foods, and supporting food system actors in climate action and resilience-building. These stakeholders believe they can take action in order to more effectively engage with the other actors and their proposals in this regard were powerful. They felt there was a need for trust building so they could prove their capacity and capability to support sustainable food system transformation. *"We will prove to them our capacity and capability from which they too will benefit,"* one respondent wrote. Women groups are committed to work towards integrating women workers at all stages in food systems.

For youth, policy advocacy and capacity development are high priorities. They advocate for national-level educational programmes such as agroecology initiatives. Youth also considered important to share the challenges and barriers faced by youth while proposing practical solutions to those challenges and to scale up the number of youth ambassadors across the world working to increase awareness around food systems challenges and solutions.

Farmers/Producers plan to focus on strengthening partnerships with other actors, implementing advocacy programmes to raise awareness among policymakers about the challenges faced by family farmers, supporting grassroots initiatives, and promoting regenerative agriculture. Some producer groups plan to collaborate with higher education institutions to host students as interns on their and other local farms.

Businesses and industries expressed their commitment to drive innovation, strengthen technology adoption to reduce environmental impact of food production, increase youth involvement, gender inclusion, enhance capacities, and provide support for marginalized populations through grants. Some organizations plan to join global and regional initiatives that promote sustainable soil management practices, circular and bioeconomy solutions. They also intend to conduct environmental impact assessments of their own operations and develop ethical standards and compliance manuals for

sustainable food production, ensuring accountability throughout the value chain. Communities of private sector organizations have also offered to function as a channel to create the linkages between private sector and the other actors, especially the UNFSS coalitions and National Convenors.

The aims of the Scientific and Technological community included engaging with other stakeholders to work on joint solutions and push for stakeholder negotiation processes. They wish to focus on innovations in food safety and food security and resilient and transformative food systems, the role of smallholder farmers, training youth and providing a platform to link policy and development actors and organizing dialogue sessions/linkage events.

Participation in international, regional and national fora, the importance of communication including sharing work experience, success stories and local initiatives were considered as important measures by all Stakeholders. Respondents believed that strengthening peoples' organization and mobilizing local communities and the implementation of concrete action plans for implementing food systems transformation were critical. All Stakeholders were keen to participate in training activities and research collaborations.

Recommendations for other actors and Stakeholders

The UN and regional integration organizations are encouraged to establish direct channels of communication and provide funding for policy implementation and projects, including capacity development, particularly for women's organizations. Stakeholders felt that the UN System should also give more visibility to informal sector women workers and that the voices of informal sector women workers engaged in the food systems be integrated into the discussions during the UNFSS+2.

Encouraging scientific research and ensuring it is translated into practical solutions is crucial, as well as including Indigenous Peoples' issues and farmer-driven approaches in research efforts. Enhanced collaboration between businesses and academia for staff training is also sought. Improving investments in innovation and rethinking climate finance towards food and agriculture systems is also a priority to consider, to generate positive impacts and financial returns.

Governments are urged to create mechanisms for increased engagement with NGOs, particularly Indigenous Peoples' groups, and to support graduate programmes focused on food systems. It is recommended that governments develop participatory action plans involving all stakeholders. Allocating a percentage of the national budget to agricultural development and supporting local food production and the use of locally produced organic inputs are also suggested for national governments. Ministries of agriculture should engage farmers' organizations in designing and implementing agricultural policies and take a proactive role in engaging with business and industry actors. Making agriculture attractive to youth to prevent outmigration, ensuring access to affordable and nutritious food to reduce malnutrition, child mortality, and gender-based violence within households were also highlighted as important goals. At the national level there should be an overall recognition that women and men are equal within the agricultural sector and therefore women are entitled to the same rights.

Ensuring farmers/producers' access to climate finance, co-ownership of climate initiatives, and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises in developing business plans to facilitate access to finance have also been seen as essential steps. This requires leveraging multi-stakeholder collaborations and developing new models of Public-Private-Philanthropic Partnerships with a farmer-centric approach.

Businesses and Industry respondents suggested that an inclusive approach by the UN System should also involve the private sector as a partner and solution provider to promote sustainability in food systems. They also emphasized the need for clear guidance from the UNFSS Coalitions on how the private sector could be engaged in these coalitions, clearly presenting benefits, opportunities, and requirements to be partner.

Stakeholders unanimously agree on the need to involve and engage more youth in food systems transformation, particularly in developing and implementing adaptation plans that directly impact their lives. This requires providing funding support to youth-led organizations, creating favorable policy environments, and increasing learning opportunities for the youth.

The way forward

The challenge will be to ensure that addressing such issues detailed above is included in the design of multisectoral responses through the establishment of specific funding mechanisms, particularly emphasizing questions of gender equality and inter- and intra-generational equity as well as strengthening territorial balance (ex: infrastructure) at the sub-national level to support/promote economic and physical access to food for the most vulnerable populations. The same could be said as regards to inclusion of youth and women and Indigenous Peoples in food systems transformation. This is a persistent issue that requires greater understanding and concrete action.

What is clear from the survey is that all stakeholders have made value added contributions to the implementation of food systems transformation. The sheer diversity of the various stakeholders with a plethora of inputs as well as divergent interests implies a fragmented vision of the food system. It is important at the outset to remember that such divergencies are natural and discussions among stakeholders as to the various ways forward will in all likelihood, imply tradeoffs and reconciliation. Part of the way forward could be to identify the ways in which other umbrella organizations (e.g. The Sun Movement) have acted to manage such divergencies and apply recognized best practices to conciliate divergencies and support multi sectoral collaboration and policy dialogue. There is no magic solution to identify and agree upon optimal tradeoffs. Instead, it should be a process of discovery and trust building in which recognition of the interdependency between and among stakeholders is itself a significant outcome.

Based on the examples provided, national responses are beginning to replicate the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub's SENA group vision – incorporating stakeholders' groups as part of their response. In this regard, good planning and best practices need to be highlighted and incorporated. Stakeholders will ultimately have to ensure that the policies they pursue can be adapted to different national environments.

With regard to the need for better coordination at the country level, the question of more detailed multisectoral and multi-stakeholder plans for food systems at the country level is a question in need of discussion.⁹

⁹ The ecosystem approach model of the Food Innovation Hubs initiative could be leveraged here as a case study - as they are developed as partnership platforms that connect across various ecosystem actors to foster partnerships and networks that unlock investments, stimulate innovation and collectively work to take down barriers. The Hubs are globally supported but designed at country/regional level to address the needs of the local food systems.

It seems that in order to support the National Pathways for sustainable food systems transformation, there is a need to develop a multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral architecture. Such an architecture, for example, would not only acknowledge the need for greater resource allocation but also provide a process for addressing such needs.

Based on the survey responses, such an architecture should entail and accomplish the following 3 main aspects.

- 1. Better “food systems transformation governance” at country level** - Stakeholder responses indicate evidence of a lack of coordination and leadership displayed at the national level. Taken together the responses in the survey indicate a fragmented vision of food systems. There is a lack of knowledge of food systems focal points; changes in governments mean changes in priorities; there are no specific funding mechanisms for food systems transformation either at the national, regional or local level to empower transformation. A food systems platform¹⁰ to support multi-actor dialogue would prevent a situation in which each stakeholder is struggling on its own. Such a platform would also showcase visible ownership and leadership of food systems transformation at the national level. A stronger convening role would also promote accountability frameworks.

Strengthened food systems transformation governance should take place within the framework of a clear multisectoral/multi-actor plan. Such a plan is distinct from or complement the National Pathways in that it would provide more specific guidance as to exactly what will be done, when and who will do it. Strategic objectives, for example, of social inclusion and equity could be translated into concrete objectives through such a mechanism.

- 2. Recognize equity as a cross-cutting key dimension of food systems transformation** - Stakeholders indicated the need for youth sensitization as well as the necessity to conduct gender and youth advocacy to support youth and women and girls’ inclusion in policy dialogue. Women stakeholders mentioned land use and land access as an issue and the need for strong advocacy around women’s access to means of production. The persistence of macho mentality evidence a need to explore and address discriminatory gender norms and the way they are being mirrored at the policy level. Youth and gender equality should be recognized as a crucial cross-cutting dimension. Inter-generational and intra-generational equity should be clearly articulated through the definition and implementation of specific measures. Youth, Women and Indigenous Peoples seems to be facing the same type of challenges – that speaks to the need to recognize that Youth as a cross-cutting social dimension needs to be supported by a less fragmented vision of those three stakeholders’ groups.
- 3. Articulate linkages with other global agendas, not only at the global level, but at the country level**- Although stakeholders views on the linkages to other global agendas are mainly focused on global agendas such as COP, SDG Summit and others, there is also a need to articulate the food systems transformation agenda with other global agendas at the country level.

¹⁰ This could build on, scale up and replicate existing national level multistakeholder platforms, such as those developed through Food and Land Use Coalition and the Food Action Alliance.

Main expectations from the UNFSS+2

The way forward will be to a great extent also influenced by the outcomes of the UNFSS+2. In this regard, the UNFSS+2 is expected to serve as a forum for countries to share knowledge, good practices, scalable solutions and expertise with the ultimate objective to ensure everyone has access to healthy and affordable food. Additionally, the UNFSS+2 should provide a comprehensive assessment of the current state of global food systems, taking into account diverse perspectives, challenges, and opportunities of the different food systems actors.

The UNFSS+2 is seen as an opportunity to celebrate progress made in sustainable food system transformation, identify areas where further work is needed and strengthen the understanding and the evidence-base around how food systems can be a solution for some of the world's most pressing issues, such as hunger, malnutrition, poverty, climate change, biodiversity loss and inequality.

Respondents considered important for the UNFSS+2 to help finding ways to phase out unsustainable food systems practices, avoid food waste, in particular postharvest loss, ensure grassroot organizations' voices are heard, and that the role of all stakeholders, including women farmers, women informal workers, Youth, Indigenous Peoples, Farmers/Producers, the Private Sector, including micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, NGOs and the Scientific and Technological Community in sustainable food systems transformation is highlighted.

Stakeholders wish to see an inclusive, balanced and action-oriented discussion that considers the inputs and needs of diverse stakeholders across all aspects of food systems. The discussion should help understand how to sustainably increase food production, including use of sustainable agricultural practices such as for example agroecology, regenerative agriculture, and call attention to the role of youth as backbones of food systems transformation as well as to issues of women and Indigenous Peoples, including the need to ensure their food security and improve their living conditions.

Stakeholders also expect that the UNFSS+2 will share good examples of partnerships and at the same time foster networking and help build alliances, promote collaboration across organizations and geographies while emphasizing the importance of national dialogues in implementing actions that can strengthen food systems at country level.

Stakeholders hoped that the UNFSS+2 will be successful in mobilizing resources for the implementation of the SDGs as they relate to food system transformation and that the UNFSS+2 would result in workable recommendations that will facilitate the implementation of enabling policies and thus pave the way for the development of concrete work plans for food systems transformation at international, regional, local and community levels.

Stakeholders representing Farmers/Producers acknowledged their central role on the frontlines of food systems. They hoped that farmers/producers of different size and their issues and solutions will be highly visible at the UNFSS+2. They looked forward to improved engagement and consultation and their direct involvement in food systems transformation.

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Other expectations included:

- highlight the role that international trade can play in promoting improved nutrition and sustainable food systems;
- ensure that concepts and indicators of sustainability are expressed and treated in a way that is easily understood by those involved in agriculture and the food sector and the general public;
- advance of the Coalitions, building on what has been done thus far and identifying future action;
- help understand how the private sector can be engaged in UNFSS follow up, e.g. through collaboration with the UNFSS Coalitions.

Annexes

Annex 1. Survey questions

1. Permission to use the information in this form. Please choose one of the following:
 - a. The Hub can use the information provided in this survey for the drafting of information documents to be compiled for the UN Food Systems Stocktaking Moment including references to the name of the submitting organization.
 - b. The Hub can use the information provided in this form for the drafting of information documents to be compiled for the UN Food Systems Stocktaking Moment but without references to the name of the submitting organization.
2. Contact details of the person responsible for filling in the questionnaire:
 - a. First name
 - b. Last name
 - c. Gender
 - d. Title
 - e. Organization
 - f. Email
3. Country/region where your Organization is based in (for international organizations please write “global”).
4. Major Group or Stakeholder represented (as per UNDESA categories):
 - a. Business and industry
 - b. Children and youth
 - c. Farmers/producers
 - d. Indigenous peoples
 - e. Local authorities
 - f. Non-governmental organizations
 - g. Scientific and technological community
 - h. Women
 - i. Workers and trade unions
5. Please provide a short narrative on the concrete steps your organization has taken to support the implementation of National Food System Transformation Pathways and/or other actions related to the UN Food System Summit follow up.
6. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 indicating highest satisfaction), how satisfied are you with the extent to which each of the following actors consider the perspectives and views of your organization and involves you in their work related to food systems transformation? If you don't have any experience working with any of these actors, please proceed to question 8.
 - a. National Government
 - b. Local governments
 - c. UN System
 - d. Other international intergovernmental organizations

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- e. Regional integration organizations (e.g. EU, ASEAN, CARICOM, African Union, etc.)
 - f. International Non-Governmental Organizations
 - g. Multinational corporations
 - h. Small and Medium Enterprises
 - i. Academic and research institutions
 - j. Other actor (please define below)
7. If you have worked with any of these actors, please give an example of positive actions they took that included cooperation with your organization.
8. Based on your experience, which are the persisting challenges for your organization to effectively engage with the following actors. Please provide a short description of the challenges for each actor you have worked with, or you wish to work with.
 - a. National Government
 - b. Local governments
 - c. UN System
 - d. Other international intergovernmental organizations
 - e. Regional integration organizations (e.g. EU, ASEAN, CARICOM, African Union, etc.)
 - f. International Non-Governmental Organizations
 - g. Multinational corporations
 - h. Small and Medium Enterprises
 - i. Academic and research institutions
 - j. Other actor (please define below)
9. Considering the challenges outlined in the previous question:
 - a. How would you suggest these actors engage more effectively with your organization?
 - b. From your side, what actions could your organization take to engage with these actors more effectively?
10. During the next two years, what are the priority activities your organization intends to undertake to support food system transformation in your country?
11. In what ways can the Stocktaking Moment be effectively linked to other global initiatives, such as the SDG Summit, the 2024 Summit of the Future, the COP and other global processes?
12. What are your main expectations from the Stocktaking Moment?
13. Are there any other ideas that you would like to share?

Annex 2. List of survey respondents

The SENA Group and the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub would like to thank the following individuals that provided response to the open survey and should be considered as the “shadow authors” of this report:

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