

2nd UN Food Systems Summit Stocktake (UNFSS+4)

Concept Note

July 27-29, 2025 – Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

1. Title of the session:

High-Level Opening: "Harnessing a changing world for the future of sustainable food systems"

Lead: Ethiopia and Italy

2. Type of the session:

Plenary

3. Date and time of the session:

Monday, 28 July, 09:00 AM – 10:50 AM

4. Session background (max 300 words):

The High-Level Opening will launch UNFSS+4 by positioning food systems transformation as central to achieving the SDGs in a fast-changing world marked by climate shocks, conflict, and rising inequality. The session will bring together political leaders, UN agencies, private sector, civil society, and youth to reaffirm shared responsibility, collective action and that solutions to our global challenges can be found in our food systems.

5. Context (max 300 words):

UNFSS+4 convenes at a time when global dynamics are shifting rapidly. Climate impacts are intensifying, conflicts and other geopolitical tensions are disrupting markets and economic inequalities are widening. With just five years to 2030, SDG progress is dangerously off track. Yet, amid these converging crises, the imperative to transform food systems remains unchanged and more urgent than ever.

Food systems transformation is not a standalone goal; it is the linchpin for achieving zero hunger, better nutrition, climate resilience, equitable development, and sustainable economic growth. Since 2021, countries have mobilized national pathways, fostered multi-stakeholder coalitions, and driven policy innovation. UNFSS+4 builds on this momentum, providing a global stage for reflection, course correction, and renewed ambition.

This session will open the Summit with a reminder of our collective power to transform food systems. It will set a forward-looking, solutions-oriented tone anchored in political leadership, shared responsibility, and bold action. It will reaffirm the urgency of aligning policies, investments, governance, and partnerships to deliver impact for people and planet.

6. Session objectives:

The **High-Level Opening** will:

- Set a unifying narrative for UNFSS+4 and introduce key priorities: financing, partnerships, governance, and accountability, and their role in translating commitments into real-world impacts.
 - Emphasize the critical role of all actors' governments, the UN, private sector, civil society, youth in shaping resilient, inclusive food systems.
 - Signal unwavering commitment from global leaders to sustain momentum and accountability on food systems transformation.
 - Articulate food systems as central to tackling the interconnected challenges of climate change, inequality, health, malnutrition, and conflict.
 - Acknowledge today's geopolitical and economic complexities while underscoring the shared responsibility to act decisively and collectively.

7. Link UNFSS+4 objectives

The **High-Level Opening** will frame UNFSS+4 as a platform for reflecting on progress, strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships, and fostering accountability by aligning commitments. It will also spotlight the urgent need to unlock inclusive, sustained finance and investments, ensuring food systems transformation is backed by aligned financial flows, enabling governance structures, and bold collective action toward the 2030 Agenda.

8. Key message(s) of the session:

- **Food as a Fundamental Right:** Hunger is unacceptable in a world of plenty; the right to food is universal and is a shared responsibility.
- **Political Leadership and Global Cooperation:** Sustained political will, national action, and international solidarity are critical to systemic food transformation.
- **Innovation, Science, and Knowledge:** Leveraging technology, research, and indigenous wisdom is essential for resilience, productivity, and sustainability.
- **Inclusive Food Sovereignty:** Strengthen local systems, climate-smart agriculture, and empower women, youth, and smallholders.
- **Financing the Future:** Unlock transformative investments, align public finance, de-risk private capital, and ensure debt relief for vulnerable countries.
- **Whole-of-Society Approach:** Partnerships with farmers, businesses, civil society, and youth must drive action at every level.

9. Session format (max 100 words):

The **High-Level Opening** will be a plenary blending political leadership with inspirational messaging, setting the narrative frame for UNFSS+4.

After a video message from the UN Secretary-General and an introductory video on the UNFSS+4, the co-hosts will deliver framing statements highlighting UNFSS+4's significance and ambition in the current global context. Leaders will follow with keynote addresses, underscoring the urgency of accelerated, inclusive, and sustainable food systems transformation. The session will include a brief panel discussion on key considerations related to unlocking investment in food systems as well as statements by the UN's Rome-based Agencies.

10. Guiding questions for speakers:

- What are the most significant shifts in your country or organization's approach to food systems transformation since UNFSS+2?
- How are you ensuring that food systems remain central to tackling today's interconnected global challenges?
- What are the key enablers, finance, partnerships, and governance, that you see as critical to accelerating food systems transformation?
- How are you promoting shared responsibility and inclusive action among governments, the private sector, youth, civil society and other stakeholders?
- What bold actions or commitments are you prepared to advance as we move toward 2030?
- How has political leadership in your country or context enabled food systems transformation?
- How are you ensuring that food systems remain central to tackling today's interconnected global challenges?

11. Desirable outcome:

The **High-Level Opening** aims to:

- Set the tone for UNFSS+4, ensuring a strong foundation for actionable, results-driven outcomes throughout the Summit.
- Reaffirm global commitment to transforming food systems, emphasizing urgency, inclusivity, and sustainability.
- Inspire collective action through shared responsibility among governments, the private sector, civil society, and youth.
- Catalyze momentum for accelerated food systems transformation, aligning efforts with the SDGs and the right to food for all.

- Enhance visibility of key achievements, such as Ethiopia's progress in food systems and nutrition, inspiring further global action.