

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

Draft Concept Note

July 27-29, 2025 – Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

1. Title of the session:

- National Food Systems Transformation Convenor-led session: *From Pathways to Implementation: National Convenors Leading Food Systems Transformation*

2. Type of the session:

Stakeholders Action Session

3. Date and time of the session:

July 29. 15:00 – 16:20

4. Session background:

Four years after the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit and five years ahead of the 2030 SDG milestone, countries are advancing food systems transformation in diverse and often challenging contexts.

At the heart of this transformation are the National Convenors, appointed in 155 countries. These leaders have played a pivotal role in steering the design and implementation of 129 National Food Systems Pathways. Through coordination, advocacy, and facilitation, Convenors have worked across ministries, sectors, and stakeholders to turn national ambition into concrete action.

The five 2025 UNFSS+4 Regional Preparatory Meetings reaffirmed the importance of the Convenor role and the growing role and impact of the on the national transformation efforts. Convenors are increasingly institutionalized within government structures, leading efforts to reflect on progress, foster partnerships and accountability, and unlock the financing needed for long-term transformation. — while consistently advocating for better nutrition, climate action, gender equality, and the right to food.

In a context where only 15% of the SDG targets are on track and nearly half are moderately or severely off track, the role of Convenors is more critical than ever. Their work focuses on cross-cutting, systems-based coordination. They have driven country-level progress by mobilizing financial resources (e.g., through the SDG Fund, public budgets, and international financial institutions), accelerating the implementation of national pathways, establishing and convening the Science-Policy-Society Interface, serving as the main mobilizers and implementers of the Hub Food Systems Climate Action Convergence Initiative, setting up inter-ministerial coordination and governance platforms, and leading national dialogues and policies on climate action, nutrition, and equity.

Yet, significant challenges persist — including fragmented financing, limited implementation capacity, and the absence of sustained coordination mechanisms. Continued global support and commitment are needed to empower National Convenors and strengthen inclusive food systems transformation over the next critical five years.

5. Session objectives:

As the global community gathers for the UNFSS+4 Stocktaking Moment, this session centers on the roles and perspectives of National Convenors. It will serve as a high-level platform to:

- **Spotlight Convenor experiences and leadership**, showcasing how convenors drive national effort in translating vision into action;
- **Explore partnerships and governance mechanisms** that are enabling progress;
- **Identify financing gaps and harness investment opportunities** critical for scaling transformation;
- **Outline national priorities through to 2027 (UNFSS+6)** and examine key drivers and risks shaping the path to 2030.

While centered on the experiences of National Convenors, the session will provide valuable insights for the broader food systems community, including development partners, multilateral organizations, civil society, and the private sector. It offers an opportunity to leverage support for National Convenors, ensuring that strategic efforts from the international and regional community deliver the greatest impact.

6. Link to the UNFSS+4 objectives

Please complete at least one of the three sections below. Feel free to fill in more than one where relevant.

- a. **Reflecting on Progress:** This session offers a platform for National Convenors to share country-level achievements, innovations, and lessons learned since the 2021 Summit. It highlights how Convenors have driven implementation of national pathways, institutionalized food systems governance, and catalyzed policy alignment across sectors — providing a grounded reflection on progress made and remaining gaps.
- b. **Partnerships and Tracking Commitments:** By showcasing collaboration across government entities, development partners, and civil society, the session emphasizes the critical role of partnerships in advancing transformation. It also explores how Convenors are tracking national commitments, facilitating accountability, and sustaining multi-stakeholder engagement.
- c. **Unlocking Finance and Increasing Investments:** Convenors are actively mobilizing resources through national budgets, international mechanisms, and innovative financing approaches. The session will surface key financing challenges and explore how global and regional actors can better align support with national priorities to scale impact and sustain momentum through 2030.

7. Key messages of the session:

- **National Convenors Are Strategic Anchors Within Government:** Convenors are institutionalizing food systems transformation by creating inter-ministerial platforms, aligning policies across sectors, and embedding food systems into national development priorities.

- **Convenors Are Catalysts for Inclusive and Systemic Change:** Through their coordination, leadership, and engagement with diverse stakeholders, Convenors are translating national pathways into action — even in the face of complex and evolving challenges.
- **To Succeed, Convenors Need Sustained and Aligned Support:** Convenors face key barriers such as fragmented financing and limited capacity. Unlocking their full potential requires long-term, flexible, and coordinated support from the global community.
- **Convenors Hold the Key to Accelerating SDG Progress:** With only five years to 2030, Convenors' leadership and innovation are critical to bridging ambition and action — making them essential actors in the global effort to transform food systems.

8. Session format:

This session will follow a discussion and Q&A format. It will open with remarks from the DSG, highlighting the critical role of National Convenors in driving food systems transformation. Reflections will follow from senior leaders who have worked closely with Convenors, along with interventions from the Netherlands, Germany, and the EU on their support through the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub's flagship initiatives. A moderated dialogue on key achievements, challenges, innovations, and lessons segment will allow Convenors to share their experiences followed by reflections from the floor. The session will be closed by the Hub Director, who will connect the discussion to the broader summit outcomes.

9. Guiding questions for speakers:

- **Institutional Anchoring:** How have Convenors positioned food systems transformation within national governance structures? What institutional shifts or new mandates have emerged as a result?
- **Multistakeholder Engagement:** What tools and mechanisms have proven effective in sustaining inclusive, participatory dialogue? How are Convenors managing power dynamics and ensuring voices from marginalized groups are heard?
- **Partnerships:** Which partnerships — with development partners, the private sector, UN agencies, academia, NGOs, and civil society — have been most effective in driving national food systems priorities forward?
- **Cross-Ministerial Collaboration:** What strategies have helped align agendas across agriculture, health, social protection, education, environment, finance, and planning sectors? What coordination structures or incentives have been useful?
- **Policy and Investment Integration:** How are countries translating food systems pathways into fully budgeted national strategies and programs? What role do Convenors play in making this happen?
- **Opportunities in Challenging Times:** In a complex and uncertain global context, where do Convenors see momentum and opportunity for transformative change? How can a forward-looking narrative help shift from a focus on gaps to one that highlights innovation, leadership, and systems thinking?
- **Challenges and Risk Management:** What persistent barriers (e.g., political transitions, mandate fatigue, data gaps, donor fragmentation) have Convenors faced, and how have they adapted? How do they manage uncertainty and risk?

- **Support Needed:** What forms of support — including capacity building, technical assistance, flexible financing, and long-term partnerships — are most needed? What reflections do Convenors have on flagship programs like the Convergence Initiative and the Joint SDG Fund? How could such programs be better tailored to support national transformation efforts?
- **Financing Gaps and Barriers:** What are the main funding challenges? How can the international community — including the Hub — better align financial and technical support with national priorities? What innovative financing approaches are emerging?

10. Desirable outcome:

State what the session seeks to deliver in terms of concrete outcomes (e.g., recommendations, commitments, collaboration opportunities, input to policy/strategy, etc.)

- **Share Country Experiences:** Facilitate the exchange of practical insights, leadership practices, and governance models from diverse national contexts.
- **Strengthen Collaboration:** Reinforce peer-to-peer networks among Convenors and stakeholders to promote continued learning and cooperation beyond UNFSS+4.
- **Identify Gaps and Needs:** Clarify key capacity, financing, and tracking challenges, and outline priority areas for targeted support — including reflections on existing programs and how these initiatives can be better tailored to support Convenors' needs and what additional types of programs or mechanisms could enhance their effectiveness.
- **Inform Global Action:** Ensure that national experiences contribute directly to the UNFSS+4 Stocktake, guiding follow-up actions at global, regional, and national levels.
- **Showcase National Leadership:** Highlight the strategic role of National Convenors in driving food systems transformation and bridging progress across the SDGs.

11. Tentative run of show

Provide a high-level outline of the session flow — e.g.:

- *Opening remarks/ Keynote speech (5 min)*
- *Framing contributions (10 mins)*
- *Panel discussion (30 min)*
- *Interventions from key stakeholders (15 mins)*
- *Convenors reflections from the floor (10 min)*
- *Closing/key messages (5 min)*

Time	Segment	Description
5 min	Opening Remarks	H.E. Ms Amina Mohamed, UN Deputy Secretary General

10 min	Framing Contributions	Reflections from 1–2 senior leaders who have been directly supported by Convenors (HoS/HoG)
30 min	Convenor Dialogue Circle	Moderated discussion among National Convenors from the regions on achievements, challenges, innovations, and lessons
15 min	The Hub's Flagship Initiatives Supporting National Convenors in Food Systems Transformation	Interventions from Donors and Key Stakeholders for advancing equitable and sustainable food systems.
10 min	Convenors' Reflections	National Convenors key messages from the floor
5 min	Closing	Summary and connection to broader summit outcomes Mr Stefanos Fotiou, Director, UNFS Coordination Hub

13. List of speakers:

Name	Affiliation/Title	Country/Region	Gender	Contact Information (email/phone /whatsapp)
TBC - Moderator				
Opening/Keynote speech: H.E. Ms Amina Mohamed,	UN Deputy Secretary General		F	
Framing contributions: HoS/HoG TBC				
Closing: Mr Stefanos Fotiou	Director, UNFS Coordination Hub		M	
TBC	HoS			
Framing contributions: TBC	The Kingdom of Netherlands			
Framing contributions: TBC	Federal Government of Germany			
Framing contributions: TBC	European Union Delegation			

Panel discussion: TBC	National Convenor from Asia	Asia		
Panel discussion: TBC	National Convenor from The Pacific	The Pacific (SIDs)		
Panel discussion: TBC	National Convenor from Latin America and the Caribbean	LAC		
Panel discussion: TBC	National Convenor from Europe and Central Asia	Europe and Central Asia		
Panel discussion: TBC	National Convenor from the Arab region	Arab (Lebanon)		
Panel discussion: TBC	National Convenor from Africa	Africa		

14. Contact information of the session leads and co-leads:

Include contact information of the session leads and co-leads.

- *Lead: Khaled Eltaweel. Programme Senior Coordinator. UN Food Systems Coordination Hub. Khaled.eltaweel@fao.org.*
- *Support team: Juana Giraldo. Food Systems Specialist for Latin America and the Caribbean. UN Food Systems Coordination Hub. Juana.giraldo@fao.org*
- *Co-lead: TBC (Food systems regional Task Forces, Issued Based Coalitions, Regional Economic Comissions).*