

# UN Food Systems Summit +4 Stocktake

## SESSION REPORT

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## Public finance, Trade, & Responsible Investments to Accelerate the Transition

28 July 2025 | 16:30 – 18:00

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List of speakers, in all segments, and key messages

NAME AND TITLE OF SPEAKER	SEGMENT	KEY MESSAGES OR/AND RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
1. Amina Mohammed Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations	Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>With only five years left to achieve the SDGs, transforming food systems is critical to ending poverty, hunger, and malnutrition while driving progress across multiple global goals. While financing has increased—particularly from international financial institutions—current investment remains far</li></ul>

		<p>below what is needed, especially for smallholders and vulnerable communities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the face of debt distress, inflation, climate shocks, and shrinking development finance, bold, country-led strategies are needed to blend domestic resources, development finance, and private capital, guided by robust financial intelligence to deliver lasting impact.</li> <li>• Mobilizing, scaling, and repurposing finance with urgency is essential, as the real challenge lies not in affordability but in political will, innovation, and coordinated action to create inclusive, resilient, and sustainable food systems.</li> </ul>
2. Alvaro Lario President, IFAD	Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a rapidly evolving food finance landscape, empowering decision-makers and stakeholders with financial intelligence is a game changer. Access to comprehensive country-level financial intelligence—combining data, actionable insights, and clear visibility of flows across domestic, external, and private sources—is critical.</li> <li>• Understanding the roles each actor plays within a country's food finance ecosystem—governments, the private sector, and development partners—is vital for leveraging their respective strengths and assembling the right mix of financial instruments tailored to each country's context.</li> <li>• While numbers alone do not drive change, they are indispensable for revealing funding gaps, identifying opportunities, anticipating shortfalls, proactively managing risks, and strategically aligning resources to balance immediate needs with long-term goals.</li> </ul>
3. H.E Abubakar Kyari Minister Agriculture & Food Security, Nigeria	Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nigeria's pioneering Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zones (SAPZ) programme is the first of its kind in Africa—aims to transform agriculture into a powerful engine for rural industrialization, economic growth, and job creation.</li> <li>• With over half a billion dollars mobilized from IFIs—including the African Development</li> </ul>

		<p>Bank, IFAD, and IsDB—the Nigerian government is establishing integrated agro-industrial hubs across the country. These hubs combine critical infrastructure—roads, energy, logistics, and processing facilities—to reduce post-harvest losses, boost value addition, and connect farmers to markets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The programme empowers smallholder farmers, women, and youth, while attracting private investment and setting a bold new model for inclusive, high-impact food systems across Africa.</li> </ul>
4. Mr. Ali Imam Majumder Minister of Food, Bangladesh	Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bangladesh is a pioneer in operationalizing global food systems transformation, serving as the only Asian pilot for the 3FS Initiative to track financial flows and align public expenditure with food system priorities. Through strong collaboration with IFAD, the World Bank, GAIN, and national ministries, it is mapping public spending to identify gaps, overlaps, and opportunities for greater impact.</li> <li>• Guided by its National Food Systems Pathway Plan of Action to 2030 and supported by IFAD-led foresight work, Bangladesh is strengthening strategic planning for resilient and equitable food systems, offering lessons for countries navigating climate and market shocks.</li> <li>• The \$1.34 billion PARTNER programme—co-financed by the Government, World Bank, and IFAD—drives transformation through climate-smart and nutritious food production, empowerment of smallholders, women, and youth, and modernization of institutions and policy systems, positioning Bangladesh as a global example of integrated, results-based national action.</li> </ul>
5. Saleh Abdullah Lootah Chairman, UAE Food Cluster	Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UAE’s National Food Security Strategy 2051 aims to position the country as a global leader by investing in agricultural projects abroad, especially in Africa and Asia. Gulf countries, particularly GCC members, are</li> </ul>

		<p>becoming major players in finance global development. At UNFSS+4, UAE's growing investments in food systems, economic diversification, and food security strategies offer a platform for business dialogue with LMIC leaders anchored in mutual benefits.</p>
<p>6. Felicia Mbaidoo Gbuuka Financial Secretary, VCDP Commodity Alliance Forum</p>	Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Felicia Mbaidoo Gbuuka exemplifies the power of inclusive agribusiness and public-private partnerships. Supported by the Value Chain Development Programme (VCDP), she transformed from a smallholder rice farmer into a regional aggregator and mechanization entrepreneur in Benue State, Nigeria—demonstrating how innovation, finance, and market linkages can unlock rural prosperity and youth employment.</li> <li>• Limited access to finance remains a critical barrier. Expanding access to finance can unlock youth innovation. With targeted support—such as youth-friendly financial products, dedicated agricultural banks, and flexible loan mechanisms—young agripreneurs can more easily access the capital they need to launch and grow transformative agribusinesses.</li> <li>• Strengthening partnerships accelerates youth impact. Youth agripreneurs often struggle to build strategic partnerships that could provide mentorship, market access, and technical support—key enablers of success in the agrifood system.</li> </ul>
<p>7. Brian Zabdiel Exaud Founder and CEO, AfriHarvest</p>	Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brian Exaud, founder of Afriharvest, is a youth agripreneur driving innovation in sustainable livestock systems. Through his youth-led company focused on cattle fattening and animal feed production, he collaborates with over 300 smallholder farmers to promote climate-smart fodder practices, value chain development, and affordable feed solutions. Actively engaged in youth-led agri-food systems initiatives, Brian champions inclusive value chains, livestock resilience, and youth empowerment.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young agripreneurs need to be seen as partners, not risks. When starting out, many are overlooked by financial institutions and viewed as liabilities rather than viable partners. This forces youth to seek alternative, often limited, sources of financing. Expanding access to inclusive, youth-friendly financial services remains one of the most critical enablers for unlocking the full potential of youth in agrifood systems.</li> </ul>
8. Shobha Shetty Global Director, Agriculture and Food, World Bank	Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global hunger is rising, with nearly 300 million people facing severe food insecurity as conflict, climate change, and economic shocks strain food systems. International Financial Institutions (IFIs) play a critical role in bridging short-term crisis response and long-term transformation by aligning public spending with sustainable agriculture, mobilizing private capital, de-risking innovation, and supporting policy reforms to make agriculture more productive, nutrition-sensitive, and climate-smart.</li> <li>• The World Bank Group is scaling its impact, having reached 201 million people through its active food and nutrition security portfolio and targeting 327 million by 2030. It has committed \ \$22.3 billion to food and agriculture over the past five years, is doubling annual agri-finance and agribusiness commitments to \ \$9 billion by 2030, and is helping countries repurpose harmful subsidies toward inclusive, sustainable outcomes.</li> <li>• Future priorities include expanding integrated, high-impact solutions through stronger partnerships, mobilizing both public and private sector investment, and advancing reforms in over 45 countries to modernize food systems—ensuring they deliver better livelihoods, nutrition, and resilience for millions worldwide.</li> </ul>
9. Philip Knill Director for Africa, Germany	Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Country-led efforts to finance food systems transformation are emerging as promising</li> </ul>

		<p>models, reflecting national ownership and commitment. However, these positive developments are unfolding in a global financing environment under mounting stress. Debt distress now affects 52 developing countries—around 40%—limiting their ability to invest. Simultaneously, external development finance is shrinking due to fiscal tightening in donor countries, while armed conflicts, displacement, and intensifying climate shocks are increasing humanitarian needs. Rising import tariffs and agricultural input costs are further straining national budgets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-income countries continue to face major obstacles in attracting private capital at scale, exacerbating the gap between long-term investment needs and available financing. Projections for 2025 are deeply concerning, pointing to a widening disconnect between growing food assistance needs and declining development finance flows. Without new approaches and stronger international support, these trends risk undermining progress toward food systems transformation.</li> <li>• Food systems financing remains heavily concentrated among a small group of donors, with five countries—the United States (24%), Germany (20%), Japan (10%), France (10%), and the United Kingdom (7%)—providing over 70% of total bilateral funding. This concentration highlights the significant influence these donors exert in shaping global food systems financing, both through direct support and via contributions to multilateral organizations.</li> </ul>
10. Claver Gatete Executive Secretary, UNECA	Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The global food finance system must be reimagined to serve those who feed the world. Smallholder farmers remain among the most financially excluded actors, while capital continues to flow toward high-emission industries. In contrast, investments</li> </ul>

in climate-resilient and nutrition-sensitive food systems remain scarce. A bold shift is needed—a new financial architecture that is inclusive, de-risks investments, and expands access to concessional finance. The private sector is essential to this transformation, but unlocking its potential requires building trust, addressing perceived risks, and scaling blended finance instruments that enable responsible, long-term investment.

- Food systems transformation must extend beyond the farm gate. Too often, efforts stall at production, leaving farmers disconnected from markets and value creation. Investing in processing, storage, transport, and logistics is critical to building resilient, high-value food systems. Strategic investments in agro-industrial value chains offer a clear path forward. Regional collaboration, through cross-border initiatives, is already demonstrating results—while national models show that digital innovation can enhance competitiveness, inclusivity, and efficiency across the entire value chain.
- Lasting change depends on strong, coordinated partnerships anchored in national priorities. Fragmented, donor-led interventions are not enough. What's needed are systems-based, country-owned approaches that strengthen governance, ensure accountability, and most importantly, invest in people. Youth, women, and informal workers form the backbone of food systems and must be placed at the center of transformation strategies. The African Common Position on Food Systems provides a clear blueprint, emphasizing resilience, equity, and innovation as the foundations of sustainable progress.



### Overall session summary, conclusions and recommended actions (max 250 words)

At UNFSS+4, financing was centre stage amid a strained food finance ecosystem—marked by debt distress, major shifts in food systems finance, crises and shocks and rising import tariffs. Since the 2021 Food Systems Summit, progressing food systems financing has been mixed: some low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) have strengthened domestic resource mobilization, and development finance for food systems has grown, signalling donor commitment. Yet public and private financing remains insufficient. Humanitarian needs compete with long-term investments, blended finance continues to favour middle-income countries and does not always deliver expected social, environmental and health benefits, and most agri-SMEs remain excluded from affordable finance.

In a rapidly changing food systems financing landscape, LMICs must lead and own their financing strategies more than ever—combining domestic budgets, market resources, grants, and concessional loans tailored to national contexts. This flagship session—featuring the UN Deputy Secretary-General, ministers, IFIs, private sector leaders, and small agri-entrepreneurs—assessed progress and risks, and spotlighted country-led initiatives and financial instruments blending domestic, development, and private capital to empower small-scale producers, women, youth, and local enterprises.

#### Conclusions

- Promising country-led solutions are emerging, combining diverse sources of capital to deliver financial, social, and environmental returns.
- IFIs play a vital role—not only as providers of long-term, catalytic capital, but also as conveners, risk mitigators, and partners in designing blended, country-led solutions. In 2023, they disbursed \$17.8 billion to LMICs for food systems transformation, surpassing the UNFSS+2 target. Seven IFIs—the World Bank, AsDB, AfDB, IDB, IFAD, IsDB, and EBRD—account for over one-third (35%) of total external development finance to food systems, with contributions up 53% since the Summit.
- IFAD and the World Bank, co-leading the UNFSS financing agenda with partners (GAIN, FAO, OECD, SUN, AGRA, AKDEMIYA2063, IICA), have developed the 3FS framework to track financial flows. Timely, country-level financial intelligence is essential to empower decision makers identifying gaps, managing risks, and aligning resources to balance urgent needs with long-term transformation.
- The main barrier is not affordability but political will, innovative financing solutions, and strong partnerships. UNFSS+4 is a moment to rally decision-makers behind actionable, country-led strategies that mobilize diverse financing sources and drive collaborative action.



#### **Recommended Actions**

- Advance country-led financing solutions blending domestic, development, and private capital to empower small-scale producers, women, youth, and local enterprises.
- Balance urgent humanitarian relief with long-term structural transformation.
- Equip national leaders with financial intelligence to design and implement context-specific financing strategies