

The UNFSS+4 Youth Declaration on Food Systems Transformation

July 2025

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



The consultative process

The 2025 Youth Declaration is the product of a dynamic, youth-led and inclusive consultative process that began with a critical review of the inaugural [Youth Declaration on Food Systems Transformation](#), presented at the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS). This review also included a baseline analysis of the [2024 Regional Progress Reviews](#) across all six regions of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) where common themes and regional priorities affecting youth in agrifood systems were identified.

To build on this baseline and work towards an updated Youth Declaration, the [UN Food Systems Coordination Hub](#) (the Hub) established a partnership with the [World Food Forum \(WFF\) Youth Assembly](#) to launch six virtual regional consultations. Each regional consultation was informed by the [2024 Food Systems Transformation Regional Progress Reviews](#) and a survey completed by the Hub's [Youth Leadership Programme \(YLP\)](#) participants. Over 1 200 youth participated, discussing challenges and solutions, and identifying region-specific priorities. A follow-up survey remained open for seven days, capturing feedback from both participants and non-attendees, and was completed by 244 young people. Together, these inputs resulted in the Zero Draft of the Youth Declaration on Food Systems Transformation.

This Zero Draft was presented at the [Preparatory Youth Conference for the 2nd UN Food Systems Summit Stocktake \(UNFSS+4\)](#), held in May 2025 in Bangkok, Thailand. This hybrid gathering convened over 100 youth leaders alongside 1 000 virtual participants, enriching the process with diverse perspectives that informed the further review and refinement of the draft. This draft was then made publicly available on the Hub's website for one month to gather additional feedback from youth organizations, youth constituencies and others. A final global consultation, co-hosted by the Stakeholder Engagement and Networking Advisory (SENA) Group Youth Representatives and the UN Major Group for Children and Youth (UN MGCY), was attended by 130 people in June 2025 and gathered perspectives of further youth networks.

The final document was reviewed by representatives of the WFF Youth Policy Board, the SENA Youth Representatives and UN MGCY. Their work has resulted in this final UNFSS+4 Youth Declaration on Food Systems, to be presented in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 28 July 2025. The youth leading this process extend their sincere gratitude to all those who contributed, ensuring that the collective voices and priorities of young people shape the transformation of our food systems at [UNFSS+4](#) and beyond.

Preamble

This Declaration combines regional and global calls from youth leaders to take urgent and decisive action to transform food systems and safeguard the future of both people and the planet. It outlines youth priorities for equitable, sustainable, resilient, rights-based and inclusive food systems that uphold food sovereignty and security. We, the youth, call on governments, the private sector and all stakeholders to take immediate action, support youth-centred and led initiatives, and ensure meaningful youth participation and leadership at all levels, recognizing youth as stakeholders and right-holders. We offer bold, innovative and community-rooted solutions, with the capacity to transform our food systems.

Our food systems are under urgent threat from extreme weather, soil degradation, desertification, biodiversity loss and conflict, all of which destabilize food production and access. Additionally, our current food systems fail to uphold health, human rights, economic justice and intergenerational equity.

As noted by the [State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024 \(SOFI\)](#) report, the world remains far off track to achieve SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) with between 713 and 757 million people that may have faced hunger in 2023 – this accounts for one out of 11 people in the world, and one out of every five in Africa. Deep-rooted gender inequalities in land rights, legal access, care work and climate impacts demand urgent and gender-responsive action. These inequalities not only marginalize women, particularly young women, they also weaken the resilience and sustainability of food systems.

We are also deeply concerned by the increased use of hunger and starvation as weapons of war and urge that food systems be safeguarded from weaponization and upheld as instruments of peace, human dignity and food justice.

Marginalized groups, including Indigenous Peoples, women, rural youth and low-income communities face systemic exclusion from resources and decision-making. In cases where they are included, these groups can experience tokenism with their knowledge being undervalued – despite these groups holding the key to crucial food systems solutions. As rights-holders, youth must challenge the increasing corporate concentration in the food system.

We, the youth, demand inclusive and resilient food systems that accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while realizing the right to adequate food, which must be nutritious, free from harmful substances and culturally acceptable.

We believe food systems must promote climate resilience, sustainability, gender equality, decent work, and uphold all human and labour rights – considering the needs of both current and future generations. Youth from every region are already driving solutions. This Declaration unites our global priorities with region-specific actions to guide the transformation of food systems at UNFSS+4 and beyond to national, regional and global levels.

Call to action

The urgency of the moment demands bold and immediate action. The time for transformation is now. We, the youth, reaffirm our vision for a food system that ensures the well-being of current and future generations. We are hopeful and forward-looking, driven by the belief that change is not only possible, but inevitable when we act together. Youth unite around three pillars:

1. Advocacy

- We champion food sovereignty and the right to food as foundational to human dignity and global justice.
- We advocate for a transition to agroecological food systems that honours Indigenous and traditional knowledge, protects biodiversity, and confronts the climate crisis.
- We elevate food systems as a cross-cutting issue across climate action, health, education, labour and peacebuilding agendas.
- We call for universal recognition that food is a human right, one that transcends borders, colonial legacies and legal status. Everyone deserves access to safe, nutritious and culturally acceptable food.
- We call on stakeholders to align national and global policies with youth priorities on healthy diets, climate resilience, and fair labour practices, and to amplify the voices of marginalized groups, particularly Indigenous Peoples, youth, women and displaced communities, in all decision-making processes.

2. Action

- We demand the creation and advancement of transparent and inclusive food systems governance structures that are rooted in solidarity, social justice and environmental sustainability.
- We call for the institutionalization of youth voting rights and leadership roles across all levels of food systems governance, and for the meaningful co-design of policies that reflect the priorities of young people.
- We urge governments and the private sector to redirect subsidies and financing toward sustainable food systems, supporting agroecology, smallholder farmers, Indigenous knowledge systems and women-led agricultural enterprises.
- We call for investments in regenerative and climate-resilient agriculture, ecosystem restoration, and biodiversity protection, rooted in Indigenous land rights and community stewardship.
- We urge stakeholders to develop circular, low-waste food economies that enhance local resilience, reduce supply chain lengths and preserve cultural foodways.
- We call for the dismantling of structural inequalities in land, labour and resource access, and youth-led movements that redefine power, equity and sustainability in food systems.

3. Empowerment

- We call for the institutionalization of youth leadership in food system governance, with mechanisms for accountability, mentorship and intergenerational co-governance.
- We demand the protection of young farmers, food workers and producers through fair labour laws, decent work standards, and social protections, especially in informal and rural economies.
- We urge governments and donors to ensure equitable access to land, training and finance for youth-led food initiatives, particularly those rooted in agroecology and community innovation.
- We call for capacity-building programs tailored to the specific challenges faced by young women, Indigenous youth and other marginalized groups.
- We seek the removal of structural barriers, including academic, financial, linguistic and geographic limitations, that hinder youth participation in local, national and global food governance forums.
- We emphasize the need to foster partnerships that centre youth-led innovation, bridge ancestral knowledge with new technologies and scale impact sustainably.

Regional declarations

AFRICA

Africa's youth face overlapping challenges in transforming food systems, including limited access to land, finance and technology, as well as climate change, biodiversity loss and deep-rooted inequalities. Despite playing vital roles in both informal and formal food economies, youth remain under-represented in decision-making. As the continent undergoes rapid urbanization and demographic growth, young people are calling for inclusive governance, equitable access to resources, and sustainable and just food systems. Building on the [Kigali Youth Declaration on Food Systems, Policy and Climate Action 2024](#), we urge greater investment in youth leadership, emergency preparedness, digital skills, and civic space to unlock Africa's potential for resilient and regenerative food systems.

The following priorities reflect the key areas where youth across Africa are calling for urgent and inclusive action to transform food systems:

1. Strengthen youth inclusion in food systems governance.

- a. Assign dedicated youth representative seats in national food systems committees and technical working groups, particularly those coordinated by National Convenors, to facilitate youth input in national food systems pathways, with a focus on achieving gender parity in representation.
- b. Develop open data platforms, mobile tools, and blockchain-enabled systems to track and publicize youth-led agrifood initiatives, promoting transparency and fostering accountability in youth engagement, including disaggregated tracking by gender and other intersecting identities.
- c. Recognize and integrate Indigenous youth into food governance structures, ensuring their knowledge systems and lived experiences, including gendered experiences, influence local and national food policies and practices.
- d. Develop youth-specific and accessible financial structures that prioritize gender equity, including tailored grants, youth innovation funds, microloans, and agricultural start-up packages that empower young women and gender-diverse youth to enter and lead in governance and business spaces.
- e. Implement government-led capacity-building and leadership programs and establish "Youth Hubs" in learning institutions. Targeted support should be provided for young women, Indigenous youth, rural youth and persons with disabilities, equipping all youth with the knowledge, skills and confidence to lead across various governance spheres.

2. Promote climate-resilient agriculture.

- a. Promote climate-resilient food systems that integrate Indigenous and traditional knowledge with modern, adaptive technologies, while recognizing and supporting the gendered roles of women and girls in climate adaptation, land stewardship and food production.
- b. Develop and implement early warning systems for climate-related risks, including auto-mated meteorological alerts that are accessible to young people, particularly smallhold-ers, pasto-ralists and fisherfolk.
- c. Establish effective and inclusive climate finance mechanisms that ensure funding flows direct-ly to youth-led grassroots initiatives, especially those led by young women and girls in cli-mate-vulnerable regions.
- d. Incorporate water-smart technologies (e.g., solar irrigation, rainwater harvesting and greywa-ter recycling) that reduce the time burdens often disproportionately carried by young women and girls in agricultural households.
- e. Leverage intergenerational collaboration to revive Indigenous seeds, ancestral farming and fishing techniques, and biodiversity stewardship, ensuring that youth are engaged as custodi-ans of ecological and cultural knowledge.

3. Enhance market access and value chain development.

- a. Create an enabling environment for youth, including young women entrepreneurs, to lever-age the African Continental Free Trade Area and unlock intra-African trade opportunities in agri-processing and value addition.
- b. Invest in inclusive infrastructure, such as roads, storage, cold chains and energy access, that reduces post-harvest losses and improves mobility and safety for young women, especially those in rural and peri-urban markets.
- c. Develop digital aggregation platforms and multilingual SMS-based extension services with gender-sensitive design to ensure equitable access to markets, credit and agricultural services for young people.
- d. Strengthen social protection systems for youth across the value chain, including young women in informal markets and mobile vending, through mechanisms such as input subsidies, price guarantees, maternity protections and business formalization support.
- e. Foster youth-led cooperatives and aggregation networks to enhance collective bargaining power, reduce transaction costs, and improve access to regional and international markets.

4. Ensure food sovereignty/ security, nutrition, and planetary health.

- a. Establish and expand school- and community-based nutrition programs that prioritize the nu-trition of girls and young women, particularly in underserved and rural areas where gender disparities in dietary access persist.
- b. Revitalize Indigenous and traditional food systems through urban and peri-urban farming ini-tiatives, ensuring that young women are recognized and supported as primary caregivers, food producers and knowledge holders.
- c. Ensure food safety by investing in regulatory frameworks, training and infrastructure that pro-tect the health of women food vendors and processors operating in both formal and informal sectors.

- d. Develop inclusive nutrition strategies that address the needs of marginalized and gender-diverse populations, such as young mothers, girls, refugees and displaced women, recognizing their specific rights to adequate, nutritious and culturally appropriate food.
- e. Promote the One Health approach by establishing sustainable farmed animal systems that also account for the unique exposure risks and care roles young women assume in food and animal care settings.

5. Strengthen preparedness for emergencies and external shocks.

- a. Integrate shock-responsive mechanisms into youth-focused food systems planning that account for gendered vulnerabilities during conflict, pandemics and climate disasters.
- b. Establish emergency food reserves, mobile food distribution systems and resilient supply chains in crisis-prone regions, ensuring they are inclusive, safe and accessible to young women, especially those in informal settlements and arid and semi-arid regions.
- c. Support youth-led innovations in early response systems, including mobile alerts and community surveillance, that engage and empower young women and girls as crisis responders and data collectors.
- d. Expand social protection programs (e.g., food vouchers, input subsidies and climate insurance) with gender-sensitive eligibility criteria to support young women, single mothers and other vulnerable youth groups during shocks.
- e. Ensure gender-responsive emergency planning by prioritizing the needs of young women and girls and ensuring their meaningful participation in response, recovery, and rebuilding efforts.

We, the youth of Africa, call on all stakeholders to address these priorities and work together to transform our agrifood systems. We invite governments, businesses, and civil society to join us in creating a sustainable, equitable, and just food for the future.

The Arab region

The Arab region faces significant challenges in food systems, including water scarcity, land degradation and socioeconomic inequalities. Youth in the region prioritize equitable access to resources, climate-resilient agriculture and inclusive decision-making processes. We advocate for policies that support sustainable practices, promote efficient food value chains, protect marine ecosystems and ensure youth leadership in food governance. By integrating traditional knowledge with modern innovations, advancing public awareness, and empowering youth to lead behavioral and technological shifts, the region can build resilient food systems that support both people and the planet.

The youth priorities for the Arab region are:

1. Institutionalize youth food systems leadership and representation.

- a. Legally mandate youth representation (with a gender quota) in national and local food system governance bodies, including crisis response committees.
- b. Establish youth food councils at the municipal and refugee camp levels, granting them decision-making authority in food security and nutrition planning.
- c. Recognize participation in food system governance as a human right for youth, particularly for displaced, rural and conflict-affected communities.
- d. Integrate youth-led priorities into National Determined Contributions, youth, peace and security strategies, and humanitarian food security frameworks.
- e. Include food systems education, rights literacy, and governance skills in school and vocational curricula to prepare the next generation of youth leaders.

2. Provide youth access to land, funding and infrastructure.

- a. Guarantee youth access to land, funding and agricultural infrastructure.
- b. Reform land tenure laws to recognize young women as independent landowners and producers.
- c. Establish state-funded youth microgrants and cooperative loans targeting food system innovation, particularly in rural, informal, or post-conflict economies.
- d. Prioritize youth access to rehabilitated farmland, water and storage facilities in recovery zones.
- e. Make public investment in youth-led agrifood enterprises a key component of national economic development and recovery policies.
- f. Ensure access to Arabic and other local languages, as well as technical support and digital tools, to democratize participation in food production and distribution.

3. Create sustainable livelihoods for youth.

- a. Establish community-based youth food cooperatives in rural areas, refugee camps and fragile cities that process, distribute and sell locally produced food.
- b. Fund youth-led agribusiness incubators and mobile processing units to create income streams and reduce food waste.
- c. Provide housing, land and training incentives for youth who commit to rebuilding food systems in conflict-affected or abandoned regions.

- d. Expand school feeding and local market programs run by youth and women in displacement or humanitarian zones.
- e. Protect youth agricultural workers with decent work standards, mobility rights and conflict-sensitive social protection schemes.

4. Enable youth-led climate and crisis-resilient innovation.

- a. Establish regional funds for youth-led innovation in drought-resistant, low-cost and localized food production systems.
- b. Integrate food systems and sustainability education into youth livelihood programs to increase awareness, promote behavioural change and strengthen climate-conscious food entrepreneurship.
- c. Train youth in crisis-responsive farming practices that meet emergency and long-term needs.
- d. Ensure youth in war zones are included in early warning systems, food loss prevention and recovery planning.
- e. Guarantee access to agri-data, weather tools, and humanitarian decision-making spaces for young farmers and food system workers.

5. Reclaim the cultural, political and economic role of youth in food sovereignty.

- a. Elevate and support youth-led local knowledge and traditional practices as core components of sustainable agriculture and agroecology.
- b. Invest in youth-run urban gardens, cultural food preservation projects and community kitchens in underserved or occupied regions.
- c. Condemn and address the weaponization of food during wars and under colonization, where access to food and aid is deliberately denied in violation of international law and basic human rights.
- d. Partner with youth organizations to develop rights-based food education programs centered on justice, solidarity and dignity.
- e. Ensure that humanitarian actors, international non-governmental organizations and governments are held accountable for youth demands for autonomy, participation and transparency in food system aid.

We, the youth of the Arab region, call on all stakeholders to address these priorities and work together to transform our food systems. We invite governments, businesses and civil society to join us in creating a sustainable, equitable and just food future.

Asia and the Pacific

Based on the outcome of youth consultations, the Asia and Pacific region faces significant challenges related to climate change, food and nutrition security, and socioeconomic inequalities. Youth prioritize access to nutritious food and adequate nutrition, sustainable production, climate action, decent work opportunities in food systems and integrating traditional knowledge into modern food systems.

We advocate for policies that support sustainable practices, protect marine and coastal ecosystems, and ensure youth leadership in food governance. By combining traditional knowledge with modern innovations, the region can develop resilient food systems that support both people and the planet.

The youth priorities for Asia and the Pacific are:

1. Foster sustainable production, promote informed consumption, and ensure access to safe and nutritious diets.

- a. Promote sustainable production and healthy diets by subsidizing urban and farmers' markets, thereby increasing accessibility to fresh, diverse and affordable food.
- b. Enhance agriculture and nutrition education by integrating food literacy into school curricula and involving smallholder farmers in school meal programs to support local economies and improve children's nutrition.
- c. Promote Indigenous, traditional and alternative nutritious diets and food preservation techniques to improve dietary diversity, reduce food waste, and revive local knowledge and cultural food practices.
- d. Strengthen sustainable practices in food systems by enhancing product traceability, ensuring regulatory compliance and advancing consumer trust in the food supply chain.
- e. Implement policies that promote healthier eating habits, including the use of front-of-pack nutrition labeling and limiting the marketing of ultra-processed foods in schools, public spaces and digital media.

2. Unlock finance and invest in climate action, adaptation and mitigation technologies.

- a. Unlock finance for climate action by investing in youth-led agroecological initiatives, innovative adaptation technologies and sustainable agrifood start-ups.
- b. Enhance capacity-building for young farmers, especially women, to develop funding proposals and make informed decisions on climate-resilient agricultural practices.
- c. Align national policies with agroecological principles and improve access to affordable credit for innovative agricultural technologies that support sustainable production.
- d. Promote financing for climate-responsive agricultural technologies, such as solar-powered irrigation systems, rainwater harvesting infrastructure, and research and development for alternative proteins.
- e. Strengthen cooperatives and collective mechanisms to ensure equitable participation, benefit-sharing and youth decision-making in the food system transition.
- f. Integrate climate-sensitive social protection mechanisms and promote land reclamation for sustainable farming practices.

3. Integrate traditional knowledge into modern food systems.

- a. Document and preserve Indigenous agricultural practices, including seed saving, crop rotation and sustainable harvesting methods.
- b. Promote education, documentation, and knowledge exchange through farmer-to-farmer platforms and community-based training.
- c. Promote agroecology to combine traditional (Indigenous) ecological knowledge with modern agricultural science.
- d. Ensure the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in food governance and research, and protect intellectual property rights to safeguard traditional knowledge and cultural heritage.
- e. Ensure that the use of traditional knowledge is based on Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), and that benefit-sharing mechanisms are in place for knowledge-holding communities.

4. Build resilient infrastructure and food systems.

- a. Diversify crops and implement ecosystem-based fisheries management to reduce dependency on vulnerable monocultures and safeguard food and marine ecosystems.
- b. Expand early warning systems and insurance schemes to protect against extreme weather events and minimize livelihood losses.
- c. Upgrade rural infrastructure, roads, digital systems and cold storage to reduce post-harvest losses and enhance connectivity between producers and markets.
- d. Establish youth food systems innovation labs and provide training in digital tools to build capacity for entrepreneurship and direct market engagement.
- e. Improve waste systems to protect ecosystems and invest in local food processing to reduce losses, create jobs and improve access to diverse, nutritious foods.

5. Enhance meaningful youth participation in policy and promote fair labour practices.

- a. Establish youth advisory bodies within UN organizations and appoint youth representatives to regional food security dialogues to ensure that youth voices inform food system policies.
- b. Strengthen grassroots networks, amplify the voices of marginalized individuals and streamline grant access for youth-led food and nutrition initiatives to promote inclusive governance and innovation.
- c. Enforce living wages, provide legal aid, and reform labor codes to eliminate exploitative practices and ensure gender equity in the workforce.
- d. Promote cross-sectoral knowledge exchange and national youth policy dialogues to engage and empower youth in decision-making processes.
- e. Partner with stakeholders to scale up social safety nets and offer professional development to boost youth competitiveness in sustainable food systems.

We, the youth of Asia and the Pacific, call on all stakeholders to address these priorities and work together to transform our agrifood systems. We invite governments, businesses, and civil society to join us in creating a sustainable, equitable, and just food future.

Europe and Central Asia

Europe and Central Asia face overlapping challenges, including climate change, inequality, ageing populations, labour gaps and water scarcity. Food systems in the region must navigate both modernization and deepening environmental and social divides. We, the youth of Europe and Central Asia, call for a green and fair transformation of our food systems that guarantees nutritious food for all, builds climate resilience, promotes gender equality and creates inclusive rural opportunities.

We emphasize integrating traditional knowledge with technological innovation, promoting cooperation across borders and safeguarding civic space. Youth in the region urge for a holistic approach to food systems transformation guided by the following priorities:

1. Ensure access to nutritious and sustainably produced food.

- a. Introduce dynamic incentive systems instead of static subsidies for sustainable food production and healthy eating habits.
- b. Support plant-based diets and limit the marketing of ultra-processed, low-nutrition foods, especially those targeting children. Enforce clear front-of-pack nutrition labelling and promote fiscal policies such as taxes on ultra-processed foods and incentives for local and seasonal produce.
- c. Promote food systems and nutrition education in schools and communities to address “hidden hunger”, micronutrient deficiencies and food waste. Support local producers in supplying healthy food to schools and public institutions, reducing food miles and strengthening local economies. Raise public awareness about healthy diets and sustainability through educational curricula and public campaigns.
- d. Introduce and enforce legal protections to protect Indigenous seed varieties from corporate exploitation and ensure the preservation of agrobiodiversity.
- e. Combine traditional farming practices with modern innovations to create climate adaptation strategies.

2. Prioritize sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture.

- a. Legally recognize and protect traditional agricultural practices and the land rights of Indigenous, ethnic and rural communities.
- b. Promote crop diversification and conservation of endangered and Indigenous seed varieties.
- c. Support research and adaptation on regenerative farming, agroecology and carbon removal technologies adapted to local ecologies.
- d. Reduce post-harvest loss by investing in cold-chain infrastructure and early warning systems, and partner with retailers to redistribute surplus food to food-insecure populations.
- e. Integrate soil health, biodiversity and carbon sequestration into national agricultural frameworks, and establish measurable targets for soil organic matter to prevent soil degradation and extinction. Promote soil literacy through training and youth programs.
- f. Address water scarcity through transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia, drawing on European Union water frameworks and regional dialogue platforms.

3. Promote decent and inclusive labour conditions.

- a. Guarantee equal pay, protection and mobility rights for migrants and seasonal farmworkers.
- b. Strengthen labour unions for food system workers to enable collective bargaining. Invest in food processing and storage infrastructure across Eastern Europe and Central Asia to reduce seasonal market imbalances and support local economies.
- c. Provide childcare support for women in agriculture to enhance gender equality.
- d. Expand youth apprenticeship, entrepreneurship, and vocational training in sustainable agriculture and food innovation.
- e. Encourage cross-border mobility schemes for young seasonal workers, providing them with complete legal protection. Remove language and credential barriers that exclude rural youth, especially those with lived agricultural experience, from participating in global governance and trade discussions.

4. Empower smallholders and young farmers.

- a. Create tailored grants and incentive programs for young people starting agroecological or sustainable food businesses.
- b. Include young representatives in national delegations and policymaking bodies, especially in climate and food governance.
- c. Establish regional training hubs for sustainable water and soil management. Bridge the urban-rural divide by creating green jobs, services and digital infrastructure in rural areas; design migration-sensitive rural development strategies that promote sustainable growth.
- d. Promote land access policies for young farmers, including women, to guarantee intergenerational equity.
- e. Develop digital democracy tools and provide training in digital literacy, ethical artificial intelligence, and hard and soft skills, including business management and entrepreneurship in the agricultural sector. Ensure youth are represented in regional trade and innovation forums and supported in building cross-border partnerships.

5. Improve governance, transparency, and accountability.

- a. Institutionalize youth participation through municipal youth food councils and national food audits led by young people.
- b. Launch real-time dashboards to publish corporate environmental impacts and government incentive flows.
- c. Criminalize land grabbing, environmental destruction and resource exploitation to protect the rights of smallholder farmers.
- d. Foster regional cooperation mechanisms to safeguard food chains during political, economic or climate-related crises, wars and conflicts.
- e. Protect and expand civic space for young food systems advocates, ensuring that activism and democratic engagement are supported. Strengthen links between scientific research and agriculture by empowering young agricultural scientists, creating sectoral career pathways, and launching public campaigns to make agriculture attractive and innovative.

We, the youth of Europe and Central Asia, call on all stakeholders to address these priorities and work together to transform our agrifood systems. We invite governments, businesses, and civil society to join us in creating a sustainable, equitable, and just food future.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin America and the Caribbean face deep-rooted and intersecting challenges related to land rights ownership, extractive development models, climate change-related impacts and biodiversity loss, exacerbating existing socioeconomic and racial inequalities. Youth in the region prioritize agroecology, Indigenous food sovereignty, and meaningful, inclusive participation in decision-making processes. We advocate for policies that support sustainable practices, protect land and marine ecosystems and ensure youth have meaningful leadership opportunities in food governance. By integrating Indigenous and traditional knowledge with youth-led innovation, the region can build resilient, just, and regenerative food systems that support both people and the planet.

The youth priorities for Latin America and the Caribbean are:

1. Promote agroecology and land rights.

- a. Ensure that Indigenous communities and rural youth, particularly young women and gender diverse youth, have formal land titles to secure their rights and promote sustainable land use practices, integrating feminist agroecology principles that recognize the unpaid labor of women in food systems and center care work as essential to sustainability.
- b. Allocate funds (e.g., grants, subsidies and financial incentives) for agroecological urban farming and other innovative approaches, environmental stewards, and extension and advisory service providers, market information, and shared infrastructure, among other approaches, while encouraging youth employment in the aforementioned sectors to enhance sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices and urban food security, and reduce urban-rural disparities.
- c. Identify and phase out harmful incentives to highly hazardous pesticides in agriculture by promoting incentives for climate-resilient and sustainable food production practices and farming alternatives to protect the environment and human health, alongside support for producers to facilitate this transformation.
- d. Enhance the understanding, monitoring, and prediction of meteorological events and their impacts on soil and crops through a strategic combination of targeted training programs and appropriate technological tools. This integrated approach aims to support improved decision-making among agroecology farmers.
- e. Develop food strategies within local governments that incorporate equity, sustainability and food sovereignty as fundamental principles, promoting food production in urban areas through initiatives such as community gardens, edible parks and vertical farming.

2. Strengthen Indigenous food sovereignty.

- a. Document ancestral knowledge and practices, integrating them into national food security strategies to ensure their recognition, cultural protection, intergenerational transmission, and support the range of youth aspirations, which may include teaching in Indigenous languages
- b. Support Indigenous-led cooperatives to market traditional crops, promoting economic independence and cultural preservation.
- c. Enact and enforce laws to protect biodiversity and prevent deforestation in ancestral territories, safeguarding Indigenous lands and ecosystems, including by supporting the protection of Indigenous Peoples' Knowledge with FPIC, and local and traditional knowledge, through appropriate legal frameworks, in particular within the national legal context that consider international agreements, such as the Escazu Agreement.
- d. Encourage the cultivation and consumption of traditional and Indigenous crops to enhance food security and cultural heritage.
- e. Promote collaboration between Indigenous communities, academic institutions and scientific laboratories to co-develop innovative solutions that integrate ancestral knowledge with contemporary scientific advancements.

3. Improve rural-urban linkages.

- a. Establish alternatives and fair supply chains to connect smallholders with urban markets, improving access to food supply chains, reducing post-harvest losses and enhancing fair trade throughout the trade network.
- b. Adopt a cooperative model in food distribution to create significant advantages for small-scale farmers and producers, including improved market access, enhanced resource efficiency and more sustainable models, benefiting not only individual members but also enabling producers to make their voices heard and to engage in meaningful negotiations. This increases farmers' capacities for risk-taking and provides social security.
- c. Provide training for youth in finance, innovation, digital tools and supply chain transparency to enhance their participation in food systems, fostering inclusive innovative practices and technologies, including new uses of data, digital tools and knowledge-sharing platforms.
- d. Promote circular economy models to ensure dignified employment opportunities in rural areas, encourage the return of young people to their rural communities and counteract urbanization to advance local development.
- e. Enhance sustainability by integrating food planning into urban development strategies, emphasizing a circular economy and dignified green jobs that can be achieved by investing in community-led urban agriculture initiatives and urban gardens. Establish food banks to improve access to culturally appropriate, healthy diets, especially in underserved areas.

4. Prioritize nutrition, health and education.

- a. Integrate culturally appropriate, biodiverse and healthy diets – including ancestral, local, Indigenous and traditional foods – into school meal programs that incorporate education initiatives to build diets that are not reliant on imported ultra-processed foods, while promoting local production, improving nutrition and preserving cultural heritage.
- b. Train educators by promoting community-based, gender-sensitive workshops and implementing holistic community education programs in climate-smart agriculture and nutrition literacy. This empowers communities with knowledge on sustainable food practices, sustainable diets and food preservation techniques.
- c. Promote fully funded, evidence-based public policies for all that are gender-responsive, intergenerational, anti-racist, disability-inclusive and climate-just. Ensure universal access to decent work, land, water, housing, food sovereignty, quality education, comprehensive health-care (including mental health) and robust social protection systems.
- d. Establish taxes or bans on ultra-processed foods with clear health and climate implications.

5. Ensure youth leadership in policy and food governance.

- a. Establish youth quotas with gender parity in food policy councils, national delegations and public procurement committees, including through civil society and private sector organizations, as well as in governance mechanisms and decision-making fora at all levels, such as parliaments, unions and other national and local policymaking spaces, including national frameworks for intergenerational co-governance, with mechanisms that bridge ancestral knowledge and youth innovation.
- b. Provide funding and support for grassroots youth networks, youth- and women-led initiatives, and Indigenous youth initiatives to amplify the voices of marginalized individuals, promote food justice and foster inclusive decision-making.
- c. Offer training programs in policy drafting, negotiation skills and digital advocacy tools to empower youth to engage effectively in governance, including gender-focused programs.
- d. Ensure that young women, Indigenous youth and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and other (LGBTQIA+) youth have institutional pathways to lead and shape food policy agendas, with resources to sustain their organizing while protecting the civic space for youth climate and food justice defenders, ensuring their safety and freedom of expression.
- e. Recognize youth labour in food systems and ensure dignified conditions, wages and career pathways, and mainstream just transition scopes to identify and address structural inequalities by ensuring access to Indigenous Peoples, LGBTQIA+ individuals and women.

We, the youth of Latin America and the Caribbean, call on all stakeholders to address these priorities and work together to transform our food systems. We invite governments, businesses and civil society to join us in creating a sustainable, equitable and just food future.

North America

High consumption levels, significant food waste and a need for greater equity and sustainability characterize the food systems in North America. Youth in the region prioritize Indigenous food sovereignty, climate-resilient agriculture and the development of stronger local food networks. We advocate for policies that support regenerative farming practices, reduce food waste and ensure equitable access to nutritious food. By integrating Indigenous knowledge with modern science, the region can build food systems that nourish people and the planet.

The youth priorities for North America are:

1. Accelerate climate-resilient agriculture.

- a. Provide financial support, such as grants and subsidies, for the transition to regenerative farming practices that restore soil health and sequester carbon. Shift away from subsidies that favor environmentally damaging industrial agriculture and implement policies that require agro-industrial polluters to pay for their damages.
- b. Promote existing resources that encourage knowledge transfer and collaboration across sectors to implement best management practices in regenerative agriculture.
- c. Develop insurance programs tailored to protect smallholders from climate-related risks, such as wildfires and floods, ensuring necessary financial safety nets to recover from such events.
- d. Establish safeguarded, transparent data-sharing platforms that enable the tracking of emissions and other critical environmental metrics while strictly adhering to data privacy regulations and best practices to safeguard sensitive information.
- e. Encourage policies that support sustainable food system practices and reduce the environmental impact of food production, including carbon removal technologies such as enhanced rock weathering.

2. Advance food security and nutrition equity, and ensure universal access to nutritious food and clean water.

- a. Ensure universal access to affordable, culturally appropriate foods in underserved urban and rural communities through expanded national nutrition programs.
- b. Partner with healthcare providers to integrate nutrition education into primary care, targeting diet-related chronic diseases through public health campaigns.
- c. Support local food systems to reduce dependency on imports and enhance food security.
- d. Implement policies to address food deserts, improve access to fresh nutritious food in urban areas and address hyper-consolidation in the agrifood sector, thereby protecting producers and consumers alike from unfair price manipulation.
- e. Ensure that food security initiatives prioritize the needs of low-income and marginalized communities.

3. Strengthen education and public awareness.

- a. Incorporate food systems literacy into elementary and high school curricula, with a focus on sustainable diets and science-based agriculture education.
- b. Develop programs in collaboration with local governments and public universities to train youth as “food ambassadors” to lead workshops on urban gardening, composting and meal planning in schools and communities.
- c. Launch public awareness campaigns to educate consumers on sustainable food practices and adopt clear food labelling policies to reduce unnecessary food waste and help consumers make informed choices.
- d. Provide funding and support for educational initiatives that promote sustainable food systems and Indigenous knowledge.
- e. Foster community-led initiatives to promote food literacy and sustainable practices at the local level.

4. Support Indigenous-led food sovereignty and protect ancestral land rights.

- a. Restore and protect ancestral land rights to support Indigenous-led initiatives and preserve traditional food systems.
- b. Support Indigenous-led seed banks to preserve biodiversity and traditional crops, and advocate against agribusiness.
- c. Ensure FPIC in policies affecting Indigenous territories and food systems.
- d. Support Indigenous youth-led initiatives that integrate traditional ecological knowledge with modern agroecological practices.
- e. Encourage the integration of traditional and Indigenous practices into modern food systems to enhance sustainability and cultural preservation.

5. Foster equitable and circular food economies.

- a. Develop grants and low-interest loans for youth-led start-ups focused on upcycling food waste into affordable products such as fertilizers or animal feed.
- b. Promote farm-to-institution programs in schools, hospitals and prisons to prioritize local food redistribution systems and climate-smart producers.
- c. Provide financial and technical support to local producers to enhance their capacity and market access.
- d. Encourage circular economy practices to reduce food waste and promote sustainable food production.
- e. Improve infrastructure and market access for small-scale and Indigenous producers to ensure fair prices and reduce dependency on corporate monopolies.

We, the youth of North America, call on all stakeholders to address these priorities and work together to transform our food systems. We invite governments, businesses and civil society to join us in creating a sustainable, equitable and just food future.

Driving change at UNFSS+4 and beyond

We, the youth, the largest generation in history, are not just demanding change; we are delivering it. As frontline actors in the intersecting crises of food, climate and injustice we bring innovation, lived experience and a bold vision for the future. This Youth Declaration is not just a statement, but a shared mandate for urgent, systemic and sustained transformation. Youth must no longer be tokenized or sidelined. We call for meaningful co-creation, decision-making power and direct investment in youth-led solutions.

As UNFSS+4 advances, youth leadership, realities and achievements must not only be acknowledged, but they must also be centered. Youth must be recognized as essential partners in evaluating state and non-state commitments. Our participation in inclusive governance must be formalized, our right to co-own food systems transformation must be respected and our contributions must be resourced with bold, accessible and sustained financing. Youth-led initiatives must connect local action to global momentum.

The themes driving UNFSS+4 must centre youth as rightsholders and leaders in food systems transformation. We call on governments, international organizations, multilateral institutions, the private sector, civil society and academia to act with us, not just for us.

Now is the time for governance that includes and uplifts the value of youth, financing that seeks out and prioritizes youth-centred and led initiatives, and progress on the priorities of young people as reflected in this Youth Declaration. This is not only a policy imperative – it is a moral obligation. A matter of justice, survival and shared responsibility.

Stand with us to build food systems that protect the planet, uphold human dignity and secure a just future for all.