

In-person Side Events

Concept Note

3 July 2025

Background

The UN Food Systems Summit +4 Stocktake (UNFSS+4) marks a critical milestone in the Decade of Action, four years after the 2021 Food Systems Summit. Co-hosted by Ethiopia and Italy, the UNFSS+4 provides a platform for reflection, accountability, and mobilization of investments in food systems transformation — with a focus on inclusive, sustainable, and resilient approaches.

With the global food systems agenda more urgent than ever — amid climate shocks, conflict, fragility, and rising food insecurity — UNFSS+4 aims to spotlight national progress, unlock scalable solutions and strengthen mutual accountability across sectors and stakeholders.

To enrich these high-level dialogues, a curated set of **in-person side events** will be hosted on the 27 July 2025 (Action Day) and during the lunch breaks of the UNFSS+4 official programme (28-29 July 2025), offering a space for partners to showcase country experiences, innovations and evidence-based approaches.

Objectives of Side Events

Side events are designed to:

- Share country progress, knowledge and tools to accelerate transformation;
- Promote cross-sectoral and multistakeholder collaboration, including with youth, Indigenous Peoples, farmers, business, civil society and donors;
- Elevate promising practices and innovations across finance, governance, climate and technology;
- Strengthen mutual accountability and support inclusive food systems governance.

Side Event Format

- **Dates:** 27–29 July 2025
- **Format:** In-person only
- **Slots Available:** 29
- **Duration:** 75 minutes
- **Language:** Of organizer's choice (interpretation is not available)
- **Venue:** UNFSS+4 venue (UNECA, Addis Ababa)

Call for Submissions

The UN Food Systems Coordination Hub invites governments, civil society, private sector entities, UN agencies, research institutions and other partners to submit proposals for in-person side events.

How to Apply (Deadline/via/notification of selection)

PROPOSED TIMELINE

Launch call for side events submission:	14 April 2025
Deadline for side events submission (extended):	23 May 2025
Internal screening by the Hub:	26 May 2025
Review by the Selection Committee and final selection:	24 June 2025
Notification of selected side events to applicants (including proposals for merging):	25 June 2025
Confirmation by applicants:	27 June 2025
Publishing final side events programme:	11 July 2025

Submission Requirements

Applicants must provide:

- Event Title and Summary (max 250 words)
- Objectives and expected outcomes
- Lead Organizers and Partners
- Thematic focus (aligned with UNFSS+4 objectives)
- Format and tentative profiles of speakers
- Description of inclusivity approach (e.g., youth, gender, regional balance)
- Technical/logistical needs (e.g., AV, interpretation)

Selection Criteria

Events will be selected based on:

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| • Clarity of objectives and alignment with stocktake objectives | 20 points |
| • Clarity of expected outcomes and plans for follow-up action | 20 points |
| • Potential for scaling, replication, or policy impact | 20 points |
| • Balanced multistakeholder partnership | 20 points |
| • Representation of diverse voices, countries sectors | 20 points |
| • Regional balance and gender balance of speakers in panels | 20 points |

More details on selection:

- Preference will be given to country-led multi-stakeholder submissions that bring together a systemic approach.
- Proposals that they do not achieve gender balance in the panel (with 10% margin to either gender, *vis a vis* the 50-50 participation) will be excluded from evaluation.
- Proposals submitted by more than one country will be prioritized.

Selection process

The selection committee consisting of representatives of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, FAO, WFP, IFAD, and 2 representatives from the Stakeholder Engagement and Networking Advisory (SENA) Group will evaluate the submitted side event application against the criteria.

NB: The organizations that are members of the selection committee (FAO, WFP, IFAD and SENA members' representatives affiliated organizations) cannot submit or lead side event to avoid conflict of interest in the selection process. Speakers from these entities can participate in the side events but not the members of the selection committee.

Organizer Responsibilities

Selected organizers will be responsible for:

- Confirming and coordinating speaker participation
- Covering travel, logistical, and interpretation costs
- Ensuring registration and accreditation of all participants
- Submitting a 1-page summary report post-event

Explanatory Note for Applicants

Side events are an opportunity to:

- Complement official dialogues with practical, forward-looking conversations
- Engage with a high-level, global audience
- Share successes, challenges, and solutions grounded in real-world experiences
- Strengthen visibility and partnerships in advancing food systems transformation

These events are not part of the formal programme but are recognized as an integral platform for dialogue and accountability within the Summit's ecosystem.

Due to space and time constraints, only 28 high-impact side events will be hosted. Organizers are encouraged to collaborate and co-host events where possible.

Side events proposals with similar topics/focus will be invited to merge. Only one side event proposal could be submitted by an organization.