



Accelerating Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Food Systems Transitions for People and Planet

UN Food Systems Summit +4 Stocktake

Report of the Secretary-General

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**UN FOOD SYSTEMS
SUMMIT + 4**
STOCKTAKE

Cover photograph: © FAO/Jean Baptiste Nkurunziza

Rwanda – Farmer Field Schools and innovation platforms transform rice production in Rwangingo.

KEY MESSAGES

The 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) catalyzed global momentum for food systems transformation, recognizing their central role in achieving the 2030 Agenda. At the first United Nations Food Systems Summit Stocktake (UNFSS+2) in 2023, countries reaffirmed their commitment to translate national pathways into action. Now, four years since the Summit, and with just five years remaining before 2030, a stronger and more coordinated global community of food systems actors and partners has taken root. Grounded in the leadership of governments – a broad Ecosystem of Support (EoS) – including the United Nations (UN), civil society, youth, local actors, Indigenous Peoples, the private sector, food producers, and others – this community is now advancing toward the Second UN Food Systems Summit Stocktake (UNFSS+4) to reflect on progress, strengthen partnerships, and unlock the finance and investments needed to scale transformation.

Momentum for food systems transformation has deepened amidst a volatile global context. Countries are tackling interconnected and persistent challenges, including conflict, climate change, inequalities and economic pressures that undermine food security, nutrition and livelihoods. Addressing these challenges has called for coordinated global action, strengthened national capacity and inclusive, sustained investments. At the same time, countries are aligning their food systems pathways with broader transitions to green and digital economies that create decent jobs and are anchored in social protection and education, necessary to achieve resilience and sustainability.

By 2025, 128 countries developed national food systems pathways, up from 126 in 2023, and 155 countries have appointed National Convenors to lead and coordinate efforts. Since 2023, 39 countries have revised their pathways, translating them into concrete action plans. Voluntary reporting also increased, with 112 countries submitting progress updates in 2025, compared to 101 in 2023. These reports reflect strong political will and

institutional commitment from national leaders, food systems convenors and stakeholders working together to respond to continued crises and building resilience for their people and countries.

Since UNFSS+2, countries have reported encouraging progress in transforming food systems, as evidenced by trends emerging from the voluntary progress reports:

- In all regions, countries are placing the right to food at the core of their strategies, safeguarding dignity and human rights. Many have enshrined this right in constitutions, enacted enabling legislation, and work to ensure food is never used as a weapon during conflict.
- Countries are accelerating the implementation of national food systems pathways by integrating food systems into national development plans and policy frameworks. These efforts are increasingly aligned with climate and biodiversity planning instruments, including Nationally Determined Contributions, National Adaptation Plans and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.
- Recognizing the cross-sectoral nature of food systems transformation, countries are establishing fit-for-purpose, high-level governance mechanisms such as presidential secretariats and interministerial committees that support bottom-up and integrated approaches to food systems transformation.
- Countries are building and strengthening inclusive partnerships and coalitions to advance national food systems pathways, including through international cooperation, South–South and triangular collaboration. At the UNFSS, 31 Coalitions of Action were formed to support implementation and of this 20 Coalitions have continued to provide critical support through advocacy, knowledge generation, fundraising, partnership building and technical assistance.

- Countries report that there has been strong collaboration amongst the National Convenors, civil society, academia, local actors, Indigenous Peoples, youth, food producers, consumers and businesses.
- Many countries are advancing inclusivity by prioritizing the needs of women, young people, Indigenous Peoples, smallholder farmers and producers, and persons with disabilities in national food systems policies and initiatives. The UN system, through its country teams and led by the Resident Coordinators, has continued to work closely with National Convenors and the local EoS to advance food systems transformation.
- Through the UN Food Systems Task Force and the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, the UN has contributed through joint programming, policy guidance, regional cooperation, and strategic financing in support of national priorities.
- Countries have committed to adopting and investing in science, technology, data systems, artificial intelligence and evidence-based policymaking as essential drivers of implementation, investments and accountability.
- Mobilizing finance for food systems transformation was a top priority during the period, following the Secretary-General's 2023 UNFSS+2 Call to Action. Countries reported reallocating national budgets, accessing climate finance, engaging regional banks and international financial institutions, and advancing innovative financing strategies such as blended finance, public-private partnerships, green financing and corporate social responsibility. Emerging models, including concessional financing mechanisms tailored to food systems transformation, offer promise, yet access to finance remains a persistent challenge.

This growing global movement, anchored in governments and powered by a diverse and inclusive community of actors, is accelerating food systems transformation for people and for the planet.

The UNFSS+4 marks a pivotal moment to scale up implementation and mobilize action that will benefit current and future generations. Five years ahead of the 2030 deadline, backed by the recently agreed *Compromiso de Sevilla* and stronger engagement with the private sector to ensure the investments that are needed, the Secretary-General is convening Member States and the EoS to capitalize on the actions and learning of the past five years to meet the ambition of the Sustainable Development Goals. The context against which we meet in 2025 poses new issues to contend with, related with trade, artificial intelligence and new and fast evolving technologies. Looking ahead, the World Summit on Social Development and COP 30 will be opportunities to present the results of our dialogue for the expansion of decent jobs and social protection, to meet the right to food, reduce poverty and hunger for all people and to further strengthen the linkages between our food systems and climate action.

The multilateral system has proven to be the most effective source of solutions and resilience in this quinquennium. We must continue to strengthen our ability to work together, building on the unity of our resolve to deliver food for all to ensure peace, inclusion and prosperity.



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INTRODUCTION

Ten years after the global community adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we continue to face significant challenges in translating our systemic vision into tangible action. Progress remains uneven - and, in many areas, alarmingly slow. According to the latest global data, 35 percent of the 137 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets with available data are either on track or showing moderate progress. Meanwhile, 47 percent are advancing at an insufficient pace, and 18 percent have regressed compared to the 2015 baseline.ⁱ With just five years remaining until the 2030 deadline, urgent and intensified efforts are essential to reverse these trends, as reaffirmed in the 2025 Secretary-General's SDG Progress Report. The six transitions - food systems; energy access and affordability; digital connectivity; education; employment and social protection; and climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution - identified at the Sustainable Development Summit for their catalytic and ripple effects across the SDGs, remain central to driving transformative change.

The 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) marked a turning point for the transformation of global food systems, positioning them as a primary lever to achieve all 17 SDGs and break down sectoral silos. To ensure continued progress, the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General committed to a biennial stocktaking of the UNFSS outcomes and their contribution to the 2030 Agenda. The first UN Food Systems Summit Stocktake (UNFSS+2) reaffirmed that food systems remain a global priority and culminated in a *Call to Action for Accelerated Food Systems Transformation*, which urged governments and stakeholders to deepen their efforts and commit the UN System to supporting country-led transformations.

In 2024, the SDG Summit Political Declaration and the Pact for the Future both reaffirmed sustainable development as a core pillar of multilateral cooperation.ⁱⁱ Food systems have the potential to drive multidimensional progress due to their deep interconnections with all SDGs, contributing to health, climate, biodiversity, livelihoods,

trade, gender equality and local economies, amongst many other positive gains. The second UN Food Systems Summit Stocktake (UNFSS+4), in July 2025, offers a critical opportunity to assess progress, renew global solidarity and connect high-level ambition with local action to advance food systems transformation as a cornerstone of sustainable development.

A growing global commitment to food systems that responds to the challenges of our time

The UNFSS sparked a global movement aimed at transforming food systems by engaging numerous stakeholders worldwide. Today, in the face of severe challenges, this movement is demonstrating that there is the capacity for millions of people to act boldly and strategically, together. Critical to this is the increasing appreciation among organizations and individuals of the need to approach food and agriculture as a system, acknowledging the different and complex interactions of elements both within and beyond the food system itself. In 2023, this global community reconvened, enlarged, to take stock and reaffirm that food systems remain a global priority.

Since UNFSS+2, food systems have gained unprecedented political momentum and have been recognized as a critical nexus for addressing interconnected global challenges and delivering on the SDGs. This was reflected in the 2023 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development **Political Declaration**.ⁱⁱⁱ The COP28 UAE *Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems and Climate Action* represents a watershed moment, securing an unprecedented commitment from 160 Heads of States and Governments to integrate food systems into national climate strategies and vice versa.^{iv} Complementing this, the COP15 Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework established 23 specific targets on food systems transformation,^v and at COP16, a comprehensive

implementation strategy and a dedicated fund were set up to achieve these targets. The G7 and G20 have also elevated food systems as a strategic priority, exemplified by the Apulia Food Systems Initiative^{vi} and the G20 Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty.^{vii}

Recent evidence from the *Food Systems Countdown Report 2024* underscores that progress in transforming food systems is not only possible— it is already underway. Out of 42 indicators with measurable time trends, 20 have moved in a desirable direction globally, reflecting encouraging shifts across key dimensions such as diet quality, environmental sustainability and resilience.^{viii}

The urgency of building resilient, sustainable and inclusive food systems is increasingly evident in multiple settings. Climate shocks have become more frequent and severe, disrupting agricultural production, social protection mechanisms and threatening the livelihoods of millions. The global community continues to navigate the lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and in doing so, has demonstrated remarkable adaptability and solidarity. Many millions of people experience increasing inflation, cost-of-living pressures and environmental crises. At the same time they drive a renewed commitment to sustainable solutions and widespread, promising innovations. Amid regional tensions and trade wars, there is a need to encourage the emergence of fair, inclusive and resilient food systems. This requires collective governance, convergent policies, and coordinated implementation.

This imperative must be understood through the lens of increasingly challenging fiscal realities. Today, many countries have tight fiscal constraints and face a high debt burdens. The median debt service burden for Least Developed Countries rose from 3.1 percent of revenue in 2010 to 12 percent in 2023.^{ix} Alarming, four out of ten people live in countries where governments spend more on interest payments than on education or health.^x Similarly, many upper-middle-income countries are burdened with high debt levels and often lack access to concessional financing while facing major vulnerabilities such as climate risks and commodity dependence.

Amid these constraints, there is broad recognition of the need to scale up private investment in food systems, particularly in developing countries, calling for a more enabling policy environment that supports long-term, strategic financing and facilitates private investment in agriculture and food systems while aligning with national priorities and contexts.^{xi}

The worsening fiscal landscape not only limits countries' ability to invest in social protection and food systems resilience but is compounded by the shrinking pool of international financial support. Support for humanitarian and development interventions through Official Development Assistance (ODA) is declining in real terms.^{xii} In 2024, ODA fell by 9 percent in net terms.^{xiii} The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) projects an additional 9-17 percent decline in 2025.^{xiv} The international humanitarian sector faces mounting pressure and underfunding as domestic priorities compete with global commitments.

The hidden social, economic, and environmental costs of food systems are estimated at USD 11.6 trillion (2020 Purchasing Power Parity) across 156 countries, with health-related costs alone accounting for USD 8.1 trillion—70 percent of the total.^{xv} Hunger and malnutrition remain widespread, with 735 million people undernourished and over 3.1 billion unable to afford a healthy diet in 2023.^{xvi} The world faces a triple burden of malnutrition—undernutrition, obesity, and diet-related noncommunicable diseases—affecting more than 2.8 billion adults^{xvii} and costing USD 7 trillion annually in healthcare and lost productivity. Yet, every dollar invested in undernutrition yields an estimated USD 23 return.^{xviii}

Food loss and waste—representing about one-third of all food produced—account for USD 1 trillion in annual economic losses, 8 to 10 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, and the use of nearly 30 percent of the world's agricultural land.^{xix} Food systems provide substantial employment, yet agricultural households still make up as much as two-thirds of those in extreme poverty. They also contribute over one-third of global emissions, up to 80 percent of biodiversity loss, and 70 percent of freshwater use.^{xx, xxi}

PROGRESS AT NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL LEVEL

Since UNFSS+2, countries have maintained a sustained commitment to food systems transformation as reflected in their voluntary progress reporting. In 2023, 67 percent of countries reported on the integration of food systems priorities into national and sectoral plans - a trend that continued in 2025, with 62 percent reporting. In 2023, the reporting process was conducted through a voluntary progress questionnaire, with 101 countries submitting their reports. By contrast, in 2025, a more comprehensive, three-pronged reporting approach was adopted.^{xxii} This included standardized country questionnaires (80), in-depth interviews with National Convenors (55), and analysis of statements from regional preparatory meetings (87).^{xxiii} As a result of this enhanced process, 112 countries submitted reports, providing updated insights on progress made since 2023.

Two series of five regional preparatory meetings were held (Asia and the Pacific,^{xxiv} Europe and Central Asia,^{xxv} Latin America and the Caribbean,^{xxvi} Near East and North Africa,^{xxvii} and Africa^{xxviii}) with participation of National Convenors, government representatives and key stakeholders from 87 countries in 2024 and 107 countries in 2025.

While no radical shifts have been observed in global food systems transformation progress, the trends emerging from the reports at a national, regional and global level indicate a consistent movement towards more sustainable, equitable and resilient food systems. These trends are summarized below.

Pathways implementation

Food Systems Pathway Implementation Trends

Percentage of countries implementing various food systems initiatives

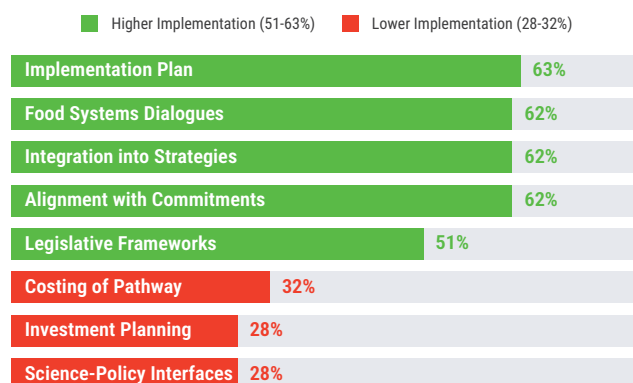


Figure 2a: Steps towards pathways implementation taken by countries (as a response to questionnaire)

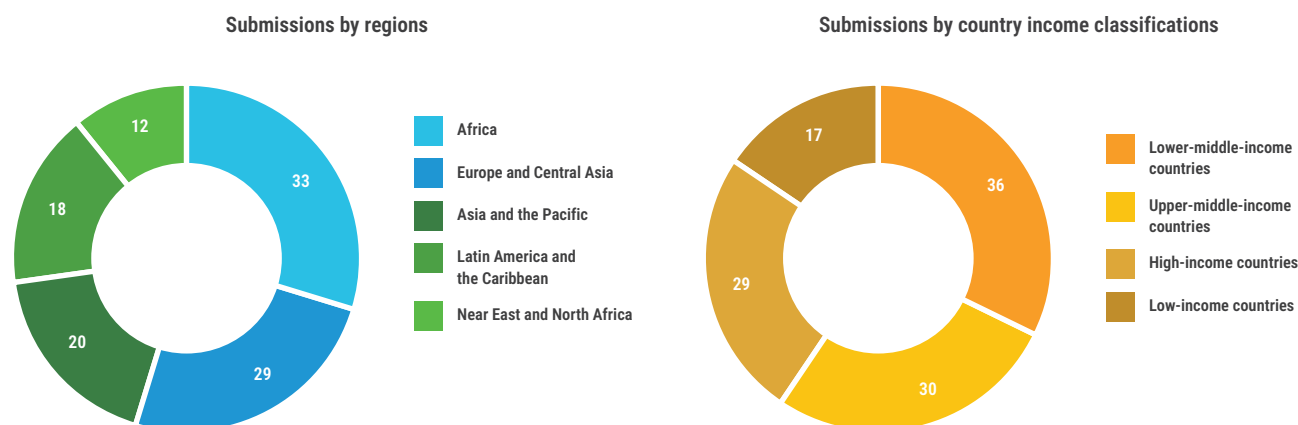


Figure 1: Voluntary progress reporting submissions by regions and by country income classification.

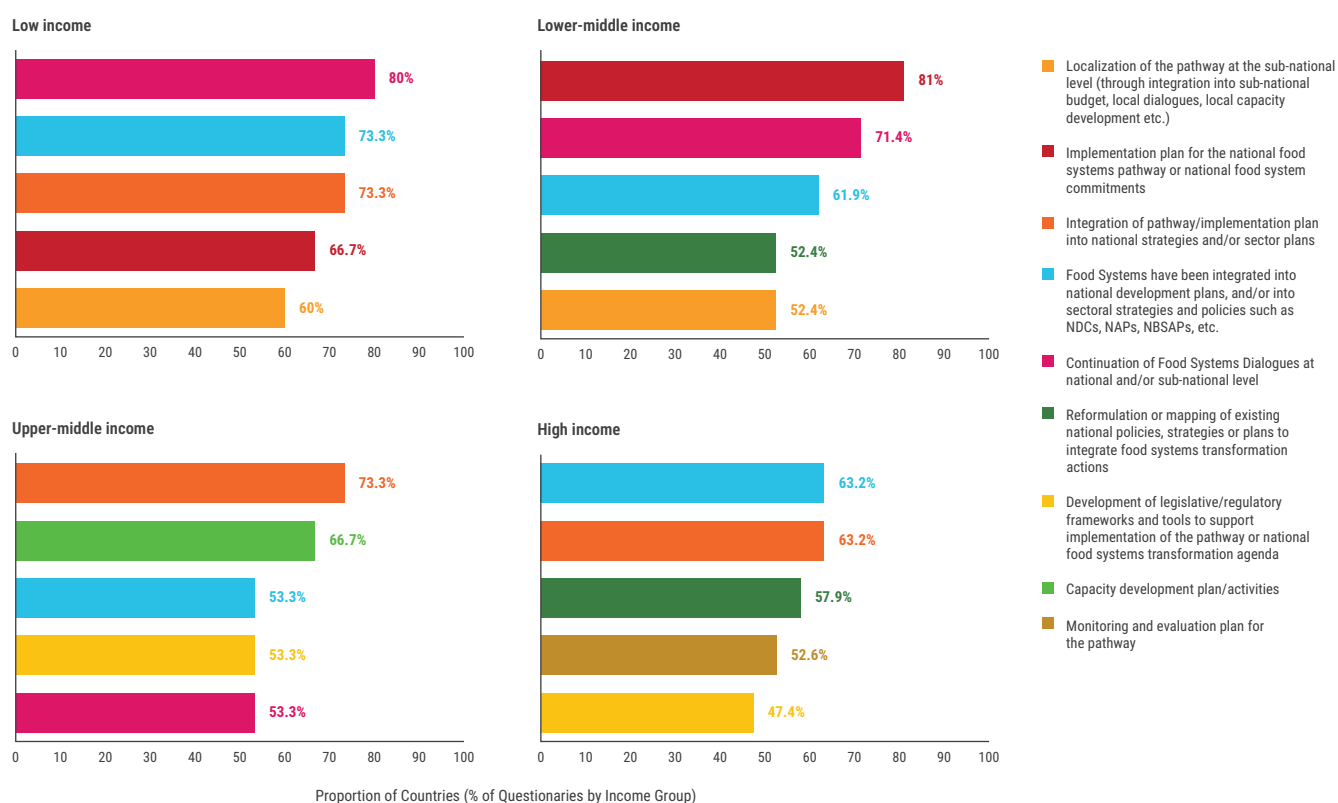


Figure 2b: Steps towards pathways implementation taken by countries, by income group (as a response to questionnaire)

Countries indicated progress in implementing their national food systems pathways across several areas, including but not limited to the development of an implementation plan, policy integration and legislative frameworks. A quarter indicated they have updated their national pathways.

The Ecosystem of Support (EoS) is coalescing in support of national food systems pathway implementation. For example the European Union (EU), FAO and CIRAD conducted food systems assessments to unravel 'systematic levers' for transformation towards more sustainable and resilient food systems.^{xxix} The UN Food Systems Coordination Hub (the Hub), through the Flexible Voluntary Contribution sub-programme supported seven countries – Indonesia, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, Tajikistan, Uruguay, Uzbekistan – in accelerating the implementation of their national food systems pathways.^{xxx} In addition, the Hub through the project *Accelerating Food Systems Transformation through a Scalable Success Model*, funded by the EU is supporting the operationalization of national food systems pathways for countries and

activities in Cameroon, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Kiribati, Madagascar, Mauritania, Sierra Leone and Zambia. The One Planet network has a working group to support the implementation of national pathways.^{xxxi} Various Coalitions of Actions, such as the HDP Nexus Coalition support pathway implementation in countries affected by food crises and conflict. The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) is supporting the implementation of national food pathways in countries where GAIN has a presence towards greater sustainability and improved nutrition.^{xxxii}

Governance mechanisms

Most countries reported progress in their food systems governance mechanisms. The Ministry of Agriculture remains prominently involved in these mechanisms, serving as chair or co-chair of governance bodies in half of the responses. In some countries across Asia and the Pacific and Africa, governance mechanisms are hosted within planning offices or even at the Vice President or Vice Prime Minister level. In Latin America

and the Caribbean, countries are building on existing interministerial groups and are increasingly involving parliamentary fronts and civil society to strengthen inclusive governance. Questionnaire data shows that while UN agencies and civil society are commonly included in governance structures, participation by the private sector, academia and farmers remains limited. During regional meetings, most countries confirmed the establishment of high-level multistakeholder governance mechanisms. For example, countries in Asia and the Pacific, including Indonesia, Timor-Leste, Pakistan, Nepal, Thailand and Sri Lanka, have formed interministerial food systems steering committees and secretariats, ensuring better policy integration across sectors such as agriculture, environment and health. In the Near East and North Africa, governance is emphasized as a participatory political process – guided by clear vision and values. In interviews, National Convenors emphasized the principle of *“we govern together”*, indicating the importance of inclusivity within the mechanisms. Similar trends were reported in Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific, and Africa. An emergence of decentralized governance was observed during regional meetings, with examples including Timor-Leste’s localization efforts in provinces, the Federated States of Micronesia’s focus on strengthening local food systems in the State of Pohnpei, and the Philippines’ engagement with local government units. Other examples of decentralization in Latin America and the Caribbean (Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Uruguay) and Africa (Burundi, Mali, Nigeria, Uganda) are also emerging.

In Europe and Central Asia, countries have strengthened food systems governance through multisectoral and multistakeholder platforms, often led by Ministries of Agriculture. For example, Belgium established inclusive bodies like the Food Coalition and the Walloon Sustainable Food College, while Georgia and Kazakhstan created interagency coordination councils that actively involve civil society in policy development and monitoring processes.

Policy integration

Policy integration in food systems transformation must advance through strategic alignment across health, nutrition, climate, agriculture and biodiversity agendas. Questionnaire responses confirm that most countries have incorporated food systems priorities into overarching national development plans, including policies on food security, healthy diets, and climate change adaptation and mitigation. Interview data from the Asia and Pacific region further highlight policy integration efforts in countries such as Cambodia, Bhutan, Indonesia, Japan and Viet Nam.

Regional meetings highlighted common priorities, including food and nutrition security, food safety, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the development of sectoral strategies. In Africa, alignment with nutrition goals and addressing malnutrition remain a priority. The Near East and North Africa have prioritized integrating food systems with comprehensive nutrition strategies and social protection measures to address severe water challenges. European and Central Asian countries are focusing on nutrition, sustainable food systems and policy integration across trade, health and the environment. Similarly, in Asia and the Pacific, countries are increasingly



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aligning food systems transformation with health, climate, and biodiversity agendas to enhance resilience. Latin America and the Caribbean is demonstrating strong policy integration by linking agriculture, nutrition, climate and social development within robust governance frameworks. Data from the questionnaire indicated that in 29 countries nutrition and food security activities complemented other programmes. In 13 countries they were connected with social protection, and in 22 countries with school feeding. The countries emphasized the importance of cross sector collaboration when supporting vulnerable populations.

^{xxxiii} For example, the EU Food Systems Pathways, driven by the Farm to Fork Strategy, aim to integrate fair, healthy and environmentally friendly food policies across food systems in Europe. This comprehensive initiative seeks to reduce the environmental impact of food production and consumption, ensure food security and public health, maintain affordability and fairness for all actors, and foster innovation. Projects like FOSTER and CULTIVATE highlight the importance of citizen engagement, co-creation, and local food sharing initiatives in transforming EU food systems.

The EoS continued to support countries with policy integration of their food system transformation priorities. For example, the Zero Hunger Coalition supported Benin in embedding the food systems pathways within the national legal and policy framework. The Coalition of Action on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All (HDSFS Coalition) has supported Pakistan in incorporating best practices in its healthy diet policy. Currently, the Coalition is developing national case studies about centering healthy diets and nutrition in their food systems transformation efforts based on lessons from Pakistan and Sierra Leone. Together with the Initiative on Climate Action and Nutrition (I-CAN), the HDSFS has mapped nutrition and climate policies in Zambia and Ghana, assessing entry points for integration. Additionally, coalitions helped countries align food system priorities with Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. For example, the Aquatic Blue Food Coalition has supported the development of guidelines for integrating aquatic blue foods into national climate strategies.



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Right to food and human-rights based approach

In 2023, countries reported integrating food systems issues into their legal frameworks, with food sovereignty emerging as a fundamental pillar of food systems strategies.^{xxxiv} By 2025, eleven countries in Latin America and the Caribbean will have explicitly enshrined the right to adequate food in their constitutions, thereby strengthening legal frameworks and aligning with international commitments.^{xxxv} Similar constitutional recognition of the right to food was reported in Mali and Kenya (Africa), Switzerland (Europe), Lebanon (Near East) and Nepal (Asia). Bolivia, Chile, the Dominican Republic and Nepal have advanced legislation and policies promoting the right to food and food sovereignty.

Legislative actions have also been adopted in some cases, such as in Lebanon, where advocacy for policy reforms like the Right to Food draft law and support for local production and dietary diversity initiatives are ongoing; in Nepal, where the Right to Food and Food Sovereignty Act and the Food Safety and Quality Act have been approved; in Japan, where the multilayered food system prompted the establishment of the MIDORI Act setting out basic principles for an environmentally harmonious and sustainable food systems, including a certification system to reduce environmental burdens from agriculture, forestry and fisheries; and in the Solomon Islands, interview findings indicate that the first of five food systems pathways is prioritizing the progressive realization of the right to food focusing on promoting nutrition.

Box 1: Progress related to school meals programmes

<p>School meal programmes are widely recognized as a key tool for promoting healthy diets and transforming food systems. They have shown clear benefits, including better school attendance, academic performance, lower dropout rates and improved child nutrition. Countries are increasingly tailoring these programmes to local needs.</p> <p>The School Meals Coalition has played a central role in elevating school meals on the global agenda, contributing to their inclusion in major declarations such as the G20 Leaders' Declaration and the COP28 UAE Declaration. As lead penholder, the Coalition developed the School Meals Policy endorsed by 44 member states and 33 partners. School meals were also recognized in a UN General Assembly resolution, backed by 158 Member States, which extended the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition to 2030 and placed school meals at the heart of global efforts to end hunger and malnutrition.</p>	
<p>Asia and the Pacific</p> <p>The Solomon Islands are implementing nutrition programmes funded by UNICEF and Japan. Nepal allocated USD 87 million for its 2023/24 school meals programme, reaching 3.3 million children.</p>	<p>Africa</p> <p>The Democratic Republic of Congo signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with WFP to nationalize school feeding. Botswana prioritizes home-grown programmes, and Ghana is integrating local farmers through its National Buffer Stock.</p>
<p>Europe</p> <p>Finland plays an active role as co-chair of the UNFSS School Meals Coalition, while the Netherlands (Kingdom of the) co-leads on biodiversity and school meals dialogues.</p>	<p>Near East and North Africa</p> <p>Egypt is financing school meals through innovative mechanisms like Egyptian-Italian and Egyptian-German debt swaps.</p>
<p>Latin America and the Caribbean</p> <p>Brazil, Mexico, Honduras and Uruguay emphasize nutrition education, local food sourcing, restricting unhealthy foods and supporting family farming. Belize and Guatemala are expanding school feeding with regional support to foster child development and healthy eating.</p>	
<p>The School Meals Coalition has established regional networks that foster dialogues in East Africa, West Africa, Latin America, Europe and Southeast Asia and established a Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition to build the global evidence base on school meals. The Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems Coalition has supported this progress and prepared a special report <i>"Towards an Intercultural Approach to School Meals in the Latin America and the Caribbean region"</i>.</p>	

Unlocking finance and increasing investments

Countries across all regions are increasingly prioritizing the mobilization of finance to accelerate sustainable food systems transformation – a trend consistently emphasized in the questionnaire, interviews and statements during the regional meetings. These efforts reflect a multifaceted approach that combines strategic investment planning,

inclusive multistakeholder engagement, innovative financing instruments and strengthened governance frameworks, all tailored to the unique regional and national contexts. In the questionnaire, as shown in Figure 3, countries detailed the measures they have taken to mobilize both public and private financial resources in support of their food systems transformation efforts.

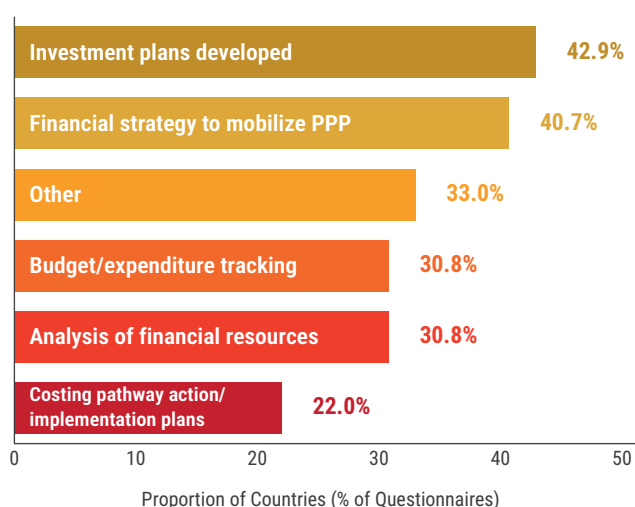


Figure 3. Actions taken by countries to mobilize finance for food systems transformation.

Countries are increasingly mobilizing diverse financial resources to support food systems transformation. Successful approaches include public-private partnerships (e.g., Australia's co-funded agricultural R&D), central government funding to local initiatives (Cambodia) and expanded public investment (Pakistan, Norway, Germany). Innovative financial instruments are being used, such as loan programmes and insurance schemes (Philippines), affordable loans for SMEs (Ukraine), and realigned national funds to attract private investment (Eswatini). Programmes like Brazil's PRONAF and the support drawn down by Costa Rica and Bolivia through the Joint SDG Fund also highlight targeted support for family farming and local value chains.

Since 2023, countries have been exploring diverse funding sources. By 2025, 36 countries reported accessing global climate financing through mechanisms like the Green Climate Fund, Global Environment Facility and Climate Investment Funds.

The 3FS framework (developed by IFAD and the World Bank) is being used by 10 countries to track financing flows, identify gaps, and manage risks—particularly valuable amid fiscal constraints. Countries are also leveraging strategic partnerships with organizations such as FAO, IFAD, WFP, GAIN, and the World Bank to attract

investments. National investment readiness programmes (e.g., Ethiopia and Slovenia), regulatory reforms (e.g., Georgia), and multistakeholder platforms (e.g., El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Uganda) are enhancing coordination and alignment with global finance. Finally, projects promoting agroecology, traditional agriculture, digital tools and gender-responsive approaches are gaining traction as viable investment opportunities.

Regional efforts to mobilize finance for food systems transformation are accelerating through innovative strategies and strengthened partnerships. In Africa, countries are establishing investment hubs and multistakeholder platforms, such as an inter-donor coordination group in the Democratic Republic of Congo and an investor matchmaking platform in Madagascar. In Asia and the Pacific, governments are blending public budgets with private sector engagement; in Samoa, a partnership with the Asian Development Bank and commercial banks supports sustainable agriculture through blended financing.

Europe and Central Asia are mobilizing public and private resources via increased investment in research and green transition, supported by EU instruments like the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Malta, for example, is allocating over EUR 5 million to sustainable agriculture through its CAP Strategic Plan and Organic Food Action Plan.

In the Near East and North Africa, countries are aligning public budgets with sustainability goals and using instruments such as debt swaps, climate risk insurance, and blended finance. Jordan's Agriculture Resilience Programme provides 1,200 interest-free loans to support smallholders and vulnerable groups.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, countries are leveraging regional alliances, development banks and blended finance to promote inclusive and climate-resilient food systems. Uruguay's issuance of its first sovereign green bond illustrates innovative financing for sustainable agriculture.

Despite ongoing global crises, external development finance to food systems in low- and middle-income countries has grown steadily, increasing by 12 percent from 2018 to 2023, even during the COVID-19 peak. International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have played a central role, disbursing USD 17.8 billion in 2023 alone exceeding the UNFSS+2 target of USD 15 billion. Seven major IFIs (World Bank, AsDB, AfDB, IDB, IFAD, IsDB, EBRD) together account for 35 percent of total external development finance to food systems.^{xxxvi} Nearly all (99.6 percent) of IFI financing is dedicated to long-term, structural investments, particularly agricultural development, value chains and food systems infrastructure.

FAO's Analytical Support Mechanism for Agrifood System Country Programming and Evidence (SCOPE) is enhancing technical capacity to support integrated UN country programming. By working through six regional multidisciplinary teams and in close collaboration with other UN entities, SCOPE strengthens the UN's ability to deliver tailored macroeconomic and microeconomic assessments, along with policy and data analysis. This contributes directly to accelerating food systems transformation and advancing the 2030 Agenda.

Launched during the UNFSS+2 in 2023, the Food Systems Window of the Joint SDG Fund mobilized USD 32 million and initiated two funding rounds across 26 countries. It also integrates food systems into other funding streams, such as energy, climate and digital transformation. Designed as a catalytic investment tool, the Fund supports national food systems pathways and leverages 5–9 times its investment by mobilizing resources from public budgets, international financial institutions, donors and the private sector.

Investment in research, data, technology and innovation

The integration of science, technology and innovation (STI) is widely recognized by countries as essential to food systems transformation globally. In their progress reports, countries indicated that national and regional research institutions play a pivotal role in fostering strong

collaborations among universities, innovation hubs and the private sector to accelerate technological development and adoption. For example, in Tajikistan, institutions like the Academy of Agricultural Sciences and Tajik Agrarian University are advancing food system sustainability through research on crop intensification, soil conservation, and livestock improvement. STI is evident in evidence-based policymaking, digital tool adoption, climate-smart practices, and inclusive stakeholder engagement, all of which are critical to addressing food security, nutrition and sustainability challenges. For instance, in Peru, STI informs policymaking and sustainability through the development of high-performing crop varieties by the National Agricultural Innovation Institute to address diverse environmental conditions. Digital agriculture technologies—such as artificial intelligence, remote sensing, Geographic Information System mapping, drones and satellite imagery—are extensively used to enhance crop monitoring, resource efficiency and early warning systems. For example, Kuwait is incorporating digital technologies such as remote sensing and data-driven systems to optimize water consumption in agriculture, supporting efficient resource management in arid conditions. Precision farming methods, including autonomous machinery, soil sensors and data-driven irrigation, are increasingly adopted to boost productivity while minimizing environmental impact. Additionally, digital platforms facilitate extension services, market access and knowledge exchange. For example, in the Central African Republic, farmer field schools and agribusiness platforms serve as digital and practical hubs for knowledge exchange, capacity building, and the promotion of sustainable farming techniques. In Tuvalu, partnerships with international actors are introducing smart agriculture techniques and digital advisory support to help farmers adopt more efficient, productive practices.

Science-policy-society interfaces (SPIs) are vital for grounding food systems policies in research, integrating diverse stakeholder views and enabling continuous improvement. They foster collaboration among scientists, policymakers and communities to align knowledge and goals. Examples include the Gambia's platform promoting climate-smart agriculture and empowering

youth and women in agribusiness, by providing land, financing, and productive resources; Chad's soon-to-be formalized multistakeholder task force delivers climate-smart agriculture and value-chain training to youth and women's cooperatives; and Cameroon's multiple SPIs focuses on eco-friendly farming and emissions reduction. Conversely, Nauru faces challenges in integrating science due to limited capacity. Regionally, the EU's Sustainable Agrifood Systems Intelligence initiative has conducted Rapid Food Systems Assessments in about 50 countries and promotes multistakeholder SPIs to advance agrifood transformation globally.

To reinforce national and regional efforts, members of the broader EoS—including coalitions—are contributing practical tools, platforms and financial innovations that strengthen the role of STIs in food systems. For example, the Coalition for Action 4 Soil Health, in collaboration with AICCRA, has supported the development of policy briefs for countries such as Mali, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Ethiopia, and Zambia, aimed at integrating soil organic carbon targets into their NDCs. In addition, a pilot initiative has

been launched in Kenya and Tanzania to assess national soil data ecosystems and promote stronger collaboration and data sharing among stakeholders. The Pastoralism as a Sustainable Food System Coalition has supported the creation of the Global Rangelands Data Platform, a resource mapping pastoralist community worldwide to enhance visibility and policy engagement around extensive livestock systems. The Climate Resilient Food Systems Alliance has published Country Diagnostics Reports for Lesotho, Pakistan, Panama, Belize, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, The Gambia, and Fiji, providing detailed analysis to guide climate-resilient food systems planning. Meanwhile, the True Value of Food Initiative has developed tools and guidance materials to help governments apply true cost accounting approaches—ensuring that environmental, social and health-related costs are reflected in food systems decision-making. These initiatives complement ongoing government-led and UN-supported actions, highlighting the importance of coordinated, evidence-driven and inclusive approaches to transforming food systems.

Inclusive and participatory process

	Implementation or operationalization of national food systems pathways	Data analytics: assessments, data management	M&E frameworks	Capacity building	Inclusive engagement for stakeholders	Coordination mechanism for FS at the national level	Resource mobilization
Academia	45%	32%	17%	28%	38%	18%	5%
Civil Society	47%	8%	12%	29%	46%	17%	8%
Coalition of Action	21%	5%	3%	11%	17%	11%	8%
Donor Representatives	32%	17%	16%	24%	25%	17%	22%
Financial Institutions	18%	11%	11%	12%	14%	16%	20%
Food producers, associations and networks	46%	12%	12%	24%	43%	18%	7%
Indigenous Peoples Groups	18%	4%	7%	8%	20%	7%	3%
Private Sector and/or business networks	43%	9%	12%	17%	39%	24%	13%
Regional bodies	38%	17%	16%	21%	22%	18%	11%
UN System	42%	33%	24%	42%	43%	32%	26%
Youth Networks	26%	8%	8%	18%	32%	12%	5%
Women Organizations	32%	8%	9%	22%	32%	17%	4%

Figure 4. Engagement and collaboration across stakeholders in 2025.

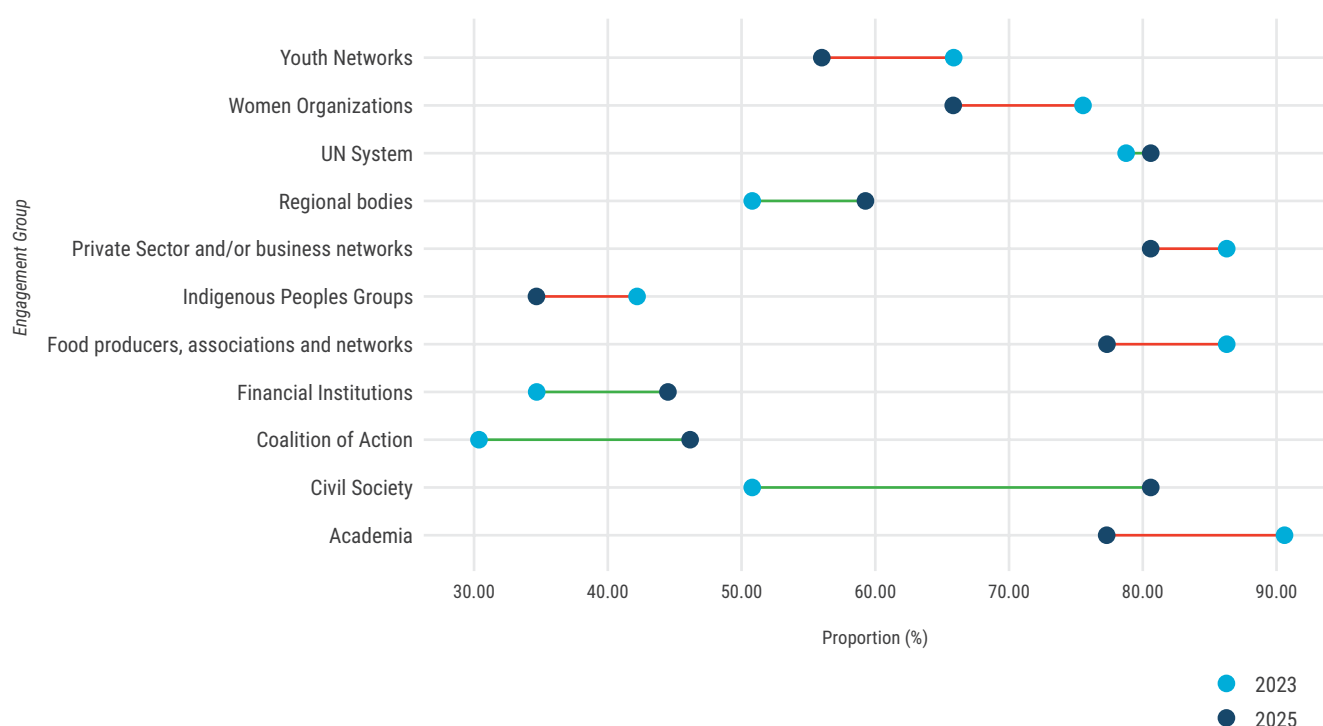


Figure 5: Country Engagement with Ecosystem of Support Entities: 2023 vs 2025 comparison

Countries report enhanced collaboration both within government and with external actors, including academia, civil society, Coalitions of Action, donor representatives, IFIs, food producers and networks, Indigenous Peoples, the private sector, regional bodies, the UN system, youth networks and women's organizations. This collaboration spans key areas such as the implementation and operationalization of national food systems pathways, data analytics and management, development of monitoring and evaluation frameworks, capacity building, inclusive stakeholder engagement, national-level coordination mechanisms and resource mobilization. The heatmap in Figure 4 presents questionnaire responses related to stakeholder engagement across the EoS, highlighting both strong collaboration (in green) and areas needing improvement (in red).

A closer examination of engagement with EoS entities between 2023 and 2025 reveals several notable trends in stakeholder participation patterns (see Figure 5 and Figure 6). The data displays a mixed landscape of progress, with some EoS groups showing significant improvements in engagement while others demonstrate concerning declines.

Since 2023, many countries have initiated or are developing policies, programmes and projects that focus specifically on women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and smallholder farmers, as part of their efforts to implement national food systems transformation pathway priorities. In 2025, countries reported the following collaborations with these groups, demonstrating a strong emphasis on empowerment and inclusion.



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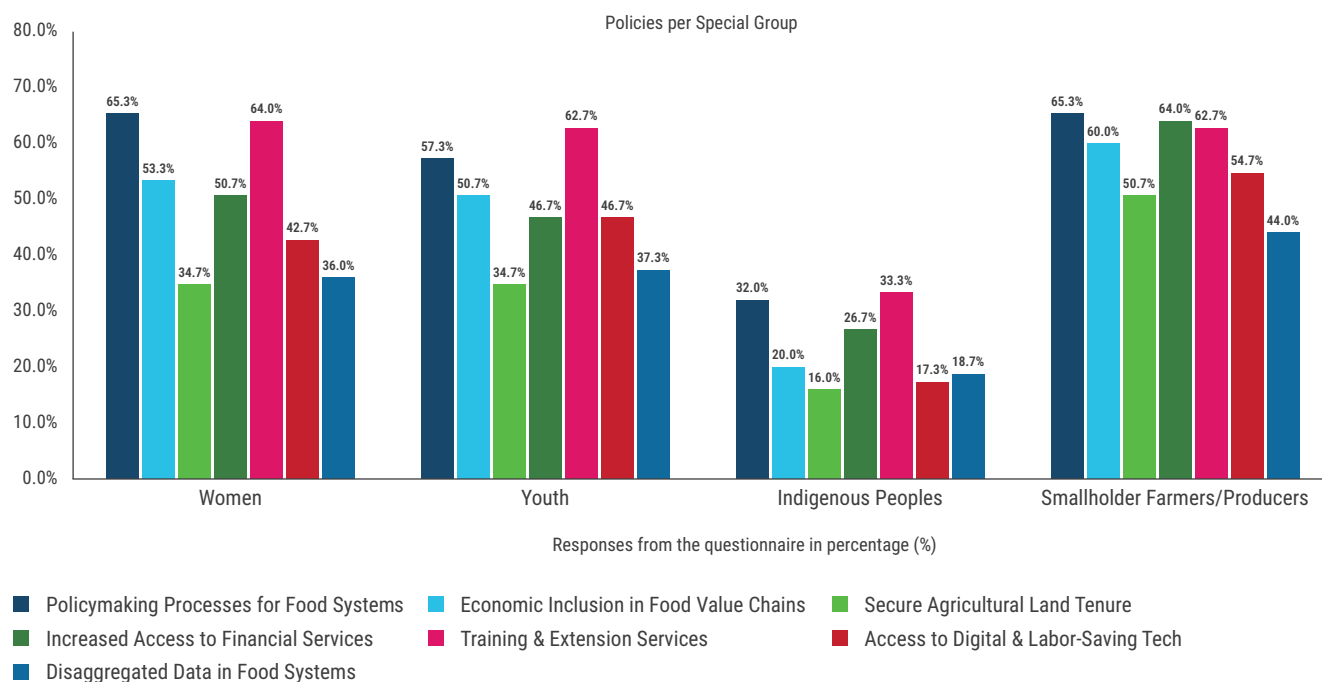


Figure 6: Engagement with women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and smallholder producers across policy themes

Figure 6 shows that countries are actively working to increase the participation of key groups in policymaking processes, enhance their economic inclusion through access to employment and value chains, and improve their access to land, financial services, training, extension services and technology. Questionnaire responses highlight the diverse engagement of special interest groups across regions. For example, Belgium's value chain restructuring in Wallonia; Qatar integrates youth into its agrifood programmes; Finland's efforts to improve livelihoods for the Sami Indigenous communities; Benin collecting disaggregated data to aid vulnerable groups; Burundi facilitating communal land certificate issuance; and Zimbabwe establishing Youth Innovation Hubs, the Agric4She programme for women, and land allocation quotas for youth and women.

In all regions, civil society plays a vital role in driving inclusive, rights-based food systems transformation by ensuring that the voices of those most affected by hunger, inequality and environmental degradation are reflected in policy and action.^{xxxvii} Their engagement has shaped national and regional agendas, promoted equitable access to resources, and strengthened participatory

governance. Amplifying civil society's voice is key to building democratic, resilient, inclusive and sustainable food systems. For instance, in Latin America and the Caribbean, civil society has long championed food sovereignty, agroecology and social justice.

Questionnaire responses show moderate but growing engagement with the private sector and financial actors across regions, highlighting strong potential for expanded partnerships. In Asia and the Pacific, governments are leveraging private expertise to modernize food systems and adopt sustainable technologies, as seen in Cambodia. Europe and Central Asia lead with co-investment schemes and innovation platforms, including EU blended finance and Norway's health-food industry partnerships. In Africa, the private sector supports value chains and infrastructure, with Benin showcasing investment and innovation across the value chain. Near East and North Africa countries are promoting enabling policies for private sector engagement, as demonstrated by Egypt's public-private partnerships in sustainable and digital agriculture. In Latin America and the Caribbean, countries like Costa Rica, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic foster responsible business practices and innovation through cooperative and public-private models.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The UNFSS+4 provides a crucial opportunity to renew global commitment and accelerate collective action on food systems transformation, building on progress since 2021. Looking ahead, food systems must evolve further as a model of inclusive, networked multilateralism, linking agriculture, climate, health, biodiversity, trade, jobs, social protection and finance. Key upcoming milestones—including the Second World Summit for Social Development, COP30, and the 2027 SDG Summit—offer platforms to embed food systems firmly within global agendas, promote cross-sectoral synergies, and reinforce accountability. These efforts will accelerate progress towards the SDGs, ensuring food systems become a central lever for resilient, inclusive, and sustainable development by 2030.

Governments are increasingly taking ownership of the food systems agenda, with national food systems pathways and related policy commitments being integrated into national development plans and legislations —reinforcing the right to food through legal and constitutional frameworks. At the same time, food systems governance mechanisms are being strengthened, marked by higher levels of political commitment and inclusive, multistakeholder participation. National Convenors continue to play a central role, leading inclusive dialogues that bring together diverse actors to drive coordinated and sustainable transformation. The Hub continues to connect National Convenors with UNRCs, UN agencies (UNCTs), and EoS at the country level.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and analysis from country progress reports, the following recommendations are proposed to guide action during the 2025–2027 biennium:

- National Convenors must be further empowered to implement updated, cost-effective national food systems pathways that are firmly anchored in a rights-based, people centered, and gender responsive approach. These pathways should be practical, inclusive, and capable of driving equitable outcomes.
- Inclusive governance must also be deepened, bringing together state and non-state actors. National and subnational actors, in particular, Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, smallholder producers, financial institutions, the private sector, scientists, and marginalized groups in decision-making processes. This inclusive approach will help build trust, enhance accountability, and ensure that solutions are grounded in local realities.
- Enhanced investments in scientific capacity, improved timeliness and availability of data, and increased adoption of context-specific technologies is essential. Combining modern science with traditional and indigenous knowledge can foster innovation and adaptability. To support this, knowledge-sharing platforms and multistakeholder partnerships should be expanded to bridge the gap between research, policy and practice.
- Finally, unlocking finance remains essential. Efforts should focus on developing de-risking instruments, enabling supportive policy environments, expanding access to climate finance, and strengthening long-term public-private partnerships. Stronger engagement from international financial institutions and commercial banks is vital to scaling investment, deploying innovative financing tools, and channeling capital toward inclusive, climate-resilient food systems. Redirecting harmful subsidies toward sustainable and equitable food systems must also be a priority, to ensure that public finance aligns with long-term development, climate, and nutrition goals. Addressing national debt burdens and increasing domestic funding for food systems will be crucial to

empowering small-scale producers and enterprises to lead sustainable transformation.

- The private sector plays a vital role to enable innovation and secure investments and finance, in line with the public good as captured in the vision set forward by the Food Systems Summit, the Sustainable Development Goals and the broader international instruments that guide our collective efforts.

Two years from now the international community will meet again under the 2027 SDG Summit. While the horizon of our actions should be the 2030 deadline for the achievement of SDGs, UNFSS+4 in Addis offers a unique opportunity to capitalise on what has been achieved, including the recent *Compromiso de Sevilla*, and take decisive action to deliver for all.

In this regard, together with our continued efforts to unlock finance at scale, addressing power imbalances to promote social justice and make the right to food a

reality for all becomes a priority. This means increasing our effectiveness in creating decent jobs and expanding social protection, especially for women for whom our solutions in this time of overlapping and successive crises have been less effective. Our vision for food systems transformation has a lot to offer to the discussions under the World Summit for Social Development to take place in Qatar in November this year.

As countries plan for COP 30 let us continue to ensure that policies and planning around climate action and food systems transformation go hand in hand, for increased effectiveness in closing funding needs and the adaptation gap.

Trade disruptions, artificial intelligence and new technologies will have an impact on our ability to deliver our objectives. We must recalibrate our efforts to account for the new scenarios that we will need to confront. Above all, we need peace. Our food systems can only thrive in the absence of conflict and war.

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