



BIENNIAL WORK PLAN 2024-2026

Coordinating ecosystem-wide support to enable
food systems transformation for SDG acceleration

May 2024



UNITED NATIONS
FOOD SYSTEMS
COORDINATION HUB



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United Nations Food Systems Coordination Hub

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Confronted by a myriad of interconnected challenges, global food systems are under significant strain. A combination of factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic, rising hunger and multiple forms of malnutrition, escalating inflation, a cost-of-living crisis, the triple planetary crises, economic hardships, natural disasters, and regional and national unrest and conflicts, collectively hinder advancements toward accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

The [2021 UN Food Systems Summit \(UNFSS\)](#) and the [1st UNFSS Stocktaking Moment \(UNFSS+2\)](#) have successively created, maintained, and enhanced momentum in recognizing food systems transformation as a key accelerator for the SDGs, acknowledging that these transformations offer solutions to the numerous challenges posed by the way food systems currently operate.

Thanks to the UNFSS+2, the sense of urgency and the increasing complexity and interconnectedness of issues surrounding food security, health and nutrition, climate change, resilience, and conflicts received the attention of an unparalleled number of global leaders over three days. Many took follow-up actions upon their return to capital, in line with the [Secretary General's Call to Action](#) issued at the end of the UNFSS+2.

After the UNFSS+2 and achieving one of the most significant milestones of its 2022-2023 Work Plan, it is timely for the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub (the Hub), to set new ambitious goals through a Biennial Work Plan 2024-2026. This Work Plan was developed based on the proceedings of the UNFSS+2, the UN Secretary General's Call for Action, the outcomes of the SDG Summit and COP28, the lens of the six transitions, and the feedback provided by the 155 Food Systems National Convenors, various stakeholders, and other strategic partners over the past biennium.

The mission of the Hub remains focused on serving countries through **coordinating and facilitating** the provision of systemic, demand-driven, customized support to reach sustainable food systems by 2030. In doing so, the emphasis remains on collaborating with agencies supporting the Hub at HQs, regional and country levels, the wider UN System, Resident Coordinators (RCs), UN Country Teams (UNCTs), and the national Ecosystem of Support (EoS) to ensure profound and sustainable impact.

Based on this background, the Biennial Work Plan 2024-2026 of the Hub is structured along an evolving version of the six key functions adopted for the 2022-2023 Work Plan recomposed into **five coordination clusters**. A “coordination clusters” approach facilitates a more interconnected articulation of the priority coordination initiatives over the next biennium, fostering a systems approach for implementing the Work Plan. These five clusters are:

1. Landing the Vision - Overarching Cluster
2. Policy and Governance Cluster
3. Science and Knowledge Cluster
4. Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration Cluster
5. Finance and Investment Cluster

The Work Plan covers the period April 2024 to March 2026. While activities will be strategically coordinated at both global and regional levels to move the global needle towards a tipping point where transformative change is widespread across countries, all efforts will ultimately go towards coordinating **support by all partners at the country level**.

The strategic work, decision-making, and engagement of the Hub continues to be steered by an Oversight Steering Group comprising the Principals of FAO, WFP, IFAD, UN-DCO and the UN “Food Systems Task Force” Leads (WHO and UNDP), with participation from the UN Deputy Secretary General.





INTRODUCTION

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CURRENT STATE OF FOOD SYSTEMS

Confronted by a myriad of interconnected challenges, global food systems are under significant strain. A combination of factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic, rising hunger and multiple forms of malnutrition, escalating inflation, a cost-of-living crisis, the triple planetary crises, economic hardships, natural disasters, and regional and national unrest and conflicts, collectively hinder advancements toward accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

The hidden social, economic, and environmental costs linked to current food systems (2023 SOFA report) reach a staggering USD12 trillion¹, undermining decades of collective developmental achievements.² According to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023 (2023 SOFI), global hunger rates remained relatively stable from 2021 to 2022 but persistently surpassed pre-COVID-19 levels. In 2022, around 9.2 percent of the world's population, or an estimated 691 to 783 million individuals, faced hunger, marking a rise of 122 million people from 2019, prior to the pandemic.³ FAO and WFP caution that acute food insecurity is likely to worsen in 18 hunger

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- 1 FAO 2023, The State of Food and Agriculture 2023 Revealing the true cost of food to transform agrifood systems. Available from <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en?details=cc7724en>
 - 2 Growing Better: Ten Critical Transitions to Transform Food and Land Use, available from <https://www.foodandlandusecoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/FOLU-GrowingBetter-GlobalReport.pdf>
 - 3 FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2022. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022. Repurposing food and agricultural policies to make healthy diets more affordable. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0639en>

hotspots – encompassing a total of 22 countries – during the outlook period from November 2023 to April 2024.⁴ Fragile contexts are central to the current global hunger and food security crisis⁵: 1.9 billion people living in fragile contexts account for 24 percent of the world’s population but 73 percent of the world’s extremely poor⁶, and two-thirds of these people are facing hunger today⁷. The SOFI Report also reveals that the number of individuals unable to afford a healthy diet continues to climb. Over 3.1 billion people worldwide – or 42 percent – could not afford a healthy diet in 2021, reflecting an increase of 134 million people compared to 2019, before the pandemic. Meanwhile, the developmental, economic, social, and health impacts of the global malnutrition burden persist for individuals and countries. In 2022, 2.5 billion adults were overweight, including 890 million who were living with obesity, while 390 million were underweight⁸. Although food systems account for a significant proportion of global employment, agricultural households constitute up to two-thirds of people living in extreme poverty worldwide.⁹ Meanwhile, food systems continue to generate soil, water, and air pollution, contributing to more than one-third of greenhouse gas emissions, as much as 80 percent of biodiversity loss, and up to 70 percent of freshwater use.¹⁰

These ongoing interlinked crises fuel one another, intensifying the challenges faced in addressing poverty, food security, better health and nutrition outcomes, decent livelihoods, resilience, and sustainable resource use. Among those most affected are vulnerable populations, particularly households led by smallholder farmers and agricultural laborers. While there is a need for greater social protection of the most vulnerable, broadening support to progress on the transformative commitment to creating an enabling and profitable business environment for small farms and small-scale agri-food businesses is key. A policy environment conducive to decent livelihoods and working conditions for agri-food workers remains a critical priority of the food systems transformation agenda.

4 WFP and FAO. 2023. Hunger Hotspots. FAO–WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity: November 2023 to April 2024 Outlook. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cc8419en>

5 *States of Fragility 2022*, OECD. There are a total of 60 states and territories that are classified as fragile contexts, of which 15 are classified as extremely fragile and 45 are classified as fragile.

6 *States of Fragility 2022*, OECD.

7 Calculations based on The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (*SOFI Report* - 2023; and the *States of Fragility 2022*, OECD.

8 <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/malnutrition>

9 World Bank. 2018. Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2018: Piecing Together the Poverty Puzzle. Washington, DC: World Bank. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO

10 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, 2022. The Global Land Outlook, second edition. UNCCD, Bonn, available at https://www.unccd.int/sites/default/files/2022-04/UNCCD_GLO2_low-res_2.pdf



UNFSS+2 AND GLOBAL PROGRESS SINCE THE 2021 FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT

Since the 2021 Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), 127 countries have adopted national pathways (from 111 in 2021 at the time of the Summit), and 155 Food Systems National Convenors have been appointed.¹¹ The preparations towards UNFSS+2 witnessed significant global participation and engagement, with 108 countries submitting voluntary country progress reports, which provided insights into the efforts being made to transform food systems worldwide¹² and contributed toward a collective understanding of what transformational changes are needed. In the coming years and until 2030, this voluntary reporting will serve as an important mechanism for tracking progress, identifying gaps, and inspiring collective action that will be built into each successive biennial Stocktaking Moment.

11 <https://www.unfoodsystemshub.org/member-state-dialogue/dialogues-and-pathways/en>

12 Reference to the results of the voluntary progress reports analysis is provided in the narrative under each cluster

In 2023, the [UNFSS+2](#) gathered more than 3300 in-person participants, including 21 Heads of States/Governments, 126 Minister level delegates (94 Ministers and 32 Deputies), close to 100 Food Systems National Convenors, 1900 government officials, more than 500 non-state actors and close to 800 representatives from the UN and other international organizations. In convening such a large and diverse audience, the UNFSS+2 showcased global commitment to food systems transformation and the need for collaborative solutions. Thanks to the UNFSS+2, the sense of urgency and the increasing complexity and interconnectedness of issues surrounding food security, health and nutrition, climate change, resilience and conflicts received the attention of an unparalleled number of global leaders over three days, with follow-up actions initiated by participating Heads of State and Governments and decision-makers upon their return to capital, in line with the Secretary General's Call to Action issued at the end of the UNFSS+2.

The SG [Call to Action](#) exhorts all actors to incorporate food systems transformation into national policies, establishing multi-sector and multi-stakeholder food systems governance, investing in science, research, data, innovation, and technology, deepening inclusive design and implementation, promoting increased engagement of businesses and accountability and ensuring access to finance. In addition, the SG Call to Action put the spotlight on some key “thematic” priorities (climate alignment, resilience, and nutrition) as well as some critical enablers (capacity-building, collaboration, ecosystem optimization and UN coordination).



THE NEXT BIENNIUM: FOCUSING ON AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Momentum from the UNFSS+2 translated into strong mainstreaming of the food systems transformation agenda at the 78th General Assembly (GA78). In continuation with the 2019 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), the 2023 GSDR recognized sustainable food systems and healthy nutrition as one of the six entry points for accelerated transformation. Five 'levers'—governance, economy and finance, science and technology, individual and collective action, and capacity-building—are proposed to bring about progress in this entry point. These levers align closely with the Means of Implementation highlighted in the Secretary-General's Chair Summary and Statement of Action at the end of the 2021 UNFSS: financing, data, science and innovation, governance, and trade."

Food systems also featured prominently in the "Call to action – turning our world towards 2030" of the Political Declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) convened under the auspices of GA78¹³. Similarly, the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage¹⁴ recognized resilient and diverse nutrition-sensitive food systems as important elements to address malnutrition in all its forms. Other important references to the 2021 UNFSS and 2023 UNFSS+2 can also be found in recently adopted resolutions¹⁵, including the "Resolution on agriculture development, food security and nutrition" ([A/C.2/78/L.65](#)). In this resolution, Member States highlight the biannual UNFSS stocktaking as a crucial platform for collective action and look forward to the UNFSS+4 in 2025.

At COP28, the Presidency centered food systems transformation on the Global Climate Agenda, inspiring 159 world leaders to endorse a ground-breaking declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems, and Climate Action.

¹³ The Declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development was adopted 18 September during the Sustainable Development Goals Summit

¹⁴ Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 5 October 2023

¹⁵ The UNFSS process also garnered recognition within the resolution on agricultural technology for sustainable development ([A/C.2/78/L.24/Rev.1](#)) as a significant forum facilitating food systems transformation through the advancement of agricultural technologies, innovations, and digitalization. The resolution on implementation of the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027) ([A/C.2/78/L.60](#)) highlights how the UNFSS promotes policymaking that supports an inclusive, sustainable and resilient recovery to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the resolution on natural plant fibres and sustainable development ([A/C.2/78/L.32/Rev.1](#)) expresses appreciation for the UNFSS+2 within the context of advocating for more sustainable production, consumption, and utilization of natural plant fibers.

These key milestones since the UNFSS+2 have underlined that to accelerate progress in transforming food systems, as well as in achieving the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, a more integrated approach is necessary – one that addresses multiple Goals simultaneously and makes the various agendas converge and reinforce their respective impact at the country level.

Working on the remaining five SDG transitions as an integrated framework for action and addressing the profound interconnections between them creates a powerful opportunity to accelerate progress in transforming food systems across all SDGs. For example, **the triple planetary crisis** negatively impacts agriculture, threatening food security and health, while agriculture is a major contributor to climate change. **Energy transition** and food systems transformation are intricately linked, with traditional agriculture heavily reliant on fossil fuels, making transitioning to renewable sources crucial for sustainability. Ensuring that all workers in food systems, including smallholder farmers, have access to **decent jobs and social protection** mechanisms can significantly reduce **poverty** and generate sustainable livelihoods. Food systems transformation can also help address the complex inequalities **women and youth face**. Engaging with stakeholders, such as **farmers and food producers**, women, youth, **Indigenous Peoples**, the private sector, and consumers, is at the forefront of implementing effective on-the-ground solutions that transform potential into concrete action.

Likewise, **digital transformation** can play a significant role in supporting data-driven food systems transformation. Using **science** to identify **technology** and **infrastructure** as solutions is also crucial for a practical and evidence-based approach. Finally, while fiscal constraints significantly challenge the implementation of comprehensive measures by governments, successful approaches to unlock concessional public and transformative private capital must urgently be brought to scale to support countries most in need of **finance** to shift to high-performing food systems. Ultimately, food systems represent the arrowhead of these transformative efforts and, coupled with high-impact initiatives within the energy and digitalization transitions, can help countries leapfrog and accelerate change across the board.



PART A THE WORK PLAN

Vision

The Hub's vision is to convene, stimulate and support action for food systems transformations toward accelerating the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

Mission

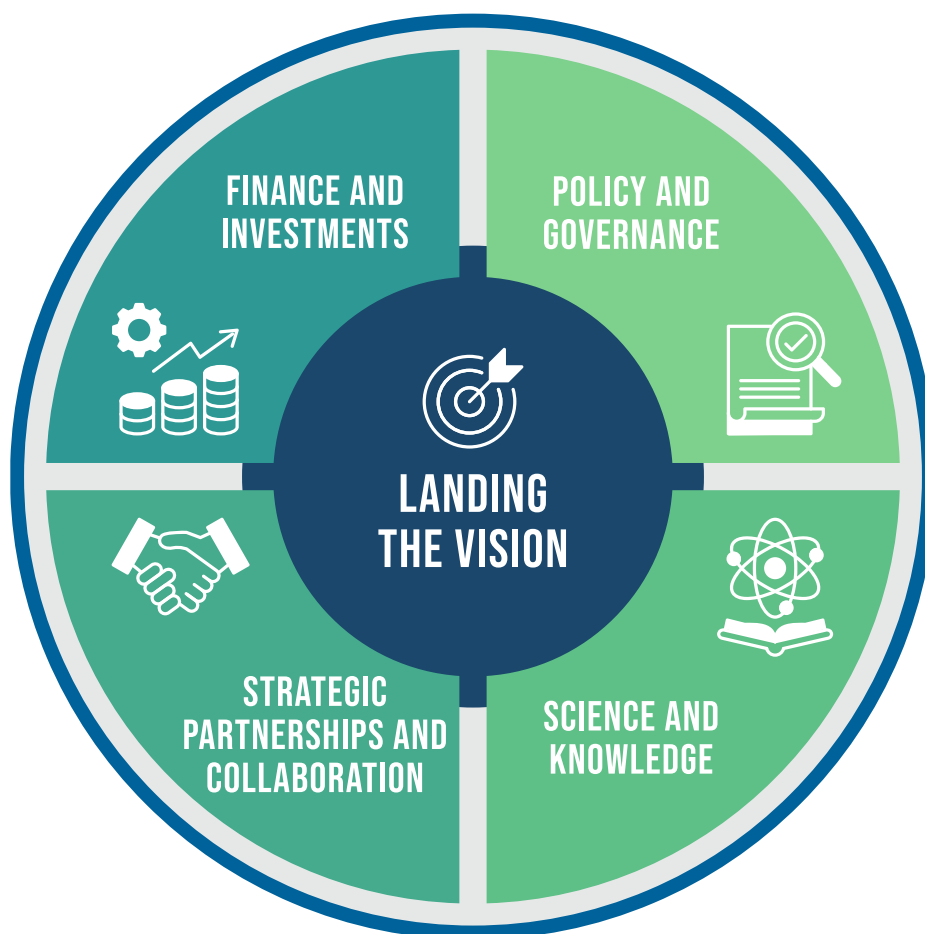
The Hub's mission is to serve countries by **coordinating and facilitating** the provision of systemic, demand-driven, customized support in translating their commitments into effective actions to reach sustainable food systems by 2030. To achieve this, in line with the UN Secretary General's UNFSS+2 Call to Action, the Hub acts as a catalyst and integrator, leveraging and harnessing the wider UN and Ecosystem of Support's capacities, including coalitions, to galvanize food systems expertise as well as coordinate the provision of technical and financial assistance in support of countries' action and the implementation of their national pathways. To continue promoting an inclusive and participatory approach, the Hub takes on an essential convening role to bring together and engage relevant constituencies and stakeholder groups at regional and global levels. Finally, the Hub facilitates the creation of synergetic linkages with other relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental processes to advance the food systems transformation agenda.

Rationale and strategic intent

After the UNFSS+2 and achieving one of the most significant milestones of the 2022-2023 Work Plan of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub (the Hub), which demonstrated its relevance and its ability to fulfil its mandate, it is timely to set new ambitious goals, through a Biennial Work Plan 2024-2026. This Work Plan was developed based on the proceedings of the UNFSS+2, the UN Secretary General's Call for Action, the outcomes of the SDG Summit and COP28, the lens of the six transitions, and the feedback that has been provided by the 155 Food Systems National Convenors, numerous stakeholders, and other strategic partners over the past biennium.

Based on this background, the Biennial Work Plan 2024-2026 of the Hub is structured along an evolved version of the six key functions adopted for the 2022-2023 Work Plan, recomposed into **five coordination clusters**. A “coordination clusters” approach will facilitate a more interconnected articulation of the priority coordination initiatives over the next biennium, fostering a systems approach for implementing the Work Plan.

Figure 1: Five Coordination Clusters of Work



While activities will be strategically coordinated at both global and regional levels to move the global needle toward a tipping point where transformative change becomes widespread across countries, all efforts will ultimately go toward **coordinating support at the country level**. The emphasis will remain on concretely facilitating the coordination of support to countries in collaboration with agencies contributing to the Hub at HQs, regional and country-level offices, the wider UN System, Resident Coordinators (RCs), UN Country Teams (UNCTs), and the national Ecosystem of Support (EoS) to ensure profound and sustainable impact building on the Means of Implementation, the **four engine rooms actions** (policy and regulatory frameworks, participation and public-private partnerships, deal room, and capacity building) and other critical enablers such as infrastructure. A robust and holistic monitoring architecture to track food system transformation at the global and national level, as well as a gender, youth, diversity, and human-rights responsive approach, will be central in the facilitation role of the Hub.

Furthermore, the new Work Plan supports consolidating the coordination function of the Hub, focusing on enhancing its value-addition *vis-à-vis* all stakeholders, partners, and actors. It will also aid in resource optimization by informing the Hub's financial and human resources needs and ensuring those are directed toward coordination activities with the most significant impact. It will constitute a clear and readable blueprint of the Hub's priorities for the next biennium, which should facilitate the mobilization of additional resources for the Work Plan implementation and continued effective assistance to countries.



COORDINATION CLUSTERS

1. Landing the vision - overarching cluster

In two years, the UNFSS+4 will bring together leaders, food systems actors, and stakeholders to showcase the most recent progress in accelerated and transformative action within food systems. To maintain the level of engagement achieved during UNFSS+2, preparations will commence in early 2024 at the global, regional, and national levels. Continuous engagement with countries will be facilitated through the continuation of the now well-established Food Systems Solutions Dialogues and Regional Touchpoints, as well as through face-to-face regional meetings organized in collaboration with the UN agencies that contribute to the Hub, Regional Commissions, Opportunity/ Issue-Based Coalitions, and key regional bodies. The meetings will allow for a regional review of progress and capacity building in thematic areas to facilitate regional knowledge sharing among experts and stakeholders and foster regional collaboration and communities.

Building on the success of the first round of voluntary reporting, where the Hub received 108 voluntary progress reports, the baseline established in 2023 will be used to create a refined system, allowing for a more sophisticated tracking of progress leading up to UNFSS+4 in 2025. The 2023 Voluntary reporting process highlighted that nearly two-thirds of countries are upgrading their information systems by refining the relevance and quality of available data and strengthening systems for data collection, analysis, and presentation. However, many mention specific technical assistance needs to progress in that area. The Hub will collaborate with the Food Systems Countdown Initiative and FAO, to expand support to National Convenors in monitoring the Pathways. The partnership will also feed into the 2025 Secretary General report ahead of UNFSS+4.



In addition, recognizing the many ongoing international initiatives that support the transition of food and other sustainable development transitions in line with the SDGs and the Paris Agreement, the Secretary General called for “*greater coherence and collaboration, and reducing duplication and burdens on country-level engagement*”. Under this overarching cluster, the Hub will continue to build synergistic partnerships with other intergovernmental processes within the wider UN system and non-governmental processes of strategic importance. In doing so, the overarching cluster will pursue initiatives to foster the effective localization of the outcomes of these engagements at the country level. One such example will be the Convergence Initiative born out of the strategic partnership with the COP28 Presidency and developed in response to the Secretary General’s Call to Action to “*align the implementation of national food systems transformation pathways with the continuous updates of National Determined Contributions (NDCs) and national adaptation plans (NAPs) for climate action*”. Through this Initiative, the Hub, in partnership with 4SD, will support and accompany National Convenors and governments as they advance ambitious food systems transformation in ways that support climate action and vice versa. This aligns with the Global Roadmap of achieving SDG2 without breaching the 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold launched at COP28¹⁶.

Another example is the “Nutrition-related outcomes of the United Nations Food Systems Summit country pathways” conducted by WHO, FAO and the Hub after the UNFSS+2,¹⁷ which found that most National Pathways included nutrition policy actions related to nutrition-sensitive agriculture, awareness-raising, food safety, and healthy public procurement. However, actions to address the affordability, accessibility, and availability of foods high in unhealthy fats, sugars, and salt (HFSS) were less common. The Hub will partner with WHO, FAO, WFP, UN Nutrition, SUN Movement, and relevant coalitions to coordinate support to National Convenors in adequately addressing health, nutrition, and all context-relevant forms of malnutrition in the National Pathways design and implementation.

In line with its terms of reference, the hub will also leverage the collaboration with IFAD and the World Bank to foster connections between the financing agenda for food systems transformation and the ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum intergovernmental process to advance the integration of food systems in the financing agenda for the SDGs.

Lastly, directly in response to the Secretary General’s Call to Action that the Hub “*increases the capacity of National Food Systems Convenors to shepherd inclusive national processes and contribute to a Convenors’ network*”, the Hub will coordinate with partners in the design of innovative capacity-building initiatives aimed at empowering them to effectively lead systems change within their respective countries. These initiatives aim to equip National Convenors with essential skills, concepts, and meaningful connections to lead systems change in the complex landscape of food systems transformation.

16 <https://www.fao.org/interactive/sdg2-roadmap/en/>

17 UN-Nutrition. 2022. Nutrition-related outcomes of the United Nations Food Systems Summit country pathways

Result matrix



Outcome

Sustain global momentum on food systems transformation

Coordination areas

- Follow up on the UNFSS+2 and empower the Food Systems National Convenors network to implement the SG Call to Action.
- Coordinate the organization of the UNFSS+4.
- Monitor global progress ahead of the next stocktaking moment and support enhanced country-level monitoring capacities and systems.
- Engagement and alignment with global processes.

Activities/ Deliverables

- Regional meetings and regional touchpoints
- Food Systems Solutions Dialogues
- Briefings and engagement with Member States
- Capacity-building initiatives for National Convenors
- 2nd Stocktaking Moment (UNFSS+4)
- 2025 Voluntary reporting exercise and Secretary General Report on food systems transformation for UNFSS+4
- Secretary General Reports to the HLPF for 2024 and 2025
- Strategic partnership with the Food Systems Countdown Initiative
- Coordination of the Convergence Initiative
- Engagement with COP29 and COP30 Presidencies for the Convergence Initiative
- Engagement in the Nutrition for Growth Summit and nutrition and national pathways initiatives in support of the UN Nutrition Group
- Engagement with the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development
- Engagement with the CFS

2. Policy and governance cluster

Countries are in various phases of operationalizing their food system transformation agendas and National Pathway implementation. While some countries are well advanced, others still need to establish comprehensive and integrated food system policies, strategies, and plans. This includes creating governance structures that ensure leadership, cross-sector integration, and effective budgeting.

Analysis of the Voluntary Progress Reports reveal that:

- two-thirds of the countries have integrated the food systems transformation vision of their national pathway into national strategies and/or sectoral plans.
- one-quarter report that food systems issues are reflected in national laws and regulations
- six out of ten countries have started to develop implementation plans for their national pathways.
- around two-thirds report the setup, or strengthening, of platforms for governing national food systems. 70 percent have adapted governance processes to take into account the food systems approach.
- one-third report that food systems work is being decentralized and advanced in sub-national jurisdictions and/or administrations, usually with dedicated coordination mechanisms.
- nearly 50 percent are continuing food systems dialogues linked to implementation at national and sub-national levels to refine their Pathways.

To advance food system transformation at the country level, the Hub will, within this policy and governance cluster, coordinate support to governments in food system policy coherence and integration of National Pathways while promoting effective governance platforms for both government partners and development partners. The Hub will continue to connect and collaborate with National Convenors, Resident Coordinators (RC), UN Country Teams (UNCT), and the national Ecosystem of Support (EoS) to assist countries in developing, updating, operationalizing, integrating, implementing and localizing their national pathways. The Hub will leverage its extensive network and the knowledge and expertise of UN agencies, coalitions and other actors in the EoS to - in close collaboration with the Resident Coordinator's Offices - assist in convening and coordinating partners, bringing value to governments and intensify the implementation of national pathways and leveraging catalytical financing for this purpose.

The results and learning from the Hub's Startup Fund and key partners have facilitated a more granular understanding of countries' needs and required support and will be used to enhance the Hub's advisory and coordination role for food system transformation. Identifying and disseminating models and good practices for pathway implementation, country support, engagement of the national EoS and advancement of the food system agenda will solidify the Hub's role as coordinator on effective ways to implement the Secretary General's Call to Action for Accelerated Food System Transformation. A dashboard tracking country-level progress, a Food Systems Assistance Gateway and good practices for food system transformation will reinforce this role.

This work also includes facilitating the integration of Pathway priorities into national development plans and strategies and enhancing policy coherence for sustainable development. Pathways will be positioned to reinforce other national food system planning instruments and coordinated support delivered for integrating agendas related to food systems transformation, food security, nutrition, access to healthy diets, resilience, the humanitarian peace development nexus, water, decent work, social protection, and the convergence of the food and climate agendas. Work under this stream will assist countries in establishing or strengthening food systems governance platforms for cross-sector collaboration and multi-stakeholder engagement.

Two-thirds of the people facing hunger today live in countries affected by fragility, and close to 90 percent of the population facing acute food insecurity live in countries affected by fragility. In response, the Hub will facilitate coordination with its partners, including the Global Network Against Food Crises, the prioritization and implementation of a broad-based food systems approach, and investments and support to accelerate food system transformation in countries affected by fragility.



Result matrix



Outcome

Customized support for the effective operationalization and implementation of the national pathways

Coordination areas

- Coordinate assistance to governments in implementing Pathways through inclusive and effective multi-sectorial governance platforms, including national dialogues.
- Build country intel, track food system transformation progress, and connect national demand to global offer.
- Share models and good practices for pathway operationalization, national EoS engagement with governments, and country support.
- Facilitate prioritization of food system transformation in countries affected by fragility.

Activities/ Deliverables

- Operationalized Pathways
- National dialogues carried out and governance platforms established
- Country transformation Pathways Dashboard built
- Food Systems Assistance Gateway built by key partners
- Good Practice database launched and continuously updated by key partners
- Dissemination of models and good practices validated and implemented by key partners
- Pathways are linked to the HDP nexus

3. Science and knowledge cluster

Ahead of the UNFSS+2, most governments reported that there is close engagement with scientific groups both for developing information systems and for the development of the capabilities of personnel. Over two-thirds of national reports indicate that actions have been taken to facilitate access to knowledge, science, evidence, and technology. The Secretary General's Call to action urged countries and all involved in food systems transformation to "*invest in research, data, innovation and technology capacities including stronger connections to science, experience and expertise for the implementation of the national pathways*".

The proposed science-policy activities aim to engage diverse stakeholders, foster connections, build trust, and identify shared commonalities to scale action for food systems transformation. This includes engaging senior scientific experts and coordinating dialogues with entities like the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE-FSN), UN agencies, Universities, and CGIAR.

A central purpose of the science and knowledge cluster is to support the operationalization and work of the Hub's Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC). This includes secretariat function as well as support for the substantive activities of the SAC. In direct coordination with the SAC, the Hub will organize science-policy roundtables and webinars. These initiatives offer two key advantages: firstly, they align purpose and directionality by supporting the Hub's convening power to stimulate countries to implement evidence-based national policies for food systems transformation. Secondly, promoting co-creation and diverse participation of multiple stakeholders, emphasizing the importance of genuine interfaces between the public, private sectors, and civil society to mobilize collective intelligence. These deliverables underscore the commitment to a collective response to global food system challenges through inclusive, evidence-based, and transformative initiatives.



The activities will also involve identifying and developing innovative approaches at the local, regional, and global levels from an interdisciplinary and system-thinking perspective on food systems transformations, partnering with donors and academia. In-depth research and exchanges with selected countries contribute valuable lessons for Convenors and Hub partners. In addition, the Hub focuses on coordinating capacity-building tasks to support countries, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), in scaling the next generation of food systems leaders.

Result matrix



Outcome

Scale evidence-based action for food systems transformation

Coordination areas

- Support the work of the Hub's Science Advisory Committee (SAC).
- Promote public learning on key principles and components of food systems transformation.
- Facilitate science-policy interface to promote system thinking, co-create innovative communities of practice and enable knowledge exchange.
- Empower next-generation leaders (including Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth) to drive positive change in food systems.

Activities/ Deliverables

- Provide secretarial support to the SAC
- Support the drafting of SAC's outputs
- Support the participation of SAC in the Montpellier Process and other relevant initiatives
- Public knowledge sharing webinars with UN Agencies quarterly
- Four science-policy roundtables with the SAC
- Mobilize national scientific communities in support of pathways implementation
- Six regional workshops
- Coordinate pilot establishment of local science support systems in five countries (in collaboration with the SAC)

4. Strategic partnerships and collaboration cluster

Data analysis from the national voluntary progress reports indicates that stakeholder engagement most often prioritizes those involved in food production, processing, trade, distribution, and retail. Women's organizations are often engaged; however, youth and Indigenous Peoples networks are not systematically involved. The Secretary General's Call to Action identifies "*deepening joined-up participatory design and implementation of the national pathways inclusive of women, young people and Indigenous Peoples at the local level*" as a priority. This should be done through knowledge sharing, cross-sector programming, multi-stakeholder partnering, context, and place-based actions, as well as stronger and more diverse production and mutual accountability.

Recognizing that stakeholder collaboration and engagement serves to catalyze bottom-up transformation, amplifying the impact of initiatives, driving systemic change, and aligning diverse interests, this cluster will deepen the coordination of engagement with stakeholders, including through the SENA group, and strive to support National Convenors to engage stakeholders in the implementation of the National Pathways effectively.

Another focus of this strategic partnerships and collaboration cluster, as mandated by the Secretary General's Call to Action, lies in optimizing the global and national EoS, mapping food systems actors at the national level, and supporting National Convenors in their complex convening role. To do so, the Hub will continue to pilot a tool to create dynamic food systems maps that visualize the complex sub-ecosystems and interdependencies in a national (and local) food system. By offering an accurate picture of the interconnected and complex web of actors at the country level, these maps can empower the National Convenors to strengthen synergy and collaboration by bringing together key stakeholders and partners to collectively identify ways to close implementation gaps, scale up promising initiatives, and accelerate progress. The Hub will continue to map key global partners to convene them more effectively and create a structured and facilitated space for dialogue, cooperation, and collective action within the intricate dynamics of the existing vast EoS.

In doing so, special attention will be given to enhancing coalitions' engagement and concrete, effective assistance to National Convenors to support Pathway implementation, especially in areas such as support to policy formulation, advocacy, peer-to-peer learning, analytics, modelling, development of food systems strategies and investment plans, capacity-building, and monitoring and evaluation (in synergy with the overarching cluster). The Hub will play a convening role in supporting coalitions to optimize learning, synergies, cross-system collaboration, and a systems thinking approach, as well as make their offer more visible to National Convenors.



Furthermore, the Secretary General's Call to Action encouraged promoting *"increased engagement of businesses, including through public-private partnerships, to shape the sustainability of food systems and establish and strengthen accountability mechanisms, recognizing their centrality for food systems"*. Accordingly, the Hub will intensify its collaboration with key partners (the Global Compact, the Food Foundation, the World Benchmarking Alliance, Access to Nutrition Initiative - ATNI, and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition - GAIN) to develop frameworks and tools to foster greater private sector accountability in connection with the work under cluster 5 on private sector financing capable of supporting countries move the needle on financing food systems transformation.

Finally, this area of work will continue the strategic engagement with the Joint SDG Fund through operationalizing the Thematic window on food systems programming as a critical enabler of Resident Coordinators and the UN Country Teams' increased integrated support to countries, for the implementation of their National Pathways. Through two funding tracks: seed funding and high-impact, and in line with the Fund's Strategy, the funding window will contribute significantly to drive systemic change and integrated national action, advancing results and impact across many of the Hub's priority areas for this biennium. Progress enabled through the window will be showcased in the 2025 and subsequent stocktaking moments.

The Hub will also seek to foster deeper regional collaboration with bodies, networks, commissions, and UN regional assets, promoting regionalized solutions and generating virtuous circles of acceleration at the regional level. Collaboration with the UN Task Force, under its new leadership and configuration will further enhance these efforts.

Result matrix



Outcome

Spearhead innovative partnerships and collaborations as catalysts for bottom-up transformation

Coordination areas

- Foster stakeholder engagement
- Optimize collaboration between the EoS and National Convenors
- UN system coordination
- Support the integration of food systems in regional development frameworks

Activities/ Deliverables

- Stakeholder Engagement Report/ Guidelines, including a stocktake of current stakeholders' engagement good practices
- Corporate accountability framework in collaboration with key partners and the private sector¹⁸
- Tool for stakeholder mapping at the country level
- Global mapping and convening of the ecosystem of support
- Mobilize coalitions' engagement and assistance to national convenors to support pathway implementation, as well as cross-coalition coordination and collaboration
- Mobilization and support to UN Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams in support of National Pathway implementation
- Operationalization of the Joint SDG Fund Food Systems Window and coordination of system-wide support to Joint Programmes
- Mobilization UN regional assets (Regional Commission and relevant initiatives) and of the UN Task Force on Food Systems
- Facilitate the involvement of National Convenors in regional processes and planning and development of regional strategies (e.g. Support to the post-Malabo process)

¹⁸ This deliverable also contributes to the outcome on the fifth coordination cluster on financing and investment, namely support countries move the needle on the quality of financing for food systems transformation.

5. Finance and investment cluster

In the UNFSS+2, only half of the governments who submitted voluntary progress reports on their National Pathway to Food Systems Transformation indicated progress in assessing financing gaps for food systems transformation, with only a few embarking on costing their National Pathways. Many reported that despite significant domestic resource mobilization efforts, financing remains insufficient. IFAD and World Bank (WB) data from pilot countries confirmed that governments and development partners strive to finance emergency responses without losing track of the need for transformative investments. Finally, deliberations confirmed that private sector investments are yet to reach the level and scope needed in countries most in need. During the biennium 2024-2026, IFAD and the WB will continue to provide leadership for the Means of Implementation- finance as a major focus area.

Consistent with the SDG stimulus approach of the 2023 SDG Summit, the overall objective of IFAD and the WB as co-leads of the MOI - finance in collaboration with the Hub, will be to support countries most in need to move the needle on the level and quality of financing for food systems transformation: (i) leveraging three sources of financing in a complementary manner, namely domestic public spending, private investments, and concessional financing; and (ii) by enabling country access to quality and timely financing analytics and budgeting tools for impactful financing decisions. Support is focused on the countries of the Global South, where, in the context of multiple crises, tight fiscal conditions, increasing interest rates, and gloomy global growth prospects are the most challenged in financing food systems transformation.

During this biennium, the Hub will expand the scope of work under this finance and investment cluster to work on trade. The co-leads are designated to lead this work.



Result matrix



Outcome

Support countries move the needle on the level and quality of financing for food systems transformation:

- (i) Leveraging domestic public spending, private investments, and concessional financing;
- (ii) Enabling access to financing analytics and budgeting tools

Coordination areas

- Country support to cost and track domestic public and international development financial flows to food systems
- Support countries in enabling transformative private-sector investments for food systems
- Facilitate collaboration between International Financial Institutions to step up country access to concessional financing for food systems transformation

Activities/ Deliverables

- Support is scaled up to at least 10 countries through the 3FS tool to track their financial flows to food systems in line with National Pathways
- Country peer exchanges are facilitated on costing and tracking financial flows to food systems for impactful financing of National Pathways
- Pilot is initiated to support countries track private sector financial flows to food system
- Pilot is developed to support countries benchmark the quality of private sector financing against food systems transformation action trackers
- Inclusive public-private consultations are facilitated on successful and game-changing country models to scale up transformative private-sector investments in countries most in need
- IFI collaborative to step up financing windows in support of National Pathways is advanced
- The Joint SDG Fund Thematic window on Food Systems Transformation is operationalized as per work with UNRCs/UNCTs under Cluster 4
- Tool to track progress in IFI financial flows in support of National Pathways is developed

PART B

OPERATIONAL MODALITIES

Mandate

The Hub will align itself with existing UN functions and capacities in its work, as well as institutional structures and mechanisms that supported the 2021 Food Systems Summit. The Hub's overall mandate is to ensure:

1. Continued support to National Pathways and other transformative actions through coordinating technical and policy support requested by countries for food systems transformation.
2. Continued connectivity with the broader ecosystem of actors for sustainable food systems, including coalitions and other initiatives, as well as the science ecosystem, and promote the better integration of these efforts with country demand.
3. The elevation of priority topics in the food systems transformation agenda identified through the 2021 Food Systems Summit and the UNFSS+2.

Governance and coordination arrangements

The Hub is hosted by FAO on behalf of the UN system. As the Hub has no legal personality, it will continue to conduct operations per FAO rules of procedure and will be managed under the FAO Office of Sustainable Development Goals (OSG).

The strategic work, decision-making, and engagement of the Hub is steered by an Oversight Steering Group comprising the Principals of FAO, WFP, IFAD, UN-DCO and the UN Task Force Leads (WHO and UNDP), with participation from the UN DSG. This group will engage with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) and the UN Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) on the Hub's work. The group might also share information on progress and lessons learned with Member States, the Informal Joint Rome-based Agencies (RBA) Governing Board, Chairs of the RBA Governing Bodies, the Chair of the Committee on World Food Security, and the HLPF through the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

To promote joint ownership, the "Management Consultative Team" comprising senior UN officials from the UN agencies that directly support the Hub (either secondments/assignment of staff or allocation of substantial financial resources) will continue to meet regularly. These officials (one per UN agency) will not be from the staff to be seconded/assigned to the Hub but will be other senior officials who will ensure the UN agencies' continuous engagement with the Hub.

The Hub was designed to be a UN institutional innovation grounded in the United Nations reform and uniting efforts from various UN Agencies. At the heart of the global food systems architecture, the Hub's role is to coordinate, facilitate and convene, leveraging the unique competencies of each supporting agency, making the collective greater than the sum of its parts. To enable effective collaboration, coordination arrangements, and a clear division of roles between the Hub and its supporting agencies will be critical for harnessing the richness of their respective mandates and strengths.

Immediately upon the adoption of the Biennial Work Plan 2024-2026, these coordination arrangements will be defined, benefitting from two years of experience and lessons learned since the Hub's establishment. These detailed arrangements are essential for guiding mutual and reciprocal accountabilities, delivering tangible results, enabling effective reporting and facilitating strategic oversight by the Oversight Group. It is recognized that the coordination arrangements will not fully capture the complexity and richness of interactions and interdependencies between the Hub and supporting agencies and that ambiguities will be addressed collaboratively, as they arise. Under these arrangements, the Hub will maintain overall responsibility for ensuring strategic focus, functioning, and accountability across all clusters.

Staff Structure

The Hub will continue to be supported by the FAO Office of Sustainable Development Goals (OSG). The Hub will comprise a nimble team staffed by a mix of seconded full and part-time professional staff (from FAO, DCO, IFAD, WHO and WFP), project staff and consultants, as well as Junior Professional and other officers sponsored by Member states.

