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FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION PROGRESS REVIEW

Food Systems National Convenors Meeting

Pre-Event at the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development-Tenth Session (ARFSD-10)

Concept Note

Addis Ababa (hybrid) - Conference Room 6

22 April 2024, 0900 – 1700 GMT+3

Introduction

The UN Food Systems Coordination Hub is organizing a series of regional meetings with Food Systems National Convenors as a follow-up to the United Nations Food Systems (UNFSS+2) Stocktaking Moment which took place in Rome in July 2023. These meetings are being conducted in collaboration with the UN Regional Commissions, the Regional Offices of the UN Agencies supporting the Hub, and other relevant UN and regional bodies.

The main objectives of these Meetings are to assess the progress made in transforming food systems, facilitate regional knowledge sharing, and identify emerging patterns and solutions across regions in response to the UNFSS+2 call to action by the UN Secretary-General¹

These meetings are built upon the discussions held during the 2023 Regional Preparatory Meetings and UNFSS+2, where Member States shared their perspectives, best practices, lessons learned, and challenges related to food systems transformation. The importance of accelerating food systems transformation for achieving sustainable development goals was emphasized during these dialogues.

The primary participants of these meetings include National Convenors and their teams, UN Resident Coordinators, members of UN Country Teams, and other stakeholders.

Background

The first UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment (UNFSS+2) took place in Rome, Italy from 24 – 26 July 2023, at the premises of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It was Convened by the United Nations Secretary-General and hosted by Italy, in collaboration with the Rome-based UN Agencies (FAO, IFAD, WFP), the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, and the wider UN system.

The UNFSS+2 Moment built on the momentum of the 2021 Food Systems Summit and created a conducive space for countries to review progress on the commitments to action and identify successes, enduring bottlenecks, and priorities to close the implementation gap by effectively and efficiently utilizing the Means of Implementation for food systems transformation. It was also an opportunity to further socialize the powerful role of sustainable, equitable, healthy, and resilient food systems as critical SDG accelerators and advocate for urgent action at scale, building on the latest evidence that sustainable food systems contribute to better and more sustainable outcomes for people, planet and prosperity leaving no one behind.

The summit saw over 3300 participants, including delegations from 182 countries, 21 world leaders and 126 ministers, 225 Non-state Actor organizations, and close to 900 UN system representatives, gathered to share efforts and steer global action towards sustainable food systems.

At the end of the UNFSS+2, the Secretary-General launched a Call to Action for accelerated Food Systems Transformation. The Call focuses on six concrete objectives: embedding food systems strategies in national policies; establishing food systems governance with a whole-of-society approach; investing in research, data, innovation, and technology capacities; promoting business engagement and accountability for sustainability; including full participation of marginalized groups

¹ <https://www.unfoodsystemshub.org/fs-stocktaking-moment/documentation/un-secretary-general-call-to-action/en>



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including women; farmers, youth, and Indigenous Peoples; and ensuring long-term, concessional finance for food systems transformation.

A key takeaway from the UNFSS+2 Special Event on [Building Africa's Food Sovereignty and Resilience through Sustainable Investments](#) is to support the African Common Position on Food Systems with catalytic policy options and strategies through the game-changing solutions identified.

The Africa Common Position on Food Systems acknowledges the significant impact of climate change on Africa's food systems, highlighting an urgent need to enhance climate resilience efforts. Smallholders, whose resilience is affected by multiple shocks, are particularly vulnerable. In Africa, 70 to 80 percent of smallholder farmers are dependent on agriculture and renewable natural resources for their incomes, employment, food, nutrition and overall well-being. In the past decade, climate-related extreme weather events have impacted an average of 16 million individuals in Africa each year, resulting in an estimated annual cost of approximately [USD 670 million](#). Agricultural pests and diseases are also expected to persist, threatening the production of crops, livestock, and fisheries. In addition, it was found that climate change fuels land-based tension within and among African countries.

With the Malabo Declaration concluding in 2025, there is an ongoing discussion for the post-Malabo and 2025 agenda. With hands-on experience in aligning agendas within governments and engaging stakeholders for effective implementation, National Convenors can play a pivotal role in providing inputs to the post-Malabo and biannual review of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP).

The present regional meeting aims to support national convenors in their efforts to transform food systems and converge food and climate commitments to deliver on environment and food security goals, in preparation for upcoming global events in 2024, and towards the next Stocktaking Moment and COP30 planned for 2025.

Structure and Objectives of the Regional Meeting

The Regional Meeting will be a one-day meeting to be held on 22nd of April in Addis Ababa in the margins of the 2024 Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD-10).

The meeting will build on the outcomes of UNFSS+2 STM and the [Regional Preparatory Meeting for Africa](#) that took place in February 2023. It will focus on regional priorities and effective practices to transform the region's food system, and chart the way forward, aligning with the six action areas outlined in the Secretary-General's Call-to-Action issued at the conclusion of at the UNFSS+2. The meeting will a review of progress and foster regional collaboration and knowledge sharing amongst National Convenors and stakeholders in the regional ecosystem of support (EoS).

The event objectives are thus to:

- i. Provide a focused moment for National FS Convenors to reflect on progress made and share and learn from each other on experiences and insights in fostering food systems acceleration in their countries;
- ii. Allow interactions between national convenors and some key players and stakeholders in the ecosystems of support (EoS) on issues and trends of national and global interest in the pursuit of accelerated food systems transformation in Africa, including (a) implications of the outcomes of the FS Stocktaking Moment (2023) and COP28; and (b) informed on key developments of interest including African Union processes on the Post CAADP/Malabo;
- iii. Explore strategies for aligning food systems transformation processes with existing climate action plans;
- iv. Socialise key priorities and preliminary milestones in the process leading up to the 2025 Stocktaking Moment and COP29 and COP30.

Expected Outcome



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The main output of the meeting is a summary report that will include the key messages from National Convenors and stakeholders to strengthen their collaborative efforts in the transformation of food systems. By the conclusion of the meeting, National Convenors are expected to have a clearer understanding of key enablers and initiatives applied in the region toward accelerating progress and overcoming challenges faced in food systems transformation. In addition, key recommendations will be incorporated into the Outcome Report of the Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development.

Participation and Registration

For in-person participation, ensure to register on the INDICO platform to receive badge access to the UNECA Conference Centre by 18th of April: <https://indico.un.org/event/1009805/registrations/>

For Virtual participation, kindly register through this link:
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_uXQvHdNQQuG5VIKmpBINZA

Entry Visas

Participants are requested to secure their own visas for travel to Ethiopia, as may be necessary.

Correspondence

For further information, kindly contact Khaled Eltaweel, UN Food Systems Hub Senior Programme Coordinator, at Khaled.Eltaweel@fao.org, and Martin Bwalya, Senior Food Systems Regional Focal for Africa, at Martin.Bwalya@fao.org.

Programme

TIME FRAME	TOPIC	SPEAKERS
8:00 – 9:00 am	Registration and badge collection	Kindly arrive at 8am to collect your badges from UNECA Gate 2.
9:00 – 9:40 am	Panel opening discussion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Statement by The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2. H.E Ibrahim Mayaki, Special Envoy for Food Systems of the African Union (online) 3. Antonio Pedro, Deputy Executive Secretary, UNECA 4. David Phiri, Special Adviser to the Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, FAO 5. Stefanos Fotiou, Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub <p>Moderator: Khaled Eltaweel, Senior Programme Coordinator, UNFS Coordination Hub</p> <p><u>5 minutes each</u></p>
9:40 – 10:00 am	Thematic Session: Progress on food systems transformation in the context of Africa dynamics.	<p>Moderator: Martin Bwalya, Senior Food Systems Specialist for Africa</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Amath Pathe Sene, Managing Director, Africa's Food Systems Forum (AGRF) 2. Margot Vandervelden, WFP Regional Director for Western Africa (online) 3. Mphumuzi Sukati, Senior Food and Nutrition Officer, focal point for the UN Food Systems Summit, FAO Regional Office for Africa (online) <p><u>5 minutes each</u></p>
10:00 – 10:30 am	Coffee break	
10:30 am – 12:00 pm	Roundtable: Review and stocktake on the progress of food systems transformation: Progress, challenges, and best practices.	<p>Moderator: Khaled Eltaweel, Senior Programme Coordinator, UNFS Coordination Hub</p> <p>Scene Setting (10 min)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Svante Helms, National Pathway Manager, UNFS Food Systems Coordination Hub – Update of National Pathways (online) <p>Discussion time with National Convenors country experiences (75 min)</p> <p>Opening interventions from National Convenors per sub-region. Maximum 4 min each</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.E. Ehab Badawy, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Multilateral Affairs & International Security, Ministry of

		<p>Foreign Affairs, and National Convenor of Egypt.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms Siopathis Armelle, Director of Food Security and Nutrition, Central African Republic <p>Open discussion and interventions from National Convenors based on guiding questions in Annex 1.</p>
12:00 – 1:15 pm	Roundtable: Means of implementation/ Financing for food systems transformation in the Africa Region	<p>Moderator: Joan Kagwanja, Chief, Agriculture, Business Enabling Environment, UNECA</p> <p>Speakers (10min each):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Christopher Brett, Lead Agribusiness Specialist, World Bank on <i>Financial Flows to Food Systems (3FS Tool)</i> (online) 2. Mamoudou Sebego, Economist, UNECA - <i>Presentation of a study and policy brief about the effects of macroeconomic factors on food systems in West Africa.</i> (online) 3. Hedwig Siewertsen, Head of Inclusive Finance, AGRA - <i>Driving Blended Public-Private financing in FS transformation initiatives</i> (online) <p><u>Country experience (5min)</u></p> <p>Priscilla Muiruri, Chairperson of the National Food Systems Technical Working Group of Kenya on <i>institutionalising the financial flow of food systems tool to inform policy by modelling it to provide foresight on the implications of the level of investment in food systems.</i></p> <p><u>Open discussion and country experiences (30 minutes total)</u></p>
1:15 – 2:15 pm	Lunch hosted by UNFS Coordination Hub at Press Bar, Second Floor.	
2:15 – 3:45 pm	Roundtable: Alignment and convergence of food systems transformation and climate action. Country experiences	<p>Moderator: David Nabarro, 4SD Strategic Director</p> <p><u>Scene setting with global and regional climate initiatives (7 min each):</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Khaled Eltaweel, UNFS Coordination Hub – <i>Convergence initiative presentation</i> 2. Daive Laborde, FAO Director of Agrifood Economics Division on <i>Achieving SDG 2 without breaching the 1.5 °C threshold</i> (online) 3. Rose Mwebaza, Regional Director and Representative, Regional Office for Africa, UNEP

		<p>4. Antonio Palazuelos, UNECA Africa Climate Policy Centre on Climate finance that work for African agrifood systems</p> <p><u>Country experience (5min)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mohamed Abdi Farah, Special Adviser on Food Systems and Nutrition, National Convenor of the Republic of Somalia. <p><u>Discussion time (45 minutes)</u> Open discussion and interventions from National Convenors and stakeholders based on guiding questions in Annex 3.</p>
3:45 – 4:00 pm	Coffee Break	
4:00 – 4:50 pm	Thematic Session: Ecosystem of Support	<p>1. Wangechi Gitata-Kiriga, Foresight4Food Country Facilitator Kenya, and Jim Woodhill (online), Global Lead Foresight4Food</p> <p>2. Emillie Chazelle, Head of the HDP Nexus Coalition Secretariat</p> <p>3. Dina Kassa, Researcher, Ethiopian Public Health Institute and Youth Leadership Program representative</p> <p><u>Discussion time: 20 minutes</u></p>
4:50 – 5:00 pm	Wrap – up and closure	<p>1. Khaled Eltaweel, Senior Programme Coordinator, UNFS Coordination Hub</p> <p>2. Cristina Duarte, Special Advisor for Africa to the UN Secretary General</p>

Guiding questions

Annex 1 - Roundtable: Review and stocktake on the progress of food systems transformation: Progress, challenges, and best practices

1. Could you outline, what further steps have been taken to implement the national pathways since the UNFSS +2 last year in July, and to keep them dynamic as a driver for national food system transformation? Please give emphasis to entry points, specific innovative approaches or institutional changes or interesting examples at local level.
2. Are you holding regularly national dialogues with a wide range of stakeholders? Could you share your experience regarding the usefulness of the dialogues and what are the results?
3. How can food system governance structures effectively drive the national food system agenda? (e.g. national or also local governance structures, focused or with a wide set of actors, who is chairing?).



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4. In what ways can we enhance regional collaboration to transform food systems and bolster resilience? What are the main challenges and lessons learned within the regional approaches to food system transformation?
5. Have you already established a monitoring mechanism to measure the food system progress based on the pathways/action plan? In case yes, could you share your examples or mechanisms and what are the key challenges? Are there any good examples of review or monitoring mechanisms of the national pathways/action plans in place?

Annex 2 - Roundtable: Means of implementation: Financing for food systems transformation in the Africa Region

6. How is your country dealing with the issue of increased quality/appropriate investments into food systems related initiatives and programs
7. Any lessons/insights from public-private blended ventures in investment financing for food systems programs

Annex 3 - Roundtable: Alignment and convergence of food systems transformation and climate action. Country experiences

8. What are practical examples of work ongoing to better align the food systems and climate agendas at the country level?
9. How is your country promoting collaboration between the different Ministries' and other relevant stakeholders connecting food systems and climate action?
10. How can the convergence initiative support your efforts to converge food systems and climate action to support the SDGs?
11. How can national convenors be effectively supported and accompanied to access the evidence, knowledge, and skills necessary to address the interconnected and complex issues at hand?