

FOOD SYSTEMS SOLUTIONS DIALOGUES

Financing Food Systems Transformation to Achieve the SDGs

Wednesday 24 July 2024

Session I – 8:00 - 9:30 CEST | Session II – 16:00 - 17:30 CEST

Background

The UN Secretary-General's Call to Action for Accelerated Food Systems Transformation, announced at the 2023 UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment (UNFSS+2), charts a clear and comprehensive roadmap for shaping sustainable, equitable, and resilient food systems integral to achieving the 2030 Agenda. One of the priority areas of the Call to Action includes "ensuring access to short and long-term concessional finance, investments, budget support, and debt restructuring." This approach underscores the importance of creating financial mechanisms that not only address immediate needs but also promote sustainable development. The subsequent 2023 SDG Summit spotlighted and reinforced food systems transformation as one of the six investment pathways that are critical to accelerate SDG progress within and across countries. The SDG financing strategy emphasizes the importance for low-income countries to leverage and manage in a complementary manner three key sources of financing within a National Integrated Financial Strategy: 1) domestic public spending, 2) international development financing, and 3) private-sector financing¹.

The UNFSS+2 took stock of progress in advancing the food systems transformation agenda. Regarding financing, the UNFSS+2 revealed that only half of the governments who submitted voluntary progress reports on their national pathways 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. Deliberations also confirmed that more must be done to attract private sector investments at the requisite level and scope for the countries most in need². With regard to international development financing, in a context of multiple crises and muted global growth prospects, international development financial flows to food systems remained relatively stagnant between 2018-2021, warranting attention moving forward. Development partners are struggling to keep the balance between transformative financing for food systems and emergency aid remains. Over one-third (32%) of the international development financing to food systems went to social assistance, including food assistance, during 2018-2021.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Bank (WB) are co-leading the financing agenda for food systems transformation, in support of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub. Their twofold objective is to help countries leverage and manage financial flows for food systems transformation in a complementary

¹ Jeffrey Sachs et al. UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). SDG costing & financing for low-income developing countries, 2019.

² Making Food Systems Work for People and Planet, UNFSS+2 Report of the UN Secretary-General, 2023.

manner, including domestic public spending, private investments, and international development financing, and to enable access to quality, timely data on financing food systems for informed decision-making. The financing agenda is structured around three interconnected priorities: providing **data and evidence** to support government financing strategies and foster accountability, ensuring **access to financing windows** for food systems transformation, and developing **transformative private sector financing** projects at the country level.

Purpose of the dialogue

The dialogue will explore the latest strategies for mobilizing financing for transforming food systems to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Participants will discuss their experiences, identify challenges to access finance and share innovative funding approaches and collaborative solutions to overcome challenges in creating sustainable and equitable food systems. The dialogue will also cover the role of national financing, International Financial Institutions (IFIs), and private funding in supporting this transformation, ensuring access to concessional finance, investments and budget support.

Finance and Investment is one of the five clusters in the Hub's 2024-26 biennium work plan. In the Hub's start-up survey, National Convenors rated financing for food systems transformation as the top priority for support. This dialogue will provide a platform for interactive exchange with National Convenors and stakeholders on progress and priorities in the financing agenda for food systems transformation.

Agenda

Duration	Item
5 min	Opening remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stefanos Fotiou, Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub
30 min	Moderator of the Dialogue: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christopher Brett, Lead Agribusiness Specialist, World Bank Financing Agenda Food Systems Transformation 2024-25 and beyond: Scope and objectives Panel of speakers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nadine Gbossa, Director Food Systems, IFAD • Priscilla Muiruri, Chairperson of the National Food Systems Technical Working Group, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Kenya • Jamie Morrison, Senior Advisor, Policy and External Relations, GAIN • David Laborde, Director Agrifood Economic Division, FAO

45 min	<p>Interactive dialogue with National Convenors and stakeholders on the financing agenda for food systems transformation</p> <p>Guiding questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please share your experience of developing a costed action plan for the national pathway for food systems transformation, and evidence on the level of financing to inform the national financing strategy and dialogue with development partners on financial flows to food systems. • How would you rank the priorities of the financing agenda for food system transformation for 2024-25? What are the main challenges and what kind of support is needed at the country level?
5 min	<p>Conclusions from the Dialogue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christopher Brett, <i>Lead Agribusiness Specialist, World Bank</i>
5 min	<p>Closing remarks and next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stefanos Fotiou, <i>Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub</i>