



HIGH IMPACT
INITIATIVES



SEPTEMBER 2023

FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

Transforming food systems for a
sustainable world without hunger

HALFWAY TO 2030

High Impact Initiatives at SDG Action Weekend, 2023

The SDGs are essential but we are off track

World leaders made a historic global promise to secure the rights and well-being of all peoples when they adopted the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. This Agenda recognizes that collectively, we can deliver a better future for all. However, the Agenda is a promise, not a guarantee.

Over the past eight years, the world has seen unprecedented mobilization around the SDGs and we have made significant progress on some fronts, laying the critical foundations for our future success. However, now halfway to the 2030 deadline, we are not halfway there – in fact, we are only 15% of the way.

To keep the promise, we need a fundamental pivot

It will take more than rhetoric or increased attention to deliver the promise. We cannot stay wedded to current ways of working. Everything we do, in every corner of our world, will need to evolve for us to advance.

The fundamental pivot we need at the core of the 2030 Agenda demands that countries reorient economies, ways of working and mind-sets to ensure the rights and aspirations of all can be achieved while preserving our climate and natural environment.

This change will take everyone

In many ways, the foundations for transformation are right in front of us - the technical know-how, institutional infrastructure, global financial resources and proven programmes – but we need to channel these resources more effectively. This is the critical moment for political leadership and bold action from national governments; for the international community to come together in common purpose; and for all partners on the SDG journey to take their contribution to the next level. We start tomorrow, by accelerating what works today.

THE HIGH IMPACT INITIATIVES AT SDG ACCELERATION DAY SUNDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER

As we look to the future, our goal is simple: to generate renewed momentum, strengthen political leadership and channel tangible, integrated and coordinated support behind national plans and priorities. As part of the global effort to meet this challenge, the United Nations development system is mobilizing behind 12 high impact initiatives which provide a platform to help take SDG progress to scale. This platform will enable us to learn, evolve and scale what works with greater coordination and collaboration. The platform cuts across three major areas: economic and social transitions, means of implementation, and a core aspect of the cross-cutting issue of gender equality.

- **Energy** Compacts: Scaling up ambition to deliver on SDG7
- Nature Driving Economic Transformation: Leveraging the power of **biodiversity and nature** to drive equitable economic progress
- **Food Systems** Transformation: Transforming food systems for a sustainable world without hunger
- Transforming **Education**: Learning to build a better future for all
- Global Accelerator: The Global Accelerator on **jobs and social protection** for just transitions
- **Digital** Public Infrastructure: Scaling inclusive and open digital ecosystems for the SDGs
- The SDG Stimulus: Scaling up long-term affordable **financing** for the SDGs
- Transforming **Trade**: Paradigm shift to boost economic development
- **Local2030** Coalition: Pushing key transitions and achieving the SDGs by 2030
- FutureGov: Building **public sector capabilities** for the future
- Power of **Data**: Unlocking the data dividend for the SDGs
- Spotlight Initiative: To eliminate **violence against women and girls**

FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION: VISION FOR IMPACT

The world's food systems stand at the center of the SDGs; however, food systems are under tremendous stress from the persistence of global crises and conflict, loss of biodiversity and climate change. Around 735 million people faced hunger in 2022, and more than 3.1 billion people were unable to afford healthy diets in 2021. Between 2021 and 2022, progress was made towards reducing hunger in Asia and Latin America, but hunger is still on the rise in Africa, Caribbean and Western Asia.

Food systems must be transformed to become more sustainable, efficient and resilient, for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life. These efforts are being undertaken through the national food systems transformation pathways, which have shown that increased investment in rural transformation, reducing food loss and waste, empowering vulnerable populations, expanding social protection programmes and building resilient value

chains, are essential to ensuring successful food systems transformation.

This High Impact Initiative will help Member States by providing policy and technical assistance; offering innovative tools and solutions; and strengthening the national capacities for nationally owned, led and accelerated transformative processes for food systems.

This High Impact Initiative will act as an overarching, active and inclusive means of implementation and will advance this ambitious agenda by mobilizing finance, science, data (including geospatial platforms), innovative solutions, robust policy and governance mechanisms to support food systems transformation.

This High Impact Initiative will drive progress not only on SDG2, but across all SDGs. The world's food systems can be highly effective at driving transformative change across all SDGs under the right conditions and with the appropriate actions.

OVERVIEW: FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

This High Impact Initiative aims to mobilize commitments from Member States to prioritize their journey of food systems transformation to ensure food security and healthy diets for all. In addition, the initiative will call on UN Agencies, international financial institutions (IFIs), the private sector, civil society partners and all relevant stakeholders to assist countries in this journey. Further, academia will help assure state of the art science and innovation is part of this process. This initiative will build on and advocate for selected means of implementation that will help to accelerate national processes.

The High Impact Initiative will achieve this through three key pillars:

1. The development and provision of **tools, methods, models, and analyses** that leverage the best results obtained from the implementation of the FSS recommendations, including the advantages of applying a territorial approach and data resources of the Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Platform.
2. A **flexible and innovative approach to partnership** based on identifying technical and programmatic challenges and supporting the design and implementation of innovative solutions.
3. The pooling of existing investments and, where appropriate, the deployment of **new financial instruments** as well as risk-reducing or risk-sharing financial structures, as investment is an indispensable driver of transformative change.

The High Impact Initiative will build on the outcomes of the Food Systems Summit 2021 and ongoing means of implementation (including the Hand-in-Hand initiative, School Meals Coalition, Food is Never Waste Coalition, Coalition of Action on Healthy Diets, Zero Hunger Coalition, work on financing gaps, the Scientific Group, Indigenous group, the youth groups etc.). It will underscore the integrated vision advanced by the Secretary-General in the Food Systems Summit and reaffirmed in the UNFSS +2 Stocktaking Moment 2023. As per the [Secretary General's Call to Action](#), in the coming years the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub will focus on increasing integrated support to countries' transformation efforts by working with National Food Systems Convenors, optimizing assistance from the Ecosystem of Support and further leveraging means of implementation and multi-stakeholder, multisectoral and multi-level platforms.

The initiative will rely on partnerships with IFIs; donors; UN development system entities; universities and other national and international technical institutions; NGOs and civil society organizations, including consumers; and small, medium and large private entities engaged in different phases of agrifood systems production, processing, distribution and consumption. It will maximize the potential of all streams linked to the FSS (the scientific group, youth, indigenous peoples' group and others).

PLANS FOR THE 2023 SDG ACTION WEEKEND

The session aims to mobilize means of implementation to assist countries in the implementation of national pathways ([Link to UNFSS +2 Report of the Secretary-General](#)) and to expand commitments from Member States to prioritize their journey of food systems transformation. This will ensure food security and healthy diets for all in sustainable food systems to deliver for people and the planet. In addition, the session will drive agreement among partners on the path forward to support countries on delivering their Food Systems transformation agendas.

ROADMAP TO 2030

Long-term plans will evolve as we learn and circumstances change, below is our current approach to acceleration through 2030 after SDG Action Weekend.

By 2030, the initiative aims to work in 134 countries. It will push for greater coherence, coordination and collaboration for food systems transformation.

Deliverables for progress by 2030:

- Leverage and scale up ongoing means of implementation, Food Systems Summit Coalitions, science advisory group, indigenous and youth groups for delivery at country level to assure country transformation pathways are accelerated.
- Develop and design innovative ways to provide access to tools, data, analyses to accelerate transformation pathways at country level.
- Increase and accelerate the pool of existing investments and new needed financial resources, deploy new financial instruments including risk-management mechanisms.
- Provide policy and technical assistance support for food systems transformation at country level.
- Strengthen national capacities for owning, leading and accelerating transformative change.

Metrics for success:

The Food Systems Transformation initiative aims to reduce chronic undernourishment by at least three

quarters of the current projection of 600 million people who may face hunger by 2030, this implies a reduction in average of 85 million people in hunger per year. At the same time it will increase access to healthy diets and deliver on climate mitigation and adaptation targets.

To achieve this ambitious goal, we would need to mobilize funding from public, private, IFIs and all relevant stakeholders around USD 4 trillion from now to 2030 in Low- and Middle-Income countries – which is USD 680 billion per year. This amount is a mix of investments related expenditure, 425 billion in average per year and 255 billion in social safety net.

Roles and responsibilities of partners:

- Provide technical and policy assistance support to selected countries to deliver on their Food Systems transformation Agenda.
- Mobilize innovative Means of implementation (finance, data, innovation, etc.) and solutions for action.
- Support increasing commitments from Members for national level leadership, ownership and financing.



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



World Food
Programme



WORLD BANK GROUP



World Health
Organization



For more information on Food Systems Transformation, please contact Maximo Torero (Chief-Economist@fao.org).
For an overview of the High Impact Initiatives, visit the [Transformative Actions](#) action tab on the [SDG Summit](#) website.