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**Priorities for FAO in the region under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-
31**

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Executive Summary

The 42nd Session of the FAO Conference endorsed the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and approved the budgetary appropriations for the 2022-23 biennium. The strategic narrative guiding the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 is supporting the Agenda 2030 through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life*, leaving no one behind. FAO will implement the Strategic Framework through 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), which articulate FAO's thematic, technical comparative advantage and competency to deliver. The *four betters* and 20 PPAs are anchored in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Considering the Region's development trends, including challenges and opportunities, FAO in the region proposes the following four Regional Priorities, fully aligned with the PPAs under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, to implement consolidated actions effectively and efficiently while promoting digitalization of the agriculture sector and rural communities, which will generate opportunities for youth and women:

- a. Transforming agrifood systems for sustainable production and healthy diets.
- b. Accelerating sustainable natural resources management for biodiversity conservation and climate action.
- c. Supporting inclusive rural transformation for sustainable agrifood systems and equitable rural societies.
- d. Building sustainable and resilient agrifood systems in the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

In order to accelerate progress and maximize efforts in meeting the SDGs and to realize the *four betters*, FAO will apply four accelerators (Technology, Innovation, Data and Complements - governance, human capital and institutions) and three cross-cutting themes (Gender equality, Youth, Inclusion) in all programmatic interventions to accelerate impact while minimizing trade-offs.

FAO in the region will also implement corporate strategies and initiatives, including the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, One Country One Priority Product and the 1 000 Digital Villages Initiative.

This biennium will also be an important year for FAO to promote a reinvigorated business model through effective delivery through a programmatic and results-based approach and field programmes, while promoting sharing and exchanging under the "new normal" and the use of information and communication technologies.

Suggested action by the Regional Conference

- a. Endorse the four Regional Priorities identified for the 2022-23 biennium based on key trends, issues and challenges in the Asia and Pacific region.
- b. Recognize the relevance of the individual PPAs mapping to each the four Regional Priorities in the proposed results framework and to the achievement of the Four Betters.
- c. Provide guidance on the proposed results framework, corporate programmes and strategies to be implemented with regional specificities.
- d. Advise on emerging issues and partnerships for consideration in further programme development and provide efficient and adequate support to countries on the SDGs.
- e. Note the significance of the work of the Regional Commissions in standards setting, development of voluntary guidelines and implementation of globally endorsed legal instruments in key technical areas of the Organization's mandate.

I. Introduction

2. The 42nd Session of the FAO Conference endorsed the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, which guides all of the Organization's work as called for in the Basic Texts, and approved the budgetary appropriations for the 2022-23 biennium.¹ The strategic narrative guiding the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 is supporting the Agenda 2030 through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life*, leaving no one behind.

3. FAO will implement the Strategic Framework through 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), which articulate FAO's thematic, technical comparative advantage and competency to deliver (see Annex 1). The *four betters* and 20 PPAs are anchored in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Organization will use a systems approach, considering social, economic and environmental development dimensions, addressing the relevant trade-offs. Action at country level is at the core of the transformative nature of the Agenda 2030, and the PPAs act as a pathway towards achieving the SDGs in alignment with national priorities.

4. The *four cross-cutting accelerators*: technology, innovation, data and complements (governance, human capital, and institutions) focus efforts in all of FAO's programmatic interventions to fast-track progress and maximize prospects for contributing to the SDGs, while minimizing trade-offs. The *cross-cutting themes* of Gender, Youth and Inclusion are embedded across all of FAO's work to operationalize the principle of leaving no one behind.

5. Two new Strategies on *Science and Innovation* and *Climate Change* are being developed to support the implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, and provide guidance respectively on: coherence and alignment to Member-led initiatives for impact at country level through better use of *science and innovation*; and strengthened support to countries in their raised ambitions on *climate action* and achievement of their nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

6. In the 2022-23 biennium, FAO will continue to maximize impact at the country level through key corporate initiatives. The *Hand-in-Hand Initiative* is FAO's evidence-based, country-led and country-owned initiative to accelerate agricultural transformation and sustainable rural development in support of the SDGs. The *COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme* aims to mitigate the immediate impacts while strengthening the longer-term resilience of livelihoods, moving towards a green recovery, building to transform the agrifood systems, and appeals for immediate-, medium- and longer-term actions to prevent the health crisis from becoming a food crisis.

II. Context

Trends and developments in the region

7. The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic has swept Asia and the Pacific region since January 2020. The region has also witnessed the emergence of an agrifood systems approach as well as digital agriculture. The region is blessed with ingenuity, resilience, technological innovation and financial potency. Digitalization holds the promise of accelerated development of rural areas. The emergence of a fourth Industrial Revolution that combines physical and biological systems with the digital world may also affect where and how we grow and deliver our food.

8. The region is currently falling behind in achieving the SDGs by 2030, especially with the impacts of COVID-19. In response, the Regional Collaborative Platform, which unites organizations of the United Nations (UN) in the region, and five Issue-based Coalitions were formally established in 2020. UN Country Teams are supporting Members to "build back better" from the pandemic, in line with the 2030 Agenda. FAO's work with the Regional Collaborative Platform and UN Country Teams will channel strengths of the region towards delivering inclusive and sustainable development.

The four betters – challenges and opportunities

¹ C 2021/REP paragraphs 61-70 and CR 8/2021

A. Challenges and opportunities for better production

9. **Challenges:** Low productivity of crops increases the risk of food insecurity and undermines the base to improve incomes of farmers. In Asia, an estimated 80 percent of the population living below the international poverty line is from rural areas and largely dependent on crop production. In addition, agricultural production in the region remains under constant threat due to climate change, natural resources degradation, and multiple hazards and disasters. Challenges include: the reduced availability of arable land due to soil degradation and urbanization; the extensive spread of transboundary pests and diseases; food safety hazards and antimicrobial resistance (AMR); and environmental pollution caused by chemicals and plastics. While the region accounts for more than 70 percent of the world's irrigated lands, the majority of countries in the region are still classified as water-insecure. Moreover, groundwater depletion as well as transboundary water issues have become a major concern, reflecting an urgent need for enhanced governance. Increasing populations, demographic shifts (such as urbanization), ageing populations and youth migration, as well as changes in diets, also are inducing changes in food production. Agriculture can no longer be seen as an independent sector; agriculture has become part of an integrated and more globalized agrifood system.

10. **Opportunities:** Asia and the Pacific region is capable of developing a variety of solutions, from policies through to innovations and technologies. The region has also inherited thousands of years of traditional and indigenous agrifood systems and know-how. Fertilizer management and improved cropping systems, as well as revitalized seed systems to supply high-quality seeds, could help to accelerate production and meet new types of demands and address climate change. New production approaches include nature-based solutions, integrated management and efficient use of natural resources, and reduction of the losses caused by biotic and abiotic stresses, as well as advanced logistics, including cold-chains and storages. The region also spearheads global partnerships for sustainable soil management. Digitalization and advanced new farming technologies provide great opportunities for increasing productivity, managing risk, improving input use efficiency, and improving environmental, social and economic sustainability. The Water Scarcity Programme and Collaborative Platform are mainstreaming water accounting, which serves as the base for water allocation and sustainable use. Tailored and inclusive agricultural mechanization approaches are another area of increasing production efficiency, which could support ageing farmers and help stem urban migration by developing new agriculture and food industries in rural areas.

B. Challenges and opportunities for better nutrition

11. **Challenges:** After years of gains in reducing hunger, and despite decades of economic growth, progress in promoting better nutrition has stagnated in the region. Over 40 percent of the region's population cannot afford a healthy diet. The number of people affected by hunger in Asia and the Pacific region continued to increase under the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the total number of undernourished people in 2020 (768 million), more than half (418 million) live in Asia. The percentage of undernourishment in 2020 is estimated at some 300 million, ranging from below 2.5 percent in Eastern Asia to 15.8 percent in Southern Asia. Women continue to play a critical role in the agriculture sector, but their access to rights and resources is still limited. The prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity was 10 percent higher among women than men in 2020. More than 30 percent of women in Asia are affected by anaemia. Approximately 67 percent (35 million) of the total number of wasted children live in Asia and the Pacific region and some 80 million children under five years of age are stunted in the region. At the same time, childhood overweight and obesity are rising.

12. The situation in the Pacific is complicated because of the co-existence of triple burden: over-nutrition; undernutrition; and micronutrient deficiencies. Non-communicable diseases are responsible for more than half of total deaths in the Pacific. Over half of the total population is obese or overweight. No Pacific Islands nation is on track to meet the global nutrition targets for anaemia, and child stunting and lack of access to healthy diets are affecting about four million children in the Pacific.

13. **Opportunities:** Most countries are increasingly conscious of the need to create healthier food environments and to empower consumers to pursue dietary patterns that are nutritious, healthy and safe, with a lower impact on the environment. Many urban consumers in the region, especially among

middle- and upper-income groups, are well-educated and have begun integrating better nutrition practices in their diets, while food industries have started providing affordable and nutritious foods. The private sector and the media are leading a transition from cheap and convenient yet unhealthy processed foods to nutrient-rich alternatives.

C. Challenges and opportunities for better environment

14. **Challenges:** With unsustainable natural resources management and rapid change in land use, the region is experiencing widespread degradation of natural resources in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Approximately 25 percent of all land in the region is degraded, with 13 percent classified as seriously degraded, causing soil erosion and fertility losses, while increasing flash floods and landslides. The region is home to a large share of the world's biodiversity, tropical forests and peatlands, fresh water, coastal wetlands, and coral reefs. Since 1970, however, 45 percent loss of biodiversity (species) has occurred. Although some countries have increased forest cover, the region still faces high rates of conversion of forests, which is also linked to the loss of biodiversity habitats.

15. Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sectors represent the second largest share of emissions (16 percent) in the region. The increasing negative impacts of climate change also threaten efforts to ensure food security, eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development.

16. **Opportunities:** Countries in the region have put in place strong legislative and policy frameworks to tackle environment-related challenges. They are committed to implement sustainable natural resources management and carbon-neutral and resilient agrifood systems based on the agreements made in various UN conventions and global frameworks.

17. Advanced digital tools, climate information and localized agro-meteorological services have become increasingly available, promoting climate-smart agriculture (CSA) planning and adoption. Better information on costs and innovations in forestry technology support the identification and implementation of forest and landscape restoration opportunities and mainstreaming biodiversity in agricultural sectors. The sharing of good practices in sustainable land and soil management is increasing, particularly to address emerging challenges such as salt-affected soil. Blended financial mechanisms are being explored to mobilize private investments while promoting synergies of global environmental and climate finance. Similarly, efforts to optimize humanitarian and development assistance can support countries' desired shift from costly disaster response to anticipatory action based on better forecasting, early warning, and linking with climate resilience-building.

D. Challenges and opportunities for better life

18. **Challenges:** The migration of young people to urban areas is leading to an increase of labour shortages in farm households, ageing of the agricultural labour force and an increasing engagement of women in agriculture in South Asia, all of which have an impact on the uptake of new technologies. Issues of income inequality, gender, youth employment and ageing remain a huge challenge in the region. Along with the declining share of agriculture in total output in the region, the labour productivity gap between agriculture (dominated by smallholders) and non-agricultural sectors in Asia increased from 0.9 percentage before 2000 to 1.34 percentage after 2000.² Rising income inequality has slowed progress in poverty reduction. Progress in hunger reduction was slowing down even before COVID-19, but the pandemic has made the situation worse. The Pacific Island countries face additional challenges due to their small territorial size and geographic isolation.

19. **Opportunities:** The region is the front-runner in digital agriculture. The disruptive impacts of COVID-19 are also offering a unique opportunity for rural transformation along more equitable, inclusive and resilient foundations, fuelled by digital transformation as well as inclusive agrifood system policies. Rural transformation has become crucial for Members to regain the lost ground on SDG targets on poverty, malnutrition and gender inequality and reduction of the rural-urban development divide. Partnerships between governments and the private sector offer many

² Imai, K., Gaiha, R. & Bresciani, F. 2019. The Labour Productivity Gap between the Agricultural and Non-agricultural Sectors, and Poverty and Inequality Reduction in Asia. *Asian Development Review* 2019; 36 (1): 112–135. doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/adev_a_00125

opportunities to promote rural digitalization at large scale and contribute to eliminate the digital gap within rural communities.

III. Priority Areas of Work in 2022-23

20. FAO's work in Asia and the Pacific region in 2022-23 and beyond will be driven by post-COVID-19 recovery and agrifood systems transformation, the latter being one of the key levers to unlock progress towards the Agenda 2030 and its SDGs. FAO, as the leading organization in food and agriculture, has a historic opportunity to assist Members over the needed transformational change while leaving no one behind. FAO in the region will focus on supporting Members in the following four Regional Priorities to implement consolidated actions effectively and efficiently, and fully aligned with the PPAs under the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 (Annex 1 provides details on the PPAs). Regional Priorities are the regional approach towards achieving FAO's vision and the global goals of Members, through the transformation to **MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, leaving no one behind.**

- a. Transforming agrifood systems for sustainable production and healthy diets.
- b. Accelerating sustainable natural resources management for biodiversity conservation and climate action.
- c. Supporting inclusive rural transformation for sustainable agrifood systems and equitable rural societies.
- d. Building sustainable and resilient agrifood systems in the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

21. FAO will promote digitalization of the agriculture sector and rural communities, which will generate opportunities for youth and women.

Regional Priority 1: Transforming agrifood systems for sustainable production and healthy diets

22. FAO recognizes the urgent need to reinvest in agrifood systems in the region to ensure achievement of the SDGs. FAO in the region will continuously facilitate dialogue among Members to support the development of sustainable agrifood systems pathways. Moreover, FAO will support Members to foster enabling environments for the adoption of agrifood systems based on data, science and evidence, while implementing transformative projects and promoting further digitalization and mechanization among farming communities based on the region's advanced experiences in these areas. Eight PPAs of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 will form the core of this priority for the region, as follows:

Table 1. Relationship between Regional Priority 1 Transforming agrifood systems for sustainable production and healthy diets and PPAs, SDG targets and areas of emphasis

	Programme Priority Areas (PPAs)	SDG Targets	Regional Areas of Emphasis
Better Production	BP1: Innovation for sustainable agriculture production	2.3, 2.4, 6.4, 15.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of more location-specific integrated technology for crop management as well as technology transfer and adoption. • Development of national pathways and regional partnerships towards more productive and sustainable agrifood systems to achieve SDG 2 and other targets.
	BP2: Blue transformation	2.1, 2.2, 14.2, 14.4,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of capacity in fishery stock assessment for management and monitoring SDG 14.

		14.6, 14.7, 14.b, 14.c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquaculture, based around innovation and sustainable intensification, including through the Aquaculture Regional Technical Platform.
	BP3: One Health	1.5, 3.d, 15.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention and control of zoonotic diseases and transboundary pests and diseases of plants, aquaculture and livestock. • Expanded One Health to include forestry, wildlife, natural resources management and environment sectors. • Safe farming practices, phytosanitary improvements. • AMR.
	BP4: Small-scale producers' equitable access to resources	1.4, 2.3, 2.4, 9.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange of knowledge and best practices on family farming and agroecology. • Enhanced access by small-scale producers, traders, and agri-entrepreneurs to digital technologies, credit, inputs, information and training and strengthening laws that protect land tenure, water rights, financial services to women and indigenous communities (including forestland).
Better Nutrition	BN1: Healthy diets for all	1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4 12.8, 14.b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and programmes for the production of diversified and nutrient-dense foods that are affordable and accessible to people and nurture healthy dietary habits.
	BN2: Nutrition for the most vulnerable	1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End of child wasting in the region by 2030.
	BN3: Safe food for everyone	2.1, 2.2, 3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened national food control systems. • Food safety solutions for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). • Codex food standards to mitigate hazards in e-commerce and trans-boundary trade.
	BN4: Reducing food loss and waste	2.1, 2.2, 12.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Strategy on Food Loss and Waste (FLW). • Regional knowledge base and awareness raising on FLW impacts on climate, food security and nutrition. • Policy guidance and technical advice to Members on improvement measurement/data on FLW at local and national levels.

23. Innovation for Sustainable Agriculture Production (BP1): The focus of FAO in the region will be on the development of more location-specific integrated technology for crop management as well

as technology transfer and adoption, coupled with human resources development in appropriate areas. In addition, FAO will support Members to develop their own national pathways and regional partnerships towards more productive and sustainable agrifood systems. FAO will also promote regional initiatives such as the Sustainable Rice Landscapes Initiative with the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the International Rice Research Institute, the Sustainable Rice Platform, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, to meet future demand for rice production in an environmentally and economically sustainable manner. The region also has rich experience in improving incomes among farmers by integrating production and value-chain development to help the most vulnerable farmers, especially those in mountain areas – for example, through the One Village One Product (OVOP) approach, which originated in a remote mountain area of Japan. Building on the OVOP experience, FAO will pilot activities of the One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) Initiative in Bhutan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka and Thailand, embedding it as an integral programme of FAO in the region. Regional Priority 1 will also address reversing water scarcity, unsustainable agriculture water management and land and soil degradation. Based on the region’s advanced practices and policies developed by Australia, China and India, the Water Scarcity Programme will enhance regional and interregional cooperation through a Regional Cooperative Platform. The Platform will build Members’ capacities to manage and adapt agriculture to a water-scarce future with tools and training for water accounting and allocation and innovative communication materials to increase uptake of best practices. The Next Generation Irrigation Programme and the Eco-Friendly Agriculture Water Programme will draw on global best practices to accelerate the modernization of irrigation systems in Asia.

24. Blue transformation (BP2): In capture fisheries, the focus in the region will be on transforming fisheries to sustainable management through development of a capacity-building programme in fishery stock assessment for management and decision-making, and application of the ecosystem approach. This approach will assist Members to address overfishing in the region and shift towards sustainable yields, and to monitor their progress towards SDG 14. Additional advisory support to Members will link to FAO global programmes around fish trade, support to small-scale fisheries, the combating of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, and the reduction of bycatch. In aquaculture, support will be based around the areas of innovation and sustainable intensification. The Aquaculture Regional Technical Platform has been developed to showcase and raise awareness around this need and to stimulate the networking and capacity-building required among Members to take these action areas to implementation. FAO will support capacity-building in broader aspects of trade through improved documentation and certification systems and food safety.

25. One Health (BP3): FAO will continue addressing devastating transboundary diseases and pests. Building on the experience of the FAO Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD), which has operational units based in 10 countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, FAO will support Members to implement evidence-based successful risk management approaches. FAO is strengthening multisectoral partnerships and networks including the Tripartite (FAO, OIE, World Health Organization (WHO)) plus the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and other relevant international organizations. FAO aims to expand One Health programming to be inclusive of ministries of natural resources management, representing “environmental” concerns, to incorporate the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems and to improve upstream interventions and policies to prevent the emergence of infectious zoonotic pathogens and transboundary diseases. FAO in the region is also developing a comprehensive One Health Needs and Readiness tool along with training programmes, which will be rolled out in 2023. The expected outcomes of this work will support Members to achieve national and international One Health and plant health security systems through improved pest and disease prevention, early warning, risk reduction and the better management of national and global health risks, including AMR.

26. Small-scale producers’ equitable access to resources (BP4): FAO in the region will enhance the exchange of knowledge and best practices on family farming and agroecology among Members. For example, FAO will provide a Modular Training Programme on Policy Cycle for family farming,

based on case studies in ASEAN, for Members to develop policies for equitable access to economic resources, infrastructure and natural resources, especially for smallholders, family farmers, indigenous peoples, women and youth. FAO's support to Members will also: enhance access by the most vulnerable to extension, information, services and training, technologies and innovations; assist in the development of short value chains that link smallholders more directly to the market; and design and implement gender-sensitive advisory and rural services to improve the competitiveness of small-scale producers and broaden their participation in the rural economy.

27. Healthy diets for all (BN1): FAO will support Members in the region to influence consumers' adoption of healthy diets and to promote the engagement of food chain actors to produce and market nutritious foods. Interventions will focus on policies, legislations and coordination with the private sector and development of programmes, while ensuring mainstreaming of nutrition across sectoral policies to address increased concerns among growing urban populations in the region. FAO will also develop materials for nutrition-sensitive education, information dissemination, capacity development and awareness-raising while valuing the diversity of Asian cuisine. Such country-specific information will help stakeholders and consumers to realize the right to adequate food and healthy diets for all and influence behavioural change. FAO will prioritize empowerment of all actors, with a focus on those who are often left behind in rural communities.

28. Nutrition for the most vulnerable (BN2): The work under this PPA will focus specifically on the above-mentioned challenges for *better nutrition*, and FAO will support Members to address them. FAO's work will include data and evidence collection and developing nutrition policies and programmes focused on the most vulnerable. In 2019, FAO, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and WHO jointly developed the Global Action Plan (GAP) on Child Wasting with an aim to reduce its burden and achieve relevant SDG 2 targets by 2030. FAO's Members in the region are actively promoting the GAP, and FAO will support GAP frontrunner countries in the region to prevent and manage child wasting through a systems approach, i.e. agrifood, health, social protection and water and sanitation systems.

29. Safe food for everyone (BN3): With growing urban populations and increasing health-consciousness in many of the countries in the region, FAO's support to Members will build effective national mechanisms of food safety control by helping to review and update policy, legal and institutional frameworks that support strong national, regional and global food safety governance, and fair practices in food trade. FAO will assist Members to assess Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) standards and market transparency in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Pakistan and Viet Nam, and mainstream digitalized SPS tools. The work under this PPA will also develop capacities of food value chain operators among micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the region, increase food safety awareness of consumers, and strengthen and extend partnerships for food safety, particularly along value chains and in fresh markets. The food standards of the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission will continue to be promoted and the capacity of countries to engage in their formulation will be enhanced.

30. Reducing food loss and waste (BN4): FAO will support Members to expand the knowledge base of reducing food loss and waste (FLW) through data collection and statistical analysis. FAO prepared the Asia-Pacific Food Loss and Waste Strategy, based on the Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste Reduction, which was developed following the request of the 26th Session of the Committee on Agriculture (COAG). Through the rollout of the FLW strategy, FAO strives to raise awareness of minimizing FLW based on evidence and provide relevant tools and technologies. Improvement of practices on FLW will be facilitated by the FLW network among government officers and practitioners, as well as through technical and training manuals for on- and off-farm food loss being developed by FAO in the region.

Regional Priority 2: Accelerating sustainable natural resources management for biodiversity conservation and climate action

31. The objective of this Regional Priority is to support Members to protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and combat climate change in realizing more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems.

Table 2. Relationship between Regional Priority 2 Accelerating sustainable natural resources management for biodiversity conservation and climate action and PPAs, SDG targets and areas of emphasis

	Programme Priority Areas (PPAs)	SDG Targets	Regional Areas of Emphasis
Better Environment	BE1: Climate change mitigating and adapted agrifood systems	2.4, 13.1, 13.2, 13.b, 14.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate services for evidence-based policies, planning and investment decision-making. • Access to global environmental and climate finance. • Scaling up climate change adaptation and mitigation measures and monitoring, reporting and verification.
	BE3: Biodiversity and ecosystem services for food and agriculture	2.5, 14.4, 15.1, 15.3, 15.4, 15.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecosystem restoration (including forest and landscape restoration, sustainable forest management, and sustainable land and soil management). • Sustainable use of biodiversity, through capacity development.
	BE4: Achieving sustainable urban food systems	1.1, 2.1, 11.a, 12.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support for enhancing food value chains supplying urban areas. • Urban food governance for inclusive food access and affordability for the urban poor. • Urban forestry solutions for enhanced delivery of ecosystem services.
Better Life	BL4: Resilient agrifood systems	1.3, 1.5, 2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of multiple and compounded risks to agrifood systems and livelihoods from economic and environmental shocks. • Governance mechanisms (including policy, planning and institutional coordination) for multi-risk management in AFOLU sectors. • Vulnerability and risk reduction measures, targeting smallholder farmers and the humanitarian–development–peace (HDP) nexus. • Anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection.

32. Climate change mitigating and adapted agrifood systems (BE1): An important focus in the region is on facilitating the development of innovative, blended climate finance mechanisms, and engaging the private sector for sustainable investments at scale. FAO's support will be provided to Members, especially the least developed countries, to strategize and develop proposals to access finance, including but not limited to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Adaptation Fund, in support of achieving their climate ambitions in the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sectors. In addition, capacity development on foresight planning at all levels and support to develop and invest in solutions to tackle climate change and related challenges will be key to scaling up sustainable climate-smart agriculture (CSA) that builds

resilience and reduces emissions from agrifood systems, as well as to achieving the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture, spearheaded by the ASEAN Climate Resilient Network. FAO in the region has developed climate services and tools³ that will support Members to develop climate-responsive policies, plans, investments and programmes/projects. Furthermore, FAO will continue to work on advocacy and support to raise the profile of AFOLU sectors in climate change and disaster risk reduction (DRR) frameworks while strengthening the monitoring, reporting and verification of the sectors' contribution to the NDCs, the Sendai Framework for DRR and related SDGs for resource mobilization and delivery of the ambitious actions.

33. Biodiversity and ecosystem services for food and agriculture (BE3): In order to reverse widespread degradation of natural resources of terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems in the region, FAO will continue to support Members in ecosystem restoration and the sustainable use of biodiversity. FAO will support Members to implement and scale up good practices for ecosystem and landscape restoration, sustainable forest management, and sustainable use of land, soil and water. Building on country-specific restoration programmes, FAO together with Members will explore a regional restoration programme, in which FAO will provide technical assistance to Members to improve their access to innovative finance for restoration. Although some countries have been successful in reversing the trend of deforestation with large-scale reforestation investments, FAO will continue supporting Members to halt deforestation and forest degradation, and to achieve reductions in forest emissions by building national capacities to assess the extent and status of their forest and land resources. Considering that Asia and the Pacific region is the largest timber consumer, FAO will support Members in promoting sustainable trade and value addition along timber supply chains, addressing barriers to accessing finance by smallholders, MSMEs and communities in response to increasingly regulated global trade and a growing international demand for legal, deforestation-free and sustainable wood products.

34. Achieving sustainable urban food systems (BE4): Rapid urbanization in the region necessitates the development of capacities of national stakeholders and local governments to design and plan integrated agrifood sector programmes for diverse urban populations. Under this PPA, FAO's work in the region will focus on governance and multistakeholder coordination within an urban food agenda to improve food access and the provision of affordable and healthy diets to urban residents, especially the urban poor. A key component of this work will be strengthening entrepreneurship and market linkages along the agrifood value chain supplying urban areas. FAO's work will also contribute to urban forestry, nature-based solutions in peri-urban landscapes, ecosystem-based adaptation and managing urban disaster risks, including of sand and dust storms. With the advance of affordable technologies in many large cities, especially in the areas of digitalization and improved logistics, and strengthened banking networks following the two financial crises, the region has a huge potential to promote urban food systems. FAO will continue maintaining a knowledge exchange platform to promote innovative approaches and practices in Members' access to finance for scaling up actions and catalysing sustainable investments by national and local stakeholders.

35. Resilient agrifood systems (BL4): FAO will focus on developing tools and building capacities to assess vulnerability and risks, especially increasingly compound and overlapping risks, such as floods, drought and the COVID-19 pandemic. FAO has started working with ASEAN to develop and implement a framework for anticipatory action in disaster management, considering that several ASEAN countries, such as Indonesia and the Philippines, are disaster-prone. FAO's support to Members on anticipatory action will enhance the use of risk information in policies, planning and investment decision-making within more sustainable agrifood systems. Strengthening risk governance in AFOLU sectors will focus on planning, mobilizing resources and increasing investments in DRR, in coherence with climate change adaptation. FAO will work with Members to promote innovative and cost-effective measures such as anticipatory action and shock-responsive social protection to reduce vulnerabilities, particularly of women, indigenous peoples and socially marginalized smallholders.

³ FAO has developed tools such as the PyAEZ model, climate risk assessment platform, agro-meteorological services and early warning systems.

Regional Priority 3: Supporting inclusive rural transformation for sustainable agrifood systems and equitable rural societies

36. This Regional Priority commits FAO to inclusive rural transformation, including economic growth and support to vulnerable populations to reduce inequality, leaving no country and no person behind.

Table 3. Relationship between Regional Priority 3 Supporting inclusive rural transformation for sustainable agrifood systems and equitable rural societies and PPAs, SDG targets and areas of emphasis

	Programme Priority Areas (PPAs)	SDG Targets	Regional Areas of Emphasis
Better Production	BP5: Digital agriculture	1.4, 5.b, 9.c, 17.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Village Initiative (DVI) to accelerate rural and village digital ecosystem development. Digitally powered agrifood systems through digital policy and strategy development, and empowerment of women, youth and small-scale producers through digital literacy.
Better Life	BL1: Gender equality and rural women's empowerment	2.3, 5.4, 5.a, 5.c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the Regional Gender Strategy and Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific (2022-2025). Gender mainstreaming in policy processes on food security, nutrition, social resilience, equal access to resources (e.g. land, water), and digital inclusion.
	BL2: Inclusive rural transformation	1.1, 8.3, 8.5, 10.1, 10.2, 10.7, 14.b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resilient rural-urban agrifood markets, including e-commerce and digital trade, inclusive value chains, MSME and agrifood enterprises development, and empowerment of women and youth through agrifood and MSME investments and digital skill capacity.
	BL5: Hand-in-Hand Initiative	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.a, 10.1, 10.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated territorial development and targeted investments to achieve SDG 1 (poverty alleviation) and SDG 2 (food insecurity elimination) and SDG 10 (regional inequality).

37. **Digital agriculture (BP5):** This is one of the most important areas of work for FAO and Members in the region during this biennium, and it is expected to increase the efficiency of other PPAs. Under the Digital Village Initiative (DVI), FAO and Members are developing an integrated framework to promote the uptake of digital services in line with rural end-users' needs and capacities. This framework will contribute to enhance enabling conditions for small-scale producers, agrifood MSMEs and rural communities to access better market opportunities, improve productivity and strengthen the resilience of agrifood systems. FAO will work with Members to integrate DVI concepts and good practices and solutions into ongoing projects and support Members to design and scale up DVI ecosystems as a base to accelerate rural transformation.

38. **Gender equality and rural women's empowerment (BL1):** The Regional Gender Strategy and Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific (2022-2025) will be completed in early 2022. FAO will support Members to implement the strategy and ensure that rural women and young girls have equal access to innovations and solutions as well as training, education and finances to meet their needs and priorities and improve their quality of life. This work will promote rural women's economic empowerment and

equal rights, as well as enhance women's voice, leadership and decision-making in rural institutions and organizations. Selected ASEAN countries will be supported to strengthen mechanisms and networks for gender mainstreaming in national rural development and poverty eradication programmes. FAO's support to Members will include legal protection and supporting policies, and the development of initiatives to promote equal access to and control over natural and productive resources through land tenure, irrigation water rights and other resources. Members will also be supported in developing marketing and social capital and related services, including credit, information, extension services, digital innovations and other services to empower rural women and narrow gender gaps, as well as improved survey methods, analysis and policy dialogues to achieve the SDG target on gender (SDG5).

39. Inclusive rural transformation (BL2): Following rapid economic development, the region has ample experience to transform the livelihoods of rural people, especially poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups (e.g. women, youth, small scale-producers, family farmers, indigenous peoples) with the principle of leaving no one behind. FAO will work with Members to promote income diversification and develop decent work in rural areas along agricultural value chains by linking rapidly growing urban areas and the private sector to rural areas and farmers. The work will emphasize better paid and higher quality employment opportunities especially for youth, while striving to eliminate child labour, and will also improve and expand access to appropriately designed and targeted social protection. Sharing the region's good practices with improved communication platforms, Members will be supported to exchange know-how on the policies and strategies to promote rural-urban market linkages by developing diverse market platforms and digital trade, which will ensure improved market access by small-scale farmers, women and youth entrepreneurs. FAO will advocate for tailored programmes and strategies to attract youth, with a focus on employment creation, training and financial support for rural youth-led agribusinesses, capitalizing on the rapidly expanding digitalization in the region.

40. Hand-in-Hand Initiative (BL5): Nine countries in the region – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu – are working towards the use of the flagship Hand-in-Hand Initiative (HIHI) Geospatial Platform and partnership modality to enhance Members' collaboration with major donors (including international financing institutions), the private sector and civil society. A number of additional countries will join the partnership during the biennium. FAO will assist these countries to prepare a HIHI investment plan and train government officers on the approach to ensure that programme, policy and investment decision-making to realize agricultural development potential is founded on the strongest available science and country-specific evidence, thereby strengthening country-led investments to promote rural transformation. Recognizing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and other shocks, particularly on poverty and hunger of vulnerable territories and populations, resilience will also be integrated into targeting and entry points of most HIHI programme investment plans in Asia and the Pacific region. By supporting Members to build and sustain coalitions of stakeholders around ambitious territorial plans, HIHI will assist Members to identify opportunities for financing, investments, policy and institutional changes and support, including South-South and Triangular Cooperation on data, innovation and digitalization.

Regional Priority 4: Building sustainable and resilient agrifood systems in the Pacific SIDS

41. In line with the agrifood systems transformation pathways developed by Members, FAO's work in the Pacific SIDS will place strong emphasis on building sustainable and resilient agrifood systems through the implementation of the current Multi-Country Programming Framework (CPF) for the Pacific Islands 2018-2022, which covers 14 countries in the Pacific. This regional priority will be the central pillar of FAO in the Pacific in developing the new CPF 2023-2027 and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2027, which are under preparation and will integrate agrifood systems transformation as the fundamental development pathway.

Table 4. Relationship between Regional Priority 4 Building sustainable and resilient agrifood systems in the Pacific SIDS and PPAs, SDG targets and areas of emphasis

	Programme Priority Areas (PPAs)	SDG Targets	Regional Areas of Emphasis
Better Production	BP2: Blue transformation	2.1, 2.2, 14.2, 14.4, 14.6, 14.7, 14.b, 14.c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seafood value chains. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Data and statistics: SDG 14 monitoring.
	BP3: One Health	1.5, 3.d, 15.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pest and disease prevention and management. Early warning and management of health risks, including AMR. Biosecurity legislation and policy alignment with international standards. Ecologically based alternatives to highly hazardous pesticides.
	BP4: Small-scale producers' equitable access to resources	1.4, 2.3, 2.4, 9.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe and sustainable small-scale fisheries and aquaculture: safe and equitable access to productive nearshore species, enabling and improving effectiveness of community-based fisheries management, small-scale aquaculture. Smallholder agriculture, agroforestry and forestry: community-based governance and decision-making mechanisms, traditional resource management and farming systems, and value chains. Data and statistics: adaptation of production and yield data collection methodologies in small islands context.
	BP5: Digital agriculture	1.4, 5.b, 9.c, 17.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIDS Solutions Platform: knowledge-sharing and cooperation. E-agriculture strategies (formulation and implementation). Access to up-to-date technical, meteorological and market information.
Better Nutrition	BN1: Healthy diets for all	1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 12.8, 14.b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food and nutrition policy and programme design and implementation. Nutrition mainstreaming across sectoral policies. Support to national coordination and planning mechanisms for food security and nutrition. Advocacy and awareness at national and community levels.

	BN3: Safe food for everyone	2.1, 2.2, 3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good manufacturing, handling, packaging and hygiene practices. • National Codex committees.
Better Environment	BE1: Climate change mitigating and adapted agrifood systems	2.4, 13.1, 13.2, 13.b, 14.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSA practices for integrated crops, trees and livestock production. • Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture and NDC implementation. • Data and statistics: SDG 15 monitoring and Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, plus the sustainable management of forests, and the conservation and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+) forest reference levels. • GCF readiness proposals.
	BE3: Biodiversity and ecosystem services for food and agriculture	2.5, 14.4, 15.1, 15.3, 15.4, 15.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and sound management of chemicals in agriculture. • Forest and landscape restoration. • Use of diverse, multipurpose local species in agroforestry systems. • Evidence-based management and governance, technological innovation and private-sector engagement in marine ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation (sea grass bed and mangrove regeneration, nearshore coastal ecosystem restoration).
Better Life	BL4: Resilient agrifood systems	1.3, 1.5, 2.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food security monitoring system. • Policy development and implementation, including resource allocation. • Emergency assistance following natural disasters. • Fisheries DRR strategies and management.

42. Blue transformation (BP2): FAO in the Pacific SIDS will respond to the need to support a MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable fishery sector to harness the sector's huge potential in developing the Pacific SIDS. FAO will continue to support Members to improve seafood value chains and support equitable access to markets and nutrition. Technical support will be provided to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing by developing information and technology systems. The Pacific SIDS supports small-scale artisanal fishing communities; hence FAO in the Pacific will help Members to further promote community-based fisheries management. FAO will also further support countries in the Pacific with information and analysis on small-scale fisheries for SDG 14 monitoring.

43. One Health (BP3): This is a relatively new challenge in the Pacific SIDS, and one for which FAO's assistance to Members and other stakeholders is highly relevant. While exploring additional support from other Members in the region, and in partnership with other agencies, FAO will assist Members in the Pacific to strengthen One Health systems for human, animal, plant and environmental health, in view of the increased threats to Pacific production systems. Support will be provided to strengthen regional and national capacity, policies and programmes, as well as pest and disease

prevention and management, and early warning and management of health risks, including AMR. FAO will introduce best practices developed by ECTAD and the comprehensive One Health Needs and Readiness tool and training programmes to the Pacific SIDS. FAO assistance will continue to address biosecurity gaps and ensure legislation and policy alignment with international standards. Technical and capacity support will also focus on ecologically based alternatives to hazardous pesticides to enhance food safety while protecting the natural environment of the Pacific SIDS.

44. Small-scale producers' equitable access to resources (BP4): This PPA will continue to be FAO's focus area in the Pacific, where FAO's support to Members will help enable safe and sustainable small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, smallholder agriculture and agroforestry through improved data, legislation, policies, strategies and programmes. These will enhance equitable access by small-scale producers to economic and natural resources, markets, services, information, education and technologies. Small-scale producers in each country of the Pacific have their own characteristics and hence FAO will employ tailored approaches to support the adaptation of evidence-based policies on small-scale production. These will be based on production/yield data collection methodologies in small island contexts, while also mobilizing digital technologies. Specific support to small-scale agriculture and forestry producers will be carried out while respecting the diverse culture and traditions of each country in the Pacific. Furthermore, FAO will focus on improving community-based governance and decision-making mechanisms, strengthening traditional resource management and farming systems, promoting nature-based solutions, and strengthening value chains.

45. FAO's support for small-scale fishing communities will be critical for the Pacific SIDS. It will focus on developing and promoting adaptation strategies such as safe and equitable access to productive nearshore species, scaling up community-based fisheries management, supporting small-scale aquaculture to contribute to food security, and supporting governance processes that enable fishers to participate in management decisions.

46. Digital agriculture (BP5): Under this fundamental PPA for the Pacific SIDS, FAO will assist Members to enhance market opportunities, productivity and resilience through the development of accessible digital technologies, including via the SIDS Solutions Platform, which will promote knowledge-sharing and cooperation. Support will be provided to governments and local stakeholders to facilitate the formulation and implementation of e-agriculture strategies, and the development and replication of viable solutions to improve agrifood systems, including by accessing up-to-date technical, meteorological and market information.

47. Healthy diets for all (BN1): In response to the non-communicable disease crisis and the triple burden of malnutrition affecting the Pacific SIDS, FAO's assistance in this critical area will focus on promoting the production and consumption of fresh, safe, nutritious and healthy food. Specifically, FAO will continue conducting information generation, capacity-strengthening in food and nutrition policy and programme design and implementation, and nutrition mainstreaming across sectoral policies in Pacific SIDS. In addition, FAO will support national coordination and planning for food security and nutrition, and advocacy and awareness at national and community levels, in which FAO and Members will further explore the use of digital means to reach remote islands.

48. Safe food for everyone (BN3): Members in the Pacific SIDS are committed to improving food safety, specifically good manufacturing, handling, packaging and hygiene practices. Working with Members, communities and the private sector, FAO will assist Members in the Pacific to place emphasis on strengthening the capacities of national Codex committees.

49. Climate change mitigating and adapted agrifood systems (BE1): FAO in the Pacific will continue to promote the establishment and implementation of CSA practices for integrated crops, forestry and land management, and livestock production, including through the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture, and the implementation and monitoring of NDCs. Based on regional experience and in line with the new organizational strategy on climate change, FAO's specific assistance will focus on enhancing forest monitoring capacities and determining Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) forest reference levels, sustainable land and water management, and capture fishery and aquaculture, including supporting countries' access to climate funds through GEF, Adaptation Fund and GCF proposals.

50. Biodiversity and ecosystem services for food and agriculture (BE3): FAO's focus in the Pacific in this PPA is to provide technical support for the sustainable use, conservation and restoration of marine, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems and ecosystem services. FAO will develop improved policies and programmes for integrated evidence-based management and governance, technological innovation and private-sector engagement in ecosystem restoration and biodiversity conservation programmes. These may include regenerating sea grass beds and mangroves (inshore fisheries nurseries) as well as improving and restoring the health of nearshore coastal ecosystems, such as coral reefs and associated species, to support food security and livelihoods of small-scale fishers and farmers.

51. Resilient agrifood systems (BL4): FAO will provide support to Members in the Pacific with specific attention to building the resilience of agrifood systems and livelihoods through improved understanding of vulnerabilities and improved risk reduction and management measures. FAO will provide technical support to establish sustainable food security monitoring systems in the context of seasonality and shocks, generate evidence to inform relevant policies, promote inclusive policy development in relation to resilient agrifood systems, and develop national capacities for policy implementation and resource allocation towards resilient agrifood systems. Targeted assistance will also be provided to address emergencies and support restoration efforts following natural disasters, including through the promotion of crops and trees that can restore a healthy food supply soon after the passage of cyclones. FAO will work closely with fisheries authorities and fishing communities to position the fisheries sector to reduce risk through improved disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies and participation in disaster risk management at the national level.

Accelerators and cross-cutting themes

52. In order to accelerate progress and maximize efforts in meeting the SDGs and to realize the *four betters*, FAO will apply **four accelerators** and **three cross-cutting themes** in all programmatic interventions to accelerate impact while minimizing trade-offs:

Accelerators

53. Technology for sustainable agrifood systems can be defined as the application of science and knowledge to develop techniques to deliver a product and/or service that enhances the sustainability of agrifood systems. Access to and use of technologies must be available and affordable to all, being mindful of possible risks of increasing inequality and market concentration and contributing to the degradation of natural resources. FAO in the region is organizing knowledge sharing events to showcase new technologies and good practices that use cutting-edge technologies in field programmes and projects. A knowledge management strategy will be implemented by FAO to ensure access of all Members to FAO's technical work at the regional and country levels through multiple platforms, including to sources of explicit and implicit knowledge, data and evidence.

54. Innovation is a central driving force for achieving a world free from hunger and malnutrition, and includes technological, social, policy, institutional and financial innovations. Innovation can be defined as doing something new and different like solving an old problem in a new way, addressing a new problem with a proven solution, and/or bringing a new solution to a new problem. While incorporating rich experiences of innovations in the region, FAO will implement the corporate Science and Innovation strategy and ensure availability of a menu of solutions within projects and programmes, including traditional knowledge, modern practices and upcoming tools and technologies, to address the challenges of the region. FAO will also develop a compendium of proven solutions for agrifood challenges in the region and make it available on multiple knowledge sharing platforms.

55. Data products contribute to strengthening evidence-based decision-making, and include the development of methods, standards and frameworks, and the collection, processing and dissemination of data, together with required capacity development and partnerships. FAO in the region will support national statistical institutions and relevant ministries in the adoption of internationally recognized definitions, concepts and classifications, and strengthen their capacity to produce internationally comparable data and report on the 21 SDG indicators. FAO will also support more frequent and harmonized statistics using an integrated system of agriculture surveys and censuses, while promoting

more cost-effective and timely statistics through increasing use of digital technologies. Regional knowledge products will have a strong data component to support evidence-based policy formulation.

56. Complements (governance, human capital and institutions) are necessary and complementary dimensions of effective collective action at all scales, considering in particular that while technology and innovation have achieved important progress over the last decade, many stakeholders remain excluded from their benefits. The importance of these complements were amplified during the COVID-19 pandemic. FAO will continue to develop these complements by providing policy support and technical and strategic guidance to rebuild pandemic resilient agrifood systems. Through regional and field programmes, FAO in the region will support capacity development on good governance and human capital for sustainable agrifood transformation.

Cross-cutting themes

57. Gender equality is central to FAO's mandate, as FAO can achieve its goals only if it works in parallel towards gender equality and supports women's diverse roles in agriculture and rural transformation. The country work on gender equality in the region will be guided by the Regional Gender Strategy and Action Plan for Asia and the Pacific (2022-2025), which establishes regional priorities to support gender equality in alignment with the FAO Policy on Gender Equality. FAO will also strengthen its partnership in the area of gender equality, including through the empowerment of women and youth organizations to engage in Responsible Agricultural Investments (RAI) and through gender mainstreaming in ASEAN's work programme on rural development and poverty eradication.

58. Youth have long been recognized by the United Nations as a major human resource for development and key agents for social change, economic growth and technological innovation. FAO will strive to assess and include the needs and opportunities of youth, place attention on the needs of younger youth (ages 15 to 17) and ensure the inclusion of youth representatives. In the region, FAO will support Members to develop school programmes and vocational training at local level based on studies to strengthen an interlink between child labour eradication and youth decent employment in sustainable agriculture at regional and country levels, while strengthening the capacity of local/national/regional partners to promote youth engagement in agriculture and to design youth-inclusive programmes.

59. Inclusion is critical for FAO's interventions to leave no one behind, which calls for an inclusive approach to local, national and global action to ensure that historically marginalized groups participate in, contribute to, and benefit from economic growth and human development. It is a process, a principle and an outcome. FAO will scale up its efforts to promote inclusive and sustainable rural transformation in the region. Priority actions include generating knowledge and undertaking advocacy actions to support the rural poor, particularly vulnerable groups. FAO in the region will provide policy advice and support Members in addressing structural inequalities that prevent vulnerable groups from contributing to and benefiting from development, and in having their basic rights upheld. FAO will also support the meaningful participation of vulnerable groups in local and national level decision-making processes that affect their lives and livelihoods.

FAO's corporate strategies and initiatives

60. The Hand-in-Hand Initiative (HIHI): FAO's HIHI strives to facilitate the acceleration of agrifood systems transformation and sustainable rural development by targeting the poorest and the hungry, differentiating territories and strategies, and bringing together all relevant dimensions through analysis and partnerships. FAO will continue to facilitate partnerships and provide advanced geospatial modelling and analytics through the HIHI Geospatial Platform in order to identify the greatest opportunities to raise incomes and reduce the inequities and vulnerabilities of rural populations.

61. The region will promote the following good practices and approaches:
- a. Conducting a Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis to inform integrated investment planning;
 - b. Supporting governments to broker government-private sector partnerships and investments in line with HIHI-supported programmes and plans;

- c. Introducing special perspectives from SIDS and from a resilience angle into HIHI-supported investment plans;
- d. Delivering value chain investments through partnerships with IFIs and multilateral funds (including the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Global Agriculture and Food Security Fund); and
- e. Establishing multisectoral governance structures and roundtables to coordinate diverse actors' efforts regarding inclusive rural transformation.

62. One Country One Priority Product (OCOP): In September 2021, FAO launched its Global Action on Green Development of Special Agricultural Products: OCOP, aiming to develop sustainable value chains for Special Agricultural Products. These products have unique qualities and special characteristics associated with geographical locations and cultural heritages; they can significantly contribute to ensuring food security and healthy diets, supporting farmers' livelihoods and economic growth, and protecting the environment and biodiversity.

63. Implementation of OCOP in the region will emphasize the importance of government ownership of the processes. A previous study on One Village One Product (OVOP) indicates that active involvement by governments can facilitate the mobilization of different stakeholders involved in developing and promoting products in a way that ensures sustainable outcomes. FAO will organize regional events to share experiences and provide key principles in conducting OCOP. In addition, FAO in the region will introduce Members and key stakeholders to Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)'s multimedia training package on OVOP under an agreement between FAO and JICA.

64. FAO's 1 000 Digital Villages Initiative (DVI): DVI aims to convert 1 000 villages across the world into digital hubs, with the aim of supporting the transformation of agrifood systems. Furthermore, FAO is operationalizing the International Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture to provide a venue for dialogue and peer learning and to strengthen linkages between agriculture and digital economy fora. This platform will support governments in policy-making while addressing potential concerns of increased data-sharing.

65. FAO will facilitate the process of developing digital villages under the PPA on Digital Agriculture. FAO has started working with 10 countries in the region to promote DVI, and each country is at a different stage in the process. FAO will expand its support to other countries, assist Members to develop a strategy on the use of digital approaches in transforming rural communities, and suggest possible digital solutions for targeted communities identified by Members.

IV. Towards a reinvigorated business model

Effective delivery through a programmatic and results-based approach

66. With increased accountability, FAO places strategic emphasis on the implementation of major FAO initiatives and on Regional Priorities through which the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 is contextualized for Asia and the Pacific. This approach entails more integration of resource-planning across different sources of funding (e.g. Regular Programme, voluntary contributions, Technical Cooperation Programme) for effective delivery of results within the Regional Priorities. FAO's programmatic approach links work-planning of both regular budget and field project resources and results with the Regional Priorities. This integration facilitates the constitution of teams for multidisciplinary technical support to projects as well as resource mobilization efforts within the framework of Regional Priorities. Guided by the PPAs, both programme and project monitoring is directly linked with common milestones and SDG indicators, facilitating better monitoring and reporting of progress. In this spirit, FAO will continually enhance its response to country needs to deliver results by providing interdisciplinary and high-quality technical expertise as well as policy advice through various mechanisms, in full alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Field programmes

67. In line with the ambition and needs of the SDGs, FAO will achieve higher impact by developing field programmes toward the scale of interventions that are needed for countries in Asia and the Pacific to fulfil the 2030 Agenda. Field programme interventions will benefit from an increasingly programmatic approach supported by modular and agile technical teams to bring together a range of expertise for transformation at the systems level. FAO will use its new initiatives, such as DVI and OCOP, as vehicles to formulate field programmes.

68. Deepening UN development system repositioning at country, subregional and regional levels will unlock further efficiencies and effectiveness. Through innovative partnerships and business models, such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, FAO will serve as an integrator of wider technical, policy, institutional, financial, investment, and scientific resources to achieve country priorities.

Sharing and exchanging

69. The “new normal” and the use of information and communication technology have been instrumental in creating much more dynamic platforms for sharing and exchanging ideas, experiences and lessons. FAO will reinvigorate existing collaborations on specific technical priorities to further strengthen communications inter- and cross-regionally. FAO will actively seek to learn from Members on implementing the programmatic approach and improving efficiencies for project operationalization and delivery. FAO will also further develop the Regional Aquaculture Technical Platform and SIDS Solution Platform and facilitate easy exchanges of information among Members.

V. Annexes

Annex 1. The Four Betters and 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPAs)

PPA	Outcome Statement	SDG Targets
BETTER PRODUCTION	<i>Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns, through efficient and inclusive food and agriculture supply chains at local, regional and global level, ensuring resilient and sustainable agrifood systems in a changing climate and environment</i>	2.3, 2.4, 6.4, 14.6, 14.7, 14.b, 15.2
BP1: Innovation for sustainable agriculture production	Sustainable crop, livestock and forestry production systems that are productive, resilient, innovative and competitive, and create integrated entrepreneurial and business opportunities, inclusive of small-scale and vulnerable producers, supported through enabling technologies and policies	2.3, 2.4, 6.4, 15.2
BP2: Blue transformation	More efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable blue food systems promoted through improved policies and programmes for integrated science-based management, technological innovation and private-sector engagement	2.1, 2.2, 14.2, 14.4, 14.6, 14.7, 14.b, 14.c
BP3: One Health	Strengthened and better performing national and international integrated One Health systems for human, animal, plant and environmental health achieved through improved pest and disease prevention, early warning and management of national and global health risks, including AMR	1.5, 3.d, 15.8
BP4: Small-scale producers' equitable access to resources	Enhanced equitable access of small-scale producers and family farmers to economic and natural resources, markets, services, information, education and technologies ensured through improved policies, strategies and programmes	1.4, 2.3, 2.4, 9.3
BP5: Digital agriculture	Accessible digital ICT technologies to enhance market opportunities, productivity and resilience integrated into agrifood systems policies and programmes, with particular focus on ensuring affordable and equitable access of poor and vulnerable rural communities	1.4, 5.b, 9.c, 17.8
BETTER NUTRITION	<i>End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition in all its forms, including promoting nutritious food and increasing access to healthy diets</i>	2.1, 2.2, 2.c, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 12.3
BN1: Healthy diets for all	The right to adequate food established and transition towards healthy diets for national populations prioritized in integrated institutional,	1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4

PPA	Outcome Statement	SDG Targets
	policy and legal environments that ensure and incentivize engagement of consumers and the private sector	12.8, 14.b
BN2: Nutrition for the most vulnerable	Identifying and ending food insecurity and malnutrition for the most vulnerable individuals in all contexts made the specific focus of targeted policies, strategies and programmes developed and implemented by countries	1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2
BN3: Safe food for everyone	Integrated, multi-sectoral food safety policies and legislation across national agrifood systems adopted and implemented by governments, and capacities and awareness of value chain operators and consumers enhanced.	2.1, 2.2, 3.2
BN4: Reducing food loss and waste	Clear, specific and contextualized roadmaps to prompt and enable all actors in the food supply chain, the food environment and at consumer level to reduce food loss and waste put in place and implemented by governments and intergovernmental organizations	2.1, 2.2, 12.3
BN5: Transparent markets and trade	Improved market transparency and equitable participation in markets, global value chains and international trade achieved through policy coordination and human and institutional capacities for evidence-based decision-making	2.b, 2.c, 10.a, 17.11
BETTER ENVIRONMENT	<i>Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial and marine ecosystems and combat climate change (reduce, reuse, recycle, residual management) through more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems</i>	<i>2.5, 12.2, 12.4, 12.5, 13.2, 14.3, 14.4, 15.1, 15.3, 15.4</i>
BE1: Climate change mitigating and adapted agrifood systems	Transformation and resilience of agrifood systems to achieve sustainability and Paris Agreement goals enabled through the establishment and implementation of climate-smart agricultural practices, policies and programmes	2.4, 13.1, 13.2, 13.b, 14.3
BE2: Bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture	A bioeconomy that balances economic value and social welfare with environmental sustainability promoted through formulation and implementation of integrated evidence-based policies and practices in micro and macro environments, using technological, organizational and social innovations	12.2, 12.4, 12.5
BE3: Biodiversity and ecosystem services for food and agriculture	Biodiversity for food and agriculture maintained and sustainable use, conservation and restoration of marine, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems, and their services promoted through adoption of targeted policies and practices	2.5, 14.4, 15.1, 15.3, 15.4, 15.6
BE4: Achieving sustainable urban food systems	More efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable urban and peri-urban agrifood systems transformation that addresses urban poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition, enables healthy diets and catalyses inclusive and sustainable rural transformation while safeguarding the underlying natural resources base, promoted through the adoption of supportive policies and programmes, and the initiation and scaling-up of actions and investments by national and local stakeholders	1.1, 2.1, 11.a, 12.1
BETTER LIFE	<i>Promote inclusive economic growth by reducing inequalities (urban/rural areas, rich/poor countries, men/women)</i>	<i>1.1, 1.2, 1.5, 2.3, 2.a, 5.4, 5a, 10.1, 10.2, 16.1</i>
BL1: Gender equality and rural women's empowerment	Women's equal rights, access to, and control over resources, services, technologies, institutions, economic opportunities and decision-making ensured, and discriminatory laws and practices eliminated, through gender-responsive policies, strategies, programmes and legal frameworks	2.3, 5.4, 5.a, 5.c
BL2: Inclusive rural transformation	Inclusive rural transformation and revitalization of rural areas ensuring equal participation of, and benefits to poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups accelerated through implementation of targeted policies, strategies and programmes	1.1, 8.3, 8.5, 10.1, 10.2, 10.7, 14.b

PPA	Outcome Statement	SDG Targets
BL3: Agriculture and food emergencies	Countries facing, or at risk of acute food insecurity provided with urgent livelihood and nutrition assistance and, adopting a humanitarian-development nexus and its contribution to peace approach, their populations equipped with appropriate capacities to better withstand and manage future shocks and risks	1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 16.1
BL4: Resilient agrifood systems	Resilience of agrifood systems and livelihoods to socio-economic and environmental shocks and stresses strengthened through improved multi-risk understanding and effective governance mechanisms for implementation of vulnerability reduction measures	1.3, 1.5, 2.4
BL5: Hand-in-Hand Initiative	Agricultural transformation and sustainable rural development accelerated through targeting the poorest and the hungry, differentiating territories and strategies, and bringing together all relevant dimensions of agrifood systems through analysis and partnerships	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.a, 10.1, 10.2
BL6: Scaling up investment	Transformation towards sustainable agrifood systems with large-scale impacts on reducing inequalities and eradicating poverty and hunger accelerated through increased public and private investment, and improved capacities to leverage future investments	1.b, 2.a, 10.1, 10.2, 10.b, 17.5