



# COUNCIL

## Hundred and Seventieth Session

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## The Hand-in-Hand Initiative

### Executive summary

This report summarizes recent progress in the development and implementation of the Hand-in-Hand (HiH) Initiative, with specific reference to:

- a) brief case reports of progress in 15 countries, out of the total of 52 HiH-supported countries, and their larger and ambitious programming organized by region;
- b) progress on the development of a dashboard to ensure effective delivery, management, governance and impact of the Initiative;
- c) progress on the development of a global-level communications strategy to build internal capabilities and promote partnerships with external entities.

This report builds on information provided in previous reports to the Council. Additional information on the Initiative is available on the Hand-in-Hand webpage on FAO's corporate website and on the Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Platform.

### **Suggested action by the Council**

The Council is invited to take note of the progress made on the implementation of the Hand-in-Hand (HiH) Initiative and to provide guidance, as deemed appropriate.

In particular, the Council may wish to:

- a) welcome the continued growth in the number of countries participating in the Initiative, with seven additional countries signing on since November 2021;
- b) welcome the ways participating countries are using the Initiative to strengthen and accelerate existing programmes or develop new ones, build national capabilities, and bolster national ownership of the sustainable development process;
- c) congratulate the HiH initiative and specially the HiH geospatial platform for winning the Geospatial World Excellence Award;
- d) recognize that all FAO Members may participate in the HiH Initiative, not only as beneficiaries but also as development and resource partners through multiple channels, including direct assistance and support to mechanisms such as the Flexible Multi-Partner Mechanism (FMM);
- e) recognize the progress made on the development of a dashboard and its functions as a monitoring system for providing regular, real-time progress to inform and improve the delivery and evaluation of impact of the Initiative;
- f) acknowledge the progress made in developing a global communications strategy to deepen internal engagement and develop partnership at global and local levels.

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## I. Introduction

1. This report responds to requests by the Council at its 168th Session (CL 168/5) to provide regular updates on progress and results achieved in the implementation of the Hand-in-Hand (HiH) Initiative.
2. The Director-General announced the Initiative on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September 2019. In the following months, the Director-General invited FAO Members that met the objective criteria to participate in the Initiative. Members met the criteria if they are Land-locked Developing Countries (LLDCs) or Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and also Least Developed Countries (LDCs), or other Least Developed Countries, Food Crisis Countries (as defined by the Global Network against Food Crises), and countries with large poor populations.
3. To date, 52 countries have expressed their desire to participate. Efforts to support the growing number of countries signify the increasing resource-intensive nature of the Initiative.
4. Participating countries to date:
  - a. Africa (29): Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Somalia, Tanzania, South Sudan, Uganda, Zimbabwe
  - b. Asia (11): Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Kiribati, Lao PDR, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu
  - c. Europe and Central Asia (1): Tajikistan
  - d. Latin America (8): Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru
  - e. Near East and North Africa (3): Sudan, Syria, Yemen
5. Experience confirms that the HiH Initiative offers FAO Members and their development partners programmatic support and an innovative new way of strengthening, expanding and sustaining ambitious national programmes for agrifood systems transformation to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1, 2 and 10.
6. Specifically, the HiH Initiative offers the Geospatial Platform, which is the world's largest and most capable platform for data and information exchange and analysis. Under the HiH Initiative, FAO technical task teams work with national counterparts to apply analytical methods that help identify territories and populations where programmes and investments to unlock market-oriented opportunities for inclusive and sustainable growth to eradicate poverty, end malnutrition and reduce inequality.
7. To date, nearly 40 Members have completed the necessary technical studies and are making headway in identifying programme entry points, value chains, territories and markets. Most have begun preliminary partner consultations. Concept notes are being prepared to summarize key study findings, government-selected priority objectives, a programme outline, a theory of change for achieving measurable progress on SDGs 1, 2 and 10, and key programme metrics. These will be supported by needs assessments for both public and private investments.
8. This report provides highlights of progress in 15 countries. The selection is based on the countries' desire to demonstrate their progress and diversity of experience. Additional country highlights will be presented in future reports.

## II. Country Progress Highlights

### A. Africa

9. With 29 participating countries, the African region is seeing steady, if incremental, progress, with francophone countries making considerable advance. FAO technical task team is also working on developing a more comprehensive approach focusing on the Sahel for the region.

#### Burundi

10. The Initiative started in Burundi in late 2021, with the Minister of the Environment, Agriculture and Livestock indicating expectations for strong support from the Hand-in-Hand process in five strategic priority areas:

- a. Increase productivity and quality of food through the establishment of agricultural growth zones (*centres de rayonnement*) and breeding centres, with a focus on transformation and fortification.
- b. Strengthen protection and sustainable use of natural resources, including stabilization of rivers and lakes, water resources, reforestation and promotion of renewable energies.
- c. Promote green cities through the development of horticulture, greenhouses and waste management.
- d. Support socio-economic reintegration of refugees through social integration and the development of income-generating activities.
- e. Boost institutional capacities of central and decentralized authorities, and bolster the coordination of partners for synergies and stronger impact of interventions.

11. The HiH team is currently working with the Government on several analytical products, including agricultural typologies and territorial analyses. The team is also conducting analysis on institutional and governance aspects related to decentralization, land, water and forest tenure, and the development-humanitarian-peace nexus. This analytical work will inform the development of proposals for strategic interventions for developing agricultural growth zones, including institutional innovations.

#### Gabon

12. After a slow start, the country is moving forward rapidly. The Government signed the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) supporting the Initiative in late 2021. Based on preliminary discussions, analyses and consultations, it was agreed that the Hand-in-Hand Initiative will support the Government in operationalizing the High Agricultural Productivity Zones (ZAP), established through the Emerging Gabon Strategic Plan (Plan stratégique Gabon Emergent), also known as PSGE. The ZAP aims to ensure national food security and nutrition and to prioritize the country's agricultural potential.

13. The Initiative will support the Government on establishing the first pilot ZAP in Andem region, close to Libreville, with a focus on developing a poultry value chain. The Initiative will also provide support to build up institutional capacities to manage ZAP.

14. In March 2022, the HiH team shared with Government officials a methodology for territorial-level analysis to identify agri-economic potential in the target territories, as well as the typology of micro-regions. The officials agreed to nominate national experts who can work together with the HiH GIS team to prepare agricultural typologies for Gabon.

## **Guinea Bissau**

15. The Initiative in Guinea Bissau focuses on three target regions – Gabu, Oio and Biombo – where food insecurity and malnutrition are particularly high. The goal is to move toward sustainable diversification and improve the population’s food security, nutrition and livelihoods.

16. The Initiative adopts a twin-track approach in Guinea Bissau. First, the Initiative will support the preparation of a national strategy for the cashew value chain to build a more sustainable and inclusive supply chain and processing system. Second, the Initiative will help identify the most appropriate interventions for sustainable diversification of food systems. Specifically, the Initiative will focus on developing value chains for local agriculture, forestry, fishing and small livestock. It will do this by promoting the transition to sustainable use of natural resources and building resilience against climatic and natural shocks.

17. Currently, several analytical products to support evidence-based decision making are under development. They include systematic analysis of cashew and fisheries value chains, as well as a qualitative territorial development assessment in the three target regions. The territorial assessment will help identify the most appropriate and feasible interventions.

## **Malawi**

18. Malawi joined the Initiative in November 2020. The Government has earmarked tentative entry points and value chains that could benefit from HiH’s programmatic support to accelerate agriculture development. The HiH team in Malawi is in the process of validating typologies guiding note, which was developed earlier this year.

19. The Government has set up a national taskforce team, so that they can be trained by the GIS team to customize the typologies to national context. The national taskforce team will meet in May 2022 to analyze and prioritize value chains. This process will feed into the development of the program investment plan for the country.

20. The national taskforce team is also organizing an orientation for senior government officials, specifically principal secretaries from key ministries. An orientation for Donor Community on Agriculture and Food Security (DCAFS) and other development partners is scheduled to take place in May 2022.

## **Mali**

21. Mali signed on to the Initiative in 2020. The official launch took place in February 2021 under the auspices of the Minister of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries. The United Nations Resident Coordinator in the country endorsed it at the launch. The Minister established a multi-stakeholder steering committee and technical committee to align the Initiative with key national priorities and programmes.

22. The Initiative will support the operationalization of two pilot Agricultural Growth Zones (Agropoles). The establishment of Agropoles is promoted by the country's Economic Acceleration and Sustainable Development Strategy (CREDD II, 2019-2023) and the National Agricultural Investment Plan to attract private investment and promote agricultural transformation by enhancing competitiveness and access to markets. Agropoles would also improve the incomes of small-scale producers and small- and medium-businesses supporting agricultural and non-agricultural activities in rural and semi-urban areas. Improving incomes and diversifying production would also guarantee their access to healthy diets.

23. In 2021, the Initiative supported the delivery of the following analytical products:

- a. Analysis of agricultural public expenditure.
- b. Synthesis of relevant national policies and strategies in the food and agriculture sector.

- c. The agricultural typologies in Mali using the methodology of territorial-level analysis to identify agroeconomic potential in the target areas.
  - d. Donor mapping, comprising the development of a comprehensive donor database and maps showing the geographical presence of different donors in the country.
24. The agricultural typologies were presented and discussed with key actors at the regional level in the Koulikoro, Sikasso and Ségou regions. The discussions of the regional workshops were shared during the national workshop, which took place in Bamako in July 2021.
25. In September 2021, the Technical Committee and the Steering Committee validated the recommendations that came out of the national workshop. The two committees also validated the proposal that the HiH Initiative support the operationalization of the two Agropoles to be built in Koulikoro and Kayes. Four priority areas of intervention have been identified:
  - a. Invest in building resilience against climate change to bolster productivity and production.
  - b. Develop processing tools and promote the agro-industry for value addition.
  - c. Promote entrepreneurial initiatives and financial inclusion of women and young people. This should be done through developing financing instruments and income-generating activities.
  - d. Increase access to markets using commercial partnerships, including partnerships with the private sector.
26. The pilot phase of the Initiative will target specific sites in the Koulikoro and Kayes regions:
  - a. In the Koulikoro Agropole, the Initiative will target the Bancoumana area, where it will promote polyculture market gardening.
  - b. In the Agropole de Kayes, the Initiative will focus on the western Sahel zone where it will promote the livestock and meat sector.
27. The two committees also approved three additional studies to be conducted in the target regions:
  - a. Socio-economic and financial analysis of sub-sectors, with high potential for development. The goal is to promote market-oriented agriculture.
  - b. Environmental and social assessment to identify opportunities for building resilience against climate change.
  - c. Analysis of governance and territorial development trends and institutional capacities at the decentralized level.
28. The results of these analyses will inform the development of a detailed multi-year programme, which will be supported by the HiH Initiative. The three studies are currently underway, and their results will become available by May 2022.

## **Niger**

29. Since the Government expressed interest in joining the HiH Initiative in September 2020, activities to shape the Initiative's approach in the country have progressed slowly due to presidential elections in December 2020 and in February 2021. The country has potential for agriculture and livestock development, but the economy remains vulnerable due to climate change, degradation of natural resources, lack of diversification and increasing security problems.
30. The HiH team prepared the agricultural typologies for Niger in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. They were shared with the Government and key stakeholders in December 2021. In February 2022, the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development officially launched the Initiative, together with the UN resident coordinator.

31. The preliminary assessments and multi-stakeholder consultations identified the key entry points for the Initiative. The operationalization of the Initiative builds on the results of the ongoing “pro-Sahel” project, which promotes innovation of small-scale irrigation systems for small-scale producers in the Sahel. Key entry points:

- a. Strengthen climate change resilience of irrigated farming systems.
- b. Develop entrepreneurial capacities of women and youth working in value chains, with strong marketing and nutrition potential.
- c. Build institutional capacity to support inclusive and sustainable planning and innovation locally.

32. The Technical Cooperation Programme, combined with One FAO provision of technical and policy support, provides for the institutional capacity building work at the territorial level. It aims to identify investment opportunities in the target regions of Dosso and Tahoua to improve food security and nutrition, and sustainable use of natural resources.

## **Nigeria**

33. The HiH Initiative in Nigeria has enjoyed steadily increasing government ownership and leadership. Regular briefings are provided to the ministers of agriculture and rural development, environment, finance, budget and national planning. There is a monthly coordination meeting for the Government’s technical team and the FAO team to review together progress on key tasks of 2022. Ad hoc bilateral meetings with ministries take place to clarify the Initiative’s priorities and build synergies.

34. The Government technical task team has developed, validated and finalized the HiH programme plan. The national steering committee on the Initiative has endorsed the plan, which articulates the Initiative’s vision in Nigeria, strategic objectives, key performance indicators, priority entry points and action tracks. The plan will be translated into investment briefs and concept notes to support dialogues with investors. In May 2022, FAO teams from different divisions will travel to the country to engage key stakeholders. The results of this in-country mission will inform the next stage of executive roundtables for resource mobilization and partnerships development.

35. Analytical work, including a donor mapping exercise and geospatial analysis, have been conducted to guide territorial targeting and identification of key resource partners. The inception phase for the HiH Initiative in Nigeria is slated to be completed by the third quarter of 2022.

## **Zimbabwe**

36. Zimbabwe’s HiH Initiative builds on the Government’s agrifood systems transformation agenda, leveraging existing agricultural investment in the country, including AgrInvest. The Initiative strengthens this effort with an advanced methodology that combines household-level data with GIS information by identifying territorial hotspots.

37. Following the launch of the Initiative in November 2020, significant progress has been made. The donor mapping, data assessment and typologies analysis are complete. With this, the Government has identified entry points. Extensive consultations have taken place at national and provincial levels.

38. With the Initiative’s support, Zimbabwe is focusing on developing inclusive value chain development, enhancing agriculture financing and infrastructure, and reducing food loss and waste.

- a. On policy, the Initiative also supports the use of data-driven policy, including instruments to guarantee loans for agricultural development. The Ministry of Agriculture, Land, Fisheries Water and Rural Development is leading the process of aligning the Initiative with national priorities for agriculture and food systems transformation.

- b. On partnership, the United Arab Emirates and the Netherlands have each committed USD 350,000 to target smallholder aggregation and infrastructure for reducing food loss and waste.

39. The Ministry of Lands Agriculture Fisheries Water and Rural Development is organizing a roundtable meeting to define priorities and deepen partnerships.

### ***B. Asia***

40. The 11 participating countries in the region have expressed eagerness to take advantage of the Hand-in-Hand programmatic support to advance their national development goals. FAO country teams are working together with government officials to translate into concrete investment plans the favourable intention and alignment with national priorities for the next stage of the Initiative.

#### **Lao People's Democratic Republic**

41. Lao People's Democratic Republic considers the HiH Initiative as a way to mobilize technical, financial, and human resources to unlock agricultural potential and eradicate poverty and malnutrition along the China-Lao railway corridor, currently under construction.

42. Programme activities began in late 2020, including territorial-level analysis to identify agro-economic potential in the target territories, assessments of suitable production, value chain analysis (rice, maize, cassava, fruits), donor mapping, the launch of a joint task force with the government on railway territory development. The Initiative aims to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers and vulnerable populations, especially women, youth and ethno-linguistic groups, in the provinces of Luam Namtha, Oudomxay, Luang Prabang and Vientiane.

43. The Government has requested that all development partners work together and follow the HiH Initiative approach to make progress toward SDG1, 2 and 10. A TCP of USD 100,000 was approved in March 2022. The TCP will help build the country's capacity to raise funding and build partnerships through the HiH partner engagement strategy.

44. Informal engagement of partners began in 2020, including with international financial institutions, the European Union, Israel, Malaysia, the U.S. Agency for International Development, Thailand International Cooperation Agency, and China Railway Company. An inception workshop held in May 2021 served as an opportunity for international partners to start working together formally and launch resource mobilization efforts. Currently, the Government is preparing executive roundtables to facilitate this effort.

#### **Nepal**

45. Under the Hand-in-Hand Initiative, FAO and the World Bank supported the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development in conducting a study and recommendations for a climate-smart agriculture investment plan (CSAIP) in Nepal. The CSAIP was validated and launched by the Ministry in 2021. The study sets out a framework to identify key opportunities for collaboration and investment in the agriculture sector. It also contributes to the World Bank's agriculture engagement strategy and FAO's Green Climate Fund projects.

46. The Initiative has also provided analysis on the impacts of COVID-19 on value chains and women in agriculture. It has used geospatial tools for analysis of productivity potential and climate response.

47. After a change in the Government, the HiH team is supporting ongoing stakeholder engagement processes to roll out CSAIP-related plans. The team has also supported further mapping activities. They include a more refined-scale mapping of the territorial-level analysis to identify



agroeconomic potential in the target areas, as well as localized SDG poverty and food security data mapping.

48. The new secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development chaired a wider dissemination meeting of the CSAIP in January 2022, emphasizing its guiding importance for the sector. In March, the Ministry also showcased the value-added of GIS analysis to inform integrated investment planning during FAO's Asia Pacific Regional Conference of Ministers in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

49. Detailed preparations are underway for facilitating the integration of CSAIP options into regular planning at the local level in selected provinces. This will help mainstream the inclusive climate-resilient agrifood systems approach and identify locally important investment requirements from development partners and private companies.

### **Solomon Islands**

50. FAO under the HiH continues to support the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock with the 10-year Agriculture Sector Growth and Investment Plan (ASGIP) 2021-2030. It was thanks to the joint support of FAO and IFAD that the Ministry was able to develop ASGIP, with four key programme components:

- a. governance, management, and innovation;
- b. national food security and nutrition;
- c. national livestock development program;
- d. national crop development program.

51. Based on the ASGIP, IFAD and FAO jointly designed the "Agricultural Investment for Markets and Nutrition Project" in 2021, which mobilized USD 15 million from the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP). The project supports the HiH objectives of SDG1 and SDG2.

52. In November 2021, the Ministry held the first partner engagement meeting titled "Development Partners Sector Working Group," with support from FAO and IFAD. Participating development partners, including the World Bank, World Vision, UN agencies, and officials from Australia and Japan, had a chance to learn about the ASGIP objectives, areas of intervention, and financial and technical assistance being sought. For example, the partners reviewed four prioritized concept notes, on poultry farming, coconut industry development, root crops, and food loss and waste reduction.

### ***C. Europe and Central Asia***

#### **Tajikistan**

53. In Tajikistan, the Hand-in-Hand Initiative supports the development of a 10-year National Investment Plan for the agriculture sector. The Initiative specifically focuses on the dairy sector, which has been identified as one with the greatest potential to improve the incomes of the poorest communities and to generate opportunities for value-chain development.

54. A key innovation of the National Investment Plan has been the application of geospatial techniques to analyse the country's current agriculture sector performance and existing challenges. Since the launch of the Initiative in 2020, the HiH team has produced geospatial datasets related to Tajikistan's food systems, including population, infrastructure, natural resources, production, and data processing. The World Bank and IFAD are financing two projects identified by the geospatial datasets.

55. The Ministry of Agriculture formally endorsed the National Investment Plan in February 2022. The typologies and the initial version of the monitoring and evaluation dashboard platform are complete and were presented to development partners in March 2022.

### ***D. Latin America***

56. In the eight participating countries of this region, the HiH Initiative has the Governments' support at the highest level. In addition to intensive country-level work, the FAO technical team has begun conducting an assessment to tackle food insecurity challenges of the Dry Corridors for a regional approach.

#### **Ecuador**

57. Ecuador joined the HiH Initiative in June 2020, and the Initiative supports the National Agricultural Plan (NAP) 2020-2030. FAO's HiH team has been working with the Government and local stakeholders on identifying opportunities to strengthen the cocoa value chain. As part of this effort, information on all national programmes and private initiatives are being systematized, and main actors throughout the value chain are being identified. This information will help define the scope of an investment programme to improve the value chain.

58. Ecuador is part of the Multidisciplinary Fund (MDF) project called "Strengthening Governments' Capacity for Enabling Economic and Social Recovery Post-COVID-19 Through Investments in Agrifood Sectors." Under the MDF, FAO is preparing a letter of agreement with Universidad de Chile to analyse the determinants of innovation in agrifood value chains with growth potential. Following the HiH strategies, the analysis will be used for making the cocoa value chain more inclusive and sustainable.

59. Using the typology maps as an input, the Ministry of Agriculture is organizing, on territorial basis, three of their thematic projects that are part of their National Agricultural Plan. These projects focus on livestock (Proyecto nacional de reconversión y sostenibilidad ganadera), forestry (Dinamización del sector forestal productivo sostenible), and agriculture (Proyecto integral de diversificación agroproductiva y reconversión agrícola).

#### **El Salvador**

60. The Initiative in El Salvador supports the national RECLIMA programme, which aims to strengthen the resilience of farmers against climate change. It also supports the agriculture ministry's Agricultural Rescue Master Plan, which has a fully compatible approach with HiH.

61. Noteworthy development includes preparing an investment note on the coffee value chain in the Tecapa Chinameca mountain range, a territory prioritized by the Government. The HiH task force is working together with the Salvadoran Coffee Council to obtain data on the coffee value chain. They are collecting information on the value chain's actors, characterization of the sector and the productive systems, including its financial models and national documents.

62. FAO's HiH team has met with the Vice Minister of Agriculture to validate the typology maps and understand national policy priorities. The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock has reiterated its willingness to work together with partners to modernize the coffee sector, taking into consideration the producer-consumer relationship, environmental imperative, the domestic market and the export of "special coffee."

#### **Peru**

63. The HiH proposal seeks to promote agricultural transformation and sustainable rural development by promoting family farming and invigorating public and private investments to make a high socioeconomic impact in territories.

64. During 2021, the HiH team developed tools for identifying 11 priority territories in alignment with national agricultural plans. The HiH methodology of micro-region typologies, complemented by other tools from FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture, zeroed in on family-farming territories and

territorial development. The HiH Initiative is being developed within a broad legal and programmatic framework:

- a. the Law No. 30355 for the promotion and development of family farming and its regulations;
- b. the National Strategy for Family Farming 2015-2021;
- c. the National Family Farming Plan 2019 - 2021;
- d. the new National Family Farming Strategy 2021-2030.

65. Along with the selection of the territories, the HiH Initiative will provide criteria for selecting value chains with high potential for poverty reduction and economic revitalization, especially in the family-farming sector and among rural population affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Initiative will also build the capacity of the Agrarian Management Committees (Comités Agrarios de Gestión).

66. The HiH team worked together with regional governments to identify priority value chains (dairy, native grains, potato and others) in La Libertad and Cajamarca and conducted an investment needs assessment. The team has mapped public and private sources of funding using a participatory process. To assess the social returns of such investments, several family-farming typologies are in development.

67. The HiH team is also collaborating with the International Potato Centre of the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centres (CGIAR) to develop proposals for investment in the potato sector.

### *E. Near East and North Africa*

#### **Yemen**

68. In May 2021, FAO, UNDP and WFP, jointly with the World Bank, mobilized a comprehensive USD 127 million project that supports the poverty reduction and food security improvement objectives of the HiH Initiative. The project aims to provide nutritious food products and support livelihoods restoration.

69. To facilitate the development of a national strategy on poverty reduction and food security, the following activities have taken place:

- a. The HiH team in the country held a remote meeting in March 2022 with the Technical Working Group in Aden to finalize the scope of strategy and investment plan.
- b. A four-day meeting is being organized with the Technical Working Group and private companies in Egypt in late May to discuss an investment plan.
- c. Joint FAO-IFC coffee and fisheries value chains studies were finalized. These studies will be validated by private and public sector representatives in May.
- d. The HiH team is working with the Government on drafting the National Agriculture and Fisheries Strategy (NAFS) and National Agriculture and Fisheries Investment Plan (NAFIP).

70. The HiH team and the Yemeni Government continue to mobilize resources to implement projects under the HiH priorities. The World Bank secured additional financing of USD 150 million for the Yemen Food Security Response and Resilience Project. To accelerate resource mobilization, the following analytical products have been made available:

- a. Several investment-oriented diagnostics were finalized and translated into Arabic.
- b. Key financial models for investment in production and post-production technologies were finalized. They are available on the initial model of the HiH dashboard platform.

### **III. Development of a dashboard to ensure the effective delivery, management, governance and impact**

71. The development of a programme dashboard has continued, with preliminary data from seven HiH countries made available: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan and Yemen. The initial dashboard platform has been shared with the seven countries and was well received.

72. The dashboard platform is now undergoing development to improve user experience. A request for proposal will be issued in the coming months to identify a developer to build a cloud-based data architecture that brings together information from a range of different sources and countries to make it available to all stakeholders. This is in accordance with the Organization's effort to modernize its program monitoring processes. This is also in alignment with the Organization's geospatial policies and procedures.

73. The dashboard is designed to provide regular, real-time reporting of progress against programme milestones and SDG objectives. It also provides key impacts and cost-benefit analysis, showcasing advancement in the areas of interventions. The dashboard builds upon significantly resource-intensive analysis and information collection efforts with respect to time and labour. It has also required close consultations between host governments and multiple partners, all of which have informed the country's programmes supported by HiH.

### **IV. Development of a communications strategy to build internal capabilities and promote partnerships with external entities**

74. Many HiH-supported countries are handling the process of capturing evidence and producing communications products in different ways. A global-level communications strategy is necessary to ensure that all HiH work is properly communicated to our key stakeholders, to promote HiH's programme support goals and to attract new partners and donors.

75. To ensure that all communications, engagement and outreach activities are consistent in quality, branding and messaging, the HiH team has identified, through a competitive bidding process, a company to develop a communications strategy at the global level in the timeframe that would benefit the Initiative.

76. The development, and subsequent implementation, of a global communications strategy, aims to strengthen the Initiative's advocacy efforts by supporting participating countries to engage future partners from the development community and the private sector for collaboration.

### **V. The Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Platform**

77. The HiH Geospatial Platform is the main technical tool of FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative. Launched in 2019, is a digital public good, that combines geographic information and statistical data on more than ten domains including food security, crops, soil, water, climate, fisheries, livestock, and forests, helping to identify gaps to work on and opportunities to exploit.

78. The HiH Geospatial Platform is built on data from FAO and other major public data providers from the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, academia, the private sector, and space agencies. All the data from the FAOSTAT statistics platform on food and agriculture for FAO's 194 Member Nations plus 51 territories, from 1961 to the most recent year, is also incorporated.

79. The HiH Geospatial Platform has continued to grow bringing state of the art tools and geospatial information for all Hand-in-Hand countries and was recognized as the best collaborative platform towards data-driven agriculture at the Geospatial World Forum (GWF) 2022 in Amsterdam with the World Excellence Award in Agriculture and Food Security.