

SPECIAL EVENT

United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development ([HLPF](#)) under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council ([ECOSOC](#))

HLPF Special Event Launch: The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World Report 2022

“Repurposing food and agricultural policies to make healthy diets more affordable”

6 July 2022, 10:00 – 12:00 hours EST (hybrid format)

The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World is a FAO annual flagship publication series that monitors progress towards globally agreed food security and nutrition targets, presenting and analyzing global, regional and country level trends, and providing in-depth analyses on emerging issues to inform decision making and contribute to the achievement of ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms. Over the last twenty years, the report has grown in importance and has achieved wide recognition as the leading global report providing critical information to policy makers on food security and nutrition. Since 2017, the publication reports progress towards the targets of ending hunger (SDG Target 2.1) and all forms of malnutrition (SDG Target 2.2). An example of strong UN collaboration work, jointly produced by five UN agencies (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO), this is the fourth year the report will be launched in the sidelines of the HLPF in New York.

The persistence of the COVID-19 pandemic and its lingering consequences, which exacerbate existing inequalities, continue to impede progress towards ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms. It has contributed to economic recessions around the world, leading to higher unemployment and lower earnings and incomes, which has negatively affected the quantity and quality of foods consumed by billions of people. Food prices and inflation have increased in the past year, because of bottlenecks in supply chains, soaring transport costs and other disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the Russia-Ukraine conflict that has recently erupted is already affecting global grain, fertilizer, and energy prices, with the potential to fuel further inflation in the coming months with impacts on food security and nutrition.

As highlighted in last year’s edition of **The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report**, if we are to meet the targets of SDG 2 by 2030, agrifood systems must be transformed to deliver less costly nutritious foods, thus contributing to making healthy diets more affordable for all, sustainably and

inclusively. There are several entry points to do so, but the current context of economic recession and inflation pressures is not one in which many countries – certainly many middle- and low-income countries – could massively invest in agrifood systems.

In such a recessionary context, public spending and investments become particularly important, because private investors (including agrifood systems' actors) are naturally more risk-averse. To this end, governments must wield public policy in order to create an environment more conducive to private investment.

Against this backdrop, allocating existing public budgets in a different manner becomes a more urgent necessity. It is possible to use them more cost-effectively and efficiently for promoting healthy diets, sustainability, and inclusivity. In this regard, many countries can repurpose their food and agricultural policies towards these objectives, while ensuring that complementing policies in other sectors are there to create incentives that are coherent to this end.

The 2022 edition of **The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report** will, as usual, present the latest updates on the food security and nutrition situation around the world, including updated estimates on the cost and affordability of healthy diets. Subsequently, it will take a deep dive into how healthy diets can become more affordable by repurposing existing food and agricultural policy support in ways that help reduce the cost of nutritious foods relative to other foods and people's income.

First, a stocktaking exercise will explore the predominant food and agricultural policy supports currently in place around the world, the amount of support provided, the activities and actors supported, and the extent to which this support is pushing up the relative cost of nutritious foods and promoting unhealthy diets. **Second**, analysis and evidence-based guidance will be provided on alternative food and agricultural policy support mixes that can help reduce the cost of nutritious foods, as well as on how the resulting trade-offs need to be managed to ensure agrifood systems are not only more efficient but also sustainable and inclusive. To the extent that the contribution of agrifood systems to the economy is significant in many countries, such alternative food and agricultural policy support will also be important to enable inclusive recovery. In this regard, the report is aligned to the 2022 HLPF theme – *“Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”*.