



Summary Report

Expert Group Meeting

on Sustainable Development Goal 2 and its interlinkages with other SDGs¹

2024 HLPF Thematic Review

In-Person, Rome, Italy 26-27 March 2024

Disclaimer: This is not a consensus document. The views expressed herein reflect the summarized discussions amongst the participants, however, they do not necessarily represent the views of the United Nations, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) or any Individual.

1. Introduction

This document presents a summary of the insights and recommendations from the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, convened by FAO and UNDESA, on the 26-27 March, to review progress and share lessons for achieving the eradication of hunger and food insecurity through the transformation toward more sustainable, resilient and equitable agrifood systems.

Eight years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs and past the halfway point to 2030, the world is facing multiple and interlinked crises, impacting the capacity of countries to provide adequate, safe and nutritious food to people. Interconnected and often mutually

¹ **Websites:**

<https://sdgs.un.org/events/expert-group-meeting-sdg2-and-its-interlinkages-other-sdgs-54636>

<https://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals-helpdesk/overview/sdg-progress-and-alignment/2030-agenda-follow-up-and-review/expert-group-meeting-on-sdg-2/>

reinforcing challenges and drivers, including climate change, conflict and recurrent crises, economic shocks, uncertainty and structural inequalities hinder, and in some areas reverse, progress across SDG 2 targets and interlinked objectives. The most severe impact is on rural and vulnerable communities, and interventions, finance and services often fail to reach to critical actors, particularly small-scale producers, family farmers, women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and ethnic groups. These interconnected and multilayered challenges require more articulated, and yet concrete and urgent responses.

Over 50 experts, representing government institutions, the United Nations, non-governmental and civil society organizations, private sector, academia, scientists and researchers, convened at FAO headquarters in Rome to review progress on SDG 2 and its role in advancing sustainable development across the 2030 Agenda before the 2024 HLPF review.

The meeting was designed to bring together multidisciplinary experts and practitioners working on SDG 2, to take stock of progress and lessons learned based on evidence and concrete examples; review promising and innovative solutions to catalyse action and bring results at scale; analyse trends and challenges, including with regard to the intensifying climate crisis, the recovery from COVID-19 pandemic, increased frequency and scale of conflicts, economic slowdowns and downturns, structural inequalities within and among countries; and to consider how to strengthen governance for effective collaboration across institutional and non-institutional actors, increase ownership, effectiveness and accountability of results. This summary includes the policy messages and recommendations which emerged, reflecting the variety of actors and viewpoints represented at the EGM.

2. Stocktaking and challenges

According to the *2023 Report of the Secretary-General on Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Special Edition*, the world is not due to meet most of the 17 goals by 2030, with only 15 percent of targets with data on track.² The lack of progress towards the SDGs is global, but it is abundantly clear that developing countries and the world's poorest and most vulnerable people are bearing the brunt. Ending hunger, while central to the 2030 Agenda and to the commitment to leave no one behind, is among those goals experiencing backslides in recent

² UNDESA. 2023. [Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Towards a Rescue Plan for People and Planet. Report of the Secretary-General \(Special Edition\)](#).

years. Reinforcing this point, FAO's 2023 SDG Progress Report concludes that the world as a whole is "at a moderate distance to achieving" SDG 2, yet having registered "no improvement" toward the Goal since 2015.³

The 2023 *State of Food and Nutrition Security in the World* (SOFI) estimated that between 691 and 783 million people faced chronic hunger in 2022, affecting around 9.2 percent of the world population in 2022, compared with 7.9 percent in 2019. In absolute terms, 122 million more people faced hunger in 2022 than in 2019.⁴ Looking beyond hunger, the world is clearly not on track to ensure access for all people to safe, nutritious and sufficient food, and to defeat malnutrition by 2030, with projections that almost 600 million people will be chronically undernourished in 2030. In 2022, an estimated 29.6 percent of the world population (2.4 billion people) were moderately or severely food insecure, meaning they did not have regular access to adequate food during the year. For over 900 million of these people, food insecurity was experienced at severe levels, leading to food consumption levels likely inadequate to sustain active and healthy lives. Additionally, women continue to face higher levels of food insecurity in all regions than men, due to their more limited access to assets and resources, forms of gender inequality (such as unequal pay) and to discriminatory social norms.

In the last two decades, historic progress was made in reducing chronic malnutrition, as the global prevalence of child stunting has declined by one-third and the number of stunted children by 55 million. However, there is more work to be done. In 2023, an estimated 148.1 million children under five years of age (22.3 percent) were stunted, 45 million (6.8 percent) were wasted, and 37 million (5.6 percent) were overweight.⁵ Overweight and obesity continue increasing all along the life cycle, where children and adolescents are affected by a double burden of malnutrition. Overweight and undernutrition – in the form of micronutrient deficiencies or hidden hunger – often coexist in the same individual, due to the poor quality of diets, as nutritious food is not available and affordable to all, while children's food environments are increasingly invaded by unhealthy foods.⁶

Small-scale producers and family farmers play a crucial role in global food production and in ensuring food security and nutrition, supplying 70 percent of overall food production.⁷ Despite

³ FAO. 2023. [Tracking progress on food and agriculture-related SDG indicators 2023](#).

⁴ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2023. [State of Food and Nutrition Security in the World](#).

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ WHO. 2021. [Global Anaemia estimates, 2021 Edition](#).

⁷ CFS. 2019. [Policy recommendations on Connecting Smallholders to Markets](#).

this, they often face lower productivity compared to larger-scale producers, particularly in higher-income countries. In 90 percent of countries for which data is available, small-scale food producers earn less than half of what large-scale producers do annually. Furthermore, disparities in land ownership persist, with less than 50 percent of individuals involved in agricultural production having secure land tenure rights in one-third of countries assessed by FAO in 2023.⁸ However, discrepancies in accessing food production resources encompass disparities in land quality and the ability to regulate resource utilization. Significant inequalities persist in accessing these resources, impacting both availability and control.⁹ Women are particularly disadvantaged in land ownership, with men owning land at least twice as much as women in almost half of the countries surveyed. Additionally, 50 percent of reporting countries have low or very low levels of women's land rights.¹⁰

Agrifood systems provide significant employment globally, yet agricultural households constitute up to two-thirds of those living in extreme poverty. Over 80 percent of people in income and multidimensional poverty reside in rural areas¹¹, a situation exacerbated by urbanization and the aging rural population. Although agrifood systems employ over one-third of the female workforce, their significant contributions are overshadowed as they often hold informal, low-paid, and vulnerable positions. Gender disparities persist, with women facing a 24 percent productivity gap and nearly 20 percent wage gap in agrifood-related employment. To address these inequalities, intentional efforts are needed to empower women, challenge discriminatory norms, close the wage and asset gaps on a large scale, promote women's agency and autonomy both individually and collectively, recognizing them as right-holders.¹²

The world remains far from maintaining the genetic diversity of plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture, either in the field or in gene banks. The global response to the growing threat of climate change needs to be accelerated to adequately preserve crop and crop-associated diversity. The proportion of farmed and domesticated animal breeds at risk of extinction remains worryingly high. Furthermore, the limited availability of data hinders complete understanding of the seriousness of the issue for the majority of breeds.¹³

⁸ FAO. 2023. [Tracking progress on food and agriculture-related SDG indicators 2023](#).

⁹ HLPE. 2023. [Executive summary of the report. Reducing inequalities for food security and nutrition](#). Rome, CFS HLPE-FSN.

¹⁰ FAO. 2023. [The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems](#).

¹¹ UNDP. 2023. [Global Multidimensional Poverty Index](#).

¹² FAO. 2023. [The Status of Women in Agrifood Systems](#).

¹³ FAO. 2023. [Tracking progress on food and agriculture-related SDG indicators 2023](#).

Agrifood systems continue to generate soil, water, and air pollution. Current agricultural practices and approaches contribute more than one-third of global greenhouse gas emissions and as much as 80 percent of biodiversity loss while consuming about 70 percent of freshwater total use.¹⁴ Global fish stocks are threatened by overfishing, pollution, poor management and other factors, including illegal fishing, with more than one-third (35.4 percent) of global stocks overfished in 2019.¹⁵ While, globally, there has been some progress towards sustainable forest management in the last decade, progress is uneven across regions. Additionally, the world's forests continue to shrink, mainly because of the expansion of agriculture for crop and livestock production.¹⁶ The adaptation finance gap now stands between USD194 billion and USD 366 billion per year. The current needs are 10-18 times as great as current international public adaptation flows and are 50% higher than what was previously estimated¹⁷.

Many of the negative impacts are not included in the market prices and are thus hidden from the day-to-day decisions agrifood actors make. The expected value of the global quantified hidden costs of agrifood systems is 12.7 trillion 2020 purchasing power parity (PPP) dollars in 2020, an equivalent to 10 percent of global GDP. In order to identify and undertake preferred transformational actions, accounting and comparison of the costs and benefits of each action based on the true cost of food is essential.¹⁸

The increased number of conflicts and mass displacement, poverty, deepening inequalities, rampant underdevelopment, the climate crisis and natural disasters all contribute to food insecurity.¹⁹ The environment for enabling progress on ending hunger is lagging in a number of areas.

The transition toward more sustainable, equitable and resilient agrifood systems can revert negative effects, and become a potentially positive multiplier across development objectives. Both the SDG Summit and the Climate negotiations have indeed highlighted the need for upscaled interventions to realize sustainability of agrifood systems, and to bridge the divide in

¹⁴ UN. 2023. [Report of the Secretary-General for the UN Food Systems Summit +2.](#)

¹⁵ FAO. 2023. [Tracking progress on food and agriculture-related SDG indicators 2023.](#)

¹⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷ UNEP. 2023. [Adaptation Gap Report 2023: Underfinanced. Underprepared. Inadequate investment and planning on climate adaptation leaves world exposed](#)

¹⁸ FAO. 2023. [The State of Food and Agriculture 2023 – Revealing the true cost of food to transform agrifood systems.](#)

¹⁹ Global Network Against Food Crises & FSIN. 2023. [Global Report on Food Crises.](#)

public and private investments. The transition is requiring evidence, assistance, capacities and investments.

The current data are not in the right direction. Investment in agriculture is insufficient and falling. At the global level, government expenditure on agriculture relative to the agriculture sector's contribution to GDP declined from 0.50 in 2015 to 0.45 in 2021, with drops registered in all regions except North America and Europe. There is however progress on efforts to correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions, following the 2015 World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Decision on Export Competition, in which Members committed to restrain from the use of export subsidies and all export measures of equivalent effect. Total notified annual export subsidy outlays fell from their peak of USD 218 million in 2015 to almost zero in 2021.

A transition to sustainable agrifood systems depends on a mix of supply-side and demand-side measures.²⁰ Systems approaches are needed to build coherent portfolios of policies, investments and legislation and enable win-win solutions while managing trade-offs; these include territorial approaches, ecosystems approaches, Indigenous Peoples' food systems approaches and interventions that systemically address protracted crisis conditions.²¹

3. Multiple crises and recovery

The current global gap in progress towards SDG 2 is caused by multiple drivers that tend to be mutually reinforcing in most contexts.²² They are increasingly driven not only by the occurrence of a shock, but the succession of shocks – particularly the global shocks of the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine, with knock-on effects at the national and regional levels. According to the 2023 *Global Report on Food Crises*, 58 countries and territories were experiencing food crises in 2022, with 258 million people facing a crisis or worse levels of acute food insecurity and in need of urgent assistance.²³

²⁰ Global Sustainable Development Report. 2023. [Times of crisis, times of change: Science for accelerating transformations to sustainable development](#).

²¹ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2021. [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021. Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all](#).

¹⁸ FAO. 2022. [The future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation. The Future of Food and Agriculture, no. 3](#).

²³ Global Network Against Food Crises & FSIN. 2023. [Global Report on Food Crises](#).

Conflict/insecurity remained the most significant driver for around 117 million people facing high levels of acute food insecurity in 19 countries/territories. The pandemic provoked a tremendous setback. Projections show 119 million more people facing hunger in 2030 compared to a scenario in which the pandemic had not occurred, and around 23 million more than in a scenario where 2022 events had not happened. Nearly 2.4 billion people in the world lacked regular access to adequate food in 2022; 30 percent of people in the world were moderately or severely food insecure – more women than men, and more people living in rural areas than in urban areas. Following a sharp increase from 2019 to 2020, the prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity at the global level remained unchanged for the second year in a row but was still far above pre-pandemic levels. Conflicts have exacerbated the trends.

IPC analysis warns that the entire population of the Gaza Strip is in experiencing acute food insecurity and that famine is imminent in the northern governorates, projected to occur anytime between mid-March and May 2024²⁴. The food security and nutrition situation in Sudan and Yemen has also deteriorated significantly amidst escalating conflict, raising major concern. In Sudan, between October 2023 and February 2024, 17.7 million people (37 percent of the population) faced high levels of acute food insecurity, of which 4.9 million (10 percent) were in IPC Phase 4 (Emergency).²⁵ In Yemen, approximately 4.56 million people or 45 percent of the population in Government of Yemen controlled areas will experience high levels of acute food insecurity.²⁶ Investing in time-sensitive, emergency agriculture interventions is not only lifesaving and cost-effective, but it also enables resilience-building measures to withstand future shocks. Yet only a marginal portion of humanitarian allocations goes to emergency agriculture amidst falling levels of development aid and public spending on agriculture.

Economic shocks were the main driver of food crises for 83.9 million people in 27 countries – almost tripling the 2021 figure of 30.2 million people and increasing from 21 countries. The global recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic has been uneven. The resumption of economic activity led to increased incomes and improved access to food in many regions, but this was not uniformly the case. Adding to this, in 2022, the war in Ukraine and consequent food, fertilizer and fuel price inflation eroded income gains and hindered access to food, especially among poor households that spend a higher-than-average level of household income on food. These forces have manifested differently across different regions. Hunger continues to increase in Western

²⁴ IPC. 2024. [Famine Review Committee: Gaza Strip, March 2024](#).

²⁵ IPC. 2024. [IPC Alert: Sudan](#).

²⁶ IPC. 2024. [Yemen. Acute Food Insecurity Projection Update October 2023-February 2024](#).

Asia, the Caribbean and all subregions of Africa. Most subregions in Asia and Latin America have however experienced improvements in food security.

Weather extremes were the primary driver of acute food insecurity for 56.8 million people, a doubling in the number of people from 23.5 million in eight countries in 2021.²⁷ The impacts of climate change are having disproportionately large impacts on the rural poor, female headed households and women farm managers, and older cohorts. For example, female headed households stand to lose 8 percent more of their annual income due to extreme heat than male headed households; and poor households lose 5 percent more income than non-poor households from flooding. These trends increase the dependence of vulnerable people on agricultural incomes, which are highly subject to changing climate conditions.²⁸

The global context of climate breakdown, economic shocks and increased conflict, impacting food production, fiscal space, and the affordability of nutritious food, is causing unrelenting strain on progress on SDG 2. Between 2015 and 2021, the total aid to agriculture in developing countries increased by 14.6 percent, from USD12.8 to USD 14.2 billion (in constant 2021 prices). However, in 2021, it fell by 15 percent, returning to levels similar to those before the pandemic.²⁹

These factors, combined with growing inequalities, keep challenging the capacity of agrifood systems to deliver nutritious, healthy, safe and affordable diets for all. However, it is still possible to move agrifood systems towards sustainability and resilience, while progressively realizing the right to adequate food for all. The broader socioeconomic and environmental systems could move in the same direction – which means short-term unsustainable achievements will have to be traded off for longer-term sustainability and resilience³⁰.

Based on the discussions of the crises and challenges and current state of play, the EGM participants discussed the following policies and actions that could reverse the current trends and put the agrifood systems back on to the path of sustainable development transformation.

²⁷ See note 17.

²⁸ FAO. 2024. [The Unjust Climate. Measuring the impacts of climate change on rural poor, women and youth.](#)

²⁹ UN Statistics Division. 2023. [SDG 2- Zero Hunger.](#)

³⁰ FAO. 2022. [The future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation. The Future of Food and Agriculture, no. 3.](#)

4. Policies and actions to maximize synergies, mitigate trade-offs and drive transformation

The right to food is a human right. Applying a human rights-based approach, centred on people's needs and capacities, as well as the duties of states and other actors to ensure the right to adequate food and addressing underlying drivers (inequalities, access to assets and natural resources) can deliver benefits across dimensions, leaving no one behind.

Small-scale producers, including family farmers, women and young farmers, as well as Indigenous Peoples are fundamental for achieving efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems. Nonetheless, they are disproportionately affected by the shocks and crises mentioned above. Small-scale farmers and small agribusinesses which produce one third of the world's food and up to 70 percent of the food in low- and middle-income countries are impacted by climate change, yet, climate finance going to small-scale agrifood systems has gone down by 44 percent and is now as low as 0.8 percent of total climate finance³¹. Their voice and participation in decision-making processes are key. Their potential can be unlocked by securing their individual and collective rights, improving their engagement in decisions using their technical knowledge and experience, and ensuring increased financing reaches them, including through climate finance, financial services, insurance, markets, innovation and universal social protection. They need to be integrated into markets and value chains to reap the benefits of value addition and expanding trade opportunities. Trade unions, producer organizations and cooperatives, can be critical agents of change as they aggregate and channel services to members, such as financial inclusion, capacity development and leadership to improve their livelihoods, incomes and the adoption of sustainable practices. They can also help improve uptake of new technologies and therefore support resilience.

Women in particular face discriminatory social norms which can constrain their participation and achievement in agrifood systems. As such, interventions which seek to empower women and transform these norms, as well as address significant asset and resource gaps women face, are needed to ensure their equitable inclusion and advancement within these systems. Addressing the gender disparity in farm productivity and wage inequality in agriculture would increase global GDP by 1 percent, equating to nearly USD 1 trillion. In practical terms, this

³¹ Climate Policy Initiative, 2023. The Climate Finance Gap for Small-Scale Agrifood systems: A growing challenge.

could decrease global food insecurity by approximately 2 percent, resulting in 45 million fewer people experiencing food insecurity.³²

Better integrate climate action with food security and nutrition policies and interventions.

Given the disproportionate impact of climate change on the rural poor, small-scale producers, women and older cohorts, agrifood systems must become responsive to climate challenges, enabling those actors to improve their resilience, incorporating practices that have shown to provide multiple benefits, are environmentally sustainable, maintain genetic diversity and are socially just. Integrated land and water management, as well as the conservation and sustainable use and management of biodiversity are essential to support climate action and food security. Additionally, the sector must reduce its fossil fuel dependency and find alternative, cleaner, renewable alternatives. It is also necessary to engage with actors on the food-water-energy nexus to maximise synergies on food security and energy production.

Agroecology and other sustainable and innovative practices that promote environmental stewardship, social equity and economic viability should be utilised as a framework for agrifood systems transformation, to promote sovereignty for farmers and consumers, respecting local cultures and traditions, restoring conserving and sustainably using nature. This includes actions to diversify crops and animal breeds, revitalise traditional seeds and production methods and ensure access to high quality seeds and genes. These sustainable practices can be supported through targeted (redirected or repurposed) financial mechanisms and capacity development efforts. Governments are urged to conduct thorough assessments of their agrifood systems, involving all stakeholders, especially marginalized groups. Policies should not only integrate agroecological practices but also innovative approaches, ensuring they are accessible, affordable, and tailored to local needs.³³

Promote a holistic agrifood systems policy approach. It is necessary to ensure the alignment of goals and objectives of the sector beyond agricultural production along the food supply chain, and to strengthen the rural-urban continuum. Agrifood systems sustainability interventions must be promoted, prioritizing improved infrastructure to reduce post-harvest losses and waste and to enhance food safety.

³² FAO. 2023. [The status of women in agrifood systems](#). Rome.

³³ CFS 2021/48/2 - [Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and other Innovative Approaches for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems that enhance Food Security and Nutrition](#).

Achieving equitable agrifood systems governance is needed to increase ownership, accountability and scale results. Investing in institutional and governance dynamics and recognizing tenure rights and their impact on agrifood systems functioning can help address the root causes of hunger and build the resilience of systems and communities. There is a need to establish or strengthen multisectoral governance structures, such as the Committee on World Food Security³⁴, that allow for meaningful and effective engagement, collaboration and contribution from sectors and actors, to ensure a just transition towards equitable agrifood systems based on policy alignment, with consideration of small-scale producers and family farmers, women and youth. Existing voluntary policy instruments, including the ones **endorsed** by the Committee on World Food Security, may support countries and territories in reinforcing policy coherence while increasing effectiveness and participation in decision-making and their implementation.

Strengthen capacity, quality, access to and use of reliable data, evidence and analysis to inform, monitor, assess and revise the impact of decisions and interventions. Market transparency and access to up-to-date and credible data and information are essential for reducing uncertainty and volatility and for guiding informed policy decisions, particularly during periods of crisis. Mechanisms to achieve this must be supported and strengthened. Appropriate data and indicators need to be produced and used to accurately assess and guide agrifood systems' transformation within rapidly evolving global, national and local contexts. Data should be tailored to national needs and disaggregated by sex, age, territorial location and other dimensions where necessary so as to leave no one behind.

Prioritize double-duty food-based regulatory and fiscal policies to simultaneously address all forms of malnutrition, including undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight, obesity, diet-related non communicable diseases, and to reduce the environmental impacts of the agrifood systems. Policies such as front of pack labelling, marketing restrictions, school food and nutrition policies, public food procurement, and food-related fiscal and trade policies are effective in disincentivizing the supply and offer of unhealthy, poor quality, highly processed foods, and incentivize the production and consumption of local, diverse, nutritious foods. It is crucial to establish effective regulations to safeguard national policy efforts from interference by food and beverage companies with conflict of interest. Such conflicts need to be thoroughly documented and disincentivized.

³⁴ CFS 2009/2 - [Reform of the Committee on World Food Security](#)

Long-term integrated solutions are required to reduce and ultimately end food insecurity.

The protracted nature of crises means short-term emergency assistance is not a sufficient response. While such assistance remains essential to alleviate suffering, greater efforts are needed to sustainably address the underlying structural causes of food insecurity, including conflict, and to promote longer-term, integrated programmes that seek to mitigate and ultimately prevent crises from occurring. These include supporting peacebuilding efforts, based on a clear understanding of the dividends of peace for food security and the potential of agrifood systems interventions to contribute to peace; investing in social protection, resilience and the livelihoods of vulnerable communities; and the development of resilient agrifood systems along a humanitarian-development-peace continuum. Approaches supporting food security and sustaining/building peace should draw on improved governance at all levels, encompassing global trade regulation, disaster risk reduction and community-based approaches. Anticipatory action, early warning systems and social protection serve as crucial initial safeguards for protecting lives, ensuring food security and maintaining social cohesion.

5. Means of implementation: Mechanisms and partnerships to accelerate progress

Enhance access to science and technology: Science, technology and innovation should be available and tailored for context-specific solutions, analyses and modelling, with a focus on a participative approach and disaggregation by gender and age to address diverse needs effectively. Strategic foresight and scenario building can support the long-term management of trade-offs and the identification of synergies in future planning, integrating insights into comprehensive scenarios. Facilitating the co-creation of innovations, especially in the global south, involving a broad spectrum of stakeholders, particularly end-users, can contribute to fostering partnerships that emphasize shared values and ownership, alongside ensuring transparency and traceability.

Scale up agricultural investments and repurpose support: Increase political will, better target existing investments and significantly increase funding towards initiatives that support sustainable, equitable and climate-adapted agrifood systems. This includes doubling current donor contributions and increasing country expenditures on agriculture, ensuring investments are strategically placed across the value chain and reaching the small-holder and family farmers. Increasing public spending on agriculture should not lead to more distortions but be directed to

providing global public goods. Furthermore, existing agricultural subsidies need to be re-oriented and repurposed, which requires a paradigm shift around reforming incentives and disincentives, including market-distortive subsidies, to support transformative action at all levels. Given the scale, investments need to be provided by both the public and private sectors, which requires putting in place the right incentives and enabling environment.

Structural reforms of the global and regional economic architecture, including finance, trade and taxation are needed: Current inequalities within and among countries and unequal access to financial resources and decision-making power due to the heavy external aid dependence, combined with limited capacities on public investments and effective fiscal policies, particularly in least developed countries and those in protracted crisis, need to be addressed. Advocating for policies that promote equitable trade relations, facilitate technology transfer, address trade imbalances, promote fair competition, and foster productive capacities in Global South countries is a priority. Collaboration is essential to address macroeconomic challenges and financial stability issues, aiming to mitigate economic vulnerabilities and enhance resilience in the face of global shocks.

Inclusive engagement is paramount: To address the complexities of agrifood systems and ensure comprehensive solutions, it is crucial to actively involve a wide range of stakeholders, including family farmers, women, youth, local actors and marginalized groups in decision-making and implementation. Inclusive platforms for engagement enable bottom-up, holistic, participatory approaches that account for specific challenges faced by different communities and strengthen ownership, effectiveness, sustainability of results, and capacity to address trade-offs.

Structured multi-stakeholder partnerships are essential: To activate and accelerate action related to SDG 2, traditional partnership models must evolve to bring together diverse expertise, including from international financial institutions and the private sector, and align financing efforts for maximum impact. Multi-stakeholder engagement should go beyond a procedural step and foster genuine dialogue and collaboration. It requires ongoing support, including sustainable financial backing, to translate dialogue into tangible actions with lasting impacts. Partnerships between governments, civil society organizations, academia, private sector actors, and international organizations, such as the School Meals Coalition, should embody an integrated approach, evidence-based advocacy, capacity building, and active engagement of all

stakeholders, particularly the meaningful participation of those most affected by hunger and malnutrition.

Ensure that countries affected by conflicts and crises are not left behind: This implies supporting the mobilization of longer-term investments in agrifood systems in fragile and conflict-affected contexts, building on stronger partnerships across humanitarian, development and peace actors. Coordinated efforts across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, including through platforms such as the Global Network Against Food Crisis are key to ensuring coherent and durable solutions to food crisis and streamlining funding along a humanitarian-development continuum.

Value Indigenous Peoples' knowledge: It is important to integrate traditional knowledge into agrifood system practices and policies, acknowledging its importance in sustainable and resilient food production, in preserving and restoring biodiversity and ecosystems and in maintaining genetic diversity, considering Indigenous Peoples' practices and food systems may also contribute to a nutritional strategy for promoting healthier diets, while ensuring, respecting, and protecting the Free, prior and Informed Consent, inscribed in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Bolster Localization and Urban-Rural Linkages: local food systems can provide multiple benefits to farmers, regional communities and economies, environments and consumers. However, to realize these benefits requires meaningful urban-rural connections. Localization inherently requires strengthened urban-rural linkages as most food is still grown in rural places and the majority of the world's population lives in urban areas. Additionally, the ability to realize the benefits of localization depends on how consumers, producers, and supply chain participants respond to incentives. Connecting local governments, producers and consumers may help create more inclusive policies, bridging urban and rural perspectives.