

# Ending hunger and achieving food security for all

## Answers to Guiding questions - UNEP

1. **Which areas and socio-economic groups** are especially vulnerable to poor nutrition and food insecurity and what are ways to ensure that food systems transformations leave no one behind?
2. **What fundamental changes are needed** to make our food systems an engine for inclusive growth and contribute to accelerating progress towards ending hunger and achieving food security for all in the Decade of Action?

A holistic approach to transforming our food systems is needed.

Possible solution: The One Planet Network Sustainable Food Systems Programme has a Sustainable food systems toolbox that contains the Collaborative Framework for Food Systems Transformation, which sets out a step wise approach to transforming our food systems. This approach contains inter alia, the need for multi-stakeholder processes and consensus, the widespread uptake of true cost/natural capital accounting in the valuing of food (for example TEEBAgriFood), leading to the gradual elimination of perverse subsidies that disguise the negative health and environmental externalities of food, as well as the need for a change in food systems governance.

- a) How could they be designed and implemented to generate synergies and strengthen existing ones with other Goals and Targets?

Policies and interventions need to be designed with a holistic food systems approach (as mentioned above), while governments need to work more in collaboration with other governmental ministries and departments to allow policy coherence and better management of food systems trade-off. In addition to internal institutional reforms, governments need to establish participatory approach mechanisms to allow other stakeholders of the food systems to participate in policy planning and implementation processes. Through those mechanisms, they will be better equipped to understand and address the core societies' need.

- b) What are some of the possible trade-offs from these changes and how can they be mitigated?

Any change especially as fundamental as transformational change will be disruptive. However, any trade-offs should be seen in the short term as the system readjusts to a new reality. An example of this could be a decrease in productivity as farmers move away from input-based models of crop production to more nature-based and biodiversity friendly agriculture. Therefore, support from both public and private sectors will be critical to ensure that farmers and industry are supported in this transition.

3. **How might COVID-19 facilitate or complicate** the implementation of needed food systems changes?
  - a) Will it aggravate and/or reduce vulnerabilities?

Even before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the evidence for food systems transformation had never been clearer. As agricultural systems form the foundation of our food systems, it is imperative that they restore and regenerate rather than degrade land, soils and biodiversity while providing an affordable and healthy diet to a population estimated to reach 10 billion people by 2050. However, the crisis may well complicate the need for change as focus goes to short term solutions that might further entrench existing trends in production and consumption. Also, the immediate Covid-19 crisis amplifies many vulnerabilities, not least for schoolchildren who no longer have access to school meals. In the midterm, vulnerable families are more likely to lost employment, entrenching existing inequalities.

- b) What are the changes in design and implementation of policies affecting food systems which are necessary to prevent and better deal with food security and nutrition impacts of infectious disease outbreaks and pandemics in the future?

Current food and agriculture policies are not taking into account the many interlinkages between food consumption and production in their design. This results in policies that, very often, are good for one food systems dimension (e.g. food productivity) but might be impacting the overall health of the population and/or the environment, therefore reducing food systems resilience. Assessment studies that guide these policy design need to be changed, and consider the whole food system, including activities, drivers and outcomes.

- c) What of the current immediate actions we are seeing will contribute to the long-term resilience of food systems?

Local food supply chains are being forged and strengthened during this crisis. There is an important window here to build on local dynamism during lockdowns to enhance urban food resilience. The planting of food gardens on vacant urban lands and the teaching of a food-based curriculum in school gardens are vastly under-utilized opportunities to support this.

4. **What knowledge and data gaps need to be filled** for better analyzing current successes and failures in food systems and the trade-offs and synergies, across SDGs, in implementing food systems changes to fix these failures?

Food waste data enabling countries to report on SDG 12.3, to understand the scale of the problem and the food waste hotspots in their country and to target interventions, is currently poor – only 11 countries have published food waste baselines at household level and food waste data in the global south is particularly lacking.

Behavioral insights on food consumption, and notably food waste and sustainable diets, also present a significant evidence gap, again especially in the global south. Concerted action is needed to address this, so that interventions to reduce food waste and support a shift to sustainable diets are informed by country-specific, culturally relevant data.

5. **What partnerships and initiatives are needed** to harness synergies and/or reduce trade-offs in food systems?

- a) What are the most critical interventions and partnerships needed over next 2 years, 5 years, 10 years?

A global partnership on sustainable diets is needed, linked to a science-based target to reduce the climate impact of food by 25% by 2030. This partnership can work in coordination with the executive-driven Champions 12.3 initiative to halve food waste by 2030, and with the Cool Food Pledge which addresses this issue in the food service sector.

Also, a partnership that promotes regenerative agriculture for both small - and large - scale systems that might focus on the development of indicators so that progress can be measured and rewarded enabling farming whether large or small scale to have net positive impact on nutrition, livelihoods and environment.

- b) Can these be scaled up or adjusted to fit other contexts?
- c) How can private sector support investments for sustainable agriculture production and supply reduce food insecurity?

Support for a change to regenerative or net-positive agriculture models can help to increase food security where companies that off-take product are incentivized to do so. These incentives can come from private banks/funds offering favorable lending terms, markets for break/rotation crops and/or repurposing of public support to farmers away from the input model towards better environmental outcomes – regenerative agriculture, through indicators that measure increased carbon sequestration or biodiversity levels for example could be one of the practices that could be promoted/supported.