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Food and Agriculture  
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Продовольственная и  
сельскохозяйственная организация  
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las  
Naciones Unidas para la  
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة  
الأغذية والزراعة  
للأمم المتحدة

# COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

## Thirty-fourth Session

1–5 February 2021

### DRAFT VISION AND STRATEGY FOR FAO'S WORK IN NUTRITION

## I. BACKGROUND

1. Better nutrition offers one of the greatest developmental opportunities in the world today. Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2) recognises the importance of ending all forms of malnutrition (target 2.2) including child wasting, child stunting, child underweight, child overweight, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight, obesity and related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) to achieve social, environmental and economic goals. Nutrition plays a major role in advancing the attainment of goals throughout the SDGs, such as ending hunger (2.1), advancing sustainable agriculture (2.3-2.5), reducing premature death from NCDs (3.4) and child and maternal mortality (3.1, 3.2), tackling poverty (1.1 and 1.2), reducing climate change, biodiversity and soil loss (14 and 15) and advancing gender equality (5) and inclusive economic growth (8). Yet despite some progress, the world is off track to meet nutrition targets. Fully tackling malnutrition in all its forms into the future will require a concerted effort with all stakeholders playing a role. The purpose of this strategy is to define FAO's role and what it will do to address malnutrition in all its forms, so fulfilling its mandate of "raising levels of nutrition" in the context of other actions being taken by stakeholders in the UN system and beyond.

2. One immediate determinant of nutritional status is diet. While numerous other factors are critical determinants of nutritional status, such as good health, clean water, sanitation, education, and women's empowerment; healthy diets are the cornerstone of good nutrition for today and for future generations. Diet has a vital role in addressing the deficiencies, excesses and imbalances in people's intake of energy and nutrients that impair human growth and development and thereby achieving the social, economic and environmental pillars of the SDGs. There is no one single composition of a healthy diet since they vary geographically, with age and population needs, and culture, but all are made up of the foods needed for individuals to have a healthy life: adequate, safe, diverse, and balanced in quantity and quality. In 2017, the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and

Nutrition (HLPE) presented evidence that all elements of food systems<sup>1</sup> – agriculture, food supply chains, food environments, and consumer behaviours – require deep and concerted action to ensure healthy diets are available, accessible, safe and culturally acceptable to all and recommended that opportunities are taken throughout food systems to improve diet and nutrition outcomes.

3. The responses to the COVID-19 pandemic have exposed the fragilities of many contemporary food systems that threaten food security, nutrition, health and livelihoods and exacerbate inequities. These include multiple and politically complex challenges in managing globally integrated food value chains when individual States can close borders, require closure of food services, and restrict movement and trade; physical distancing recommendations in the context of the continued need for labour-intensive harvesting, packaging, transporting, wholesale and retail marketing of essential commodities such as fruits and vegetables, fresh meat, and dairy; the reliance on temporary and migrant labour and the vulnerability of those employees engaged throughout the food system; among others. Although COVID-19 is not a food-borne disease, the pandemic has also increased focus on food safety as integral to food systems transformation, and highlights the interconnection between food safety and broader challenges related to health and sanitation.

4. The COVID-19 pandemic has also brought into sharper focus the connection between infectious diseases and malnutrition. Individuals with underlying nutrition-related NCDs (i.e. diabetes, hypertension, heart disease) have a higher risk of severity of health impact and mortality from infectious disease. Children with undernutrition are at higher risk of death from infection, respiratory infection, and complications due to pneumonia. Prevention of undernutrition and of diet-related NCDs needs to form an integral part of building resilience, especially among the most vulnerable segments of the population.

5. Now, more than ever, there is an increased urgency to catalyse the improvement of food systems, where needed, to become more resilient to shocks while ensuring individuals' health and wellbeing. This includes organisational and social innovations, low- and high-tech innovations, digitalization, and technologies to protect workers, consumers, and those engaged in recovery, redistribution, and food disposal.

6. As the UN agency primarily concerned with food and agriculture, FAO takes a leading role in tackling malnutrition in all its forms through improving diets and food systems. Building on the recommendations of the 2019 Evaluation of FAO's Work on Nutrition, FAO defines and advocates for improvements in all forms of malnutrition through food-based approaches, food systems and healthy diets.<sup>2</sup> FAO's future work in nutrition will reflect the broadened focus on all forms of malnutrition and articulate the potential contribution of food systems to nutrition and clarify FAO's nutrition role in achieving the SDGs. FAO works across all aspects of food systems, with expertise in food production, processing, distribution, trade, marketing and disposal, and in crop and livestock production, forestry,

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<sup>1</sup> Food systems comprise food supply chains starting with the agricultural sector (crop and livestock production, forestry, fisheries, aquaculture), food environments (where consumers engage with the food system) and consumer behaviour.

<sup>2</sup> FAO. 2019. Evaluation of the Strategy and Vision for FAO's Work in Nutrition. Rome. pp.119 ([www.fao.org/evaluation](http://www.fao.org/evaluation)). Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO

fisheries and aquaculture systems, value chains, food safety, emergency preparedness and resilience building, and nutrition.

7. In a range of international processes, FAO Members have called for greater action on healthy diets and food systems. In 2014, the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), co-organized by FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO) adopted the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and its Framework for Action acknowledging the challenge faced by current food systems in providing healthy diets.<sup>3</sup> In April 2016 the UN General Assembly adopted the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025) (Nutrition Decade) through Resolution 70/259.<sup>4</sup> Co-led by FAO and the WHO, the first activity in the work programme is to improve diets through food systems.

8. Food systems serve many functions beyond nutrition and are key economic, environmental and social drivers of transformational change. FAO's mandate covers the economic (e.g. livelihoods, rural poverty, trade), environmental (e.g. climate variations, biodiversity and ecosystems, food losses and waste), and social (e.g. gender, indigenous groups, equity) aspects of food systems, all of which are vital for healthy diets and nutrition while also serving other functions, making trade-offs inevitable. In managing these trade-offs, FAO's nutrition strategy ensures that nutrition outcomes receive appropriate attention and priority.

9. Given FAO's leadership role in food and agriculture, its role in the economic, environmental and social aspects of food systems, and its global functions of brokering knowledge, policy and technical assistance, and capacity building, it is uniquely positioned to play a leading role in addressing the food-related aspects of malnutrition in collaboration with global, national and local partners. The challenges in doing so are great, heightened by the growing and interconnected stresses on food systems with implications for nutrition, such as increasing population growth, extreme poverty, climate change, a degrading resource base, conflict, migration, fragile resilience and fragmented governance.<sup>5</sup> In collaboration with the numerous stakeholders in food systems and nutrition, FAO will identify and leverage opportunities to ensure food systems make healthy diets available, accessible, safe and culturally acceptable to all while also achieving the economic, environmental and social pillars of sustainable development across the SDGs. In so doing they must work with other agencies and stakeholders specializing in other determinants of malnutrition.

## II. SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

10. The Strategy describes the direction of FAO's work to leverage its collaborative advantage to improve nutrition, recognizing the central role of improved nutrition for the SDGs.

11. Building on significant previous and ongoing efforts, the Strategy sets out the activities to be undertaken by FAO's global and decentralized offices. The activities aim to enable greater actions by

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<sup>3</sup> FAO/WHO. 2014. ICN2, [Rome Declaration on Nutrition](#). Paragraph 10

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/259](https://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/259)

<sup>5</sup> FAO. 2017. *The future of food and agriculture – Trends and challenges*. Rome. <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6583e.pdf>

multiple stakeholders, including global inter-governmental agencies, regional bodies, FAO Members, local governments, the private sector, civil society and FAO staff at all levels.

12. The Strategy applies to all of FAO's work and expertise in nutrition and in crop and livestock production, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture ("agricultural sectors"), that have potential to impact diets, as well as, work on emergency preparedness and resilience building, climate, biodiversity, food safety, social protection, trade, statistics, partnership, science and innovation and other areas with relevance to the strategy's activities and outcomes and desired impacts.

13. Through a systems approach, the strategy aims to benefit the diets of all people, and especially rural people, whose livelihoods depend on crop production, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, livestock raising, food processing and retailing; people experiencing conflict and fragility; and vulnerable populations in towns and cities. The Strategy aims to support the reshaping of food systems and human exposure to risk factors within those systems, to ensure individuals' health and wellbeing, and the availability, accessibility, and affordability of healthy diets in light of the weaknesses and fragility exposed by the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

14. To achieve its goals, FAO acknowledges that, in order to effectively end malnutrition in all its forms:

- 1) **People must be placed at the centre of food systems.** To ensure food systems enable healthy diets, identifying actions must start with an understanding of drivers of people's dietary behaviour. Actions also need to enhance consumer education and agency, including by making healthy diets available, accessible, safe and culturally acceptable in food environments. The livelihoods of the people who work in the food system, and their diets and nutrition, must be protected and supported.
- 2) **No one can be left behind.** Equity, including in income, gender and ethnicity, is needed at all levels and poor and marginalized populations must be prioritised. Women must be empowered in food systems, including as leaders of change, and adverse gender-related impacts must be avoided.
- 3) **Sustainability is paramount.** Food systems need to be sustainable from an economic, environmental, and social perspective. Food systems should strive to have a positive impact on the natural environment and adapt to and mitigate climate change; support the livelihoods of producers and workers; minimise food waste; and enable diets adapted to local agro-ecological conditions, socio-cultural norms, and nutritional requirements.
- 4) **Efforts should build upon the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.** The right to food is realized "when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has the physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement. It entails the "availability of food in a quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of individuals, free from adverse substances, and acceptable within a given

culture [and] ... the accessibility of such food in ways that are sustainable and that do not interfere with the enjoyment of other human rights.”<sup>6</sup>

- 5) **Evidence and research are vital.** There is already considerable activity around the world to improve food systems and diets, which provides evidence to inform action. Practices, including those learned from local and indigenous knowledge, that already contribute to food systems enabling people to eat healthy diets should be protected and promoted.
- 6) **Innovation is urgently needed.** Achieving needed further change, at scale and within the timeframe of the SDGs, will also require to accelerate the pace and widen the scope of both technological and social innovations, including in policy and financing. In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, new thinking on livelihood support, social protection mechanisms, and the contours of human exposure to risk factors within the food system is urgently needed to ensure resilience for human health and wellbeing while maintaining availability, accessibility, and affordability of healthy diets.
- 7) **Working in partnership is essential.** Given the many actors involved in changing food systems, engaging with multiple stakeholders is necessary for implementing this strategy. Furthermore, to comprehensively tackle malnutrition, partnerships will also be needed beyond food systems.
- 8) **Actions must be adapted to regional and country contexts.** There is a diversity of food systems and diets and a diversity of solutions; FAO’s work must guide but also be responsive to regional and country needs and enable ownership. Regional and country contexts have profound impacts and implications for what actions are needed.

#### IV. VISION AND MISSION

15. FAO’s vision for nutrition is a world where all people are eating healthy diets from sustainable food systems that protect human health and wellbeing and are resilient to shocks.

16. In order to achieve this vision, the desired impact of this strategy is that FAO Members and global, regional, national, and local stakeholders, including large, medium-sized and small public, civil society, and private sector actors and indigenous peoples involved in production, processing, distribution, trade, marketing, sale and disposal of crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, are implementing policies, practices, investments and innovations (“actions”) with the aim of ensuring that:

- Agriculture and food supply chains are centred on the production, processing, distribution and trading of foods, and food services that contribute to healthy diets, including through greater diversity, less food loss and waste and safer food.
- Food environments make healthy diets available, accessible, safe and culturally acceptable, aligning with evidence-based dietary guidelines and food safety standards and practices, so

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<sup>6</sup> General Comment 12 (Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, CESCR, 1999)

shaping consumer behaviour<sup>7</sup> and encouraging the next generation of consumers to value healthy diets.

- Consumers have the access, information, motivation and agency needed to demand and eat healthy diets. Consumers are better informed and demanding healthy diets.

17. To achieve these impacts, FAO's mission in nutrition is to accelerate actions to ensure food systems enable the provision and consumption of healthy diets to raise levels of nutrition by generating and sharing knowledge, raising awareness, building consensus, supporting the development of policies, practices, investments and innovations, and strengthening capacity for implementation.

## V. OUTCOMES AND ACTIVITIES

18. To advance its mission, FAO will undertake the following 15 activities to achieve five specific outcomes, derived from FAO's core functions<sup>8</sup>.

19. ***Outcome 1. Creating a shared vision and raising awareness.*** **UN agencies, FAO Members, civil society and the private sector have a shared vision for nutrition and are aware of the importance of healthy diets for nutrition, health, and development.** There is a shared global vision for healthy diets in addressing malnutrition alongside other determinants. The importance of healthy diets for nutrition, health, and development is fully reflected in relevant international agreements and country-level guidance and stakeholders are implementing programmes to make consumers aware of and demand healthy diets. To achieve this outcome, FAO will:

i) Recognizing FAO's leadership role in food and agriculture, World Health Organization (WHO) in health, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in child and maternal nutrition, and World Food Programme (WFP) in emergency preparedness and humanitarian response, work collaboratively and through the coordinating role of the United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN) to develop a United Nations (UN) vision for nutrition, recognising the role of healthy diets for all, alongside other determinants, and identifying the different leadership responsibilities of the different agencies as part of realizing the goals of the UN development system reform and, in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, reshaping support to ensure good nutrition while always protecting individuals' health and wellbeing when exposed to risk factors within the systems and social structures needed for good nutrition.

ii) Effectively promote and communicate the role of healthy diets for all in addressing malnutrition and advancing economic and social development, among multilateral partners, regional, national and local governments, the private sector and civil society, including through awareness raising activities, the development of country-level guidance including guidance on how to promote demand for healthy diets among consumers.

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<sup>7</sup> Consumer behaviour "reflects all the choices and decisions made by consumers on what food to acquire, store, prepare, cook and eat, and on the allocation of food within the household". HLPE 2017b

<sup>8</sup> FAO Council, Adjustments to The Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21

20. ***Outcome 2. Generation and communication of knowledge and evidence.*** **FAO Members, civil society, the private sector are informed and guided about what food system policies, practices, investments and innovations are needed to enable healthy diets in their own contexts and how needs will change into the future.** Actions must be taken across sectors and policy domains, including agriculture (crop and livestock production, forestry, fisheries, aquaculture), trade, rural development, natural resource management and health. To achieve this outcome, there is a key role for collaboration among FAO and organizations involved in research and innovation for evidence generation and for taking best practices to scale. To achieve this outcome FAO will:

iii) Collate, visualize and share relevant data and metrics on food composition, diets, food security and food systems; as well as, monitor relevant SDG indicators to inform decision-making, provide guidance on data collection, and show progress towards SDG targets.

iv) Provide and disseminate tools to support stakeholders in identifying, assessing and diagnosing the dietary impacts of their food systems and the policies, practices, investments and innovations needed in their contexts to ensure food systems enable healthy diets now and into the future.

v) Document and promote good practice at multiple levels, including indigenous knowledge, already playing a role in ensuring food systems enable healthy diets; and in collaboration with partners, scale up best practices while supporting robust monitoring for continued evidence generation. This work will include compiling and studying responses and lessons-learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, the response to the Ebola Disease outbreak in West Africa 2014, and other regional and global zoonotic disease outbreaks and emergencies to inform policy and practice for resilience building to ensure the availability, accessibility, and affordability of healthy diets while protecting individuals' health and wellbeing when exposed to risk factors within the food system.

vi) Identify and communicate the evidence on the impact of food systems policies, practices, investments and innovations on healthy diets and the trade-offs involved.

21. ***Outcome 3. Convening dialogue.*** **Multi-sectoral stakeholders have built consensus on synergies and agreed on how to manage trade-offs and tackle areas of controversy.** FAO convening with UN agencies and other intergovernmental partners, FAO Members, civil society, the private sector and academia and research institutes has facilitated the process of working through complex trade-offs and areas of controversy, while accelerating delivery where there are synergies and consensus. The dialogue leads to new processes, partnerships, and innovations for ensuring food systems are reshaped to be more resilient, while ensuring individuals' health and wellbeing when exposed to risk factors within the food system. There is greater common understanding of the needed changes by the private sector, including innovations, entrepreneurship and new business opportunities. To achieve this outcome, FAO will:

vii) Identify and analyse synergies between healthy diets and the environmental (e.g. climate change, biodiversity, soil and water degradation), economic (e.g. viability for smallholder farmers, inclusive growth), and the social (e.g. gender equity) pillars of the SDGs in the context of rapidly evolving changes in food systems; as well as, links to food safety and keys to resilience in time of crisis.

viii) Convene global, regional, and national actors in multi-stakeholder dialogue in areas of controversy, acting as a credible neutral actor and recognising power imbalances, to strengthen common understanding in areas of controversy, manage trade-offs and overcome blockages to change.

ix) Engage with private sector actors in innovative ways to find common objectives in entrepreneurship, new business and financing opportunities and synergize partnerships to enable healthy diets and contribute to all SDGs while always appropriately managing interests and trade-offs between healthy diets and other environmental, economic and social goals.

22. ***Outcome 4. Building external capacity for implementation. FAO Members, and global, regional, national, and local stakeholders have enhanced capacities to develop policies, adopt practices, increase investments and implement innovative actions across the food system for healthy diets.*** FAO assistance has enhanced capacities of stakeholders to develop and implement evidence-based policies, investments and practices. To achieve this outcome, FAO will:

x) Make available and disseminate training materials, evidence-based guidance and tools on how to ensure policies, investments and practices throughout food systems can enable healthy diets; how to adapt existing best practices including those implemented as mitigation measures in response to the pressures the COVID-19 pandemic placed on the food system at scale in regional, national and local contexts; and how to identify priorities.

xi) Provide policy and technical assistance to governmental partners on how to implement policies, investments, practices and innovations and maximise synergies and manage trade-offs between healthy diets and other environmental, economic and social goals and to ensure food systems are resilient to shocks and can maintain the availability, accessibility, and affordability of healthy diets while ensuring individuals' health and well-being when exposed to risk factors within the food system.

xii) Strengthen capacities of civil society, academia, agricultural extension and schools to develop and implement educational tools on the role of agriculture, supply chains, food environments and consumer behaviour in healthy diets.

23. ***Outcome 5. Building internal capacity for delivery. All relevant personnel in FAO understand, and appreciate their role in, and have the capacity to contribute to ensuring food systems enable healthy diets including in emergency preparedness and resilience building.*** This perspective is integrated into FAO corporate planning, implementation and monitoring mechanisms, and regularly considered by relevant Governing and Statutory Bodies. Key units of the FAO vital to delivery are partnering across the Organization, facilitating enhanced cross-organisational working and ensuring all key parts of FAO are leveraged. The different areas of work within FAO are more coherent and collaborative, including at the decentralized level. To achieve this outcome, FAO will:

xiii) Leverage the key areas of expertise and experience needed to play a leadership role in delivery of outcomes 1-4, mobilise resources and provide tools and training to capacitate FAO staff to understand FAO's vital role in raising levels of nutrition and preventing all forms of malnutrition and how their area of work contributes to healthy diets.

xiv) Ensure its country representation is capacitated to support the UN Common Country Analysis and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework development process to reflect all relevant action in food systems that can enable healthy diets and support countries to reach SDG targets.

xv) Align its different policies and strategies with the Vision and Strategy for FAO's Work in Nutrition, including its Strategy on Climate Change (2017), Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across the Agricultural Sectors (2019), Policy on Gender Equality (2013), Work on Agroecology

(2018), and its existing commitments made under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as well as its future corporate framework.

## VI. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

24. The evaluation of the former Strategy (2012), noted that the Strategy would have benefited from an implementation plan. Therefore, the update of the Vision and Strategy for FAO's work in Nutrition will include an implementation plan that outlines how FAO will complete the activities needed to reach the outcomes and fulfil the FAO mission in nutrition as described by the strategy.

25. The implementation plan will also respond to the request from the Programme Committee to ensure that regional contexts and priorities are taken into account in planning and execution of activities to fulfil the FAO mission in nutrition. Furthermore, it will specify how the outcomes of the strategy are to be accomplished given the mechanisms, governance structure, and responsibilities within FAO.

26. Recognizing the wide scope of the strategy and the range of activities involved in its implementation, this plan will provide a prioritized summary of what FAO will do. Detailed country-specific activities to be implemented by the FAO decentralized offices will be generated through the Country Programming Framework development based on the Common Country Analysis and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

27. The implementation plan will take into account the priorities from the Vision and Strategy for FAO's work in Nutrition and innovations and emerging opportunities aligned with those priorities, as well as, the priorities defined by regional contexts and contemporaneous global challenges. The implementation plan will also follow the Medium-Term Review and Programme of Budget and Work processes.

### Annex 1. Description of terms used in strategy

Malnutrition[1]	An abnormal physiological condition caused by inadequate, unbalanced or excessive consumption of macronutrients and/or micronutrients. Malnutrition includes undernutrition and overnutrition as well as micronutrient deficiencies.
Undernutrition [1]	The outcome of undernourishment, and/or poor absorption and/or poor biological use of nutrients consumed as a result of repeated infectious disease. It includes being underweight for one's age, too short for one's age (stunted), dangerously thin for one's height (wasted) and deficient in vitamins and minerals (micronutrient malnutrition).
Child overweight and obesity (under 5 years)[2]	Overweight is weight-for-height greater than 2 standard deviations above WHO Child Growth Standards median; and obesity is weight-for-height greater than 3 standard deviations above the WHO Child Growth Standards median.
Micronutrient deficiencies [3]	Lack of vitamins, minerals, and/or trace elements required in small amounts which are essential for the proper functioning, growth and metabolism of a living organism. It is also referred as Hidden Hunger as it may be difficult to detect based on a person's physical appearance (people can suffer from micronutrient deficiencies while being of normal weight and height).
Overweight and obesity [1]	Body weight that is above normal for height and they are usually a manifestation of over nourishment. For an adult, overweight is defined as a Body Mass Index (weight in kilogram / height in meter <sup>2</sup> ) of more than 25 but less than 30 and obesity as a BMI of 30 or more.
Non-Communicable Diseases [4]	The result of a combination of genetic, physiological, environmental and behavioural factors. The four main types of NCDs are cardiovascular diseases (heart attacks or strokes), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (such as chronic obstructed pulmonary disease and asthma) and diabetes.
Food systems[5][6]	A "descriptive" concept, defined as the sum of all the diverse elements and activities which, together, lead to the production and consumption of food, and their interrelations. It will generate food security outcomes, as well as a range of other socio-economic and environmental outcomes. There are three constituent elements: food supply chains, food environments and consumer behaviour.

Food supply chain [6]	It encompasses all activities that move food from production to consumption, including production, storage, distribution, processing, packaging, retailing and marketing.
Food environments [6]	The physical, economic, political and socio-cultural context in which each consumer engages with the food system to acquire, prepare and consume food. The key elements of the food environment that influence food choices, food acceptability and diets are: physical and economic access to food (proximity and affordability); food promotion, advertising and information; and food quality and safety.
Consumer behaviour[6]	It reflects the choices made by consumers, at household or individual levels, on what food to acquire, store, prepare and eat, and on the allocation of food within the household (including gender repartition, feeding of children).
Food loss and waste[7]	Food loss is the decrease in the quantity or quality of food resulting from decisions and actions by food suppliers in the chain, excluding retail, food service providers and consumers. Food waste is the decrease in the quantity or quality of food resulting from decisions and actions by retailers, food services and consumers.
Food availability [1]	The amount of food physically available for consumption over a reference period.
Access to food [1]	The ability to acquire food physically, economically and socially, at individual or household level.
Food affordability [8]	Price of a food, relative to cost of other foods and/or population income.
Healthy diet [9]	Healthy diets are those diets that are of adequate quantity and quality to achieve optimal growth and development of all individuals and support functioning and physical, mental and social wellbeing at all life stages. They help to protect against malnutrition in all its forms, including undernutrition, micronutrient deficiency, overweight and obesity) as well as NCDs, such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer. The exact make-up of healthy diets varies depending on individual characteristics (e.g. age, gender, lifestyle and degree of physical activity), cultural context, local availability of foods and dietary customs. They are diversified, balanced, and safe and should limit the intake of saturated and trans fats, added sugars, and sodium. Healthy dietary practices start early

	in life – breastfeeding fosters healthy growth and improves cognitive development and may have long-term health benefits.
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[1] ICN2 Glossary, <http://www.fao.org/faoterm/collection/nutrition/en/>

[2] <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight>

[3] <https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=194>

[4] <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/noncommunicable-diseases>

[5] <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3901e.pdf>

[6] HLPE. 2017, <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7846e.pdf>

[7] SOFA. 2019, <http://www.fao.org/3/ca6030en/ca6030en.pdf>

[8] <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6275e.pdf>

[9] CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (in preparation)