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Food and Agriculture  
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Продовольственная и  
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منظمة  
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للأمم المتحدة

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## JOINT MEETING

**Hundred and Thirty-fifth Session of the Programme Committee and  
Hundred and Ninety-fifth Session of the Finance Committee**

**Rome, 13 and 15 March 2023**

**Update on the work of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub**

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Joint Meeting of the 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance Committee, invited the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub to provide regular updates at its future sessions.
- This document provides a progress report on the work of the Hub as well as information on the 2023 Food Systems Stocktaking moment.
- Main achievements of the work of the Hub include the following:
  - Financial and technical support has started to be provided to countries in implementing their national food systems pathways.
  - The Hub initiated the Food Systems Solution Dialogues, inviting Members, the UN system and the Ecosystem of Support.
  - The Hub has convened several country-level meetings (with National Convenors, Resident Coordinators (RCs), Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), Country Representatives and United Nations country teams [UNCTs]) to start shaping country support portfolios, with start-up funds.
  - The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Bank are co-leading the agenda on financing for food systems transformation and specific outputs of this work are in the work plan of the Hub.
  - The Stakeholders Engagement and Networking Advisory Group and the Scientific Advisory Committee have been established.
  - The Hub has operationalized links with the coalitions, and connections between countries, coalitions and the UN system.
  - Preparations for the stocktaking moment are well under way.

### GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE JOINT MEETING

- The Joint Meeting is invited to provide guidance on the updates as deemed appropriate..

#### Draft Advice

##### **The Joint Meeting:**

- **welcomed the briefing on the current status and operations of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub and recognized the progress achieved in supporting countries, leveraging means of implementation and engaging with the Ecosystem of Support and the UN system.**
- **noted the support provided to the Hub by FAO and other UN agencies, funds and programmes and encouraged FAO Management to identify opportunities to continue supporting the operations of the Hub; and**
- **highlighted the importance of updates regarding the organization of the Food Systems Stocktaking Moment and invited the Hub to continue organizing inclusive Food Systems Solution Dialogues with Members and other stakeholders.**

## I. Background

1. At the conclusion of the UN Food Systems Summit, in his Chair Summary and Statement of Action, the Secretary-General committed the UN system to jointly lead a Coordination Hub that collaborates with, and draws upon, wider UN system capacities to support follow-up to the Summit. The UN Food Systems Coordination Hub (hereafter the “Hub”) has been established and is hosted by FAO on behalf of the UN system. The Hub provided progress updates to the Joint Meeting of the 133rd Session of the Programme Committee and 191st Session of the Finance Committee (May 2022) and 134th Session of the Programme Committee and 194th Session of the Finance Committee (November 2022). Moreover, in November, the Joint Meeting invited the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub to provide regular updates at future sessions.

## II. Financial and technical support to countries in implementing their national food systems pathways

2. As of December 2022, 117 countries have developed food systems national pathways, which demonstrates sustained interest and momentum. Since its establishment, the Hub has liaised with food systems National Convenors to plan concrete support for the early and effective implementation of their pathways. These engagements have facilitated a more granular understanding of country technical and financial assistance needs. Multifaceted and tailored assistance is currently being provided in several countries through the mobilization of the existing UN presence, under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinators (RCs) and in direct collaboration with the FAO Representatives (FAORs) and Country Offices of other UN agencies, funds and programmes (AFPs), as well as by engaging the Ecosystem of Support. The term Ecosystem of Support refers collectively to a set of entities such as food system coalitions, international financial institutions (IFIs), development partners, think tanks and other stakeholders that are involved in the Food Systems Summit (FSS) follow-up.

3. The Hub has organized the “Food Systems Solutions Dialogues” on a monthly basis since April 2022, on a wide range of technical topics. These sessions have enabled continued peer-exchange, peer-learning and capacity development within the country networks. The Dialogues organized so far (virtual) include the following sessions: a) Six thematic dialogues (on finance, private sector, climate change, nutrition, governance and partnerships); b) five regional touchpoints on the subject of “How the current crises on food, energy and finance affect the pathways?” (in collaboration with the co-leads of the Global Crisis Response Group [GCRG] Food Stream); and five regional briefings on the stocktaking moment. Two in-person meetings with Members from Africa (during the African Green Revolution Forum Summit) and Asia-Pacific (during the FAO Food Systems Transformations Symposium) were also organized.

4. The Hub has also convened several country-level meetings (with National Convenors, RCs, RBAs, Country Representatives and UNCTs) to start shaping country support portfolios, with start-up funds injected by the Hub, to enable essential implementation steps to be rolled-out, such as localizing pathways and integrate them in subnational planning and budgeting processes; enhancing accountability and learning through the design of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems; institutionalizing pathways through the development of costed action plans; mobilizing resources with the development of investment proposals; and promoting research and innovations through the establishment of food system labs.

5. The Hub has concluded a survey with the broader Ecosystem of Support and with the UN system to identify, catalogue, and make available to the public technical tools and solutions supporting food systems transformation. These will be included in the Food

Systems Solutions Library under the website of the Hub. The website of the Hub has been launched in December 2022 and it is available at the following address <http://www.unfoodsystemshub.org>.

### **III. Financing food systems transformation**

6. In December 2021, IFAD was designated by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to lead the agenda on financing for food systems transformation on behalf of the UN system. The World Bank, former lead of the FSS Finance Lever, co-leads this stream of work with IFAD. Since financing came up as the highest area of support sought by countries in the needs assessment conducted by the Hub in February 2022, the means of implementation finance area has been prioritized for the biennium 2022-2023 and an activity plan and key deliverables were included in the Hub workplan, including the development of a National Food Systems Budgeting Tool.

7. The budgeting tool will help governments and stakeholders measure domestic, private and Official Development Assistance (ODA) financing towards food systems, at country level. The aim is to influence resource flows from governments, development partners, food businesses and investors to food systems transformation by generating evidence - Who spends what? How much, where, how and for what purpose.

8. A new partnership with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is also underway to provide the global community with verified and publicly available ODA data on international public finance - either grants or "concessional" loans supporting food systems transformation. ODA tracking will provide evidence on commitment to prioritize allocation of concessional international public finance to food systems transformation and enable informed decision-making to ensure that development financing reaches those countries with the greatest needs and least ability to mobilize other resources.

### **IV. Engaging stakeholders and mobilizing the United Nations system and the Ecosystem of Support**

9. As per the Information Note on follow-up to the UN Food Systems Summit issued by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General in December 2021, the Hub strives to stay connected with the broader ecosystem of actors for sustainable food systems including the science ecosystem; as well as draw from the expertise of diverse constituencies, including through a stakeholder advisory group. Terms of reference for the Stakeholders Engagement and Networking Advisory (SENA) Group have been developed and were approved by the Hub's Oversight Steering Committee. The SENA Group includes members from the following groups: producers, women, private sector, scientific and technological community, youth and Indigenous Peoples. Representatives from all stakeholders have been identified and nominated through self-organized processes. The representatives of youth and Indigenous Peoples were introduced at a ceremony during the World Food Forum held in October 2022 at FAO headquarters.

10. The Hub has also established a Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), which is an informal body meant to serve as an independent and diverse group of top scientists from around the world to provide robust and impartial advice and evidence to the Hub, and to the countries through the Hub. To ensure that the SAC will not duplicate existing science structures related to food security, eight members of the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) have been invited - and have accepted - to join the SAC.

11. In line with its mandate to promote greater coordination within the UN system and since the Hub has not created new but has rather used the existing structures of the RCs and UNCTs to coordinate and channel support to countries, it is incubating a new thematic window on food systems transformation, in partnership with the Joint SDG Fund. The thematic window is expected to be launched for a minimum of five years of operations to enable UNCTs design and implement high-quality joint programmes, in support of national pathways implementation.

12. Since its inception, the Hub has also embarked on establishing operational connections with the coalitions that emerged from the FSS through briefings, brainstorming sessions, a dedicated Food Systems Solutions Dialogue as well as one-on-one engagements. A survey conducted by the Hub in May 2022, revealed that through the mandates of the 27 respondent coalitions, 15 out of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are addressed. A Coalitions Compendium and frequently asked questions (FAQ) have been developed and shared widely in order to facilitate countries' engagement and strategic use of coalitions. At the time of the survey, 106 Member Nations were engaging as part of/or leading a coalition.

13. The Hub also endeavours to connect the food systems transformation agenda and other global relevant processes and delivered interventions at the 15th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP15) to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Stockholm+50 sessions, and side events of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), the 50th Plenary Session of CFS and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), among others. Specific references to food systems, the FSS and the Hub have been included in the Ministerial Declaration of the 2022 HLPF.

14. The Hub has provided updates and briefings to the following meetings: Joint meeting of the Governing Bodies of the RBAs; Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees of FAO; the FAO Africa Regional Group; the Working Party on International Food and Agricultural Questions (AGRIFAO), of the Council of the European Union; the European Union Heads of Agriculture and Rural Development; and the World Health Organization (WHO) Nutrition Committee.

## **V. Support provided to the Hub by UN system organizations**

15. The RBAs, together with the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and WHO, have assigned dedicated professional personnel to support the staffing of the Hub. Some of these entities have also provided seed funding for the Hub's early operations. The Principals of the RBAs, DCO, UNEP and the Deputy Secretary-General have also collectively assumed oversight of the Hub through the Steering Committee which approved the Hub's Biennial Workplan 2022-2023 at its last meeting on 22 April 2022. The Hub has prepared a transparent costing of its workplan in order to support the mobilization of resources for its effective implementation. The total funding needs amount to USD 14,302,784 with the bulk of the required resources earmarked for technical and financial support to countries and the organization of the Stocktaking Moment.

### *A. Update on the 2023 Food Systems Stocktaking Moment*

16. The UN Secretary-General has committed in his Chair Summary and Statement of Action of the UN Food Systems Summit to convene "a global stock-taking meeting every two years to review progress in implementing the outcomes of this process and its contributions to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. This will be supported by the RBAs,

the broader UN system and partners”. The first Food Systems Stocktaking Moment (FS STM) should take place in 2023.

17. The 2023 Stocktaking Moment will build on the momentum of the UN Food Systems Summit and bring together ministers of agriculture, environment, health, nutrition, and finance, Food Systems National Convenors, policy leaders, youth, women, farmers, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, researchers, cities and private sector. The gathering aims to create a conducive space for countries to review commitments to action that were made during the Summit, share stories of success and early signs of transformation and maintain the momentum for bold acceleration and bold action signalling national ownership of the food systems agenda. The outcomes of the event will feed directly into the SDGs Summit in September 2023.

18. The Stocktaking Moment will help to solidify the global understanding of the role of food systems in achieving the SDGs, especially in the current food and cost-of-living crisis context. It will call for actions to further the resilience of food systems, push their adaptation to climate change and ensure they contribute to communities’ resilience to further shocks and crises.

19. In order to strategically feed into a number of processes including the SDGs Summit, and other events such as the 28th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Stocktaking Moment should be organized in the first part of 2023. To allow countries to have enough time to report progress and the meeting secretariat to prepare, it has been recommended to organize it in the last week of July 2023 and specifically 24-26 July 2023.

20. The Stocktaking Moment will be hosted by Italy, which has offered financial, technical and policy support for the organization of the event. Regional preparatory meetings will be organized back-to-back with the Regional Fora on Sustainable Development. In addition, a number of global meetings planned for 2023 will provide venues for pre- and post-Stocktaking Moment engagement to further solidify messages on food systems and the SDGs. These meetings include, but are not limited to, the following: i) One-Planet Network Global Meeting (April 2023, Viet Nam); ii) International Food Security Conference (September 2023, Uzbekistan); iii) World Food Forum (October 2023, Italy); iv) COP28 (November 2023, United Arab Emirates).

21. The Executive Office of the Secretary General, Italy as the Host Country and the Hub will manage the preparations of the biennial Stocktaking Moment, supported by the RBAs, the broader UN system and partners.