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# COUNCIL

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### Update on FAO's collaboration with other UN system entities

#### Executive summary

In the pursuit of agrifood systems transformation and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this document provides a report on FAO's partnerships with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) and other United Nations (UN) system entities.

The report highlights key global, regional, and country level mechanisms and modalities guiding the Organization in the implementation of its *four betters*, as outlined in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31.

The report places a strong emphasis on the collaboration with the RBAs as FAO's central partners in achieving SDG 2 and demonstrates the key value-added of FAO's country-driven partnerships with other specialized UN agencies, funds and programmes to ensure linkages between FAO's global expertise and UN Resident Coordinators and Country Teams in critical areas such as SDG acceleration, policy integration and financing.

The report underscores how FAO has bolstered its leadership and engagement at various levels of the UN system over the last four years since the establishment of its dedicated Partnerships and UN Collaboration division (PSU), resulting in concrete outcomes and reinforcing FAO's strategic positioning within the UN system.

This first report provides a broad overview of FAO's current UN partnerships and sets the scene for further regular updates to FAO Governing Bodies on the progress made by FAO in partnering with the RBAs and the entire UN system towards transforming agrifood systems to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.

#### Suggested action by the Joint Meeting of the Programme and Finance Committees and the Council

The Joint Meeting and the Council are invited to review the document and provide guidance, as deemed appropriate.

*Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:*

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## I. Introduction

1. The transformation of agrifood systems is a multifaceted challenge involving not only agriculture but also trade, health, environment, gender, education, and infrastructure, among others. Addressing this challenge effectively requires mainstreaming integrated approaches, aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and its emphasis on partnerships for sustainable development. FAO, as part of the UN development system (UNDS), has played a crucial role by leveraging the repositioning of the UNDS to emphasize agrifood systems transformation through innovative partnerships.

2. The collaborations between FAO and other UN system entities serve as effective channels for consolidating expertise, innovative strategies and mobilizing resources to drive transformative outcomes. These partnerships are built on shared strengths and a shared vision, enabling FAO to translate its aspiration of the *four betters* (*better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life*, leaving no one behind) into tangible results.

3. While collaboration with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) remains foundational and of critical importance to achieve FAO's strategic aspirations and the SDGs, this report is intended to explore the significance of, FAO's collaborations within the broader UN system and their roles in transforming agrifood systems to achieve the SDGs. The report highlights key thematic initiatives, achievements, and the progress made over the past four years in expanding and realigning FAO's partnerships within the UN, including the RBAs.

## II. Transformative United Nations partnerships for agrifood systems<sup>1</sup>

4. The FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 recognizes the complex nature of the challenges in transforming agrifood systems. Agrifood systems encompass the journey of food (for example, cereals, vegetables, fish, fruits and livestock) from farm to table – including when it is grown, harvested, processed, packaged, transported, distributed, traded, bought, prepared, eaten and disposed of. It also encompasses non-food products (for example forestry, animal rearing, use of feedstock, biomass to produce biofuels, and fibres) that also constitute livelihoods and all of the people as well as the activities, investments and choices that play a part in getting us these food and agricultural products<sup>2</sup>.

5. FAO's partnerships within the UN system reflect the complexity and diversity of agrifood systems. The Organization seeks sustainable outcomes through long-term, systemic, and transformative actions. These partnerships leverage complementary resources and expertise beyond FAO's own capacities, with a clear focus on effectiveness and impact. FAO is actively implementing a two-year UN partnerships roadmap to enhance collaboration, capacities and tools, with the goal of contributing to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda, through agrifood systems transformation.

6. In the last four years, FAO has significantly strengthened and deepened its collaboration within the UN system. Recognizing the importance of UN partnerships, FAO focuses on UN collaboration under an overarching One FAO approach with a decentralized network of Regional, Country and Liaison Offices to enhance representation and coordination functions within the UN family.

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<sup>1</sup> FAO's partnerships are transformative when they deliver sustainable outcome(s) through systemic, long-term and disruptive action; when they catalyse impact at scale; and when all partners invest complementary resources (technical, financial, human or knowledge) to create value beyond what FAO could achieve operating alone.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.fao.org/3/nf243en/nf243en.pdf>

### III. Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) collaboration

7. The collaboration between FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP), is critical for addressing global food security and agricultural development challenges. RBA collective institutional capacities are harnessed to provide comprehensive support, propelling progress towards SDG 2 and related SDGs, and enabling coordinated, effective and sustainable responses to food crises. The Senior Consultative Group (SCG) of the RBAs acts as the main global body for regular coordination at management level to review and enhance collaboration and look for opportunities for. The RBAs' combined efforts and shared leadership invigorate critical multistakeholder partnerships, including the global Food Security Cluster (gFSC), the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report, the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC) and the UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDF), among others. Working together within the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub at FAO, the RBAs actively advance the goals set by the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 to transform global food systems in alignment with the SDGs, effectively raising the discourse and political relevance of agrifood systems on both global and national scales.

8. The strategic priorities of the RBAs, outlined in the new global tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed in South Sudan on 1 August 2023, emphasize the spectrum of their collaboration, spanning from humanitarian to development activities. The MoU underscores the necessity of a systemic agrifood systems approach, promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships and innovative investments to address complex crises. The MoU delineates six thematic areas that represent the primary collaboration focus, encouraging joint efforts in other areas of mutual interest.

#### MoU between the RBAs

<b>Term</b>	2023-2028
<b>Purpose</b>	Provides a framework for the RBAs to reset their strategy for collaboration and enhance joint contribution towards the 2030 Agenda
<b>Thematic areas</b>	Agrifood systems; Nutrition; Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment; Resilience Building; Youth; Climate Change, Environment and Biodiversity

9. For a more comprehensive and detailed overview of the RBAs collaborative activities at global, regional and country levels, the *Update on collaboration among the Rome-based UN agencies*<sup>3</sup> can be accessed at the following [link](#).

### IV. Modalities of FAO-United Nations Engagement

10. FAO's technical expertise in agriculture, agrifood systems, nutrition, rural development, fisheries and forestry, among other areas, positions the Organization as a key resource for evidence-based guidance and good practices within the UN system in the field of agrifood systems transformation. With a decentralized structure and a presence in over 130 countries, FAO tailors solutions to regional and national needs, solidifying its role as a dependable partner. Within the UN system, FAO collaborates with over 40 UN agencies, funds, programmes and other entities' and with the UN Country Teams under the leadership of the Resident Coordinators, participating in coordination mechanisms, thematic networks and UN joint programmes. These mutually beneficial and reinforcing collaborations, occurring at global, regional and country levels, enhance efficiency and effectiveness in sustainable development efforts.

<sup>3</sup> WFP/EB.2/2023/4-B *Update on collaboration among the Rome-based agencies*

### A. Global level Engagements

11. FAO actively participates in key UN coordination mechanisms, including the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP), the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM), the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG), and others. These platforms are vital for norm-setting, interagency cooperation and policy coordination within the UN system, enabling FAO to advocate for agrifood systems transformation as a central element of the UN development agenda.

12. FAO plays a key role in strategic initiatives like the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance (GCRG), chaired by the UN Secretary-General, addresses critical challenges in food security, energy and finance. FAO co-leads the food workstream, utilizing its expertise and resources to shape comprehensive strategies.

13. FAO has provided essential policy tools<sup>4</sup>, such as proposals and briefing notes, and supported initiatives like the Global Food Import Financing Facility, aimed at improving responses to food security challenges, foster resilience and sustainable development.

14. During the SDG Summit 2023 (18-19 September 2023), FAO collaborated with international financial institutions, regional development banks and UN agencies to launch the [High-Impact Initiative on Food Systems Transformation](#). This initiative emphasizes contributions of the UNDS and aims to garner support for accelerating progress towards achieving the SDGs, especially SDG 2. The goal is to mobilize USD 4 trillion by 2030, providing technical and policy assistance to selected countries for their agrifood systems transformation agendas, leveraging innovative means like finance, data and innovation. FAO's [Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Platform](#) is a critical resource to support the UN collective effort towards the implementation of this High Impact Initiative.

15. Furthermore, FAO actively supports and shapes the implementation of the UN “Our Common Agenda” (OCA), a set of proposals presented by the UN Secretary-General aiming to reinvigorate multilateralism, addressing current and future challenges while accelerating progress towards achieving the SDGs. FAO's contributions include the provision of expertise in policy papers aligning with its mandate. Additionally, FAO is a member of the UNSDG OCA Working Group, demonstrating its active engagement in this vital initiative.

#### Summary of FAO's contributions to Our Common Agenda

Action Tracks	Name	FAO's actions
#23	Climate Change Stocktaking in 2023	FAO will be promoting green and climate-resilient approaches, including technological innovation, digital solutions and indigenous and traditional knowledge.
#26	UN Food Systems Summit follow-up: transforming food systems for sustainability nutrition and fairness	FAO's key value proposition and responsibility within the OCA. In July 2023, the <a href="#">UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment</a> was held at FAO premises, which provided an opportunity for countries to report on progress made at the national level since the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021 (UNFSS).
#48	Establishment and management of the “Emergency Platform”	FAO will be offering its early warning and emergency platforms, including through the One Health partnership.
#63	Creation of the Advisory Group on local and regional governments	FAO will be chairing the UN Local2030 Coalition for the period 2024-2025 as well as contributing through the SDG Localization thematic window of the Joint SDG Fund, together with the United Nations

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.fao.org/in-focus/policy-proposals/en>

		Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).
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### B. Regional level Engagements

16. At regional level, FAO plays a pivotal role through its active participation in [Regional Collaborative Platforms \(RCPs\)](#), the primary UN regional coordination mechanism. The RCPs are instrumental in generating synergies by amalgamating functions which enhance operational efficiency and foster a more strategic direction and accountability in addressing sustainable development challenges at the regional level. Furthermore, RCPs emphasize system-wide collaboration, facilitating the coordination of various UN agencies and organizations to work towards shared objectives. In addition to this, RCPs prioritize cost-efficiency, ensuring that resources are allocated judiciously to maximize the impact of regional initiatives.

17. RCPs are informed and guided by Issue-based Coalitions (IBCs) which are chaired by UN entities possessing relevant mandates and expertise. These IBCs serve as the driving force behind RCP activities and focus on specific themes and topics that are of particular significance in their respective regions. Within these IBCs, the collaborating entities work together to produce joint regional public goods, which can take the form of knowledge products, data, tools and policy recommendations. These resources are designed to address regional challenges comprehensively and provide valuable solutions and insights.

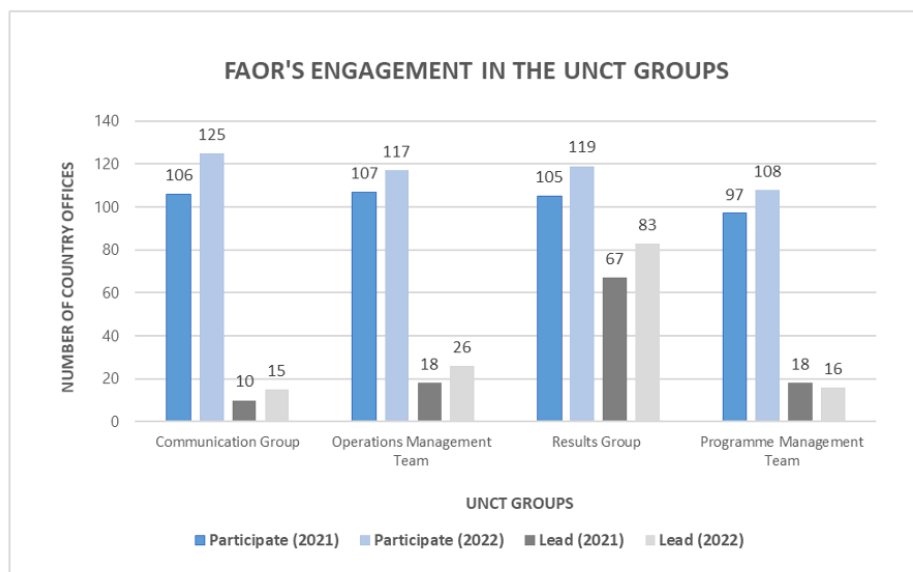
#### FAO participation in Regional Collaborative Platforms (RCP)

Region	Issue-Based Coalition (IBC)	Partners in IBCs where FAO is co-leading and/or participating
Latin America and the Caribbean	Climate Change and Resilience	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)
Europe and Central Asia	Sustainable Food Systems	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO)
Arab States	Food Security, Climate Change, and the Environment	UNEP
Africa	Fostering Climate Action and Resilience	UNEP, UNDP

\* Discussions are ongoing regarding FAO's participation in the IBC/Thematic Working Groups in Asia and the Pacific region.

### C. Country level Engagements

18. At country level, FAO is an indispensable member of United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs). As the fourth largest UN agency present on the ground, FAO actively participates in 130 UNCTs and has supported the development of 87 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs). FAO leads or is co-leading two-thirds of the UNCT Outcome and Results Groups, indicating a strong commitment to integrating agrifood systems into the UN Common Country Analysis (CCA) and UNSDCF through the development of specific outputs.

**Figure 1. FAO Representatives' engagement in UNCT Groups**

SOURCE: COUNTRY ANNUAL REPORT 2021, 2022

19. In the context of the UN Efficiency Agenda, FAO Country Offices are deeply involved in Business Operations Strategies (BOS), collaborating with other UN entities across administrative functions, encompassing human resources, procurement, administration, logistics, information technology and finance. To date, the Organization has signed off 123 BOS.<sup>5</sup> FAO has also expanded its engagement in Operations Management Teams and in Communication Groups to advocate for food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture in UN joint communication initiatives at country level. Key benefits of the UNDS Repositioning at country level are strengthened joint programmes, fostering collaborative activities on the ground and reducing inter-agency competition. Participation in these programmes remains a critical priority for FAO, and the Organization has advanced to be the fourth largest UN agency in terms of participation in UN joint programmes. In 2022, FAO was involved in a total of 119 joint programmes, with most funds (74 percent) originating from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) managed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) Office hosted by UNDP.

20. Since 2021, FAO significantly increased access to numerous UN inter-agency pooled funds<sup>6</sup> leveraging the UN Development System Funding Compact and ensuring more integrated and sustainable SDG financing through the Joint SDG Fund, the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund, the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD), One Planet Multi-Partner Trust Fund, UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration Trust Fund, the Antimicrobial Resistance MPTF, as well as various humanitarian trust funds and other key facilities. The recently launched thematic "Food Systems Window" in the framework of the UN Joint SDG Fund foresees the mobilization of USD 350 million over five years of catalytic funding to facilitate national cross-sectoral food systems leadership and multistakeholder implementation.

21. MPTFs serve as a valuable tool for mobilizing resources and facilitating UN joint programmes, enabling the UN system to work together more effectively.

22. The [Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan](#) constitutes another solid example of the "Delivering as One" approach, which is - a key modality for the implementation of country-based UN joint programmes aimed at leveraging each agency's comparative advantages and complementarities.

<sup>5</sup> Data as of 29 September 2023. Source: BOS Online Platform administered by UNDP.

<sup>6</sup> Contributions received by FAO through the MPTF in 2022 were a record USD 83 million - 69 percent higher than in 2021 - with most of the funds earmarked for peace and transition. Further information can be found [here](#).

### Overview of the Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan (STFA)

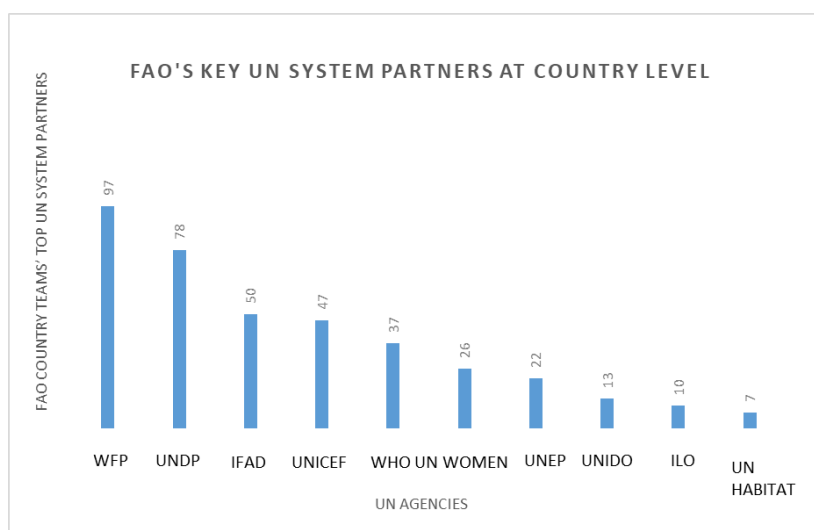
<b>Fund Scope</b>	The STFA is an inter-agency mechanism and inter-agency pooled fund to support UN joint programming in the provision of basic human needs in Afghanistan, currently supporting 18 ongoing projects.
<b>Participation</b>	17 Participating United Nations Organizations.
<b>FAO's work with partners</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	FAO is currently participating in three of the four regional joint programmes in the Northern, Southern and Eastern Regions of Afghanistan, working together with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UN-Habitat, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
<b>STFA Progress in 2022</b>	By the end of 2022, STFA mobilized over USD 180 million, of which over USD 140 million have been allocated to four regional joint programmes, reaching 3 630 824 people. 1.67 million beneficiaries were women - approximately 46 percent.

## V. Institutionalizing FAO's United Nations partnerships

23. FAO has a range of formal and informal partnership arrangements across the UN that exist in parallel. Institutionalizing partnerships through formal arrangements (e.g., Memoranda of Understanding or other partnership frameworks) is a strategic approach utilized by FAO to enhance collaboration with other UN entities. These formal arrangements have enhanced FAO's partnerships by providing a clear strategic direction, aligning joint activities with the 2030 Agenda, and defining specific roles, responsibilities and expected contributions from each partner. They are essential for tracking progress and evaluating the effectiveness of the collaboration. More importantly, developing time-bound deliverables proved to be essential for providing catalytic support to governments in an integrated way to achieve impactful outcomes both at global and country levels. This was achieved through connecting MoU implementation with joint resource mobilization efforts, facilitating joint proposals to access UN multi-partner trust funds as well as climate financing (Global Environment Facility [GEF] and Green Climate Fund [GCF]), supporting strategic level engagements with UN partners in global fora such as the SDG Summit, the Conferences of the Parties (COPs) of UN bodies, and pursuing joint advocacy and communication through flagship publications such as the SOFI report.

24. This structured institutional approach enhances accountability and ensures that collaborative efforts are complementary, preventing duplication and optimizing impact. It represents a crucial step in promoting efficient collaboration and achieving impactful outcomes in line with shared goals and objectives.



**Figure 2. Summary of FAO's top UN System partners at country level**

*Data extracted from the FAO Country Annual Report survey 2023 as of March. Each FAO Country Office was requested to list and rank up to 3 key UN partners in the country with numbers inclusive of both formal and informal partnerships.*

25. Since the endorsement of its Strategic Framework 2022-31, FAO has led the development of actionable and time-bound workplans with other UN agencies that offered a structured and coherent approach by outlining specific activities, setting clear milestones and establishing deadlines. As of September 2023, six bilateral partnerships with top-10 UN partners have been revamped and formalized during the biennium 2022-2023, while four are under negotiation. These are with UNICEF, International Labour Organization (ILO), WHO, and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).

26. FAO Country Offices maintain strong and effective partnerships with key UN entities, highlighting collaborative efforts and joint initiatives across various domains. In emergency contexts, FAO, in coordination with WFP, successfully co-leads the gFSC and the [GNAFC](#), reinforcing a unified, global response during crises. Additionally, FAO collaborates with UNDP to co-lead the Scaling up Climate Ambition on Land Use and Agriculture for a budget of EUR 20 million, to scale up climate ambition in land use and agriculture across a dozen countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean to meet the targets set out in their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

27. A pivotal collaboration with IFAD positions FAO to lead a substantial USD 250 million agrifood systems transformation integrated programme under the Eighth Replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund (GEF-8). This initiative is anticipated to generate significant investments, fostering sustainable nature-positive production and efficient value chains. To date, 22 projects have been technically cleared for inclusion with indicative co-financing of more than USD 1.3 billion.

28. FAO collaborates closely with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and UNFPA, recognizing their expertise and joint initiatives. FAO and UNIDO co-lead the Agrifood Systems Transformation Accelerator (ASTA), focusing on agribusiness value chains. FAO and UNFPA collaborate on reducing poverty and gender inequalities, particularly empowering women and youth in agriculture. Their collaboration is strengthened through a global framework initiative launched in 2022, harnessing digitalization to transform the lives of underserved farmers and rural communities. This initiative maximizes impact by leveraging existing initiatives, policies and tools like FAO's 1000 Digital Villages Initiative, and UNFPA's Women and Girls Safe Spaces and Youth Enterprise Model (YEM).

29. Similarly, collaborations with UNEP contribute to the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). FAO and UNEP are also jointly leading the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and working on oceans, climate and biodiversity.

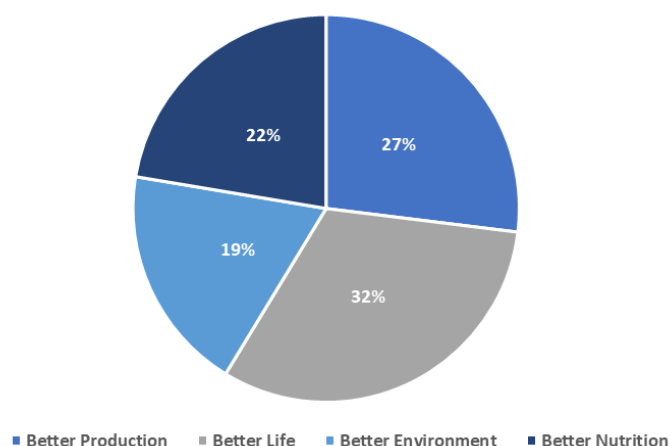
30. FAO and ILO are deepening their collaboration to bring the Decent Work Agenda standards to agriculture and rural areas by promoting decent rural employment in agriculture, agroprocessing, rural marketing companies and industries. FAO has also strengthened its partnership with ILO at country level in the areas of social security and rural employment. Both organizations work together on a variety of country-level initiatives, including the Decent Work for Food Security (DW4FS) programme and the United Nations Joint Programmes on rural youth enterprise development. Furthermore, the FAO-ILO collaboration through the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture (IPCCLA) has achieved significant successes at both national and international levels.

31. UNICEF and WHO continue to be close partners, and they actively engage in joint initiatives with FAO. Together, they formulated most joint proposals submitted to the Pandemic Fund in 2023, emphasizing areas such as child nutrition and food security.

## VI. Thematic Engagements

32. In addition to FAO's co-leadership and participation in regional Issue-based Coalitions (IBC), described under the Regional Collaborative Platforms (RCP) (paragraph 17), FAO actively engages in several crucial partnerships across the *four betters* (Figure 3), addressing thematic areas including nutrition, health, food safety, efficiency, gender equality, transparent markets and trade, and environmental sustainability. Collaborating with UN entities and other organizations, FAO aims to enhance policy coherence, programme alignment and unified support across the UN system, particularly in combating malnutrition and fostering sustainable agrifood systems. The Organization's involvement in diverse initiatives underscores its dedication to achieving the SDGs and promoting resilience and inclusivity in agrifood systems. The partnerships highlighted below are just a subset of existing partnerships and demonstrate the diverse thematic areas FAO engages in.

**Figure 3. Key UN System partners at country level across the Four Betters**



*FAO's UN partnerships are balanced across FAO's four betters at the country level. Data from internal FAO survey at country level as of March 2022.*

## A. Nutrition

33. Established in 2020, UN-Nutrition coordinates and leverages the actions of UN agencies to effectively address malnutrition in all its forms, as well as its root causes, by maximizing policy coherence, programmatic alignment and harmonized advocacy to governments and partners, leaving no one behind. FAO is one of UN-Nutrition's five founding members and hosts its Secretariat in its headquarters. Currently, UN-Nutrition has 16 members, each offering its unique expertise and perspective on tackling malnutrition challenges worldwide. Among its functions, the Secretariat galvanizes its members in liaison with the UN-Nutrition steering committee, fostering action-oriented dialogue and knowledge sharing in pursuit of its two interlinked goals and mission.

**Figure 4. UN-Nutrition structure**



34. As an inter-agency coordination and collaboration mechanism, UN-Nutrition has produced considerable results on the ground across the world. For example, 16 UN agencies<sup>7</sup> are currently active in South Sudan helping to position nutrition as a cross-cutting area in the country's UNSDCF and pave the way for various joint assessments, programmes and advocacy. In the Pacific Islands, FAO, UNICEF, WHO and others have worked together to develop and implement food-based dietary guidelines that help address the double burden of malnutrition while taking into consideration measures that foster environmental sustainability. In Honduras, UN-Nutrition aligns with the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) movement to bring a common voice to policy dialogue and standard methods of intervention. In all cases, UN-Nutrition responds to the needs of the government and the people it serves, understanding that there is no one-size-fits-all approach.

### UN-Nutrition highlight: Cambodia

UN-Nutrition in Cambodia includes representatives from FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO and operates in 17 of 24 provincial working groups. Their collaboration is formalized through an annual UN-Nutrition workplan and regular meetings to coordinate its implementation. For instance, Cambodia was among the first countries to complete its operational roadmap to implement the [Global Action Plan \(GAP\) on Child Wasting](#). Thanks to a joint proposal formulated by UN-Nutrition, it has mobilized USD 3.5 million to date for the implementation of the GAP operational roadmap. The UNSDCF, the second National Strategy for Food Security and Nutrition (2019-2023) as well as Cambodia's Roadmap for Food Systems for Sustainable Development 2030

<sup>7</sup> The following UN agencies are part of UN-Nutrition in South Sudan: FAO, IFAD, IOM, OCHA, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), UNOPS, UN Women, WFP and WHO.

are all strongly aligned. Working in collaboration with the SUN movement is essential to link systems and support implementation of agreed policies and actions.

For further information about UN-Nutrition visit <https://www.unnutrition.org/>.

## B. Health

35. The One Health (OH) approach is an “integrated, unifying approach that aims to sustainably balance and optimize the health of people, animals, and ecosystems”.<sup>8</sup> It recognizes the health of humans, domestic and wild animals, plants and the wider environment (including ecosystems) are intricately linked and interdependent.<sup>9</sup> Public health, veterinary and environmental sectors are key components of this approach, focusing on food and water safety, nutrition, zoonotic disease control, pollution management, and combatting antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

36. Collaboration from local to global level is essential for a coordinated response to health threats, including shared databases, surveillance, and community engagement. The Quadripartite collaboration for OH comprises of FAO, UNEP, WHO, and the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) in emphasizing multi-sectoral approaches to reduce health risks at the human-animal-ecosystem interface.

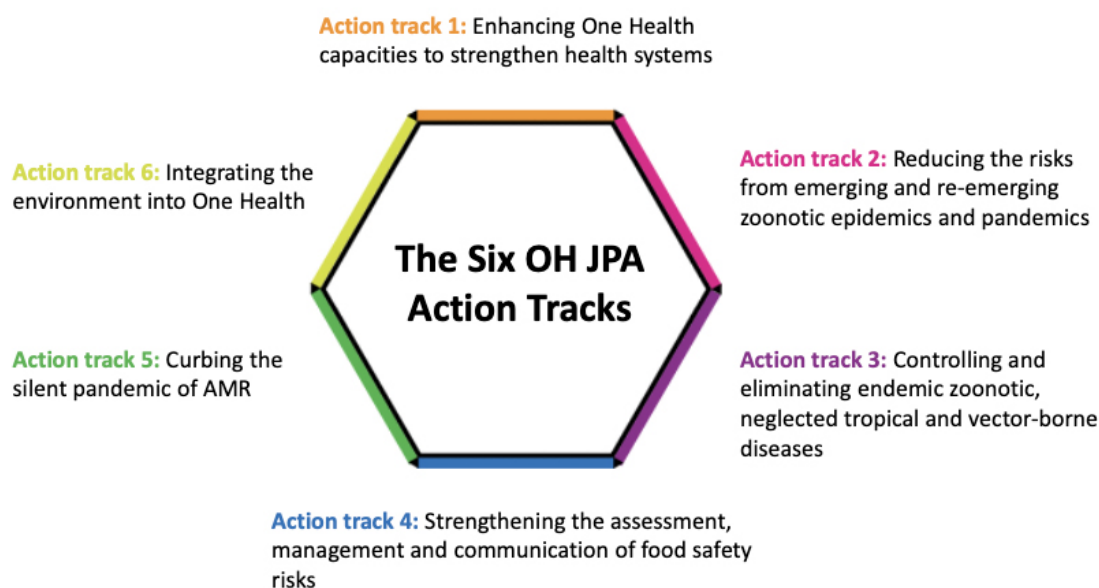
37. The Quadripartite has established the One Health High-Level Expert Panel (OHHLEP), a scientific advisory panel and an interdisciplinary initiative to improve the understanding of how diseases with the potential to trigger pandemics, emerge and spread, while also providing evidence-based scientific and policy support. OHHLEP has established four thematic working groups focused on the following areas in OH: implementation, research and initiatives inventory, surveillance and risk analysis. The areas of focus are subject to regular review by the Quadripartite partners based on the needs of Members. Two examples of concrete collaboration are outlined below.

### One Health Joint Plan of Action (2022-2026)

<b>Aim</b>	Produced by the Quadripartite Organizations consisting of FAO, UNEP, WHO and WOAHA, the OH Joint Plan of Action (JPA) aims to guide the four organizations in working together on One Health with the aim of supporting their Members, Member States and State Parties in building One Health capacities.
<b>Offer</b>	The OH JPA is built around six Action Tracks (Figure 5) with specific objectives for achieving expected medium-term outcomes. Each objective is associated with the implementation of several high-level actions, each with a set of specific activities, clear deliverables and timeline.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.fao.org/in-action/ectad/our-focus/one-health/en>

<sup>9</sup> OHHLEP One Health definition, 2021

**Figure 5. The six Action Tracks of the One Health Joint Plan of Action**

### Overview of the Pandemic Fund

<b>Aim</b>	The Pandemic Fund provides financing to low- and middle-income countries and regions to strengthen their capacity in pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. The Fund was established as part of the G20 process and has attracted USD 1.7 billion of contributions to date. The total envelope of the first call for proposals was of just over USD 300 million.
<b>Offer</b>	<p>FAO as one of 13 Implementing Entities (IEs) was successful in 12 proposals in this first call for proposals (May 2023), involving partnership with governments and other IEs, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank.</p> <p>Directly under FAO's oversight, approximately USD 60 million will be utilized over three years. The initiatives will benefit Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India, Nepal, Palestine, Paraguay, Tajikistan, Togo, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Yemen, and Zambia.</p> <p>Within the framework of OH for better prevention, preparedness and response to public health emergencies, actions include reinforcing disease prevention; combating antimicrobial resistance; strengthening early warning, detection, and response capabilities; improving collaboration between human, animal, and environmental laboratories; and staff training.</p>

### C. Food Safety

38. FAO collaborates extensively with a range of partners, including UN agencies, national and international organizations, research centres and professional associations. Their collective efforts encompass providing scientific advice, developing international food standards, sharing knowledge during emergencies, implementing sanitary and phytosanitary standards, and addressing food safety concerns across the food chain. FAO closely collaborates with WHO to ensure global food safety and protect consumer health, addressing various aspects of food safety along the supply chain. This collaboration extends to joint programmes on food standards and emergency response through the Codex Alimentarius Commission. Additionally, FAO actively participates in critical initiatives like

International Food Safety Authorities Network (INFOSAN) and the Quadripartite collaboration to combat AMR. They also focus on capacity-building in food safety through the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) and collaborate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to support Member Nations in employing nuclear techniques for food safety. These multifaceted collaborations underline FAO's dedication to holistic approaches that enhance food safety, security, and sustainable development.

### **Overview of the Joint FAO/IAEA Centre of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture**

- The Joint FAO/IAEA Centre advances and supports the safe and appropriate use by FAO and IAEA Members of nuclear and related technologies in food and agriculture, aiming to contribute to global food security and sustainable agricultural development worldwide.
- The Joint FAO/IAEA Centre specifically assists Members, particularly developing countries that are most vulnerable to climate change, to enhance their capacities to address the negative impacts of climate change and variability on food security and to adopt activities that will alleviate these impacts. Through its multidisciplinary programmatic areas in crop and livestock production; control of transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases; food safety and control; and land and water management, it uses nuclear techniques and biotechnologies to measure, monitor and adapt to the impacts of climate change in food and agricultural production.
- In 2021, the Joint FAO/IAEA Centre was upgraded from a Division to a Centre, according to Revised Arrangements signed by FAO and IAEA to further strengthen joint activities.
- The Joint FAO/IAEA Centre consists of a team of about 160 scientists, technical experts, and support personnel working at the IAEA headquarters in Vienna, and the Agriculture and Biotechnology Laboratories in Seibersdorf, Austria.
- The Joint FAO/IAEA Centre operates its Agriculture & Biotechnology Laboratories with the Animal Production and Health Laboratory, the Plant Breeding and Genetics Laboratory, the Food Safety and Control Laboratory, the Insect Pest Control Laboratory and the Land and Water Management and Crop Nutrition Laboratory.

#### **The Food Safety and Control Laboratory (FSCL)**

- The Food Safety and Control Laboratory provides assistance to countries, using nuclear and related techniques, to ensure the safety and quality of food and agricultural commodities and to facilitate international trade. It pursues a 'farm-to-fork' approach that ensures the application of good agricultural practices throughout the food chain through applied research and method development, technology transfer and the provision of data and expertise to support the development of international standards and guidelines.

### *D. Gender equality and women's empowerment*

39. FAO's pioneering role in developing methodologies and tools for gender-sensitive interventions in agricultural and rural development is well recognized. The Organization's dedication to advancing gender equality and strengthening women in agrifood systems is exemplified by initiatives aimed at ensuring equitable access to resources, services, markets and employment opportunities. FAO prioritizes empowering rural women to take on leadership positions, including in disaster response, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic.

40. In line with the principle of "leaving no one behind", FAO is committed to increasing efforts in support of women facing various forms of discrimination, including indigenous women, those in conflict zones, and women with disabilities. Leveraging its technical expertise, FAO advocates and supports the attainment of gender equality and parity in policies and collaborates with a wide-ranging network of partners and experts such as the CGIAR (formerly the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research) Gender Platform, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), UN Women, IFAD, and WFP.

41. The Organization's work with these partners is making considerable progress in advancing women's land rights, monitoring gender-related SDG indicators, and supporting Members in empowering rural women within agrifood systems. As an example, FAO is co-implementing phase two of the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment (JP RWEE) launched in March 2022, in collaboration with IFAD, WFP and UN Women. This programme aims to empower rural women, focusing on improved food security, increased incomes, enhanced participation in rural communities and gender-responsive policies.

#### **Highlight of the UN joint-programme on Accelerating Progress towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment**

Phase	Years	Countries	Beneficiaries
Phase One	2014 to 2021	Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda	Almost 65 000 rural women and 400 000 households
Phase Two	2022 to 2027	Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Tanzania, Tunisia, and the Pacific Islands	46 000 direct beneficiaries expected

#### *E. Transparent Markets and Trade*

42. FAO partners with various organizations to enhance food security and nutrition. This includes improving market transparency, promoting trade in agrifood products, and ensuring the inclusion of small-scale farmers, fishers, forest-based small businesses, women and youth in markets and value chains.

43. FAO collaborates with entities such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) to harmonize sanitary and phytosanitary measures through international standard-setting bodies like the Codex Alimentarius and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), which FAO hosts.

44. In collaboration with key partners like WHO, WTO, and the World Bank through the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF), FAO supports small-scale farmers, producers, traders and governments in developing and least developed countries to meet international standards concerning food safety, animal and plant health, and trade requirements.

45. Additionally, FAO and the International Trade Centre (ITC) have partnered in the "Empowering women and boosting livelihoods through agricultural trade" programme, leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The programme aims to enhance women's participation in AfCFTA and increase their access to capacity building and higher-productivity activities, capitalizing on the opportunities in regional trade created by the AfCFTA agreement.

#### **Highlight of the United Nations Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity**

The United Nations Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity is an interagency mechanism dedicated to the coordination of trade-related development contributions of UN entities to address the objectives of the 2030 Agenda. Members include FAO, ILO, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNIDO, WTO, UNEP, the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and UN Regional Commissions. The cluster aims to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to build their trade policies and trade infrastructure, conduct research, enhance negotiation skills, implement trade rules, resolve trade disputes and improve export capacity. The Cluster makes a concrete and direct contribution to UN system-wide coherence including by accessing innovative multi-donor funding mechanisms. As an active member of the cluster, FAO works closely with UNCTAD in activities related to Non-Tariff Measures (NTMs) through various mechanisms the Multi-Agency Support Team, Voluntary Sustainability Standards, the UN Forum on Sustainable Standards and the CEB Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity.

*Going beyond trade: humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus*

Through the Cluster, FAO, UNCTAD and UNDP, actively participate in the UN Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework developed under the auspices of the Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, reporting directly to the Security Council. The Framework, which focuses on the core countries of the African Great Lakes region, namely Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, aligns the development work of UN agencies to the implementation of the road map of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region. Using a multilevel, cross-cutting and interdisciplinary approach, the UN is working at cross-border and regional levels to address the diverse peacebuilding challenges of the region.

#### *F. Integrated Policy Support*

46. The Integrated Policy Practitioners' Network (IPPN) plays a crucial role within the UN system, with leadership provided by key agencies such as FAO, UNDP, ILO, UNFPA, and UNICEF. IPPN is dedicated to promoting collaborative learning and the exchange of experiences related to policy integration practices. Its primary objective is to support UN Country Teams and governments in their efforts to enhance their capacity for effective policy integration. IPPN achieves this by working closely with experts from member countries, development partners and academic institutions. The network is also involved in pioneering research related to integrated development policies, with a particular focus on facilitating sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in alignment with the 2030 Agenda.

47. Additionally, IPPN has launched an e-Course entitled “Applying Integrated Policy Approaches to Accelerate the 2030 Agenda” to train UN personnel and development practitioners in the principles and tools required for delivering effective policy integration support to governments in their pursuit of the SDGs. The course is accessible through the UN Knowledge Campus, hosted on the United Nations System Staff College virtual platform, and aims to equip learners with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to the realization of the SDGs.

#### *G. Climate Change, Biodiversity, and the Environment*

48. The transformation of agrifood systems, encompassing all SDGs, mandates addressing key issues tied to climate change, biodiversity and the environment. Recognizing the centrality of these issues, the Organization produced its [FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022-2031](#) which presents the role of agrifood systems as part of the solution to climate change and seeks complementarities with the missions of other organizations and related international agreements.

49. FAO collaborates with key international frameworks and entities such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), GCF, UNEP, UNDP and GEF, contributing to global efforts aimed at addressing climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental issues.

50. FAO's work with partners involves supporting countries in the sustainable utilization and conservation of biodiversity, as well as in climate change adaptation and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions stemming from food and agriculture production. This is achieved through the development of national climate plans and the implementation of research-based programmes and projects tailored to each country's unique circumstances.

#### **Highlight on collaboration with UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**

FAO and UNEP are spearheading the implementation of the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), fostering strong collaboration with countries, UN agencies and partners. FAO's vision aims at enhancing the productivity, efficiency and sustainability of agrifood systems (including crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture) while ensuring environmental protection and sustainable management of natural resources. Partnerships are fundamental to the success of the UN Decade, with a network exceeding 100 organizations and five task forces, engaging over 500



experts worldwide. These partnerships contribute to the Decade through best practices, finance, monitoring, science, and youth initiatives. The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration has set forth 10 flagship initiatives targeting the restoration of over 60 million hectares.

In November 2022, during UNFCCC COP27, the UN Secretary-General launched the Early Warnings for All initiative (EW4ALL) and appointed WMO and UNDRR as co-leads. EW4ALL's goal is to ensure every person on Earth is covered by early warning systems by 2027. FAO, in collaboration with WMO and other UN partners, actively contributes to the EW4ALL initiative. Since 2016, FAO has been at the forefront of anticipatory action, assisting over 40 countries in connecting early warnings to proactive measures to safeguard the agricultural livelihoods and food security of the most vulnerable populations. FAO offers crucial global early warning services and tools, including the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS), the Joint FAO–WOAH–WHO Global Early Warning [System for health threats and emerging risks at the human–animal–ecosystems interface \(GLEWS\)](#), the Desert Locust Watch, and the Predictive Livestock Early Warning Information System (PLEWS), among others.

## *H. Emergencies and Resilience*

51. FAO is an active member of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the highest-level humanitarian coordination forum in the United Nations system. All of FAO's humanitarian programming is fully coordinated with IASC partners and local actors, under the leadership of the country-level Resident Coordinators. Working across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, FAO saves lives, safeguards livelihoods, and lays the foundations for resilience. Beyond immediate relief, FAO embarks on longer-term developmental projects that strengthen agrifood and early warning systems to ensure communities' resilience to future crises.

52. FAO is a part of several important global efforts that synchronize responses and strategies among UN partners and other actors to effectively respond to pressing humanitarian and emergency situations, connecting global initiatives with country-level demands. The Food Security Cluster, co-led by FAO and WFP, actively scaled up the response to emergencies and contributed in protecting food crises in 30 countries, enhancing active collaboration among a wide network of partners, composed of renowned international, national and local organizations. Cluster partners reached 40 percent more people with food and livelihood assistance compared to 2021, totalling 155 million people.

53. The Organization is also a founding member of the GNAFC and supporting the [Integrated Food Security Phase Classification \(IPC\)](#), by hosting the IPC global support unit as well as providing collaborative technical support to country-level initiatives. Furthermore, FAO holds membership in the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Task Force on Preventing Famine, which advocates for essential famine prevention resources and enhanced access to those in need.

54. FAO's UN partners in the humanitarian and resilience sector spans a wide range of UN agencies, including WFP, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP, OCHA, UNFPA, IAEA, IOM, and UN Women. A recent development is the joint FAO-WFP Anticipatory Action Strategy, which was launched in October 2023, and is a commitment by these two UN agencies to systematically collaborate and scale up anticipatory action ahead of predictable shocks to mitigate the impacts on people's agricultural livelihoods and food security.

### **Overview of the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC)**

<b>Founding</b>	FAO, WFP, European Union (EU)-DEVCO (now Directorate-General for International Partnerships [INTPA]) and European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations department (DG ECHO), launched the GNAFC in 2016 at the World Humanitarian Summit to enhance the impact of future responses to food crises.
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<b>Purpose</b>	An alliance of humanitarian and development actors united by the commitment to tackle the root causes of food crises and promote sustainable solutions through shared analysis and knowledge, strengthened coordination in evidence-based responses and collective efforts across the HDP nexus.  The GNAFC became the key platform for formulating and delivering food security and nutrition outcomes in food crisis countries. A detailed list of global products and achievements can be found <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>Growth</b>	IFAD, UNDP, UNHCR and UNICEF have submitted requests for membership and will begin to work with the Network at a technical level in 2023.

### I. Science, Technology and Innovation

55. FAO's commitment to leverage the role of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in revolutionizing agrifood systems is underlined in the [FAO Science and Innovation Strategy](#). Partnerships are viewed as crucial for leveraging technical expertise, accessing research and knowledge, securing investments and social capital, and achieving impactful outcomes. STI is identified as a linchpin of the 2030 Agenda, evident in multiple SDG targets. FAO actively engages with the UN Technology Facilitation Mechanism and its Interagency Task Team on Science, Technology, and Innovation to foster multistakeholder cooperation, aiming to enhance coordination within the UN system.

56. Collaborating with key partners like IFAD, the World Bank and CGIAR, FAO plays a pivotal role by hosting the Secretariat of the Global Forum on Agricultural Research (GFAR), a collective movement actively shaping the future of agriculture and agrifood systems. The Organization actively promotes digital agriculture innovations and facilitates “e-Agriculture”, a global community of practice aimed at fostering the adoption of ICTs for sustainable agriculture and rural development. This includes ongoing collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) on various aspects related to digital agriculture, such as the production of the [Status of Digital Agriculture report](#) in 18 countries in Europe and Central Asia and the [Status of Digital Agriculture report in 47 sub-Saharan African countries](#). Based on the success achieved, FAO and ITU are working on a similar initiative in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. In the latter, FAO and UNDP have also recently organized an Ideathon on Digital Agriculture Innovation which empowers local entrepreneurs and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises in the agro-processing and agrotourism sectors by encouraging the integration of innovative and digital solutions into their operations.

## VII. Way Forward

57. Over the past four years, FAO has significantly strengthened its strategic partnerships with the RBAs and the wider UN system, emerging as a pivotal actor in driving agrifood systems transformation and advancing the SDGs.

58. The longstanding partnership between the RBAs enables FAO, IFAD and WFP to complement each other's mandates and frameworks to more effectively transform agrifood systems and boost food security and nutrition. The newly signed global tripartite MoU paves the way to further strengthen this partnership.

59. Through integrated approaches grounded in economic, social and ecological systems which drive agrifood systems, FAO has made substantial strides in addressing a diverse array of SDG targets related to food security, sustainable agriculture and rural transformation. The Organization's enhanced UN coordination functions have amplified its global-, regional- and country-level leadership and engagement, and reinforced FAO's strategic positioning within the UNDS.

60. Looking ahead, FAO aims to enhance UN collaborations at all levels by: (i) further strengthening and institutionalizing key UN-system partnerships in support of FAO's *four betters*; (ii) leveraging joint funding mechanisms and investments as a key driver of UN collaboration;

(iii) developing a toolbox of policy instruments to support the integration of the agrifood systems approach in key UN development system frameworks at the global, regional and country level; and (iv) enhancing FAO's collaboration with UN Resident Coordinators and UNCTs to strengthen leadership capacity in UNCTs to drive the agrifood systems transformation agenda and integration into UNSDCF.

61. FAO's expanding and formalized engagements across diverse thematic areas will significantly contribute to the transformation to inclusive and resilient agrifood systems. The strengthened collaboration with Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs) and the RBAs as central partners reflects FAO's commitment to a broader, integrated collaboration within and beyond the UN system.

62. The imperative of food systems transformation, as identified by the UNSDG, underscores the urgency to expedite progress towards the SDGs. FAO, in close collaboration with partners, is committed to supporting the collective effort of mobilizing approximately USD 4 trillion from various sources by 2030, crucially focusing on low- and middle-income countries.

63. FAO remains steadfast in contributing to and building upon the benefits of the repositioning of the UNDS process. The Organization aims to further enhance its leadership within UNCTs, support the integration of an agrifood systems perspective into relevant frameworks, expand participation in joint programmes, and increase access to UN inter-agency pooled funds.

64. The critical role of partnerships cannot be overstated in the transformation of agrifood systems and the advancement of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the SDGs. By mobilizing means of implementation such as finance and data, coupled with innovation and advocacy efforts for inclusive policies, FAO, with its partners, strives to achieve more sustainable, resilient and inclusive agrifood systems.