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# FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA

## Thirty-third Session

**Rabat, the Kingdom of Morocco, 26-28 March 2024 and 18-20 April 2024**

**Priorities for FAO in the region under the FAO Strategic Framework  
2022-31**

### Executive Summary

FAO's work in the Africa region is guided by the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, with its overarching *four betters* and 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPAs). Input on priorities from the 33rd Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa will guide FAO's programming for the 2026-2027 biennium and support the review of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31.

FAO is implementing Regional Foresight Exercises in the Africa region to accelerate strategic thinking, increase capacity to support transformative changes of agrifood systems, and inform Members on strategic options available to achieve MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems.

The Africa region is dealing with the consequences of overlapping shocks, including the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, cyclical droughts and floods, and other climactic variability exacerbated by climate change, pests and diseases, economic slowdowns and unsustainable debt burdens and conflicts, including the war in Ukraine. At the same time, recent trends driving agrifood systems are providing new opportunities. These factors provide challenges and opportunities for the *four betters*. FAO is responding through four Regional Priorities that are aligned with the *four betters*, 20 PPAs and their respective Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets.

A regional programmatic approach provides the framework for implementing FAO's strategies, corporate initiatives and programmes. It also facilitates better ways of working together with partners as One FAO.

### Suggested action by the Regional Conference

The Regional Conference is invited to:

- a. take note of the efforts to implement the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 in the Africa region;

- b. recognize the regional programmatic approach and how it sharpens FAO's focus, sets clear priorities, enhances dialogue, and facilitates communication and advocacy with governments and partners; and
- c. provide guidance on priorities for FAO's work in the Africa region drawing from the experience of implementing the FAO Strategic Framework in 2022-23, as well as the major trends, challenges and opportunities shaping agrifood systems.

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## I. Introduction

1. The 43rd Session of the FAO Conference endorsed the Medium Term Plan (Reviewed) 2022-25 and Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 and approved the Biennial Theme 2024-25 : “Water resources management for the *four betters: better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life*, to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.<sup>1</sup>

2. FAO’s work is guided by the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, which seeks to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life*, leaving no one behind. Its 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) articulate FAO’s thematic, technical comparative advantage. Regional Priorities are elaborated within the context of the relevant PPAs and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

3. Beyond the 2024-2025 biennium, and in line with the programming and budgeting cycle elaborated in the FAO Basic Texts,<sup>2</sup> inputs on priorities from the 2024 Regional Conferences will guide FAO’s programming for the 2026-2027 biennium, and will support the review of the FAO Strategic Framework to be presented to the FAO Conference in 2025.

## II. Context

### II.1 Medium- and long-term futures of agrifood systems

4. Strategic foresight at FAO examines the alternative future patterns of agrifood, socioeconomic and environmental systems, and the dynamics of their driving forces, to identify strategic options for triggering changes towards efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable agrifood systems at all levels.

5. Following the guidance from the Committee on Agriculture and other Governing Bodies, FAO is reinforcing its strategic foresight capacity in collaboration with UN bodies, academia, civil society and other foresight networks. This includes implementing Regional Foresight Exercises (RFEs) in all five FAO regions, involving subregions and selected pilot countries. The RFEs aim to accelerate strategic thinking, increase capacity to support transformative changes of agrifood systems, and inform Members on strategic options available to achieve efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems.

6. The recently launched FAO flagship report *The future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation* (FOFA-DTT) that formed the basis of the FAO *Strategic Framework 2022-31*, and provides the conceptual and methodological grounds for the RFEs, warns that current trends could threaten the achievement of the desired agrifood systems transformation and jeopardize the achievement of the *four betters*, potentially leading to increased severity of food crises. Drivers such as population growth, urbanization, macroeconomic instability, poverty, inequality, geopolitical tensions, competition for resources and climate change are already negatively impinging on socioeconomic and environmental dimensions of agrifood systems, while food prices are increasing. Transitioning towards sustainability may require a new mindset that prioritizes long-term objectives and addresses trade-offs through massive investment in domains with high transformative potential, such as the four “triggers for transformation” proposed in the FOFA-DTT report: institutions and governance; consumer awareness; income and wealth distribution; and innovative technologies and approaches.

7. FAO began the RFE in the Africa region with a hybrid inception workshop to identify regional priority drivers, out of the 18 drivers of agrifood systems identified in the FOFA-DTT report. With such a vast continent and immense socioeconomic, environmental and agrifood heterogeneity, at subregional and country levels, several long-lasting influencing forces (drivers and their long-term trends) were prioritized by experts.

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<sup>1</sup> C 2023/REP at <https://www.fao.org/3/nm800en/nm800en.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Basic Texts of FAO, II. F, Implementation of the IPA regarding the reform of the programming, budgeting and results-based monitoring system

8. High population and urbanization growth trends, especially on youth population, bring opportunities but also inescapably serious concerns regarding employment opportunities and the risks of the degrading quality of jobs (remunerations, exploitation and safety). The region – which has most of the world’s poor and shows little sign of meaningful improvement – has yet to undergo a sustainable transformation, notwithstanding the high economic growth experienced in the last two decades. Cross-country and interregional interdependencies, essentially based on exports of primary commodities, outward migrations and food imports, together with high real food prices, pose challenges which exacerbate growing social tensions, directly related to geopolitical instability and conflicts. Most conflict-related internal displacements around the globe take place within the region. Public expenditure on agriculture remains low compared to other regions, undermining the much-needed technological and innovative push in agrifood systems. Natural resources have been severely degraded, further affecting dryland areas of the Sahel, Horn of Africa, and Southern Africa.

9. The RFE is currently conducting further analyses, to better understand this interplay, envision alternative scenarios, decipher political and economic challenges that perpetuate undesirable realities, and identify suitable strategic options to activate key triggers for transformation, also through enhanced regional, subregional and national cooperation. A draft Regional Foresight Report is being developed through a partnership with regional experts, elaborating on initial findings, gathering further inputs through upcoming expert consultations and quantitative analysis of trends in regional priority drivers. Similarly, Country Foresight Exercises in selected pilot countries are being planned, which will deliver related Country Foresight Reports also in support of United Nations Development System Common Country Assessments.

### III. Challenges and opportunities

10. The Africa region is facing overlapping shocks, including pests and diseases, cyclical droughts and floods and other climatic variability exacerbated by climate change, economic slowdowns and unsustainable debt burdens, the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and conflicts, including the war in Ukraine. Rising food prices compromise household food security and nutrition, particularly for poor households who spend a higher proportion of their income on food. Climate change and weather extremes continue to pose risks to agrifood systems, while conflicts and political instability threaten food security.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, many countries are facing severe fiscal constraints and debt pressure.<sup>4</sup> Notwithstanding the challenges, recent trends driving agrifood systems are providing new opportunities. Growing food markets and the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement provide investment and trade opportunities. A growing youth population, urbanization and a rising number of households with discretionary income, as well as digitalization, are creating income and job opportunities throughout agricultural value chains.

#### Challenges and opportunities for Better Production

11. Limited uptake of modern technologies and innovation impedes productivity of crops, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, while policy and governance issues pose additional challenges. Therefore, investments in science and innovation are critical to increase agricultural productivity, as are digital solutions and platforms to enhance advisory services and markets for farmers and others in agrifood systems. These must be accompanied by supportive policies and governance structures. Enhanced partnerships are also crucial to disseminate technologies and innovative solutions.

#### Challenges and opportunities for Better Nutrition

12. Healthy diets are not affordable for large numbers of Africans.<sup>5</sup> Relatively high levels of fruits and vegetables, as well as roots and tubers, are lost from pre- and post-harvest to wholesale segments of

<sup>3</sup> WFP and FAO. 2023. *Hunger Hotspots. FAO–WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity: November 2023 to April 2024 Outlook*

<sup>4</sup> *Regional economic outlook. Sub-Saharan Africa: light on the horizon?* Washington, DC International Monetary Fund, 2023

<sup>5</sup> FAO, AUC, ECA and WFP. 2023. *Africa - Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2023: Statistics and trends*. Accra.

value chains.<sup>6</sup> Policy actions, advocacy and communication can help countries to influence consumer dietary choices, while several indigenous crops provide nutrient rich foods. Partnerships can accelerate investment in nutrient rich foods and scale up innovative approaches for healthy diets. Partnerships with the private sector, including on reducing post-harvest losses and trade, also contribute to nutritional outcomes.

#### Challenges and opportunities for Better Environment

13. Climate variability and extremes, degradation of soils, variations in water supply, increasing deforestation and continued biodiversity loss put pressure on agrifood systems. African Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are under intense pressure from the adverse impact of climate change. Integrated solutions are required to address sustainable and resilient environmental responses and actions. Scaling up innovative environmental approaches provides opportunities for improving sustainable and inclusive management of natural resources. The *Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action* provides renewed political focus and investment opportunities on environmental issues.

#### Challenges and opportunities for Better Life

14. Natural and anthropogenic shocks exacerbate household food insecurity and drive cascading humanitarian needs; social protection systems coverage in the region is low, particularly in rural areas, and gender gaps prevent the full realization of women's potential in agrifood systems.<sup>7</sup> Creating good quality jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for youth remains a challenge. FAO's enhanced focus on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus integrates understanding of conflict dynamics into resilience interventions. Scaling up best practices and lessons learned from the implementation of youth initiatives creates opportunities for accelerating jobs and income opportunities. African SIDS are also fostering dialogue and mobilizing investments to build resilience, promote sustainable development, and encourage inclusive growth.

### **IV. Priority areas of work in 2024-2025 and beyond**

#### Regional Priorities

15. The Africa Region has four Regional Priorities, endorsed by the 32nd Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa ARC, which guide the regional approach and work programme towards supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life*, leaving no one behind.

16. The four Regional Priorities are:

- a. Sustainable agrifood production systems;
- b. Efficient and equitable food and nutrition systems;
- c. Climate action and sustainable natural resource management; and
- d. Building resilience and ending poverty.

17. The four Regional Priorities are aligned with the *four betters*, 20 PPAs and their respective SDG targets. Together this framework provides a robust programmatic approach for the implementation of FAO's strategies, corporate initiatives and programmes.

18. The Regional Priorities, aligned to the relevant PPAs, bring a systems approach to enhance the strategic positioning of FAO, highlighting the Organization's comparative advantage as a source of data, knowledge, technical support and evidence-based solutions at the country, subregional and regional levels. This integrated regional planning and reporting approach forms the basis for organizing multidisciplinary teams to deliver the work programme, engaging technical expertise across the

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<sup>6</sup> FAO. 2019. *The State of Food and Agriculture 2019. Moving forward on food loss and waste reduction*. Rome.

<sup>7</sup> FAO. 2023. *The status of women in agrifood systems – Overview*. Rome

Organization (headquarters, region, subregion) to develop and implement specific work areas that respond to country and regional priorities, and facilitate resource mobilization.

19. This regional programmatic approach sharpens FAO's focus, sets clear priorities, enhances dialogue and facilitates communication and advocacy with governments and partners. This approach also facilitates better ways of working together as One FAO with a common vision and results.

*Regional Priority 1: Sustainable agrifood production systems*

20. Regional Priority 1 focuses on sustainable increase in productivity of crops, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture. Given the dominant role of smallholder operators in these sectors, this Regional Priority addresses constraints and opportunities for agricultural productivity and priorities to harness science and innovation for more sustainable and resilient transformation of Africa's agrifood systems.

Regional Priority 1: Sustainable agrifood production systems

Programme Priority Areas (PPAs)	SDG Targets	Regional Areas of Emphasis
BP1: Innovation for sustainable agriculture production	2.3, 2.4, 6.4, 9.5, 15.2	Animal production systems and One Health platforms and actions Crop production and protection systems
BP2: Blue transformation	2.1, 2.2, 14.2, 14.4, 14.6, 14.7, 14.b, 14.c	Fisheries and aquaculture systems
BP3: One Health	1.5, 3.d, 15.8	Animal production systems and One Health platforms and actions
BP4: Small-scale producers' equitable access to resources	1.4, 2.3, 2.4, 6b, 9.3, 14.b	Crop production and protection systems
BP5: Digital agriculture	1.4, 5.b, 9.c, 17.8	Crop production and protection systems

21. This Regional Priority is fully aligned with Better Production. Increased production and productivity of crops, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture is at the core of achieving SDG 2 Zero Hunger and other SDGs. Increased productivity of food products is also critical for increasing the availability and affordability of nutrient rich food, and the future productivity of crops, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture is crucial for managing environmental resources.

22. Regional Priority 1 will support Members in:

- a. scaling up innovative approaches to increase agricultural production and productivity, including agricultural mechanization, in an inclusive and sustainable way;
- b. promoting science, technology and innovation to enhance agricultural productivity and competitiveness in regional and global markets;
- c. addressing key enabling factors to accelerate digital agriculture to meet productivity, market and trade objectives, as well as improving efficiencies and inclusiveness along the agricultural value chains; and
- d. developing actions to support policies, capacity building and provision of technical assistance to improve genetics, animal feeds, animal health and livestock value chains, targeting smallholder livestock keepers, pastoralists and agropastoralists.

*Regional Priority 2: Efficient and equitable food and nutrition systems*

23. Regional Priority 2 supports the transition of food systems towards affordable healthy diets for all. Key areas of work focus on the demand and supply for healthy foods and on promoting the use of nutrient rich indigenous foods. The work on food safety, food loss and waste, inclusive agricultural value chains, and markets and trade address increased accessibility and affordability of healthy diets for all.

Regional Priority 2: Efficient and equitable food and nutrition systems

Programme Priority Areas (PPAs)	SDG Targets	Regional Areas of Emphasis
BN1: Healthy diets for all	1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.4, 12.8	Make nutritious foods safe, available and accessible
BN2: Nutrition for the most vulnerable	1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2	Smart policies, institutions and investments for agrifood systems transformation
BN3: Safe food for everyone	2.1, 2.2, 3.2	Make nutritious foods safe, available and accessible Trade and market opportunities for inclusive growth
BN4: Reducing food loss and waste	2.1, 2.2, 12.3	Agribusiness, inclusive and resilient agrifood value chains
BN5: Transparent markets and trade	2.b, 2.c, 10.a, 17.11	Trade and market opportunities for inclusive growth
BE4: Achieving sustainable urban food systems	1.1, 2.1, 11.a, 12.1	Make nutritious foods safe, available and accessible
BL2: Inclusive rural transformation.	1.1, 8.3, 8.5, 10.1, 10.2, 10.7	Agribusiness, inclusive and resilient agrifood value chains
BL5: Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Initiative	1.1, 1.2, 2.1 2.2, 2.a, 10.1, 10.2	Make nutritious foods safe, available and accessible Smart policies, institutions and investments for agrifood systems transformation
BL6: Scaling up investment	1.b, 2.a, 10.1, 10.2, 10.b, 17.5	Smart policies, institutions and investments for agrifood systems transformation

24. This Regional Priority is strongly aligned with Better Nutrition and also draws on Better Life. Promoting increased availability of healthy diets is essential for making progress on food security and nutrition at household and national levels. It is also strongly aligned with a *better life*, due to the increased job and income opportunities created from enhanced access to and affordability of healthy diets.

25. Regional Priority 2 will support Members in:

- a. piloting tests, scaling up promising interventions and supporting policy actions, communication and advocacy to ensure that healthy and affordable diets are available to all;
- b. promoting efficient functioning of inclusive value chains to create jobs and income opportunities in both urban and rural areas, particularly for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), women and youth;

- c. strengthening food safety systems for the harmonization of standards, streamlining of procedures for sanitary and phytosanitary measures compliance, and promoting risk-based programming and decision-making;
- d. addressing food loss and waste, with a view to increasing food availability and making healthy diets more affordable to poor and non-poor people;
- e. policy actions to improve the enabling environment and boost private and public investment in agrifood systems; and
- f. highlighting key policy reforms and investments to boost intraregional agricultural trade and services.

*Regional Priority 3: Climate action and sustainable natural resource management*

26. Regional Priority 3 recognizes that current patterns of agricultural intensification are not sustainable, and that the productivity of key components of agrifood systems is being compromised with negative effects on livelihoods and the environment. Programme and project interventions aim to foster more productive use of natural resources, support sustainable development of value chains for forest, wildlife and fisheries products, as well as governance of natural resources in being more inclusive and adaptive.

Regional Priority 3: Climate action and sustainable natural resource management

Programme Priority Areas (PPAs)	SDG Targets	Regional Areas of Emphasis
BP4: Small-scale producers' equitable access to resources	1.4, 2.3, 2.4, 6.b, 9.3, 14.b	Ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management Water management for sustainable agriculture
BE1: Climate change mitigating and adapted agrifood systems	2.4, 6.4, 13.1, 13.2, 13.b, 14.3	Scaling up climate-smart agriculture Ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management Water management and sustainable land management
BE2: Bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture	12.2, 12.4, 12.5	Ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management Water management for sustainable agriculture Sustainable use of biodiversity, responsible governance of natural resources
BE3: Biodiversity and ecosystem services for food and agriculture	2.5, 6.6, 14.4, 15.1, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6	Sustainable use of biodiversity, responsible governance of natural resources

27. This Regional Priority aligns well with Better Environment and also draws on Better Production, as responses to deal with climate action, including climate -smart agriculture, and the interconnected systems of land, soil, water, forestry and biodiversity, are crucial for future productivity of crops, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture production systems, including those managed by small-scale producers.



28. Regional Priority 3 will support Members in:
- identifying and promoting effective climate actions, including climate-smart agriculture and providing technical support on key initiatives emanating from high-level fora such as the UN Climate Change Conference, the African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action, and Governing Board decisions on forestry and biodiversity;
  - providing integrated responses and actions to address interconnected systems of land, soil, water and biodiversity for current and future production and productivity of crops, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture production systems; and
  - putting in place technical interventions, management practices and innovations that can be targeted to accelerate sustainable agricultural productivity increases and more resilient transformation of agricultural systems.

*Regional Priority 4: Building resilience and ending poverty*

29. Regional Priority 4 focuses on advancing youth employment, including strengthening the skills of youth-led agribusinesses and expanding social protection, particularly for poor and vulnerable households in rural areas. This Regional Priority provides support to people and communities in situations of vulnerability to strengthen their livelihoods and protect their assets to better respond to natural and man-made crises, along with initiatives to strengthen the resilience and sustainability of agrifood systems, and to improve food security and nutrition in African SIDS. Importantly, this Regional Priority focuses on integrating gender considerations into all aspects of FAO's programmatic work, including policy development, programme design, and monitoring and evaluation.

Regional Priority 4: Building resilience and ending poverty.

Programme Priority Areas (PPAs)	SDG Targets	Regional Areas of Emphasis
BP4: Small-scale producers' equitable access to resource	1.4, 2.3, 2.4, 6b, 9.3, 14.b	Crop production and protection systems
BN1: Healthy diets for all	1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 3.4, 12.8	Make nutritious foods safe, available and accessible
BL1: Gender equality and rural women's empowerment	2.3, 5.4, 5.a, 5.c	Gender and inclusion (cross cutting)
BL2: Inclusive rural transformation	1.1, 8.3, 8.5, 10.1, 10.2, 10.7	Decent employment in agrifood systems
BL3: Agriculture and food emergencies	1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 16.1	Social protection for livelihoods and resilience
BL4: Resilient agrifood systems	1.3, 1.5, 2.4	Resilience of livelihoods to natural and man-made disasters African SIDS

30. Regional Priority 4 is well aligned with Better Life and also linked to Better Production and Better Nutrition. The dependence of rural populations on agrifood systems means that increased agricultural productivity is translated into increased incomes and better livelihood opportunities in the farm and non-farm sectors. Increased incomes enhance accessibility and affordability of healthy diets for rural households. Moreover, reduced risk and vulnerabilities provide stability in food supplies and strengthen household coping mechanisms which, in turn, enhance availability of and accessibility to healthy diets. Several continental initiatives provide guiding principles to expand social protection, including to rural areas.<sup>8</sup> Investment in high-quality gender data helps to increase gender-responsive investments.

<sup>8</sup> Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security

31. This Regional Priority will support Members in:
- a. providing solutions to enhance decent employment and income opportunities for youth and women;
  - b. supporting expanded social protection coverage, particularly in rural areas where most of the population depends on agrifood systems for their livelihoods;
  - c. designing, implementing and sharing knowledge on resilience interventions, including new ways of saving lives through stronger and more resilient livelihoods; and
  - d. promoting innovative solutions to address risks and vulnerabilities, including in the SIDS, providing more resilient and inclusive livelihoods, as well as new opportunities for investment and trade.

## **V. Accelerators and cross-cutting themes**

32. The four accelerators (innovation, technology, data and complements [governance, human capital and institutions]) are addressed across FAO's regional programmatic interventions to accelerate impact, while minimizing trade-offs. Under the innovation accelerator, the Africa Strategic Foresight Exercise provides a forward-looking policy framework on the future of food. In addition, innovative approaches are being scaled up to increase access and use of affordable innovations. The data accelerator provides granular data to support decision-making through initiatives, such as the 50x2030 Initiative and Global Strategy to improve agricultural statistics. The Africa region is harnessing the full range of digital and non-digital technologies under the technology accelerator to scale up impact using data and real-time information to increase agricultural productivity, provide new value chain opportunities, and promote climate solutions and anticipatory actions to address vulnerability. The complements accelerator focuses on facilitating policy dialogue and intersectoral coordination for the post-Malabo Framework to transform agrifood systems.

33. Gender, youth and inclusion are cross-cutting issues reflected in all of FAO's work. Several analytical tools and knowledge products on gender issues, as well as gender-sensitive indicators, are used to track progress on gender equality and inclusiveness across all programmatic areas of work and Country Programming Frameworks. Youth-led agribusinesses skills are enhanced in key areas, while youth advocacy activities and participation in policy fora are supported by leveraging youth in agribusiness networks and platforms. The region's work on social protection addresses inclusion through the implementation of concepts and principles of inclusivity, as found in FAO's Strategic Framework, as well as case studies on different aspects of inclusion.

## **VI. FAO's corporate strategies and initiatives**

34. FAO organized several regional dialogues and consultations to support the implementation of corporate strategies and initiatives. Regarding the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy, an Africa Regional Consultation and a Science and Innovation Forum discussed key themes including science, technology and innovation for improving agricultural productivity and competitiveness in Africa and fostering youth, women and science-led innovations for climate action in agrifood systems in Africa. Regarding the FAO Strategy on Climate Change (2022-2031), FAO organized the Africa Regional Consultation on the FAO Strategy on Climate Change (2022-2031) and the Africa Regional Dialogue: Post-COP27 Opportunities for joint actions. FAO is building on these events to strengthen its work and support delivery on science, technology and innovation through Memoranda of Understanding and Letters of Agreement, including with the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa and the CGIAR.

35. The Hand-in Hand (HIH) Initiative will continue to utilize rich data and diagnostics and emphasize country-owned evidence-based investments. The business model for the HIH Initiative is being revised to enhance the quality of national government-led agrifood investments, including a clearer focus on policy issues, complementarity with other national flagship investments, and enhanced private sector engagement. Building on the launch in the Africa region of the One Country One Priority Product Initiative, in March 2022, and broad interest of Ministers for Agriculture, technical experts,

representatives of research and resource partners, FAO will scale up this initiative, as well as strengthen areas of complementarity with other initiatives, such as the HIH Initiative and the 1000 Digital Village Initiative (DVI), to include more countries and specialized agriculture products, including field crops, forestry products, livestock and horticulture. The DVI portfolio will expand, with activities focusing on market access and advisory services, leveraging digital tools, such as satellite information and e-commerce platforms, supporting digital upskilling of Farmer Field Schools, exploring the potential of artificial intelligence (such as ChatGPT) for advisory services and digital equipment for rural public extension. The digital solutions and lessons learned from the DVI will also be shared and scaled up in other FAO and partner investments on digital agriculture in the region.

## VII. One FAO

36. An integrated work planning process facilitates engagement between PPA Leaders at FAO headquarters and their Regional Focal Point counterparts for the implementation of the FAO Strategic Framework. Underpinning the integrated work planning process is an enhanced results-based management framework with quality assurance criteria, restructured processes and tools to improve data quality.

37. Normative products and standard-setting work demonstrate FAO's comparative advantage. FAO will build on these areas to support Members, including:

- a. strengthening the One Health (OH) Monitoring Tool to help countries assess and set a baseline for OH operationalization;
- b. drawing from the *Africa – Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2023*, supporting policy actions and investments to help countries achieve SDG 2 targets;
- c. continuing to provide technical inputs into the implementation of the African Union's Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action;
- d. providing policy guidance to support social protection responses to mitigate the impact of the war in Ukraine on food security; and
- e. drawing from the report *The status of women in agrifood systems*, identifying best practices and policy actions to support women's empowerment in agrifood systems.

Collaborative work with partners will continue to underpin FAO's delivery modalities. FAO will work with the African Union to support the Post-Malabo Framework. The Organization will also strengthen engagement with science and innovation partners, such as the CGIAR and regional and national research institutions, to roll out the Science and Innovation Action Plan, as well as the strategies on climate change and biodiversity. The African Agribusiness Leadership Dialogue and the Civil Society Dialogue will continue to provide important platforms for engaging key stakeholders on investment and policy processes for inclusive transformation of agrifood systems. Growing collaboration with multilateral development banks, such as the African Development Bank, the World Bank and the UN Capital Development Fund will help to better leverage FAO's work for investment and technical assistance in agrifood systems. FAO will continue playing prominent roles in UN Development System repositioning as a member of the Peer Support Group, contributing to UN INFO, and providing training to the UN Resident Coordinator's office on programmatic issues.