

**Briefing to Member States on Expert Group Meetings on SDG1 and SDG2**  
**10 preliminary messages from the EGM on SDG2**  
**Remarks presented by FAO, IFAD and WFP<sup>1</sup>**

Ladies and gentlemen,

The EGM on SDG2 brought together a diverse group of more than 100 experts and stakeholders, from nearly 40 countries, representing Member States, farmer organizations, cooperatives, civil society, NGOs, private sector, academia, CGIAR System, UN System other international organizations. On behalf of the conveners, I want to thank all these experts. They provided a wealth of diverse and relevant inputs and recommendations throughout the two-day meeting.

On the first day of the EGM, discussions focused on the individual targets of SDG2, while on the second day, we had parallel sessions that explored the means of implementation, the interlinkages among the SDGs, and countries in special situation and protracted crisis – all critical issues for the advancement of SDG2 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Allow us to briefly share with you 10 points that emanated from the two days of fruitful and insightful discussions:

First, I want to start by emphasizing that to reach SDG2 we need political commitment and strong nationally driven and country specific responses, that are supported by inclusive partnerships. We need to recognize that the rural poor, including in many cases subsistence and family farmers and indigenous populations, that make up nearly 80 percent of the extreme poor in the world, are not only beneficiaries of different kinds of support but also and mainly are agents of change. We need to ensure adequate pro-poor investments and that investments and financing are more explicitly aligned to the SDG2 outcomes. We also need to build resilience and address root causes of hunger and poverty such as conflict, natural resources degradation and climate change. The needs of countries in special situation was also highlighted and they need to be addressed to leave no one behind.

Second, the EGM emphasizes that we need transformative change to reach SDG2 and the 2030 Agenda. If we look particularly at food and agriculture, this means transforming our food systems so that they are more sustainable, inclusive and resilient to climate change. And we cannot lose sight to why this is important: people are at the center of the 2030 Agenda. We need sustainable food systems to produce the safe and nutritious food that people need to thrive.

Food and agriculture can be part of the solution to climate change, to eradicate poverty and a powerful driver for sustainable development. But we cannot look only at production and productivity. Transformative change in food and agriculture means that we need to address the three pillars of sustainable development equally: social, environmental and economic. We need to move beyond the Green Revolution, increasing production and productivity without the negative social and environmental externalities. And when we speak of agriculture, please keep in mind that we are referring to crop, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry.

And this brings us to our third point: the interlinkages between SDG2 and the 2030 Agenda. A whole of government approach is needed across the goals and within SDG2 itself. Eradicating poverty, hunger and malnutrition go hand in hand. And we need to look beyond the farm gate: food security, adequate nutrition and sustainable agriculture will not be achieved without addressing climate

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change, using land, water and energy sustainably, without tackling food loss and waste, without responsible consumption and without tapping into the potential of agriculture to create decent jobs and minimizing food loss and waste.

Fourth, the importance of diversity:

- maintain and sustainably use genetic diversity, emphasizing the importance of fair and equitable sharing of benefits. Diversity is an essential safeguard against climate change, pests and diseases.
- Diversify production to save natural resources and diversify diets.
- Diversify places of production to include urban and peri-urban production of fruits and vegetables.
- Implement diverse and innovative ways to link family farmers and small-scale producers to markets, starting from the local level. This includes combining social protection to productive support, exploring practices such as public procurement, linking local production to school meals, promoting farmer markets in urban and peri-urban contexts, integrating family farmers to value chains, including by strengthening producer organizations and cooperatives. In these efforts, we must keep in mind the need to provide market access for the vulnerable populations to ensure the quality and diversity of their diets.
- And, finally, diversify means of production responding to the different local contexts and needs of different producers. One approach that referred to by many different experts over the two days was agroecology.

Fifth, need to strengthen legal frameworks, promote a rights-based approach including the right to food, and secure tenure rights – land, water and fisheries resources. There are international instruments that can provide guidance to countries in this process, such as: the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food, The Voluntary Guidelines on Small-Scale Fisheries, and the CFS-endorsed Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure as well as the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems.

A more optimal policy and regulatory framework will also provide incentives to deliver on the SDG outcomes.

Sixth, need to make food security and nutrition governance more inclusive, and to do so at all levels, starting from local communities and going up to the subnational, national, regional and global levels. These inclusive governance structures should be used to guide more efficient allocation of resources and the policy and regulatory framework and promote accountability. Governance of food systems will be essential for shaping food security and nutrition outcomes.

Seventh, malnutrition in all its forms is a major cause of the global burden of disease and causes significant costs to the global economy. Hunger robs millions of people the opportunity of a life with dignity and minimizes the productive capacity of those who are suffering. On the other extreme, overweight and obesity is associated with a number non-communicable diseases. Addressing the nutrition in the first 1000 days and prioritizing the needs of adolescent girls and pregnant and lactating women is critical for the eradication of malnutrition.

Eighth, the centrality of smallholders and family farming and the value of indigenous and traditional knowledge was highlighted throughout the meeting. We have already spoken about family farming, but I want to make an additional point on the importance of incorporating and building from local, traditional and indigenous knowledge when using science, technology and innovation. This is essential for a bottom-up approach that respects the needs of the local population and responds to the local context.

Ninth, building on my previous point. agriculture will become more knowledge intensive. The development of technologies for agriculture should be increasingly driven by local demands. We need innovation in many different aspects: including different sustainable production technologies, institutional changes and strengthening, innovative partnerships, innovative ways to promote access to knowledge and engage with the private sector.

Tenth, we want to end by emphasizing the urgency to act. This includes the urgency to respond to the severe food insecurity crises, the famine and threat of famine, that we are seeing today. We need to act to address human suffering and depravation. The effects of water scarcity, drought and natural disasters because of climate change on fragile countries have resulted in food insecurity and increased distress migration. The Committee on World Food Security's (CFS) Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crisis provides a broad policy framework that can help address the underlying causes of crises.

I want to also emphasize the urgency to accelerate the transformational changes that we need to move beyond emergencies and into sustainable development.

These are some reflections of the in-depth discussions that took place over the last two days, but do not fully capture the diversity of the views that were expressed. A full summary of the EGM is being prepared and will be made available online at the HLPF website in the next few days.

Thank you very much.