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Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025)

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [72/306](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/72/306).¹ which invited the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly about the implementation of the United Nations (UN) Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025) (“Decade”), on the basis of the biennial reports jointly compiled by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization, requested to lead the implementation of the Decade in General Assembly resolution [70/259](https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/70/259).²

This reporting period is marked by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is threatening the food security, nutrition, health and livelihoods of many people around the world. Nonetheless, significant and meaningful progress has been made in implementing the Decade for the period 2020-2021. This report provides an overview of the progress, covering key developments towards achieving the global nutrition and related Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) targets. These include advances in nutrition-related activities within the six action areas of the Decade’s Work Programme, advances in the science-base for improved nutrition, as well as other nutrition-related global processes. It also documents stakeholders’ engagement in nutrition, induced by the Decade and relevant global dialogues, notably the UN Food Systems Summit and the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit in 2021.

¹ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/72/306>.

² <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/259>.



Addressing the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the persisting underlying drivers of all forms of malnutrition requires continuous strong sustained political leadership for large scale coordinated action across sectors and beyond borders. All stakeholders are called to act with urgency and deliver on the food and nutrition commitments made, including financial pledges and complementary investments in programming and policy, over the second half of the Decade towards eliminating all forms of malnutrition and achieving the SDGs by 2030.

I. Background

1. In April 2016, the General Assembly adopted resolution [70/259](#)³ proclaiming 2016–2025 as the United Nations (UN) Decade of Action on Nutrition (“Decade”). This had been recommended at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), co-hosted in November 2014 by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), which adopted the Rome Declaration on Nutrition⁴ and its companion Framework for Action.⁵ The Rome Declaration on Nutrition provides a common vision for global action to eradicate hunger and end all forms of malnutrition and presents ten broad policy commitments. The Framework for Action outlines 60 recommendations to guide the effective implementation of these commitments, which remain extremely relevant today.

2. The Decade provides all stakeholders with a time-bound opportunity to strengthen joint efforts and to stimulate the effective translation of the ICN2 commitments and recommendations into concrete nationally-determined policies and programmes, in support of achieving the global nutrition targets and the nutrition-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

3. The General Assembly mandated FAO and WHO to: (i) co-lead the implementation of the Decade, in collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP); (ii) cooperatively develop a work programme for the Decade, using coordination mechanisms such as the United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition (UNSCN)⁶ and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), in consultation with other international and regional organizations and platforms; and (iii) produce biennial reports on Decade’s implementation.

4. The Decade’s Work Programme embraces six cross-cutting and interconnected action areas, based on the 60 ICN2 recommendations, building upon and connecting initiatives of governments and their many partners.⁷ Key information is further available on the Decade’s website.⁸

5. The Decade provides modalities of country engagement such as Action Networks for sharing experiences, promoting improved coordination and building political momentum to scale up global action around topics linked to the Decade’s Work Programme. The Decade encourages governments to turn the global ICN2 commitments and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) commitments for action on nutrition. Forums are used for sharing knowledge, recognizing successes, voicing challenges and promoting collaboration for improved nutrition.

6. This third biennial report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [72/306](#),⁹ which invited the Secretary-General to inform the General Assembly about the implementation of Decade and outlines progress made in achieving the aims of the Decade for the period 2020–2021. It covers key developments at international, regional and country levels across the six action areas of the Decade’s Work Programme and sets out the way forward for the second half of the Decade, in the

³ <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/259>.

⁴ www.fao.org/3/a-ml542e.pdf.

⁵ www.fao.org/3/a-mm215e.pdf.

⁶ See paragraph 55.

⁷ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/work_programme_nutrition_decade.pdf.

⁸ www.un.org/nutrition.

⁹ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/72/306>.

context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and contributing to the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs¹⁰ launched by the Secretary-General in September 2019.

II. Advancements in Action Areas of the Decade's Work Programme

7. The 2020–2021 biennium marks three critical developments for nutrition: (i) the COVID-19 pandemic, with negative impacts on health, food security and other determinants of malnutrition; (ii) the high-level events advancing the global nutrition agenda held in 2021: the UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS)¹¹ and the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit (N4G),¹² which are united by the ambitious goal to address all forms of malnutrition through multiple pathways and provided a major boost for nutrition policy and financial commitments,¹³ (iii) the endorsement by the CFS of the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSyN) in February 2021.¹⁴

8. While countries made some progress during the first half of the Decade, from 2016 to 2021, nutrition challenges continue to evolve and grow. Marked by the impacts of the pandemic, by the end of 2022, COVID-19-related disruptions could result in up to 16.3 million additional children suffering from wasting and up to 4.5 million additional children facing stunted growth.¹⁵

9. The UNFSS preparatory process, including dialogues¹⁶ at various levels and a Pre-Summit held in Rome on 26–28 July 2021,¹⁷ culminated in a summit that took place virtually on 23 September 2021, setting the stage for food systems transformations in ways that contribute to people's nutrition, health and well-being, simultaneously restore and protect nature, and are climate neutral to achieve all SDGs by 2030.

10. In December 2021, the Government of Japan convened the N4G where country governments and various stakeholders, including international organizations, donors, philanthropies, businesses, civil society, youth groups and academia reaffirmed their commitment to the Decade and to drive greater action on nutrition across five thematic areas (health, food, resilience, accountability and financing).

11. The endorsement of the VGFSyN was a contribution to the Decade, and will support countries and their partners in operationalizing the ICN2 recommendations. It aims to support the development of coordinated multi-sectoral national policies, laws, programmes and investment plans to enable sustainable food systems to provide safe and healthy diets.

12. The Decade Secretariat convened in 2020 and 2021 the Decade's Mid-term Review (MTR), which provided an opportunity to review the achievements in the action areas of the Decade's Work Programme and identify gaps and barriers

¹⁰ www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/decade-of-action/.

¹¹ www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit.

¹² <https://nutritionforgrowth.org/events/>.

¹³ https://nutritionforgrowth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/N4G_UN_FoodSysSummit_9.23.pdf.

¹⁴ www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs2021/Documents/CFS_VGs_Food_Systems_and_Nutrition_Strategy_EN.pdf.

¹⁵ www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb4474en/.

¹⁶ www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/dialogues.

¹⁷ www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/pre-summit.

encountered for making progress from 2016 to 2020. A MTR Foresight paper,¹⁸ developed by the Decade Secretariat, served as the background document for this review.

13. The MTR process included informal consultations in 2020 with Geneva Mission Focal Points on 19 March,¹⁹ Permanent Representatives to FAO in Rome on 29 April²⁰ and Permanent Missions to the UN in New York on 23 July²¹ and with the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSM) to CFS, the Private Sector Mechanism (PSM) to CFS and UN Nutrition²² members on progress made, barriers encountered and gaps identified over the first half of the Decade, from 2016 to 2020.

14. The UN Nutrition Secretariat facilitated an online consultation at the Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition where stakeholders had the opportunity to share their views on priority actions for the coming five years to end all forms of malnutrition.²³ A total of 185 persons from 64 countries responded. Findings highlight that advocacy efforts during the first half of the Decade on the importance of nutrition, healthy diets, and food systems for human and planetary health are showing results.

15. Global, regional and country developments in 2020 and 2021 across the six action areas of the Decade's Work Programme include the following:

Sustainable, resilient food systems for healthy diets

16. Never before has global attention to the critical role of sustainable, resilient food systems for healthy diets and improved nutrition been so prominent, as demonstrated through the UNFSS and the focus on 'Food Systems for Healthy Diets' as a key thematic pillar of N4G. Current food systems are not delivering the quality diets needed for optimal health, are putting pressure on the planet's natural resources²⁴ and climate²⁵ and are accelerating biodiversity loss.²⁶ Healthy diets are unaffordable for 3 billion people worldwide.²⁷ Food systems need to be re-aligned in ways that make them more resilient and sustainable, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has shown their true fragility.²⁸

17. The nutrition narrative shifted towards a more holistic approach linking it with food systems, ecosystems, climate, and the health of humans and animals, recognizing the potential for policy options across food systems to deliver double/triple duty actions²⁹ that address malnutrition in all its forms. There is also increased recognition of the role of agroecology and biodiversity for enhancing food systems resilience in crisis-prone areas.³⁰

¹⁸ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/nutrition_decade_mtr_background_paper_en.pdf.

¹⁹ www.who.int/news-room/events/detail/2020/03/19/default-calendar/member-states-informal-briefing-mid-term-review-of-the-un-decade-of-action-on-nutrition.

²⁰ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/final_provisional_agenda_fao_member_country_briefing_on_mtr_nutrition.pdf.

²¹ www.un.org/nutrition/news/un-decade-action-on-nutrition-halfway-through.

²² See paragraph 55.

²³ www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/consultations/decade-nutrition-priority-actions.

²⁴ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg15>.

²⁵ www.ipcc.ch/srccel/.

²⁶ www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca3129en.

²⁷ www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb4474en; www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca9692en/.

²⁸ <https://foresight.glopan.org/>.

²⁹ www.thelancet.com/series/double-burden-malnutrition.

³⁰ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/nutrition_decade_mtr_background_paper_en.pdf.

18. FAO conceptualized in 2021 the term agrifood systems that also encompass non-food products and constitute livelihoods while recognizing the role of agrifood systems in addressing global hunger and malnutrition.³¹

19. Midway through the Decade, the UNFSS elevated this action area as a public discourse, engaging different constituencies and stakeholders and generated various outcomes, including 2,000 game-changing solutions and establishment of 30 Coalitions of Action and Initiatives to transform food systems in support of the 2030 Agenda. Moreover, 148 countries organized multi-stakeholder UNFSS dialogues, often resulting in developing national pathways towards sustainable food systems. In his final statement, the Secretary-General called upon all stakeholders to act with urgency (driven at country-level by governments in their local contexts) to implement necessary transformative actions to achieve the set goals related to the challenges in today's food systems.

20. According to preliminary analyses of 110 national food systems transformation pathways, the majority mentioned healthy diets, nutrition-sensitive agriculture initiatives and raising consumer/public awareness and healthy eating. Food was also often positioned at the core of health, socio-economic and environmental considerations. Fewer pathways mentioned foods high in fats, sugars and/or salt as risk factors.³² However, some countries did include the WHO championed priority action areas for an enabling environment for healthy diets, such as public food procurement, food safety, food fortification, nutrition labelling, regulation of marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages, fiscal policies for healthy diets and reformulation of food and beverage products demonstrating a clear link between priorities of food system transformation and health.³³

21. More than half of the 396 new N4G commitments included food (63 percent). This focus was most prominent in the commitments made by private sector (86 percent), followed by civil society organizations (65 percent), international organizations (62 percent) and country governments (57 percent). The commitments recognized the need for coherent multi-sectoral policies, linking for example the food and health sectors, and increased actions and investment for food systems to support the shift to dietary patterns that benefit human health and the environment.³⁴

22. The CFS, in October 2021, reiterated the role of all CFS stakeholders to translate the VGFSyN into specific actions at regional, national and local levels.³⁵ FAO developed an evidence platform for agrifood systems and nutrition,³⁶ with inputs from UN Nutrition members, that links the VGFSyN recommendations with existing normative guidance and evidence.

23. At the 33rd African Union Summit (February 2020), the African Leaders for Nutrition developed recommendations for promoting nutrition within food systems and increasing spending to combat malnutrition.³⁷

24. Throughout the celebration of the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables in 2021,³⁸ activities took place aiming to raise awareness on the importance of consuming more fruits and vegetables as a basis of healthy diets. The year also

³¹ www.fao.org/3/nf243en/nf243en.pdf.

³² www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/news/making-food-systems-work-people-planet-and-prosperity.

³³ www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240035263.

³⁴ www.mofa.go.jp/files/100275456.pdf.

³⁵ www.fao.org/cfs/plenary/cfs49/report/en/.

³⁶ www.fao.org/evidence-platform-agri-food-systems-nutrition/en.

³⁷ www.afdb.org/pt/news-and-events/press-releases/au-summit-african-leaders-call-action-end-malnutrition-2025-33994.

³⁸ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/244>.

brought focus to the way these perishable foods are produced, processed and marketed and the need to reduce their loss and waste in each stage of the value chain.³⁹

25. The second observance of the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (IDAFLOW) on 29 September 2021,⁴⁰ focused on the nutritional and health impact of FLW. The event was bolstered by the 2019 State of Food and Agriculture report⁴¹ that quantified the food loss index by food groups showing high levels of loss for fruits and vegetables and highlighting pathways from this loss to negative food security and nutritional outcomes.

26. The Decade's Work Programme urges the integration of food safety considerations into food systems action to ensure progress in improving nutrition. In May 2020, WHO Member States adopted resolution WHA73.5 requesting WHO, in coordination with FAO and in consultation with Member States and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), to update the Global Strategy for Food Safety.⁴² The new strategy will support Member States in their efforts towards reducing the burden of foodborne diseases and to build forward-looking and evidence-based food safety systems with coordinated governance and adequate infrastructures.⁴³

27. At the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture, FAO was requested to develop a new FAO Food Safety Strategy that would align and integrate FAO's work on food safety with its current organizational changes and provide broader support to agrifood systems transformation, fostering integration of scientific, regulatory and capacity development food safety perspectives across FAO work as well as building synergy with WHO's new Food Safety Strategy.⁴⁴

28. Ninety countries joined the celebration of World Food Safety Day on 7 June 2021 that focused on the immediate and long-term benefits of producing and consuming safe food and recognized the intrinsic connections between the health of people, plants, animals, the environment and economy,⁴⁵ and in 2020 over 100 activities, events and campaigns took place in all regions under the theme 'Food safety, everyone's business'.⁴⁶

29. The emergence of COVID-19 has underlined the urgent need to strengthen the One Health approach, emphasizing the connections between human, animal and environmental health, in line with promoting a healthy and green recovery from COVID-19.⁴⁷ In 2021, FAO, OIE, UNEP and WHO launched a new One Health High-Level Expert Panel to improve understanding of how diseases with the potential to trigger pandemics, emerge and spread.⁴⁸

30. In advancing the recognition that food systems need to deliver better health, WHO published a new global narrative to guide policy and practice for better human, ecosystem and animal health and well-being.⁴⁹ Moreover, the scientific discussion advanced on the potential of repurposing the public financial support to agriculture and food sectors for promoting the health of populations and to benefit the

³⁹ www.fao.org/fruits-vegetables-2021/en/.

⁴⁰ www.fao.org/international-day-awareness-food-loss-waste/en/.

⁴¹ www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CA6030EN.

⁴² https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA73/A73_R5-en.pdf.

⁴³ www.who.int/publications/m/item/draft-who-global-strategy-for-food-safety-2022-2030.

⁴⁴ www.fao.org/3/nd744en/nd744en.pdf.

⁴⁵ www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240034013.

⁴⁶ www.fao.org/3/cb0711en/CB0711EN.pdf.

⁴⁷ www.who.int/publications/i/item/who-manifesto-healthy-recovery-covid19.

⁴⁸ [www.who.int/news/item/11-06-2021-26-international-experts-to-kickstart-the-joint-fao-oie-unep-who-one-health-high-level-expert-panel-\(ohhlepe\)](http://www.who.int/news/item/11-06-2021-26-international-experts-to-kickstart-the-joint-fao-oie-unep-who-one-health-high-level-expert-panel-(ohhlepe)).

⁴⁹ www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240031814.

environment. For example the 2021 FAO-UNDP-UNEP report calls for governments to rethink the way agriculture is subsidized and supported.⁵⁰ The Global Panel on Food Systems, Agriculture and Nutrition (GLOPAN) addressed in a 2021 paper the need for realigning resources to make healthy diets available, particularly in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).⁵¹

31. The challenge of nutritious foods and climate within the urban food agenda in high- and middle-income countries was discussed at the 7th Milan Urban Food Policy Pact Global Forum (Barcelona, October 2021), highlighting the transformation of local food systems as important approach to ensure access to healthy diets from sustainable food systems for all.⁵²

32. As evidence is increasing on the interlinkages between food systems and climate change, the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26), (Glasgow, November 2021), confirmed agriculture and food systems as a major priority for the climate agenda.⁵³ UN Nutrition with partners highlighted the critical role of food and nutrition in mitigating climate change and the need to embed nutrition in climate negotiations.⁵⁴ The Secretary General's Special Envoy for the UNFSS, called for the COP27 in 2022 to focus specifically on food systems.⁵⁵

33. The Declaration of the G20 Meeting of Foreign Affairs and Development Ministers (Matera, June 2021), where for the first time food security and nutrition were at the centre of the agenda, calls for urgently needed actions and international efforts to recover from the COVID-19 crisis, in order to reach a world free of hunger and malnutrition, realize the right to adequate food, alleviate poverty, and promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies.⁵⁶

Aligned health systems providing universal coverage of essential nutrition actions

34. Health system disruptions, like those seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, exacerbate all forms of malnutrition through their impact on the delivery of essential health and nutrition interventions. A strengthened health system response for nutritional care needs to ensure the continuity of nutrition services, particularly early detection and community-based management of wasting, infant and young child feeding and maternal nutrition programmes, while using adequate measures to prevent COVID-19 transmission and safeguarding public confidence in national health systems.⁵⁷

35. Integrating nutrition into Universal Health Coverage (UHC) was one pillar of the N4G, where country governments and multiple stakeholders committed to take actions aiming at strengthening health systems with a view to providing quality and affordable nutrition services. The majority of the 396 new N4G commitments (67 percent) included health. The commitments referred to ensuring optimal and safe feeding of infants and young children including breastfeeding, including nutrition in

⁵⁰ www.undp.org/publications/multi-billion-dollar-opportunity-repurposing-agricultural-support-transform-food.

⁵¹ www.glopan.org/resources-documents/repurposing_agricultural_support/.

⁵² www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org/resources/the-barcelona-challenge-for-good-food-and-climate/; www.milanurbanfoodpolicypact.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/ExecutiveSummary_EN.pdf.

⁵³ <https://ukcop26.org/the-global-action-agenda-for-innovation-in-agriculture/>.

⁵⁴ www.unnutrition.org/news/nutrition-at-the-26th-un-climate-change-conference-of-the-parties-cop26/.

⁵⁵ www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/news/un-special-envoy-calls-focus-food-next-climate-talks-limit-global-heating-and.

⁵⁶ www.g20.utoronto.ca/2021/210629-matera-declaration.html.

⁵⁷ www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_policy_brief_on_covid_impact_on_food_security.pdf; www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-essential-health-services-2020.1.

health sector budgets, building health information systems to take timely actions, and promoting access to affordable nutritious food products while reducing the marketing of energy-dense foods high in fats, sugars and/or salt.⁵⁸

36. The first Global Action Plan for Child Wasting (GAP),⁵⁹ released in March 2020 and developed by FAO, the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF, WFP and WHO with inputs from other key stakeholders, presents a framework to accelerate progress in preventing and managing child wasting and achieving the SDG target on child wasting and roadmaps of 22 out of 23 frontrunner countries, which was launched at N4G.⁶⁰ WHO and UNICEF committed at N4G to working with 15 frontrunner GAP countries to produce updated context-specific nutrition policies and treatment protocols covering the prevention and treatment of wasting, which are integrated within the national health system.⁶¹

37. Through the Rome Declaration⁶² presented at the Global Health Summit (Rome, May 2021), leaders of G20 and other States committed to undertake health promotion and work on the social determinants of health to address, inter alia, food and nutrition, as part of efforts to enhance overall resilience to future health crises.

Social protection and nutrition education

38. The COVID-19 pandemic reduced the quality of diets in many countries due to pandemic-induced income losses and breakdown of food markets due to demand shocks and supply constraints. Given the socio-economic effects of this pandemic, social protection systems became the mainstay for many people during the current crisis and possibly beyond.⁶³ WFP estimated that 370 million children missed school meals due to COVID-19-related school closures.⁶⁴ The Secretary-General, in his policy brief, suggested priority actions to strengthen social protection systems for nutrition.⁶⁵

39. The 2020 WHO-UNICEF-Lancet Commission report stresses ways in which governments, medical professionals, and society can accelerate progress on child health and wellbeing strategies and advocates for more public financing of services, effective delivery, and equitable social protection to meet the SDGs.⁶⁶

40. Social protection and school health, food and nutrition programmes can deliver double-duty actions addressing both undernutrition and overweight and obesity.⁶⁷ An in-depth review of legislation, standards and guidelines for school food in 77 Member States found that they refer to food or nutrient-based criteria including the promotion of fruits, vegetables, clean drinking water and recommendations to discourage carbonated and non-carbonated soft drinks.⁶⁸

41. The 13th “Policies against Hunger” Conference (Berlin, June 2021), organized by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture, released recommendations on how to make best use of school nutrition contributing to ending hunger and malnutrition, sending out a vital signal to enhance global cooperation in this regard.⁶⁹

⁵⁸ www.mofa.go.jp/files/100275456.pdf.

⁵⁹ www.childwasting.org/.

⁶⁰ www.childwasting.org/the-gap-framework.

⁶¹ www.mofa.go.jp/files/100275456.pdf.

⁶² www.g20.utoronto.ca/2021/210521-rome-declaration.html.

⁶³ www.fao.org/3/cb1000en/cb1000en.pdf; www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb4474en/.

⁶⁴ www.wfp.org/publications/state-school-feeding-worldwide-2020.

⁶⁵ www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_policy_brief_on_covid_impact_on_food_security.pdf.

⁶⁶ www.unicef.org/mexico/media/2916/file/Child%20health.pdf.

⁶⁷ <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/255414/WHO-NMH-NHD-17.2-eng.pdf>.

⁶⁸ https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB148/B148_7-en.pdf.

⁶⁹ www.policies-against-hunger.de/en/.

42. Country governments and multiple stakeholders committed at N4G to ensure a balanced and healthy diet through school meals and to provide skilled nutrition education and counselling for related behavioural change. Moreover, they called on a system-wide approach across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, including programming and financing, investing in prevention and multi-sectoral programs for those most at risk, and strengthening routine nutrition information systems for better decision-making while improving coordination among all stakeholders and building local capacities.⁷⁰

Trade and investment for improved nutrition

43. Trade has the potential to expand consumer choices and contribute to healthy diets ensuring sufficiently available quantities of diverse, nutritious foods all year round. Imports may be a source of not only minimally-processed nutritious foods with a longer shelf life that can contribute to offsetting seasonal scarcity of perishable foods, but also of highly-processed foods of high energy density and minimal nutritional value. Trade can contribute to positive nutrition outcomes through its support to livelihoods and income generation, particularly those engaged in primary food production. Increased globalization of the food supply increases exposure to various food hazards.⁷¹

44. The 2021 Global Dialogue on Trade⁷² addressed how the multilateral trading system can contribute to achieving global food security, good nutrition and similarly address the challenges of climate change and environmental sustainability. Subsequently, the World Trade Organization (WTO) launched the WTO Trade Dialogues on Food.⁷³

45. GLOPAN demonstrated in a 2021 paper the benefits of aligning trade policies with the goal of providing healthy diets from sustainable food systems for all. The brief provides guidance and outlines why policymakers should pay more attention to the value of trade instruments as part of their portfolio of nutrition actions.⁷⁴

46. The 2021 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report identified improved trade standards with a nutrition-oriented focus among the key policy areas for strengthening food environments to promote healthy dietary patterns with positive impacts on the environment.⁷⁵

47. The Secretary-General, in his UNFSS Statement of Action, highlighted that open, non-discriminatory, transparent, rules-based trade is essential for building more inclusive and resilient food systems.⁷⁶

48. He also states that accelerated investments should be a pillar of the COVID-19 response, aiming for immediate impact to sustain and improve livelihoods, while also preparing for a more inclusive, environmentally sustainable and resilient food system recovery. He further calls for keeping trade corridors open to ensure the continuous functioning of the critical aspects of food systems in all countries.⁷⁷

⁷⁰ www.mofa.go.jp/files/100275456.pdf.

⁷¹ www.fao.org/3/ca4289en/ca4289en.pdf.

⁷² www.wto.org/english/res_e/reser_e/gdt_6july21_e.htm.

⁷³ www.wto.org/english/res_e/reser_e/tradedialogonfood_e.htm.

⁷⁴ www.glopan.org/trade.

⁷⁵ <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb4474en>.

⁷⁶ www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/news/making-food-systems-work-people-planet-and-prosperity.

⁷⁷ www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_policy_brief_on_covid_impact_on_food_security.pdf.

49. At N4G, donor governments and donor organisations committed new nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive financing of over US\$27 billion to tackle malnutrition. Twenty-seven percent of the new N4G commitments addressed nutrition financing.⁷⁸

Safe and supportive environments for nutrition at all ages

50. The COVID-19 pandemic has re-emphasized the need for policies and programmes that ensure safe and supportive environments for nutrition at all ages. School closures, diminished or suspended promotion of breastfeeding and nutrition counselling activities, and altered purchasing patterns favouring food products of high energy density and minimal nutritional value are documented outcomes of the pandemic.⁷⁹

51. Governments have accelerated specific food environment policy actions. Thus far, 189 countries have included actions to promote supportive food environments for healthy diets in their national policies and strategies. Population information policies through counselling or media campaigns are more common (181 countries) than those that seek to change the food environment (156). Of the 120 countries with nutrition labelling regulations, 78 have implemented mandatory nutrient declaration for all pre-packaged foods. Furthermore, 84 countries have imposed taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages at national level⁸⁰ and 57 have implemented policies to limit trans-fats from the food supply. Trans-fat elimination protected 3.2 billion people from those harmful substances by end 2021.⁸¹

52. May 2021 marked the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes.⁸² To date, most countries (70 percent) have enacted legislation to implement at least some provisions of the Code, but only 25 countries have implemented measures that are substantially aligned with the Code. In 2020–2021, new Code legislation or regulations were approved by Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritania, Oman, Sao Tome and Principe and Sierra Leone.⁸³

53. The Secretary-General, in his 2021 report on agriculture development, food security and nutrition, called for longer-term transformational measures aimed at enhancing policies that incentivize behavioural changes such as, in some regions, moderation in the consumption of meat and fish through food labelling and well-targeted taxes together with a greater focus on nutritional outcomes of value chains, regulation of food industry marketing, food labelling that promotes consumer wisdom, and education in nutrition.⁸⁴

Strengthened governance and accountability for nutrition

54. Effective governance is necessary to support the critical policy shifts and to better enable food security and nutrition policies and initiatives to meet the 2030 Agenda, especially SDG 2.⁸⁵

55. In follow-up of ICN2 recommendation 7, UN Nutrition was established in 2020 as the result of the merger of UNSCN and the UN Network for Scaling Up Nutrition

⁷⁸ www.mofa.go.jp/files/100275456.pdf.

⁷⁹ www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb4474en/; www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca9692en/; www.fao.org/3/cb1000en/cb1000en.pdf.

⁸⁰ <https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en>.

⁸¹ www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240031876.

⁸² www.who.int/news/item/21-05-2021-WHO-UNICEF-statement-on-the-40th-anniversary-of-the-international-code-of-marketing-breastmilk-substitutes.

⁸³ www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240006010.

⁸⁴ <https://undocs.org/en/A/76/216>.

⁸⁵ www.fao.org/3/ca9733en/ca9733en.pdf.

(SUN) Movement, to become a strong UN inter-agency coordination and collaboration mechanism for nutrition at both global and country level.⁸⁶

56. To date, most countries have adopted the global nutrition targets for 2025, covering child stunting (118 countries), anaemia in women (104), low birth weight (119), child overweight (138), exclusive breastfeeding (130) and child wasting (112).⁸⁷

57. A roadmap for implementing the WHO's draft approach to preventing and managing conflicts of interest in country-level nutrition programs for the Americas was launched in November 2021, acknowledging the need for transparent and accountable governance processes conducive to the participation of all stakeholders and multi-stakeholder partnerships for nutrition.⁸⁸

58. The global community has strengthened accountability to nutrition through continuous updating of statistics such as the UNICEF, WHO and World Bank release of annual global estimates for child stunting, overweight and wasting.⁸⁹ Furthermore, the SOFI reports 2020⁹⁰ and 2021⁹¹ bring together the global data on hunger and malnutrition, informing the monitoring of the nutrition-related targets of the SDGs and policy action. And finally, the Global Nutrition Report (GNR) provides a platform for assessing and tracking the nutrition financing landscape including reporting on past and current N4G commitments.⁹²

59. In 2021, the GNR launched a new Nutrition Accountability Framework (NAF), which is a comprehensive digital platform for both registering new SMART policy, programmatic and financial commitments, submitted at N4G and its Nutrition Year of Action, and monitoring the progress made against achieving them over time.⁹³

III. Further engagement of stakeholders induced by the Decade

Commitments by governments

60. Country commitments for action are key to the Decade's support in leveraging government policy development, investments and actions on the ground. High-level commitments on ICN2 recommendations, including financing, made by governments through the N4G, the UNFSS or other existing platforms are important contributions towards achieving the aims of the Decade.⁹⁴

61. The UNFSS reported 234 commitments⁹⁵ made by different stakeholders and the endorsed N4G outcome document revealed that 80 government departments/ministries from 66 countries made 224 commitments to address malnutrition in all its forms.⁹⁶ Governments also committed at N4G to increase national budget allocations

⁸⁶ www.unnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2020-12-04-SG-letter-to-CEB-on-UN-Nutrition-EOSG-2020-065261.pdf.

⁸⁷ <https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en>.

⁸⁸ www.paho.org/en/events/preventing-and-managing-conflicts-interest-country-level-nutrition-programs-roadmap.

⁸⁹ www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/joint-child-malnutrition-estimates-unicef-who-wb?id=402.

⁹⁰ www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca9692en/.

⁹¹ www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb4474en/.

⁹² <https://globalnutritionreport.org/>.

⁹³ <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/naf/>.

⁹⁴ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/work_programme_nutrition_decade.pdf.

⁹⁵ <https://foodsystems.community/commitments-registry/#commitments>.

⁹⁶ <https://nutritionforgrowth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/%E2%98%8512091700%E3%80%90Full-Ver%E3%80%91Tokyo-Compact-on-Global-Nutrition-for-Growth.pdf>.

to nutrition, and donor governments made financial commitments of over US\$15 billion for nutrition-related assistance through bilateral and multilateral assistance and for the development of nutrition policies and indicators.⁹⁷

Country-led action networks and new coalitions

62. The Decade's country-led and -coordinated action networks allow countries to exchange knowledge, good practices and challenges, and provide mutual support to accelerate progress to improve agrifood systems, diets and nutrition for all through policies and legislation.

63. The Global Action Network on Sustainable Food from the Oceans and Inland Waters for Food Security and Nutrition, led by Norway, organized a workshop in September 2020 to discuss the Action Plan and review a "Gain and Share tool". In 2021, it also organized three Independent UNFSS Dialogues on the role of aquatic foods in sustainable food systems and a network meeting in November 2021 to sum up the achievements so far and plan for future work. Representatives from ministries, institutions and organizations participate in this informal network.⁹⁸

64. The Global Action Network on Nutrition Labelling, led by France, Australia and Chile, shared experiences in three virtual webinars in 2020 and 2021: (i) evaluation of Australia and New Zealand's health star rating system,⁹⁹ (ii) implementation of France's front-of-pack nutrition labelling system 'Nutriscore'; and (iii) the development of the Chilean front-of-package food warning label.¹⁰⁰

65. The Regional Action Network for the Americas on Sustainable School Feeding, led by Brazil, organized two virtual meetings in 2020¹⁰¹ to exchange experiences on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on school feeding programmes. A virtual discussion in February 2021,¹⁰² where Peru, Brazil, Colombia and El Salvador presented their experiences in school feeding programs, and a virtual dialogue in April 2021¹⁰³ on food waste in schools were facilitated.

66. The Regional Action Network for the Americas on Dietary Guidelines Based on the Level of Food Processing, led by Brazil and Uruguay, conducted a webinar on "Food Guides based on the level of food processing: scientific evidence and implementation" in September 2021.¹⁰⁴

67. The concept of the Decade's country-led action networks is also reflected in the newly emerged UNFSS Coalitions, which are support networks for the implementation of national pathways resulting from the UNFSS's process.¹⁰⁵ For example, the Coalition of Action for Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All encourages action across the food supply, food environments, and valuing of food in support of implementing countries' national pathways.¹⁰⁶ The School Meals Coalition, launched in November 2021, drives action to improve and

⁹⁷ www.mofa.go.jp/files/100275456.pdf.

⁹⁸ <https://nettsteder.regjeringen.no/foodfromtheocean/>.

⁹⁹ www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_5ZhsriDEo&t=41s.

¹⁰⁰ www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0M-OQJTW0&ab_channel=UNNutrition.

¹⁰¹ www.fao.org/in-action/program-brazil-fao/news/ver/en/c/1270658/;

www.fao.org/americas/noticias/ver/en/c/1272319/.

¹⁰² www.fao.org/in-action/program-brazil-fao/news/ver/en/c/1373367/.

¹⁰³ www.fao.org/in-action/program-brazil-fao/eventos/ver/en/?uid=1394300.

¹⁰⁴ www.paho.org/en/events/dietary-guidelines-based-level-food-processing-scientific-evidence-and-implementation.

¹⁰⁵ www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/news/deputy-secretary-generals-closing-press-statement-pre-summit-un-food-systems.

¹⁰⁶ <https://foodsystms.community/coalition/the-coalition-of-action-for-healthy-diets-from-sustainable-food-systems-for-children-all/>.

scale-up school meals programmes in countries worldwide and includes, among other activities, a peer-to-peer community of best practice, led by Germany and created under the Decade.¹⁰⁷ The Zero Hunger Coalition¹⁰⁸ and the Coalition for Aquatic/Blue Foods¹⁰⁹ are examples of other Coalitions advancing the Decade's agenda.

Contributions and new commitments by non-state actors

68. Various non-state actors formally committed to the Decade and examples of their achievements are described below.

69. CARE pledged its support to the Decade¹¹⁰ using an integrated model entitled "Collective Impact for Nutrition"¹¹¹ developed through 10 years of programming across multiple countries using the 2013 Lancet nutrition interventions.¹¹² In collaboration with the Graca Machel Trust, a second regional nutrition budget analysis has been developed for Southern and East Africa, which examines government commitments and disbursements on nutrition and emphasizes the importance of achieving nutrition objectives and nutrition-sensitive development planning.

70. The Civil Society (CS) Nutrition Group facilitated civil society coordination and collaboration on the Decade and ICN2 follow-up by sharing information on nutrition-related research, policies and initiatives, organising dialogues, and promoting the effective participation and engagement of those most affected by hunger and malnutrition in reshaping nutrition policies. This primarily took place in the context of the CSM to CFS. During the COVID-19 pandemic, CSM also published ground-level experiences and concerns from constituencies and communities around the world, with dedicated reports from women and youth.¹¹³

71. GLOPAN conducted a programme of high-level roundtables in Pakistan, Ghana, Nepal and Ethiopia, which brought together policymakers from different sectors in the food system and discussed policy options required to achieve sustainable, resilient food systems that provide healthy diets for all. GLOPAN also continued to produce and deliver evidence in the form of evidence-based technical and policy briefs and a second Foresight report to encourage and support governments in LMICs as they design and implement food and nutrition policies.¹¹⁴

72. The Global Dairy Platform has initiated and refined existing projects with global health and environmental implications. The Dairy Nourishes Africa program helped dairy farmers in Tanzania to be more productive and profitable, even during times of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Net Zero Pathways to Low-Carbon Dairy initiative aims to develop pathways towards low-carbon dairy systems considering the diversity of dairy systems globally, their contributions to food security and nutrition and to livelihoods and economies.¹¹⁵

73. HarvestPlus summarized progress in its commitments to the Decade in its 2020 annual report.¹¹⁶ In 2020, globally an estimated 9.7 million households were growing biofortified crops, translating to almost 50 million people at the household level,

¹⁰⁷ <https://schoolmealscoalition.org/>.

¹⁰⁸ <https://foodsystems.community/commitment-registry/zero-hunger-coalition/>.

¹⁰⁹ <https://foodsystems.community/coalitions/the-coalition-for-aquatic-blue-foods/>.

¹¹⁰ www.unscn.org/en/topics/un-decade-of-action-on-nutrition?idnews=1994.

¹¹¹ www.care.org/our-work/food-and-nutrition/nutrition/collective-impact-for-nutrition/.

¹¹² www.thelancet.com/series/maternal-and-child-nutrition.

¹¹³ www.csm4cfs.org/policy-processes/global-policy-response-to-covid-19/.

¹¹⁴ www.glopan.org/.

¹¹⁵ www.dairyindustries.com/news/36953/gdp-announces-net-zero-initiative/.

¹¹⁶ www.harvestplus.org/knowledge-market/in-the-news/responding-crisis-building-resilience-2020-harvestplus-annual-report.

benefiting from biofortified crops. Eighty-seven countries have established and legislated fortification of cereals and 24 countries have included biofortification in policies/programs. A total of 240 nutritious, climate-smart, high-yielding, biofortified varieties, co-developed by HarvestPlus, have been released in 30 countries. HarvestPlus is also coordinating a knowledge hub on biofortification interventions.¹¹⁷

74. The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) has continued, since its official pledge to the Decade,¹¹⁸ to research the role of livestock production systems and animal-source foods in healthy diets in LMICs, including One Health,¹¹⁹ Anti-Microbial Resistance solutions and improving the productivity of chicken (Ethiopia, Tanzania and Nigeria)¹²⁰ or dairy cattle (Kenya, Rwanda)¹²¹ along with nutrition and hygiene education. Engagement with county governments in Kenya led to increased nutrition investments including budget allocations for community health volunteers to conduct household nutrition messaging.

75. Members of the International Food & Beverage Alliance (IFBA) continued improving the nutritional content of their foods and beverages. As of May 2021, most IFBA members reported to have reached the WHO's objective for industrially-produced trans-fat elimination from the global food supply by 2023. In December 2021, IFBA committed to further reduce sodium content in at least 75 percent of their product portfolios. Moreover, IFBA members have reformulated products with less added sugar and developed alternative sweeteners and adopted a set of "Principles for a global approach to fact-based nutrition labelling", in line with existing regulations and guidance.¹²² In 2020, IFBA adopted a Global Policy on Marketing Communications to Children with a common commitment to either not advertise foods and beverages to children under 12 or advertise only products that meet specific nutrition standards.¹²³

76. The PSM to CFS provides a permanent seat for private enterprises across the agri-food value chain and acts as focal point for businesses worldwide. In 2020–2021, PSM was active in the CFS policy convergence process leading to the VGFSyN and closely involved in all CFS nutrition meetings. During the UNFSS preparatory process, PSM engaged in all UNFSS Action Tracks and promoted the integration of the VGFSyN within the outputs of the UNFSS.

77. The Scaling UP Nutrition (SUN) Movement welcomed Timor Leste, Ecuador, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, and Djibouti and now comprises 65 countries and four Indian States. In 2020–2021, the SUN Movement contributed to the implementation of actions in all action areas of the Decade's Work Programme,¹²⁴ as well as ensured that nutrition remained a high priority globally despite the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on policy and funding priorities. The SUN Movement played an important role in the advocacy, communication and mobilisation for the UNFSS and the N4G, promoting the Year of Action on Nutrition,¹²⁵ during the World Health Assembly and consultations on the VGFSyN. The SUN Movement promoted accountability for nutrition outcomes through the Joint Annual Assessment and tracking of public

¹¹⁷ www.ffinetwork.org/globalprogress; www.harvestplus.org/.

¹¹⁸ www.unscn.org/en/topics/un-decade-of-action-on-nutrition?idnews=1998.

¹¹⁹ www.ilri.org/one-health.

¹²⁰ www.ilri.org/research/projects/agriculture-nutrition-ethiopia-project.

¹²¹ www.ilri.org/news/diversification-diets-community-led-solution-improves-nutritional-outcomes-kenya's-pastoral; www.ilri.org/news/social-and-behaviour-change-improves-milk-consumption-rwanda's-children.

¹²² <https://ifballiance.org/publications/nutrition-information-commitments/>.

¹²³ <https://ifballiance.org/publications/ifba-global-policy-on-marketing-communications-to-children/>.

¹²⁴ <https://scalingupnutrition.org/progress-impact/sun-movement-annual-progress-report/>.

¹²⁵ <https://scalingupnutrition.org/progress-impact/nutrition-year-of-action/>.

financial allocations.¹²⁶ Furthermore, the SUN Strategy 3.0 (2021–2025), which focuses on transparency, openness and inclusiveness while tackling the urgent need for greater pace in helping the nutrition community navigate the new COVID-19 landscape, was launched.¹²⁷

78. Under WaterAid’s ‘Healthy Start’ global advocacy priority,¹²⁸ nine country teams worked in partnership with national governments and others to advocate for greater integration of WASH in national nutrition policies,¹²⁹ and to pilot integrated WASH-nutrition programming. WaterAid also advocated globally for greater coordination of WASH within nutrition coalitions targeting donor governments and global policy processes including at a European Commission event in 2021.¹³⁰

79. New N4G commitments made by non-state actors include:

- (a) Eighty-six commitments by 51 civil society organisations, ranging from enhancing international multi-sectoral collaboration and developing national strategies to improving the nutritional status and diets of populations, investing approximately US\$500 million in nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions like nutrition advocacy and programming, nutritional care for children and pregnant and lactating women, food fortification and social protection;
- (b) Seven commitments by 7 academic and non-academic research institutions from 5 countries, aiming to conduct research to advance the nutritional status and diets of populations, e.g. through nutrition and health education programmes, continuous training of nutrition professionals and development of food-based guidelines; and
- (c) Fifty-one commitments by 19 private-sector food businesses and 7 private-sector non-food businesses from 8 countries (mostly high-income), aiming to improve the nutritional quality of their products, contribute to the building of sustainable food systems, and improve the quality of their employees’ diets.¹³¹

Contributions and new commitments by UN organizations

80. After a thorough two-year consultative process, the Vision and Approach for FAO’s Work in Nutrition was endorsed at the 166th Session of the FAO Council in 2021,¹³² which aims to guide and support the Organization in its mission to raise levels of nutrition. FAO’s vision for nutrition is a world where all people are eating healthy diets from sustainable, inclusive, and resilient agrifood systems. The mission in nutrition is to tackle malnutrition in all its forms by accelerating impactful policies and actions across agrifood systems to enable healthy diets for all. Nutrition is also central to FAO’s strategic framework that proposes 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.¹³³ In

¹²⁶ <https://scalingupnutrition.org/progress-impact/monitoring-evaluation-accountability-and-learning-meal/joint-assessment-exercise/>.

¹²⁷ https://scalingupnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/SUN-Strategy-2021-2025_ENG_web1.pdf.

¹²⁸ <https://washmatters.wateraid.org/healthy-start>.

¹²⁹ WaterAid teams in Cambodia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Timor-Leste, Zambia.

¹³⁰ https://europa.eu/capacity4dev/public-water_and_sanitation/discussions/key-takeaway-points-waterandbeyond-high-level-event.

¹³¹ www.mofa.go.jp/files/100275456.pdf.

¹³² www.fao.org/3/ne853en/ne853en.pdf.

¹³³ www.fao.org/3/cb7099en/cb7099en.pdf.

terms of ICN2 follow-up, FAO's country support in 2020 mainly addressed issues related to food safety, governance and coordinating mechanisms for food security and nutrition, agrifood systems for nutrition, food environments, income generation and decent rural employment, nutrition policies and nutrition education. FAO also provided support to 35 countries in developing or revising their food-based dietary guidelines and to 30 countries in developing school food and nutrition programmes.

81. WHO supported the implementation of ICN2 recommendations by engaging with multiple sectors and actors, developing normative products, supporting countries with policy translation and implementation tools and monitoring nutritional achievements and policy development. WHO developed guidance on healthy and sustainable diets, food safety, effective nutrition actions, cost effective programs and policies to reshape the food environment. WHO supported policy implementation in countries, such as the establishment of mandatory policies to prohibit the use of trans-fats, the establishment of fiscal policies, policies to restrict marketing foods to children, regulations on the marketing of breastmilk substitutes and fortification policies. WHO engaged with food manufacturers to call for the elimination of industrial trans-fats and the reduction of sodium. As part of its role in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic WHO provided guidance on nutrition and food safety.

82. The International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) programme on nutrition enhanced countries' capabilities to combat malnutrition in all its forms throughout life by supporting the use of accurate nuclear techniques (including stable isotopes) in nutrition assessments. In October 2020, the IAEA convened a meeting to discuss the linkages between food systems, climate change and diet quality, including food yield and production, changes in crop nutrient composition and nutrient bioavailability and the accumulation of carbohydrates in crops. As part of a 2020 IAEA research project, a dual isotope tracer method was developed to assess true protein digestion. The generated data contribute to the FAO database on true protein digestion and aid understanding of the protein quality of nutrient-rich plant varieties.

83. Following IFAD's Nutrition Action Plan 2019–2025, all new nutrition-sensitive Country Strategic Opportunity Programmes and 33 out of 60 projects were approved. IFAD increased nutrition staff and built their capacities on nutrition-sensitive agriculture. Infrastructure projects promoted water, sanitation and hygiene, social behaviour change and diversification of food production. Five guidelines on investing in neglected and underutilized species value chains were also developed in collaboration with the Alliance of Bioversity and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture.¹³⁴ Furthermore, the Rural Poor Stimulus Facility addressed key immediate challenges faced by small-scale farmers due to the COVID-19 pandemic tackling, among others, issues of malnutrition and access to clean water. Innovations on project friendly nutrition metrics and technologies for evidence-based management decisions were developed in partnership with McGill University. In collaboration with Wageningen University & Research, technical support and capacity building efforts were undertaken for closer integration of climate and nutrition in IFAD's operations.

84. UNICEF launched its Nutrition Strategy 2020-2030 with a focus on preventing all forms of malnutrition, in all children, adolescents and women through a systems approach and scaling up preventive nutrition policies and programmes, such as Family Friendly Policies, to create safe and supportive environments. Moreover, breastfeeding advocacy was accelerated in 46 countries; a Programming Guidance on Improving Young Children's Diets focusing on a systems approach to improve children's diets was released; data collection tools to assess the impact of COVID-19

¹³⁴ www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/-/publication/supporting-nutrition-sensitive-agriculture-through-neglected-and-underutilized-species.

on nutrition and a repository to monitor nutrition and innovative strategies were established and adopted by countries. As lead agency for the Global Nutrition Cluster (GNC) and the GNC Technical Alliance, UNICEF supported over 40 guidance and joint statements in response to COVID-19. Despite COVID-19 disruptions, 118 countries received support to adapt and continue maternal and child nutrition programmes. Consequently, UNICEF reached nearly 244 million children and 35 million adolescents with services to prevent stunting, anaemia, and other forms of malnutrition, and 5 million children with life-saving treatment and care for severe wasting.

85. Together with WHO and the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of NCDs (UNIATF), UNDP has completed over 20 NCD investment cases¹³⁵ that examine the health and economic impact of NCDs and the returns on investment from cost-effective preventive and clinical interventions (such as modelling the impact of reducing salt consumption through WHO SHAKE interventions). In addition, UNDP, WHO and UNIATF jointly assisted governments in strengthening multi-sectoral approaches to NCDs. In 2020, with the support of UN Volunteers, UNDP developed and piloted a model to forecast revenue from increased tobacco, alcohol and sugar-sweetened beverage taxes. UNDP developed a social impact bond that aims to assist tobacco farmers in Zambia in a shift from tobacco to economically viable and nutritious crops.

86. UNEP activities on the Decade spanned policy design, awareness-raising, integration of food systems and sustainable food consumption in climate strategies, and piloting new approaches. UNEP and the One Planet Network Sustainable Food Systems Programme organized a series of technical webinars on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in cities and on sustainable food systems, benefits of integrating sustainable food consumption in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and national climate strategies and changing food behaviours under COVID-19. In 2021, UNEP and FAO gave support in Uganda and Tanzania to an integrated approach to food and agriculture policies in the context of the UNFSS. In May 2021, UNEP started a sustainable urban and peri-urban agriculture project for healthy diets and climate resilience in Kampala, Uganda, and initiated work on a sustainable food city partnership, addressing food waste and sustainable diets, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

87. UN Habitat currently works in over 90 countries to promote transformative change in cities and human settlements. Under the Decade, UN Habitat collaborated with UN Nutrition to contribute to healthy diets that include sustainability considerations in both urban and neighbouring rural areas, reducing inequality, discrimination and poverty. Additionally, UN Habitat joined the Urban Food Systems Working Group that is co-chaired by FAO and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition and engaged in the UNFSS preparation with a cross-cutting focus on territorial governance.

88. WFP received in 2020 the Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts to combat hunger, promote peace in conflict-affected areas, and prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict.¹³⁶ WFP reached in 2020 a total of 17.3 million beneficiaries through nutrition-specific activities across 51 countries and 9.1 million women and children suffering from acute malnutrition benefitted from malnutrition treatment programmes. WFP significantly scaled up malnutrition prevention programmes in 2020, reaching 8.4 million people with interventions to prevent acute malnutrition, stunting and micronutrient deficiencies. This included a record number of 5.8 million vulnerable children, a 12 percent increase compared to 2019, and close to 2.6 million pregnant and lactating women and girls. Nutrition-sensitive programmes addressing

¹³⁵ www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240041059.

¹³⁶ www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2020/wfp/facts/.

underlying causes of malnutrition were implemented in 69 countries. To mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, WFP scaled up cash-based transfers, transferring US\$ 1.15 billion to vulnerable people in 64 countries. WFP also adapted school meal programmes, including nutritious take-home rations for seven million schoolchildren, increasing local purchases by 17 percent compared to 2019. WFP supported 50 governments with their social protection interventions in response to the pandemic. WFP provided technical assistance on food fortification or distributed fortified staple foods to more than 40 countries. WFP also supported 22 countries to make decisions on how to ensure food systems deliver healthy diets and improved nutrition through the Fill the Nutrient Gap analysis.

89. Furthermore, the UN agencies worked collectively in support of global governance processes related to nutrition. As such FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO operated as the Steering Committee of UN Nutrition whose secretariat became operational in 2021. They supported the preparation of the UNFSS as anchor agencies for the Action Tracks and, joined by UNEP, UNDP, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and others, played a pivotal support role to the lead up and execution of the UNFSS.¹³⁷ They also participated in the advisory group to the Government of Japan for the N4G preparation.

90. UN Nutrition Secretariat delivered knowledge products to foster policy cohesion and raise the profile of nutrition within the global COVID-19 response, which included a comprehensive and continually updated resource list from its UN member agencies. UN Nutrition members, under the auspices of the previous UN Network for SUN, also supported governments with the nutrition aspects of the COVID-19 response. This encompassed mainstreaming nutrition into national COVID-19 response plans and supporting the development of nutrition response plans, providing guidance in support of continuity of essential nutrition services and developing shock-response and nutrition-sensitive social protection models. UN Nutrition members provided technical support to 61 SUN countries and articulated a multi-sectoral approach to nutrition in joint UN frameworks. Both the sensitization of UN leadership and joint planning on nutrition have resulted in joint programming on nutrition, as exhibited by 84 percent of SUN countries in 2020.

91. Beyond these achievements, 10 international organisations made 21 new N4G commitments, which focus on creating an enabling environment to improve nutrition by developing global and national action plans, developing regulations on food fortification and improved agricultural practices, and integrating essential nutrition interventions into primary health care.¹³⁸

IV. Way forward

92. The world is not on track to meet its commitments to end hunger and malnutrition in all its forms by 2030. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to the fore the need, among others, to: (i) have resilient, fair and sustainable agrifood systems; (ii) recognize the role and rights of family farmers and food workers; (iii) acknowledge health actions as smart investments; (iv) strengthen the interconnectedness of food, health and ecosystems and the use of a One Health approach; (v) empower the voice of youth, women and indigenous peoples; and (vi) reiterate good governance for nutrition. The UNFSS and the N4G convened in 2021 secured concrete bold multi-sectoral commitments towards eliminating all

¹³⁷ <https://foodsystems.community/food-systems-summit-compendium/description-of-the-summit-support-structures-constituency-groups/>.

¹³⁸ www.mofa.go.jp/files/100275456.pdf.

forms of malnutrition over the second half of the Decade by 2025 and towards achieving the SDGs by 2030.

93. The Decade's MTR identified as thematic focus for priority action from 2021 to 2025: (i) access to and affordability of healthy diets; (ii) healthy food environments including regulating the reformulation and marketing of highly-processed energy-dense foods high in fats, sugars and/or salt; and (iii) the interconnection of nutrition with environment and climate change.¹³⁹

94. In conclusion, based on the MTR and other global processes reflected in this report, the following require intensified action:

- (a) *Accelerating efforts across the six action areas of the Decade's Work Programme* to ensure that food systems deliver affordable healthy diets for all, nutrition actions are integrated into national health systems and UHC plans, nutrition-sensitive social protection programmes are scaled up, responsible investments in nutrition in the agriculture and food sectors are increased, coherence between trade policy and nutrition action is promoted, food environments for healthy diets are stronger, and governance for nutrition at all levels is strengthened.
- (b) *Addressing nutrition challenges within the context of agrifood systems and climate change* by including agrifood systems transformation in NDCs to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt agrifood systems to climate change, prioritizing climate action that positively impact nutrition outcomes. The upcoming COP27¹⁴⁰ could facilitate these discussions in plenary sessions.
- (c) *Strengthening accountability mechanisms* to ensure the commitments made at UNFSS and at N4G bring about real and sustained change. The NAF, established at N4G, provides a tool to improve accountability and transparency across actors. Further steps are to be taken to also embed diet- and nutrition-related accountability mechanisms in the tracking and monitoring of progress towards the SDGs and the objectives of the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs.
- (d) *Aligning the UNFSS commitments and Coalitions and N4G commitments with the Decade's modalities of engagement* (i.e. SMART commitments and Action Networks) to advance the global nutrition agenda in a coherent way across multiple sectors and maintain political momentum to scale up nutrition action in the context of UNFSS follow-up and the UNFSS Coordination Hub.¹⁴¹
- (e) *Strengthening coordination among all stakeholders and sectors* to address all forms of malnutrition, through double/triple duty actions, effective multi-sectoral policies and multi-stakeholder mechanisms, relying on the latest scientific evidence and engagement with a broad range of experts from academic institutions.¹⁴²
- (f) *Strengthening UN interagency coordination mechanisms* to, at the request of Member States, support delivery of nutrition goals including in the context of the implementation of national food systems pathways.

¹³⁹ www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/consultations/decade-nutrition-priority-actions.

¹⁴⁰ <https://sdg.iisd.org/events/2021-un-climate-change-conference-unfccc-cop-27/>.

¹⁴¹ <https://foodsystems.community/coordination-hub/>.

¹⁴² www.thelancet.com/series/double-burden-malnutrition.

- (g) *Increasing advocacy* on the need of building and transforming political will into action, at all levels, and working with decision makers to deliver on the food and nutrition commitments made, both in terms of financial pledges and in terms of investments in programming and policy to complement those pledges, with a focus on concrete results and effective use of existing policy guidance for long-term sustainable impact, leaving no one behind.
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