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PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

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Update on Priority Actions for supporting agrifood systems transformation in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) face a unique and interconnected set of challenges in their agrifood systems. These combined geographic, climatic and economic disadvantages create a triple burden of malnutrition, food insecurity and environmental degradation, stalling progress toward Zero Hunger and No Poverty.
- FAO is deeply committed to supporting the most vulnerable nations, a commitment evidenced by the establishment of a dedicated Office for SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. This engagement is aligned with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and includes corporate initiatives like the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and targeted technical support to help these countries strengthen their resilience and build more sustainable agrifood systems.
- This document outlines FAO's ongoing support to foster transformation towards more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs.

GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

- The Programme Committee is invited to review the content of the document and provide guidance as deemed appropriate.

Draft Advice

The Committee:

- **noted the suite of ongoing priority actions presented in the document, acknowledged the results of FAO's work in supporting SIDS, LDCs, and LLDCs for agrifood systems transformation; and**
- **welcomed the preparation of a comprehensive Vision and Approach and the 2026-2027 Action Plan to consolidate FAO's coordinated efforts with increasing support modalities aimed at accelerating agrifood systems transformation in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs.**

I. Overview

1. SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs, despite their unique strengths, face persistent and profound vulnerabilities that hinder their agrifood systems transformation. Escalating climate impacts threaten agricultural productivity and food security and nutrition. Increasing vulnerability to climatic, economic and conflict shocks, often exacerbated by external factors, destabilize markets and livelihoods. Furthermore, many of these countries contend with persistent market access constraints, infrastructural bottlenecks, high transaction costs and macroeconomic instability, hindering their ability to build robust and equitable agrifood systems. As a result, vulnerabilities in natural capital, institutional capacity and human development remain deeply entrenched.

2. FAO maintains an unwavering commitment to bolstering SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs in their pursuit of their national goals, with a particular focus on Zero Hunger, alongside other intrinsically linked goals that foster sustainable development and resilience. FAO's holistic approach fosters policy coherence, resource mobilization and strategic collaboration to deliver more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for the world's most vulnerable nations.

3. Anchored in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, FAO's *four betters*, *better production, better nutrition,* a *better environment* and a *better life*, leaving no one behind, guides integrated and country-led pathways that harness data, innovation and partnerships to accelerate agrifood systems transformation. This approach aligns with the 2023 Call for Action on Agrifood Systems Transformation[1] and the 2025 Ministerial Statement[2] emanating from the FAO High-Level Ministerial Special Events for SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs, that both emphasize the urgency of scaling up investments, improving policy coherence and strengthening regional cooperation for SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. FAO actively supports the ten-year programmes of action for these vulnerable groups: the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS[3], the Doha Programme of Action for LDCs[4] and the Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs[5]. By integrating these principles, FAO ensures a harmonized and targeted approach to addressing country-specific needs, reinforcing collective responsibility and mutual accountability in transforming agrifood systems.

4. The 163rd Session of the FAO Council in December 2019 approved the establishment of the Office of SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs to bring greater coherence and coordination to the FAO's work in supporting these groups of nations. By coordinating and aligning activities of the units in headquarters and the Decentralized Offices, the Office seeks to ensure that efforts are streamlined, resources are used efficiently, and initiatives are implemented in a unified manner that maximizes impact.

II. Current context and persistent challenges for SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs

Enduring vulnerabilities

5. The ongoing context and persistent challenges facing SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs stem from a shared legacy of structural vulnerabilities compounded by intensifying climate pressures, economic instability and infrastructural deficits. These factors impede their development trajectories and undermine progress towards sustainable food security and nutrition.

6. SIDS contend with some of the most acute climate impacts, from rising sea levels that inundate arable land to more frequent and severe climate events that disrupt livelihoods and supply chains. Freshwater scarcity and limited territory restrict agricultural diversification, while heavy dependence on food imports, food prices and volatile energy prices inflate costs for households and businesses. Constrained domestic markets hamper scale economies and innovation, and persistent human capital flight depletes critical skills needed for adaptation and resilience.

[1] Call for Action – Transforming agrifood systems to increase resilience and achieve the 2030 Agenda
[2] 2025 Ministerial Statement
[3] Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS
[4] Doha Programme of Action for LDCs
[5] Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs

7. In LDCs, entrenched poverty and the prevalence hunger persist alongside chronically low agricultural yields. Weak governance and institutional capacity hinder strategic planning, while inadequate roads, storage facilities and market infrastructure inflate food losses across the value chain and limit farmers' ability to access markets. LDCs also suffer from low human development indicators, which exacerbate malnutrition and hinder productivity, and they remain highly vulnerable to external shocks, including commodity price excessive volatility and global economic slowdowns and downturns.

8. LLDCs confront a distinct set of geographical and logistical hurdles that drive up trade costs and limit market access. They are heavily dependent on often unreliable transit countries and this makes them particularly vulnerable to volatile global commodity price fluctuations. Critical gaps in their transport infrastructure further compound their economic disadvantages and limit their potential for growth and resilience.

Compounding impacts on agrifood systems

9. These enduring vulnerabilities exacerbate food insecurity and malnutrition, manifesting in the triple burden of undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and overweight and obesity. In communities where calorie-dense imported foods are cheaper than fresh produce, dietary quality worsens even as caloric intake is met. The 2025 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI 2025)[6] highlights that food insecurity remains a pressing concern in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs, where access to affordable, nutritious diets is increasingly constrained by persistent food price inflation and limited market resilience. While global hunger has shown a slight decline for the second consecutive year, these country groups continue to experience disproportionately high rates of moderate and severe food insecurity, with millions unable to meet minimum dietary diversity standards and most of the population not having access to healthy diets.

10. The health consequences of this persistent food insecurity are evident in the nutrition indicators tracked in the SOFI 2025. Stunting among children under five, while declining globally, remains above the world average in many SIDS, LDCs, and LLDCs, reflecting chronic undernutrition. Wasting and micronutrient deficiencies, such as anaemia in women of reproductive age, continue to undermine health outcomes and human capital development. Limited dietary diversity contributes to both undernutrition and the rising prevalence of overweight and obesity, creating a double burden of malnutrition. These nutritional challenges increase vulnerability to disease, impair cognitive development in children and reduce productivity in adults, perpetuating cycles of poor health and economic disadvantage.

11. Agricultural productivity suffers from both biophysical and systemic pressures. Soil depletion, water scarcity and biodiversity loss degrade agricultural productivity and weaken systemic resilience, leaving harvests vulnerable to shocks and reducing farmers' adaptive capacity. As smallholder farmers lose faith in agricultural viability, rural-to-urban migration accelerates, stretching urban infrastructure, food supply and services. This demographic shift further drains rural areas of labour and knowledge, creating a cycle of diminishing agricultural output and escalating unemployment in cities. Constrained by narrow economic bases anchored in primary commodities, these nations struggle to diversify beyond low-value exports, undermining income stability and amplifying susceptibility to price swings.

12. As environmental and economic stressors converge, entrenched socio-economic inequalities widen, with the poorest and most marginalized bearing the heaviest burden of rising costs, shrinking yields and limited access to markets, finance and social protection. Without transformative policies and strategic investments that support diversified livelihoods, strengthen infrastructure and promote inclusive governance, the compounding impacts on agrifood systems will perpetuate cycles of vulnerability. A comprehensive approach that fosters resilient production, equitable value chains and

[6] FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), World Food Programme (WFP) and World Health Organization (WHO). 2025. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025 – Addressing high food price inflation for food security and nutrition*. Rome.

robust social safety nets is essential to break this impasse and secure sustainable agrifood systems for all.

III. FAO's approach and report on progress

Overarching framework and principles

13. FAO's approach is firmly grounded in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and the *four betters*, and the accelerators, that together articulate a holistic vision for agrifood systems transformation. At the core, lies FAO's pledge to leave no one behind, ensuring that interventions specifically address the vulnerabilities of SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. To translate this global vision into tangible country-level outcomes, FAO operationalizes its support through the Country Programming Framework (CPF), a tailored mechanism that aligns with national priorities and capacities.

14. FAO orients its technical and policy assistance to support governments for development and implementation of national agrifood systems pathways that are grounded in local context, ensuring policy coherence and country ownership. The CPF convenes multi-stakeholder platforms to jointly shape interventions. By integrating shared responsibility into national planning, the CPF strengthens institutional resilience and speeds up the uptake of best practices tailored to each context.

15. FAO supports evidence-based policy- and decision-making through robust data and evidence, providing scientific solutions, geospatial tools and platform, and market analysis. It supports governments in strengthening and building resilient agrifood systems and promoting sustainable practices. Simultaneously, FAO mobilizes investments and financing from various resource partners in support of national priorities and Members' needs.

Key areas of intervention

16. FAO's interventions to transform agrifood systems in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs target the intertwined risks that are compounded by the vulnerabilities of these countries and include mobilizing policy support, enhancing technical capacity, improving value chain and market linkages, and promoting climate resilient practices to effectively tackle food insecurity and malnutrition and improve livelihoods.

17. To reverse degraded agricultural productivity, FAO promotes climate-smart and conservation agriculture in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs through initiatives such as Soil Mapping for Resilient Agrifood Systems (SoilFER) and Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS). These initiatives support precision fertilizer use and drought-tolerant crop selection. Through the Agrifood Systems Transformation Accelerator (ASTA), in collaboration with the One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) initiative, demonstration plots, farmer field schools and innovation hubs are being used to showcase techniques that restore soil health and boost yields and incomes on marginal lands.

18. To address low economic diversification, FAO strengthens value chains through Sustainable Food Value Chain approaches and national branding strategies. Projects like the Sustainable Value Chains for SIDS (SVC4SIDS) and Sustainable Value Chains for LLDCs (SVC4LLDC) enhance fisheries and aquaculture, while the Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Investment Forum and SIDS Solutions Forums connect producers to markets.

19. FAO anchors nutrition-sensitive strategies within national agrifood systems agendas, institutionalizing school-feeding programmes, community nutrition education and home garden schemes to secure sustainable access to diverse, micronutrient-rich diets for these vulnerable populations. The Organization's support for national dietary guidelines consolidates institutional frameworks for promoting healthy and sustainable diets across SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs.

20. The FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative is a country-led, evidence-based programme designed to accelerate agrifood systems transformation in highly vulnerable nations – especially Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs). It uses geospatial analytics and integrated socio-economic data to pinpoint subnational "priority territories," catalyse investment in value chains, foster innovation partnerships,

and build resilience against climate and market shocks – all to eradicate poverty, end hunger and reduce inequality in places where capacities and support are most constrained.

21. Building resilience against shocks involves integrating early warning systems, anticipatory action protocols and tailored social protection mechanisms. FAO works with meteorological services in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs, to include climate forecasts into national disaster risk management plans. At the same time, the Scaling up Climate Ambition on Land Use and Agriculture through Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans (SCALA) programme and Green Climate Fund (GCF) readiness support helps these countries mainstream agrifood solutions into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), securing long-term climate financing and institutional capacity.

22. To narrow social inequalities, FAO fosters inclusive governance and equitable resource access. Multi-stakeholder platforms convene farmers' cooperatives, women's groups, private sector actors and research institutions to co-design agrifood interventions that reflect the diverse needs of communities in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. Tailored social protection schemes target marginalized populations, enabling them to invest in resilient practices and technologies. Capacity development is a core focus, with technical assistance, specialized training, and South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) empowering farmers, policymakers and value chain actors.

Highlights of recent achievements and progress

Strategizing the organizational support and amplifying the voices of nations

23. In June 2025, FAO convened a High-Level Ministerial Special Event, *From Vulnerability to Resilience – Strengthening Food Security and Better Life*, with over four-hundred participants from 92 Members, including 60 SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. Stakeholders emphasized the need for integrated agrifood systems solutions that leverage digital and biotechnologies, scale up nutrition-sensitive policies, mobilize climate-smart investments and promote resilient, inclusive rural livelihoods rooted in both innovation and traditional knowledge.

24. The Special Event closed with the unanimous adoption of a Ministerial Statement calling on FAO to craft a dedicated SIDS, LDC, LLDC Strategy and a 2026–27 Action Plan to guide the delivery of targeted support to these countries for sustainable agriculture, natural resource management, climate resilience, technology deployment, investment facilitation and gender-youth inclusion. Ministers recommended institutionalizing this ministerial dialogue as a biennial fixture alongside FAO Conferences to maintain political momentum for transforming vulnerable agrifood systems into engines of food security, environmental stewardship and shared prosperity in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs.

25. The 2024 Pacific SIDS Solutions Forum, held in Nadi, Fiji, convened leaders, innovators and development partners under the theme *Transforming Agrifood Systems for our Blue Pacific Continent*. Co-hosted by FAO and the Government of Fiji, the Forum showcased scalable solutions and fostered regional collaboration to accelerate agrifood systems transformation across Pacific SIDS. In 2025, the spotlight shifted to Africa with the Africa SIDS Solutions Forum held under the theme *Sustainable Islands, Shared Solutions: Mobilizing Resources for African SIDS*. The Forum serves as a platform to mobilize resources, promote inclusive and climate resilient agrifood systems, and catalyse partnerships to unlock sustainable development across African island nations.

Strengthening capacity for evidence-based policy

26. FAO produced the first ever dedicated report[7] on the hidden costs of agrifood systems of SIDS, drawing on FAO's State of Food and Agriculture 2024[8] to present the internationally comparable estimates of hidden environmental, social and health costs within agrifood systems for 12 SIDS. The report provides country-level data to support targeted evaluations and guide transformative

[7] McMenomy, T. & Arslan, A. 2025. *Revealing the hidden costs of agrifood systems in Small Island Developing States – Insights from The State of Food and Agriculture 2024*. Rome, FAO.
[8] FAO. 2024. *The State of Food and Agriculture 2024 – Value-driven transformation of agrifood systems*. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cd2616en

actions. FAO has also prepared for the first time a dedicated report on the state of fisheries and aquaculture in SIDS[9], based on the 2024 State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture[10]. This report highlights sectoral trends that are often obscured in global analyses due to the relatively low, yet critically important, production levels of SIDS.

27. The Organization provides contextualized evidence-based policy support at country level. FAO's collaboration with Rwanda, South Sudan and Zambia has helped the governments launch robust agrifood strategies that strengthen food security, improve nutrition and diversify rural economies. In Rwanda, this assistance produced the Strategic Plan for Agriculture Transformation 2025–2029 (PSTA5), while in Zambia it underpinned the Comprehensive Agricultural Transformation Support Programme 2024–2033 (CATSP). Both frameworks embed nutrition-sensitive measures such as promoting bio-enriched staples and dietary diversification, alongside market-linkage incentives and investment facilitation for high-value crop and livestock sectors.

28. To build policy design capacity across vulnerable nations, FAO developed and piloted a comprehensive training manual on agrifood systems tools and methods in Rwanda and Zambia. The guide integrates modules on food security diagnostics, nutrition impact assessment and economic diversification strategies, equipping policymakers in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs to formulate evidence-based policies that attract targeted investments while addressing local dietary needs.

29. In Uganda, FAO's engagement under the One Planet Network Sustainable Food Systems Programme is advancing a systems approach to governance, investment and nutrition. By convening the National Food Systems Coordination Committee, FAO has aligned agriculture, health and climate priorities, and a financing landscape analysis has generated data to guide private and public capital toward nutrition-sensitive agrifood projects. The June 2025 National Agrifood Systems Investment and Financing Conference laid the groundwork for Uganda's new financing strategy under the Fourth National Development Plan (NDPIV), creating inclusive platforms where farmers, women and youth groups shape diversified and resilient agrifood systems.

Integrating nutrition across sectors

30. FAO is actively supporting efforts in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs to enhance access to healthy diets by improving the efficiency, inclusiveness, resilience and sustainability of agrifood systems. These efforts emphasize increasing both the production and consumption of healthy foods. Areas of action include support for diversification of production, provision of guidance to improve nutritional quality, enhancement of food safety, promotion of affordability and reduction of food loss.

31. In 2024, 84 FAO Country Offices reported supporting actions in policy, investment, and technologies to promote healthy diets in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. Additionally, —41 Offices supported the development, update, or use of food-based dietary guidelines, while 51 Offices collaborated on improving school food and nutrition programmes. Country Offices also reported convening 256 national dialogues in support of healthy diets across the three country groups. Furthermore, governments from these countries are utilizing FAO knowledge products related to healthy diets.

Building resilience to shocks and disasters

32. FAO is accelerating efforts to integrate agrifood solutions into climate commitments in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs through the SCALA programme. Countries such as Cambodia, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Mongolia, Nepal, Solomon Islands and Uganda are incorporating nutrition-sensitive, climate-smart agriculture into their NDCs and NAPs. FAO's support includes capacity building, business analysis, and private-sector engagement. FAO is now guiding fifteen vulnerable countries through their next round of NDC updates, promoting more ambitious agrifood actions to boost food security and rural livelihoods.

[9] FAO (forthcoming). *A snapshot of fisheries and aquaculture in Small Island Developing States*. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular. Rome, FAO.
[10] FAO. 2024. *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2024 – Blue Transformation in action*. Rome.

33. Water scarcity remains a major threat to food security and nutrition in these regions. Through the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG), FAO is translating high-level commitments into practical solutions, including drought preparedness, saline agriculture, and water–energy–food–ecosystem integration. Training has been delivered in Cabo Verde and Uzbekistan, and field trials in Malawi are testing drought-resilient crops like sorghum and cowpeas, showing promising results for nutrition and market potential.

34. Complementing water efforts, the SoilFER programme is revitalizing degraded soils in Central America and sub-Saharan Africa. Integrated with the Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS) movement, SoilFER uses geospatial analysis to guide crop selection and fertilizer use, improving yields and soil health. In Somalia, FAO's Water and Land Information Management system now connects local data to global networks, providing farmers with timely forecasts to protect production.

Empowering women and youth and strengthening their engagement

35. FAO continues to advance empowerment of women and youth across SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. In Pacific SIDS, initiatives such Digital Villages are enhancing digital literacy among women and youth, fostering inclusive agrifood systems. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, youth-focused projects have strengthened capacities in agribusiness, value chain engagement and responsible investment. In Palau, women have been empowered through training in sustainable tourism value chains, while eight Caribbean countries are receiving support to develop gender-responsive, climate-resilient value chains.

36. Across SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs, youth-sensitive value chain tools programming are increasingly embedded in FAO's strategic actions. In LLDCs for example, FAO is integrating youth priorities into national agrifood transformation strategies, as emphasized in the 2024 Tashkent Declaration[11]. A major milestone in 2025 was the publication of The Status of Youth in Agrifood Systems[12] report, FAO's first comprehensive global assessment of youth engagement in agrifood systems, including within the context of LDCs.

Flagship initiatives in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs

37. As of 2025, the HIH Initiative engages 65 of the 93 SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. Of these, 44 have taken part in the 2023–2025 Investment Forums to develop evidence-based investment plans that unlock targeted agrifood investments aimed at strengthening food security, improving access to healthy diets and diversifying rural economies. So far, 35 countries have presented investment opportunities totalling USD 13.61 billion and currently USD 4.5 billion of investments are under discussion or committed. For example, the Government of the Solomon Islands has mobilized USD 40 million for coconut and poultry value-chain projects, and Caribbean Community (CARICOM)'s Caribbean SIDS HIH project continues to negotiate impact-focused financing to expand local production and market access.

38. At the November 2024 Pacific SIDS Solutions Forum, five HIHI countries presented their investment plans to investors and development partners, prioritizing agrifood investments ranging from climate-smart root crops to small-scale aquaculture, showcasing pathways for nutritional resilience and economic diversification. Simultaneously, FAO's capacity-development programme trained forty-eight public officials from 20 SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs on the HIHI geospatial platform and the Environmental eXternalities ACcounting Tool (EX-ACT) modelling tool, equipping them to design investment portfolios that marry productivity gains with dietary improvements and sustainable livelihoods.

39. The 2025 HIH Investment Forum saw strong engagement from SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. Two new regional initiatives were launched – an African SIDS (plus Madagascar and La Réunion) programme co-developed with the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), and a USD 4 billion Pacific

[11] FAO and Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan. *Declaration on the sustainable transformation of agrifood systems in Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs)*. Budapest.
[12] FAO. 2025. *The Status of Youth in Agrifood Systems*. Rome.

Islands Investment Plan. Both programmes are structured to catalyse diversified agribusiness ventures, boost local agrifood systems and attract private capital for long-term nutrition and resilience outcomes.

40. The OCOP initiative is assisting 49 SIDS, LDCs, and LLDCs promote 38 unique commodities for improved market access, national branding, and economic diversification. With nearly USD 20 million in support of countries like Bangladesh, Cambodia, Lesotho, Malawi, Samoa, United Republic of Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago and Uzbekistan that have launched value chain strategies, strengthened coordination and boosted producers' incomes through sustainable, nutrition-sensitive growth.

41. Since the last quarter of 2014, the SCOPE[13] team has engaged with 14 SIDS, with a strong concentration in the Caribbean given the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) cycle. Support has focused on designing agrifood systems diagnostics (Eastern Caribbean, Cuba, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago), identifying and shaping deep-dive studies (Eastern Caribbean, Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago) and contributing to Common Country Analyses (Eastern Caribbean, Belize, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago). Current work is expanding in Guyana, the Maldives and Suriname, while the period from 2025 to 2026 will mark a strategic deepening of engagement with SIDS in Africa (Guinea-Bissau) and the Pacific, in close collaboration with SAP and Resident Coordinator Offices in Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia and Samoa.

42. Through the ASTA programme, and in partnership with the OCOP initiative, FAO is driving stakeholder-led innovations that diversify incomes and improve nutrition. Examples include Suriname's organic horticulture hub, Zambia's soybean action plan and enhanced fruit value chains in the Republic of Moldova and Tajikistan, all contributing to resilient agrifood systems and expanded export opportunities.

Leveraging strategic financing and partnerships

43. FAO's financial support to SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs is delivered primarily through a variety of funding mechanisms including extrabudgetary trust funds and project-based allocations that target the most vulnerable nations. The Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) has played a significant catalytic role in this course of resource mobilization and building strategic partnership. In the 2024-2025 biennium, the TCP approved 347 projects valued at USD 84.6 million, 70 percent of global TCP resources, benefitting the 93 SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs and underscoring FAO's commitment to leave no one behind.

44. Through its collaboration with the Green Climate Fund (GCF), FAO has enabled SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs to access readiness funding for the design of the National Adaptation Plans and institutional strengthening in agrifood systems. By August 2025, 19 SIDS, 28 LDCs and 16 LLDCs had secured GCF Readiness grants, laying the groundwork for low-emission, climate-resilient agricultural investments. A record USD 400 million of FAO-led GCF projects was approved in 2025, including USD 63.4 million for sustainable forest management in Papua New Guinea, USD 16.7 million for a resilient fisheries sector in Saint Lucia, and a landmark USD 222 million commitment to the Scaling-Up Resilience in Africa's Great Green Wall (SURAGWA) Initiative to strengthen livelihoods across the Sahel.

45. To underwrite resilience building, FAO's partnership with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has mobilized over USD 300 million from the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) to 48 LDCs and SIDS in 2024. These investments have financed early warning systems, disaster risk reduction measures and training programmes that strengthen agrifood supply chains, protect harvests from extreme weather events, and secure year-round nutrition for vulnerable populations.

46. FAO is also working on the implementation of the Financing for Shock-Driven Food Crises Facility (FSFC) which is an innovative mechanism designed to provide anticipatory and rapid financing in highly vulnerable countries, including SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs, to prevent food crises

[13] Analytical Support Mechanism for Agrifood System Country Programming and Evidence (SCOPE)

triggered by droughts, floods, conflicts, pests or other shocks from escalating into humanitarian emergencies. By combining data analytics, real-time risk monitoring systems, evidence-based "triggers" and blended finance instruments with re-insurance mechanisms, the FSFC aims to unlock early resources when early-warning signals emerge – protecting vulnerable livelihoods and reducing the high costs of delayed response. Focused on territories where institutional capacities, infrastructure and fiscal space are limited, as is often the case for SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs, the Facility strengthens systemic resilience against extreme shocks and supports a more sustainable foundation for food security.

47. FAO has continued to strengthen its collaboration with the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and Regional Entities to support agrifood systems transformation in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. Through joint initiatives, technical assistance and capacity development, FAO is helping countries align national priorities with global commitments, while ensuring that agrifood systems are people-centred and responsive to local realities.

IV. Potential priority action areas for the biennium 2026-27

48. The biennium 2026-27 marks a critical period for intensifying support to SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs. Building on FAO's achievements in recent years, and in light of the emerging challenges faced by SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs, as well as anticipated requests for support from these countries, the Organization proposes to continue addressing the following priority areas. This approach aligns with global frameworks including the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS, the Doha Programme of Action for the LDCs and the Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs.

a) *Structural Transformation, Innovation and Digitalization* – For SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs, shifting from subsistence farming to diversified agribusiness models is critical for economic resilience and food security. Policy and regulatory reforms that unlock new value chains, coupled with the scaling-up of digital tools will accelerate the adoption of appropriate technologies, expand market access and improve supply-chain efficiency. These measures are expected to generate higher farm incomes, lower post-harvest losses and stimulate rural entrepreneurship.

b) *Sustainable Increase of Domestic Production and Productivity* – In areas where soils are degraded and yields lag, climate-smart practices disseminated through farmer-field schools and community demonstration plots can revitalize local agrifood systems. By integrating pest management, conservation agriculture and soil-health techniques into everyday farming, FAO's approach will help SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs boost crop productivity while safeguarding the environment. The anticipated impact includes strengthened food security and nutrition, reduced import dependency and more stable rural livelihoods.

c) *Promotion of Healthy Consumption and Nutrition* – Addressing the triple burden of undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies and obesity in SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs requires a nutrition-first mindset. Incorporating dietary objectives into national agricultural strategies, school-feeding programmes and social protection schemes ensures that the most vulnerable populations gain access to diverse and nutrient-dense local foods. Coupled with the development of national dietary guidelines and behaviour-change campaigns, these efforts will improve public health outcomes, reduce healthcare costs and reinforce demand for locally produced healthy foods.

d) *Strengthening Value Chains and Ensuring Market Functionality* – Remote and resource-constrained producers often face high transaction costs and limited bargaining power. Investment in processing infrastructure and digital market-information systems will help to reduce costs, enhance product quality and open domestic, regional and export markets. The result will be more robust rural economies, diversified income streams and greater food availability year-round.

e) *Scaling Up resilience and Reducing Vulnerability* – SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs are disproportionately affected by extreme weather events, shocks and disasters. Expanding community-based disaster-risk reduction, early-warning systems and climate-risk insurance strengthens local capacity to prepare for and recover from extreme events. Simultaneously, restoring degraded lands and coastal ecosystems enhances natural buffers against storms and droughts. Together, these interventions will protect harvests, secure food supplies and sustain the livelihoods of millions at risk.

f) *Data and Building an Evidence-Based Enabling Environment* – Robust agrifood information systems are the backbone of adaptive, responsive policymaking. Strengthening real-time data collection on production, trade, nutrition and hazards and deploying geospatial tools and digital dashboards will empower SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs to monitor trends, forecast risks and evaluate interventions. As a concrete example, FAO's newly inaugurated Situation Room serves as a real-time, data- and scientific-based decision hub for early warning systems addressing shocks to food security. The Situation Room forms a cornerstone of the Financing for Shock-Driven Food Crises (FSFC) Facility, which enables early, targeted interventions before damage occurs and food crises escalate, saving lives, protecting livelihoods and ensuring resources are used more efficiently and effectively.

g) Underpinned by rigorous monitoring and evaluation frameworks, this evidence-driven approach is expected to optimize resource allocation, improve programme effectiveness and accelerate progress toward food-security goals.

h) *Deepening Partnerships and Supporting Strategic Financing* – Limited domestic resources and high financing costs hinder agrifood systems transformation in these vulnerable countries. Leveraging SSTC fosters peer learning and the exchange of proven solutions. Mobilizing multilateral, private and climate finance through blended-finance and risk-sharing mechanisms will unlock the capital needed for infrastructure, innovation and resilience-building projects. Over time, these strategic partnerships will catalyse sustainable investments, drive economic diversification and enhance the long-term viability of SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs' agrifood systems.

49. FAO will streamline its work with SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs through a unified Vision and Approach. The Vision and Approach for SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs will draws on global commitments from the three programmes of actions to the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and will be co-designed with governments and other key stakeholders. It will set shared priorities for structural transformation, productivity gains, nutrition security, resilience building and strategic financing.

50. For the upcoming biennium, FAO is currently preparing the 2026–27 Action Plan for SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs to provide a coordinated framework for the continued delivery of context-specific technical and policy assistance support for SIDS, LDCs, and LLDCs, ensuring that their unique and context specific challenges are addressed. This will include the technical support that FAO provide through its normative and on the ground support as well as t through the ongoing flagship initiatives.

51. Furthermore, emphasis will be placed on strengthening national capacities for robust data collection and comprehensive analysis in these countries. This will include active support through the UN Common Country Analysis process, enabling policymakers to formulate evidence-based agrifood systems' strategies.