



PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Hundred and Thirty-fifth Session

Rome, 13-17 March 2023

**Progress report on the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition
2016-2025**

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

Ms Lynnette Neufeld
Director, Food and Nutrition Division
Tel: +39 06570 52614
Email: Lynnette.Neufeld@fao.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- As recommended in 2014 by the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), the United Nations (UN) General Assembly proclaimed in 2016 the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition 2016-2025, which provides a time-bound cohesive framework to implement the ICN2 commitments. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) were mandated to co-lead the implementation of the Decade.
- The present document provides an update on progress made in implementing the Decade and in following-up on ICN2 commitments since 2020, covering key developments in the reporting period. These included advances in a wide variety of nutrition-related activities at global, regional and national levels.
- The progress report also highlights additional efforts required for scaling-up commitments and achieving concrete results.
- The Decade's Mid-term Review, convened in 2020 and 2021, identified three thematic focus areas that should drive 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.
- Addressing the challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the persisting underlying drivers of all forms of malnutrition requires continuous strong and 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 Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

The Programme Committee is invited to:

- acknowledge the progress made in advancing the implementing the Decade and in following-up on the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) commitments; and
- encourage Management, jointly with WHO, to convene open and inclusive dialogues towards the end of the Decade for reflection on global progress and challenges encountered and identification of potential way forward beyond 2025.

I. Background

1. In April 2016, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted resolution 70/259¹ proclaiming 2016-2025 as the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (“the Decade”). This had been recommended at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), co-hosted in November 2014 by FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO), which adopted the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and its companion Framework for Action. 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 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). The effects of the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic,² along with intensified conflicts, climate change and the ongoing war in Ukraine, impede progress towards ending hunger and malnutrition in all its forms and achieving the SDG targets.
3. The UN 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)³ and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), in consultation with other international and regional organizations and platforms; and (iii) produce biennial reports on the 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.⁴ Key information is further available on the Decade’s website.⁵
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. Pursuant to resolution 70/259, this report offers insights on the progress made in the implementation of the Decade and follow-up to ICN2 commitments during the period 2020-2022, covering key developments at global, regional, and country levels.

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

7. 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 (*A to F* below) and identify gaps and barriers encountered for making progress from 2016 to 2020. A MTR Foresight paper,⁶ which also identified focus areas for priority action and

¹ A/RES/70/259 - <https://undocs.org/A/RES/70/259>

² www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9549037/pdf/40475_2022_Article_271.pdf

³ 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 (SUN) Movement, to become the UN inter-agency coordination and collaboration mechanism for nutrition at both global and country level - www.unnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2020-12-04-SG-letter-to-CEB-on-UN-Nutrition-EOSG-2020-065261.pdf

⁴ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/work_programme_nutrition_decade.pdf

⁵ www.un.org/nutrition

⁶ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/nutrition_decade_mtr_background_paper_en.pdf

promising opportunities in each of the six action areas for future progress in 2021-2025, was developed by the Decade's Secretariat and served as the background document for this review.

8. The MTR process included informal consultations in 2020 with Geneva Mission Focal Points on 19 March,⁷ Permanent Representatives to FAO in Rome on 29 April⁸ and Permanent Missions to the UN in New York on 23 July⁹ and with the Civil Society and Indigenous Peoples' Mechanism (CSIPM) of CFS, the Private Sector Mechanism (PSM) of CFS and UN Nutrition¹⁰ member agencies on progress made, barriers encountered and gaps identified over the first half of the Decade (2016 to 2020).

9. 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 remaining years of the Decade.¹¹ Findings highlight that advocacy efforts during the first half of the Decade on the importance of nutrition, healthy diets, and agrifood systems for human and planetary health are showing results.

10. Some key global developments in 2020-2022 across the six action areas of the Decade's Work Programme, which were either directly or indirectly linked to the Decade or brought additional emphasis on nutrition actions aligned with the Decade's aims, include the following:

A. Sustainable, resilient food systems for healthy diets

11. 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 UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) held in September 2021,¹² and the focus on 'Food Systems for Healthy Diets' as a key thematic pillar of Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit (N4G) convened by the Government of Japan in December 2021¹³. Both summits were united by the ambitious goal to address all forms of malnutrition through multiple pathways and provided 396 new nutrition policy and financial commitments.¹⁴

12. In February 2021, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) endorsed its Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSyN)¹⁵, as a contribution to the Decade and support to countries and partners in operationalizing the ICN2 recommendations. Towards this aim, FAO developed an evidence platform for agrifood systems and nutrition,¹⁶ with inputs from UN Nutrition member agencies, that links the VGFSyN recommendations with existing normative guidance and evidence.

13. In the framework of the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables 2021,¹⁷ activities took place to emphasize the importance of consuming fruits and vegetables and the way these perishable foods are produced, processed and marketed.¹⁸

14. The second observance of the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste (IDAFLW) on 29 September 2021 focused on the nutritional and health impact of food loss

⁷ 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

⁸ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/final_provisional_agenda_fao_member_country_briefing_on_mtr_nutrition.pdf

⁹ www.un.org/nutrition/news/un-decade-action-on-nutrition-halfway-through

¹⁰ See footnote 3

¹¹ www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/consultations/decade-nutrition-priority-actions

¹² www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit

¹³ <https://nutritionforgrowth.org/events>

¹⁴ https://nutritionforgrowth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/N4G_UN_FoodSysSummit_9.23.pdf

¹⁵ www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs2021/Documents/CFS_VGs_Food_Systems_and_Nutrition_Strategy_EN.pdf

¹⁶ www.fao.org/evidence-platform-agri-food-systems-nutrition/en

¹⁷ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/244>

¹⁸ www.fao.org/fruits-vegetables-2021/en

and waste, and the third observance of the IDAFLW on 29 September 2022 on climate benefits for people and the planet through food loss and waste reduction.¹⁹

15. FAO's *Thinking about the future of food safety – A foresight report*, released in 2022, provides an overview of the major global drivers and trends by describing their implications for food safety in particular and for agrifood systems by extrapolation.²⁰

16. At the 27th Session of the Committee on Agriculture in 2020,²¹ FAO was requested to develop a new food safety strategy that would align and integrate FAO's work on food safety with its current organizational changes. Answering this request, FAO developed a set of strategic priorities for its work on food safety, while maintaining its vision to provide "safe food for all people at all times" and the mission "to support Members in continuing to improve food safety at all levels by providing scientific advice and strengthening their food safety capacities for efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems." The Strategic Priorities for Food Safety encourage a more consistent integration of food safety in the development of sustainable and inclusive agrifood systems, food security and nutrition policies, and agriculture development strategies. They were endorsed at the 171st Session of the FAO Council²² and are fully leveraging synergies with the new WHO Global Strategy for Food Safety 2022-2030, which was endorsed by WHO Member States in May 2022²³.

17. The emergence of COVID-19 pandemic has underlined the urgent need to strengthen the One Health approach.²⁴ In 2021, FAO, WHO, the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) launched a One Health High-Level Expert Panel to improve understanding of how diseases with the potential to trigger pandemics, emerge and spread.²⁵ UNEP joined the other three organizations (Tripartite) as an equal partner in 2022 to form a new Quadripartite collaboration for One Health.²⁶

18. In 2022, the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, established by the UN Secretary-General²⁷, provided an analysis of the current three-dimensional crisis, to guide a coordinated global response to the present disruptions in food systems while sustaining the transition to sustainable production.²⁸

19. The 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (Glasgow, United Kingdom, November 2021), confirmed agriculture and food systems as a major priority for the climate agenda.²⁹ At COP27 (Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, November 2022),³⁰ UN agencies and partners supported the COP27 Presidency in launching the global Initiative on Climate Action and Nutrition (I-CAN) that focuses on healthy diets from sustainable agrifood systems as a key driver for win-win solutions to climate change and malnutrition.³¹

¹⁹ www.fao.org/international-day-awareness-food-loss-waste/en

²⁰ www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb8667en

²¹ www.fao.org/3/nd744en/nd744en.pdf

²² www.fao.org/about/meetings/council/cl171/documents/en

²³ www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240057685

²⁴ www.who.int/publications/m/item/who-manifesto-for-a-healthy-recovery-from-covid-19

²⁵ [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))

²⁶ [www.who.int/news/item/29-04-2022-quadripartite-memorandum-of-understanding-\(mou\)-signed-for-a-new-era-of-one-health-collaboration](http://www.who.int/news/item/29-04-2022-quadripartite-memorandum-of-understanding-(mou)-signed-for-a-new-era-of-one-health-collaboration)

²⁷ <https://news.un.org/pages/global-crisis-response-group>

²⁸ https://news.un.org/pages/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/GCRG_Brief2_Press_Release.pdf

²⁹ <https://ukcop26.org/the-global-action-agenda-for-innovation-in-agriculture>

³⁰ www.fao.org/events/detail/fao-at-cop27/en

³¹ www.gainhealth.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/Initiative-on-climate-action-and-nutrition-I-CAN.pdf

B. Aligned health systems providing universal coverage of essential nutrition actions

20. 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.³²

21. The Global Action Plan for Child Wasting commissioned by the UN Secretary-General³³ was developed by FAO, the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UNICEF, WFP and WHO with inputs from other key stakeholders and released in March 2020. It presents a framework to accelerate progress in preventing and managing child wasting and achieving the SDG target 2.2 on ending all forms of malnutrition, including the internationally agreed targets on child wasting. Twenty-two out of twenty-three frontrunner countries have developed costed roadmaps to reach national targets³⁴. To improve operational guidelines on child wasting prevention and treatment, and support national governments in adapting their guidelines, WHO and UNICEF have established a Technical Advisory Group on Wasting³⁵ in which FAO participates.

22. To advance the prevention and management of obesity over the life course, the World Health Assembly (WHA), in 2022, approved an obesity action acceleration plan³⁶ aiming to consolidate and prioritize country-level action against the obesity epidemic through coherent and harmonized efforts.

23. In 2021, FAO Members endorsed the Vision and Strategy for FAO's Work in Nutrition³⁷, which recognized the need for addressing all forms of malnutrition, including overweight/obesity, through an agrifood systems perspective as part of FAO's work in nutrition.

C. Social protection and nutrition education

24. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, social protection systems became a mainstay for many people during the crisis and possibly beyond,³⁸ and 370 million children missed more than 39 billion in-school meals globally³⁹ due to related school closures.

25. Due to the unprecedented challenges to food security and nutrition caused by the emergence of COVID-19, the UN Secretary-General launched a policy brief *The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Security and Nutrition*. One critical action mentioned was to put food and nutrition assistance at the heart of social protection programmes in order to protect food access for the most vulnerable.⁴⁰

26. The work of UN agencies provides support to this policy recommendation. For example, FAO has recently launched two certified courses on food security, nutrition and social protection and the Inter-Agency Social Protection Assessment tool on Food Security and Nutrition that is used to assess social assistance programmes.⁴¹

27. Programmes on social protection, school health, food and nutrition can deliver double-duty actions addressing both undernutrition and overweight and obesity.⁴² An in-depth review of legislation, standards and guidelines for school meals in 77 countries 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.⁴³

³² www.mofa.go.jp/files/100275456.pdf

³³ www.childwasting.org

³⁴ www.childwasting.org/the-gap-framework

³⁵ www.who.int/news-room/articles-detail/call-for-experts-who-unicef-technical-advisory-group-on-wasting

³⁶ https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA75/A75_10Add6-en.pdf

³⁷ www.fao.org/3/ne853en/ne853en.pdf

³⁸ www.fao.org/3/cb1000en/cb1000en.pdf; www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb4474en

³⁹ www.wfp.org/publications/state-school-feeding-worldwide-2020; www.wfp.org/publications/covid-19-missing-more-classroom-2021

⁴⁰ <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/SG-Policy-Brief-on-COVID-Impact-on-Food-Security.pdf>

⁴¹ <https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=874>; <https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=875>

⁴² <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/255414/WHO-NMH-NHD-17.2-eng.pdf>

⁴³ https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB148/B148_7-en.pdf

28. Based on the results of a global survey⁴⁴ and key informant interviews⁴⁵ held with focal points from ministries of education and health, a methodology and a set of manuals are being developed by FAO and WFP to support countries in devising and implementing context-specific, effective and feasible nutrition guidelines and standards for their school food, using a food systems approach.

D. Trade and investment for improved nutrition

29. In view of increased recognition of the need for coherence between trade policies and nutrition action, the 2021 Global Dialogue on Trade⁴⁶ 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 aiming at further exploring the nutrition and international trade nexus⁴⁷.

30. The Global Panel on Food Systems, Agriculture and Nutrition 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.⁴⁸

31. 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.⁴⁹

32. The nutrition financing gap was addressed at the N4G, where donor governments and donor organizations committed new nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive financing of around USD 27 billion to tackle malnutrition. Twenty-seven percent of the new N4G commitments addressed nutrition financing.⁵⁰

E. Safe and supportive environments for nutrition at all ages

33. 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.⁵¹

34. 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 (185 countries) than those that seek to change the food environment through nutrition labelling, marketing restrictions, fiscal policies or reformulation (169 countries). 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 level and 57 have implemented policies to limit trans-fats from

⁴⁴ www.fao.org/3/CA2773EN/ca2773en.pdf

⁴⁵ www.fao.org/platforms/school-food/around-the-world/africa/en

⁴⁶ www.wto.org/english/res_e/reser_e/gdt_6july21_e.htm

⁴⁷ www.wto.org/english/res_e/reser_e/tradedialonfood_e.htm

⁴⁸ www.glopan.org/trade

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/obr.12081>

⁴⁹ <https://doi.org/10.4060/cb4474en>

⁵⁰ www.mofa.go.jp/files/100275456.pdf

⁵¹ www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb4474en

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

www.fao.org/3/cb1000en/cb1000en.pdf

the food supply.⁵² Trans-fat elimination protected 3.2 billion people from those harmful substances by end 2021⁵³.

35. May 2021 marked the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes.⁵⁴ 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.⁵⁵

F. Strengthened governance and accountability for nutrition

36. 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 2.⁵⁶

37. To date, most countries have adopted WHA's 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).⁵⁷

38. The initiative *Preventing and Managing Conflicts of Interest in Country-Level Nutrition Programs: A Roadmap for Implementing the World Health Organization's Draft Approach in 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.⁵⁸

39. The global community has strengthened accountability to nutrition through continuous updating of statistics such as the annual global estimates for child stunting, overweight and wasting.⁵⁹ Furthermore, the SOFI reports 2020⁶⁰, 2021⁶¹ and 2022⁶² bring together the global data on hunger and malnutrition, informing the monitoring of the nutrition-related targets of the SDGs and policy action. The Global Nutrition Report (GNR) provides a platform for assessing the nutrition financing landscape.⁶³ In 2021, the GNR launched a new Nutrition Accountability Framework, which is a comprehensive digital platform for registering SMART policy, programmatic and financial commitments and for collective accountability on fulfilling commitments over time.⁶⁴

III. Further engagement of stakeholders induced by the Decade

G. Commitments by governments

40. 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.⁶⁵

41. The UNFSS reported 234 commitments⁶⁶ made by different stakeholders and the endorsed N4G Compact revealed that 80 government departments/ministries from 66 countries made

⁵² <https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en>

⁵³ www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240031876

⁵⁴ www.who.int/news/item/21-05-2021-WHO-UNICEF-statement-on-the-40th-anniversary-of-the-international-code-of-marketing-breastmilk-substitutes

⁵⁵ www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240006010

⁵⁶ www.fao.org/3/ca9733en/ca9733en.pdf

⁵⁷ <https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en>

⁵⁸ www.paho.org/en/events/preventing-and-managing-conflicts-interest-country-level-nutrition-programs-roadmap

⁵⁹ www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/topics/joint-child-malnutrition-estimates-unicef-who-wb?id=402

⁶⁰ www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca9692en

⁶¹ www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb4474en

⁶² www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc0639en

⁶³ <https://globalnutritionreport.org>

⁶⁴ <https://globalnutritionreport.org/resources/naf>

⁶⁵ www.un.org/nutrition/sites/www.un.org.nutrition/files/general/pdf/work_programme_nutrition_decade.pdf

⁶⁶ www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/news/commitments-registry

224 commitments to address malnutrition in all its forms.⁶⁷ Governments also committed at N4G to increase national budget allocations to nutrition, and donor governments made financial commitments of over USD 15 billion for nutrition-related assistance through bilateral and multilateral assistance and for the development of nutrition policies and indicators.⁶⁸

42. The African Union (AU) Theme of the Year for 2022 *Strengthening Resilience in Nutrition and Food Security on The African Continent: Strengthening Agro-Food Systems, Health and Social Protection Systems for the Acceleration of Human, Social and Economic Capital Development* was launched during the 35th African Union Assembly⁶⁹, reaffirming the commitments of African countries to advance their nutrition goals. Guided by a roadmap endorsed by AU Member States, the African Union Commission implemented a series of activities together with stakeholders and partners which contributed significantly to efforts in the areas of food and nutrition security, including strengthening governance and coordination mechanisms.

H. Country-led action networks and new coalitions

43. 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.

44. 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 organized three independent UNFSS Dialogues on the role of aquatic foods in sustainable food systems and a network meeting to sum up the achievements so far and plan for future work, and in 2022, it organized two webinars on aquatic and terrestrial food systems and the sixth network meeting. Representatives from ministries, institutions and organizations participate in this informal network.⁷⁰

45. The Global Action Network on Nutrition Labelling, led by Australia, Chile and France shared experiences in three virtual webinars in 2020 and 2021: (i) evaluation of Australia and New Zealand's health star rating system⁷¹, (ii) implementation of France's front-of-pack nutrition labelling system 'Nutriscore'; and (iii) the development of the Chilean front-of-package food warning label⁷².

46. The Regional Action Network for the Americas on Sustainable School Feeding, led by Brazil, organized two virtual meetings in 2020⁷³ to exchange experiences on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on school feeding programmes. Furthermore, the network facilitated in 2021 a virtual discussion where Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador and Peru presented their experiences in school feeding programmes⁷⁴, a virtual dialogue on food waste in schools⁷⁵, a webinar on transforming food systems⁷⁶, a webinar on current challenges of school feeding⁷⁷ and a network meeting⁷⁸. Moreover in 2022, the network facilitated the organization of two webinars, a network meeting and a technical visit by ten countries to Brazil.⁷⁹

⁶⁷ <https://nutritionforgrowth.org/resource-type/pdf>; www.mofa.go.jp/files/100275456.pdf

⁶⁸ <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>

⁶⁹ Assembly/AU/Dec.813-838(XXXV) - https://au.int/sites/default/files/decisions/41583-Assembly_AU_Dec_813-838_XXXV_E.pdf

⁷⁰ <https://nettsteder.regjeringen.no/foodfromtheocean>

⁷¹ www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_5ZhsriDEo&t=41s

⁷² www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0M-OQJTTw0&ab_channel=UNNutrition

⁷³ www.fao.org/in-action/program-brazil-fao/news/ver/en/c/1270658

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

⁷⁴ www.fao.org/in-action/program-brazil-fao/news/ver/en/c/1373367

⁷⁵ www.fao.org/in-action/program-brazil-fao/eventos/ver/en/?uid=1394300

⁷⁶ <https://redraes.org/curso-alimentacion-escolar-como-estrategia-educativa-para-una-vida-saludable-edicion-2021>

⁷⁷ <https://redraes.org/red-de-alimentacion-escolar-sostenible-raes-avances-y-compromisos-de-la-america-latina-y-el-caribe-2>

⁷⁸ www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nWqK2pwg7c

⁷⁹ <https://redraes.org/en/events>

47. 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 2021.⁸⁰

48. 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’ process.⁸¹ For example, the Coalition of Action for Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All, launched in May 2022, encourages action across the food supply, food environments, and valuing of food in support of implementing countries’ national pathways.⁸² The School Meals Coalition, launched in November 2021, drives action to improve and 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.⁸³ The Coalition for Aquatic/Blue Foods⁸⁴ is an example of other coalition advancing the Decade’s agenda.

IV. Way forward

49. 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 efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems; (ii) recognize the role and rights of smallholders, 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 forms of malnutrition over the second half of the Decade by 2025 and towards achieving the SDGs by 2030.

50. The Decade’s MTR identified three thematic focus areas that should drive 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.⁸⁵

51. Based on the MTR and other global processes reflected in this report, and the identified thematic focus, the following require intensified action:

- a) Accelerating efforts across the six action areas of the Decade’s Work Programme (*A to F* above) 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 reinforced, 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 for healthy diets in nationally determined contributions to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and adapt agrifood systems to climate change, prioritizing action that addresses the climate crisis and positively impacts nutrition outcomes, guided by the Roadmap to SDG 2 and 1.5, currently under development by FAO and partners.

⁸⁰ www.paho.org/en/events/dietary-guidelines-based-level-food-processing-scientific-evidence-and-implementation

⁸¹ www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit/news/deputy-secretary-generals-closing-press-statement-pre-summit-un-food-systems

⁸² www.fao.org/webcast/home/en/item/5840/icode/

⁸³ <https://schoolmealscoalition.org>

⁸⁴ www.edf.org/media/aquatic-blue-food-coalition-formally-launches-un-ocean-conference

⁸⁵ www.fao.org/fsnforum/activities/consultations/decade-nutrition-priority-actions

- c) 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 institutions⁸⁶.
- d) Increasing advocacy on the need for 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, with a focus on concrete results and effective use of existing policy guidance for long-term sustainable impact, leaving no one behind.

52. Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) Resolution 1989/84⁸⁷ on international decades provides that the implementation of a decade's programme of work should be appraised at the mid-point and at the end of the decade.

53. In keeping with resolution 1989/84, the status of implementation of commitments of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition should be reviewed at the end of the Decade, in an open and participatory process.

54. In this regard, the Decade's Work Programme foresees the convening of open and inclusive dialogues towards the end of the Decade, for reflection on global progress and challenges encountered and identification of potential way forward to continue advancing nutrition beyond 2025.

⁸⁶ www.thelancet.com/series/double-burden-malnutrition

⁸⁷ https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/75597/files/E_RES_1989_84-EN.pdf