Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Strategic Framework 2022–31

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Reviewed Strategic Framework 2022-31

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The FAO Reviewed Strategic Framework 2022-31 builds on the momentum and transformations set out in the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, while adapting to an evolving global context marked by increasing challenges to agrifood systems transformation. It maintains the FAO strategic narrative of supporting the 2030 Agenda through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition*, a *better environment*, and a *better life*, leaving no one behind.

Keeping intact the basic structure of the *four betters*, 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), accelerators and cross cutting themes, the Reviewed Strategic Framework incorporates an updated analysis of global challenges, reflecting how escalating climate impacts, growing geopolitical tensions and market disruptions have exposed fundamental vulnerabilities in globalized agrifood systems. These developments have heightened the urgency of addressing systemic weaknesses while highlighting opportunities for transformative change. The FAO Strategic Framework reinforces alignment with key global initiatives, including integrating insights from the Global Sustainable Development Report 2023 on critical levers for systemic transformation, the UN 2.0 vision of leveraging a "Quintet of Change" towards more agile, diverse, responsive, and impactful UN organizations, and FAO's role as host of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub.

Building on FAO's Corporate Strategic Foresight exercise, the Strategic Framework provides an updated view of critical drivers and triggers for agrifood systems transformation. It pays particular attention to regional variations and implications, recognizing that transformation pathways must be adapted to local contexts while addressing global challenges and also introduces a set of "areas for transformational impact" that could substantially accelerate progress by addressing systemic impediments to achieving results at scale.

The Strategic Framework advances FAO's improved ways of working through several key dimensions. It emphasizes transformative partnerships that harness diverse expertise and resources across sectors and stakeholders, while strengthening FAO's normative work and standard-setting role. The Strategic Framework outlines approaches to innovative funding and financing mechanisms required to bridge investment gaps, alongside strategies for digital transformation and innovation to enhance organizational effectiveness. Additionally, it articulates improved approaches to managing risks and uncertainty in an increasingly complex operating environment.

Throughout, the Strategic Framework reaffirms FAO's commitment to delivering as OneFAO, bringing together its technical expertise, convening power and operational capabilities to support Members in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through agrifood systems transformation. It emphasizes evidence-based, programmatic approaches while maintaining flexibility to adapt to emerging challenges and opportunities.

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Director-General's Foreword

The world stands at a critical juncture in our pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Despite significant efforts, many SDGs remain off track, with around 735 million people still facing hunger. The compounding effects of COVID-19, the climate crisis, conflicts, and economic instability have exposed fundamental weaknesses in our agrifood systems, underlining the need for urgent, collective action.

Without transformative change, we risk a future characterized by persistent food insecurity, degraded resources, and unsustainable economic growth. Yet within these challenges lie opportunities for fundamental transformation.

The reviewed FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 reaffirms FAO's commitment to supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for the Four Betters: better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, leaving no one behind. This vision leverages FAO's unique position as a UN specialized agency with an indispensable global role in normative and standard setting work, while also directly supporting regional, subregional and national partners on the ground.

FAO will continue to leverage the powerful toolbox provided by the Four Betters, 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), accelerators and cross cutting themes to respond to Member demands and meet the emerging challenges and needs affecting the trajectory of critical drivers of agrifood systems identified during the Strategic Framework review. This review has served as an important point of reflection to take stock of progress and recalibrate FAO's response to the significant challenges that we face, to ensure the most efficient, effective and coherent deployment of the Organization's professional and technical expertise. Accordingly, FAO has updated its results framework, which now also includes baselines and milestones under the PPAs to strengthen accountability to Members and better track progress.

Our programmes continue to be guided by the key triggers of change identified in FAO's Corporate Strategic Foresight Exercise, namely improved governance, increased consumer awareness, better income and wealth distribution, and innovation. A set of strategic areas for transformational impact under the Four Betters and 20 PPAs have also been identified, which have the potential to substantially accelerate progress by acting on these key triggers of change.

The Organization is evolving to meet these challenges with improved ways of working. We are strengthening transformative partnerships, maximizing our normative strengths, developing innovative financing mechanisms, and embracing digital transformation. Through initiatives like the Hand-in-Hand platform, the World Food Forum, and the leading role of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, FAO is positioning itself as a modern, efficient organization that catalyses system-wide change.

The path ahead requires trading off short-term gains for long-term sustainability and resilience. But through evidence-based innovation, strengthened partnerships, and our renewed commitment to transformative action, I am confident that FAO can play its pivotal role in charting a course towards agrifood systems that realize their significant potential to contribute to a better future for all, leaving no one behind.

QU Dongyu
Director-General

Introduction

1. This document presents the reviewed FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, which has been updated in the context of recent global developments, global and regional trends and major challenges in the areas of FAO's mandate.

2. As called for in the FAO Basic Texts,[1] since 2010 all of the Organization's work is guided by a Strategic Framework prepared for a period of ten to fifteen years, reviewed every four years, that includes *inter alia* an analysis of the challenges facing food, agriculture and rural development and populations dependent thereon, including consumers; a strategic vision, the goals of Members in areas of FAO's mandate, as well as strategic objectives to be achieved by Members and the international community with support from FAO.

3. The reviewed FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 maintains its strategic narrative of supporting the 2030 Agenda through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition*, a *better environment*, and a *better life*, leaving no one behind.

4. This review incorporates priorities identified by the Regional Conferences and Technical Committees in 2024, guidance by the Programme and Finance Committees, their Joint Meeting and the Council, recommendations from evaluations and audits, and other Governing Body inputs. It takes account of updated Corporate Strategic Foresight analysis of trends and challenges facing agrifood systems, including at the regional level, as well as lessons learned from implementing the Strategic Framework and its results architecture in the period 2022-2024.

5. In undertaking the review, FAO put in place a comprehensive, inclusive process to update its strategic priorities, involving consultations with headquarters units, regions and normative teams. This participatory approach focused on gathering lessons learned from implementation, examining the evolution of external trends and drivers at global and regional levels, diagnosing key issues and gaps, and identifying opportunities to scale up work for increased impact, leveraging FAO's comparative advantages. Trends in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators as well as FAO stakeholder survey data, both reported in the Programme Implementation Report 2022-23, served as critical points of reference. Based on these inputs and guidance received from Members, FAO has updated its results framework as detailed in *Section C* of this document, while keeping intact the basic structure of *four betters*, 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPAs), accelerators and cross-cutting themes.

6. To accelerate progress toward the SDGs, FAO has further prioritized its ongoing work to act more directly on critical drivers and triggers of change identified in the FAO Corporate Strategic Foresight Exercise, and has identified a set of transformative, high-impact work areas with potential to trigger transformational change building on its comparative advantages and mandate, as further described in *Section D: FAO's improved ways of working*.

7. The document contains the following sections:

   A. Global context and possible futures and challenges for food and agriculture

   B. FAO's basic attributes and core functions

   C. FAO's Theory of Change – strategic results framework

   D. FAO's improved ways of working

[1] FAO Basic Texts, Volume II, Section F. Implementation of the IPA regarding the reform of the programming, budgeting and results-based monitoring system, Resolution No. 10/2009 of the Thirty-sixth Session of the Conference - Implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action regarding the Reform of the Programming, Budgeting and Results-based Monitoring System (IPA Actions 3.1 to 3.11).

A. Global context and possible futures and challenges for food and agriculture

Global context

8. Natural disasters, geopolitical and geoeconomic tensions, the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing competition for resources exacerbated by climate impacts have exposed fundamental weaknesses of global agrifood, socioeconomic and environmental systems. This unprecedented situation has exacerbated food insecurity, with the number of undernourished people rising to around 733 million in 2023.[2] The current global context is characterized by increasing income and wealth inequalities, weakened multilateral cooperation, growing pressures on agrifood systems, and weakened bargaining power of workers.

9. In recent years, the world has experienced multiple systemic shocks, including a cost-hunger trap plaguing some regions in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and highly disruptive conflicts affecting key agricultural regions and trade routes. In this context, countries are increasingly rebalancing trade-offs of efficiency through specialization and diversification, seeking greater domestic resilience by reducing import/export dependence and pursuing local reindustrialization. The increasing frequency of climate-related shocks has compounded costs, losses and damage, further narrowing fiscal space to address these challenges, while entrenching income and wealth inequalities. Low- and middle-income countries facing commodity dependence, limited flexibility in spending choices and debt distress are particularly vulnerable to both climate shocks and international economic dynamics.

10. Higher food and energy prices have driven rapid inflation, undermining global progress toward food security and nutrition targets and significantly impacting access to healthy diets, which remain unaffordable for approximately a third of the world's population.[3] Macroeconomic volatility and exchange rate fluctuations have deepened vulnerabilities, particularly in countries with high external debt burdens, further constraining their ability to invest in long-term sustainable development. Labour markets face uncertainty from increasing digitalization and robotization, with potential impacts on employment patterns and income distribution. While some interventions[4] provided a measure of temporary relief to these tensions, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Land Locked Developing Countries (LLDCs) remain particularly exposed to import dependency, supply chain disruptions, natural disasters and extreme weather events.

11. Agrifood systems across regions are affected by rising greenhouse gas emissions and extreme weather events. While vulnerable countries bear a disproportionate burden of climate-related costs, recent years have demonstrated the global nature of climate risks, where even high-income countries are not immune to climate impacts, including severe flooding and other extreme weather events. Investment gaps persist in agrifood systems transformation, and many countries are prioritizing short-term benefits over long-term sustainability. Additionally, as global supply chains become increasingly specialized and digitalized, new challenges emerge. These include concerns regarding market concentration of inputs and outputs, transparency issues, growing digital and technological divides, and international governance for data ownership and control.

[2] FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2024. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024 – Financing to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms*. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cd1254en

[3] FAO. 2022. *The future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation*. The Future of Food and Agriculture, no. 3. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0959en

[4] E.g. the Black Sea Grain Initiative, IMF emergency support, and G20 debt relief.

12. Overall, these dynamics work against creating the enabling environment required to end hunger and move towards more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems. Consequently, negative agrifood systems outcomes persist and many Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are off track.[5]

UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, Global Sustainable Development Report 2023 and Pact for the Future

13. The **2021 UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS)** and the **UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment (UNFSS+2)** were pivotal moments in increasing the awareness and commitment of an unparalleled number of global leaders to food systems transformation as a solution to many of the pressing and interlinked social, economic and environmental challenges facing the world – and as such, a key accelerator for SDG achievement. This renewed sense of urgency recognized the increasing complexity and interconnectedness of issues surrounding food security, health and nutrition, climate change, resilience and conflicts, with follow-up actions initiated by participating Heads of State and Governments, in line with the Secretary General's Call to Action issued at the end of the UNFSS+2.

14. FAO, as host of the **UN Food Systems Coordination Hub**, plays a catalytic role in supporting and enabling the Hub's mission to drive forward the outcomes of the UNFSS+2. This reflects FAO's global mandate and recognized leadership in the UN system as the UN food and agriculture Specialized Agency, with an essential role in advancing food systems transformation. By leveraging the broader UN system, global expertise, coalitions of partners and other stakeholders, the Hub serves as a catalyst and integrator, coordinating systemic and demand-driven support to help countries translate their commitments into effective actions for achieving sustainable food systems by 2030.

15. The **Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2023** identifies five critical levers[6] to drive systemic change towards overall sustainable development. The UN Sustainable Development Group has identified "six transitions",[7] or transformative entry points that can have catalytic and multiplier effects across the SDGs – among which is building sustainable food systems. As emphasized in the GSDR 2023 and reaffirmed by global discourse on sustainable development (UNFSS and UNFSS+2, 2023 SDG Summit, 2024 Summit of the Future), transforming agrifood systems is paramount to achieving the SDGs and catalysing systemic change.

16. While the GSDR levers target overall sustainable development transformation, the triggers for agrifood systems transformation identified in FAO's Strategic Foresight Exercise – (i) institutions and governance, (ii) consumer awareness, (iii) income and wealth distribution, and (iv) innovative technologies and approaches – specifically focus on the changes needed within agrifood systems. The FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 operationalizes both approaches through its results framework and four accelerators, and improved ways of working, strengthening FAO's role as a catalyst for systemic transformations toward sustainable and resilient agrifood systems that contribute to global SDG acceleration.

[5] FAO. 2023. *Tracking progress on food and agriculture-SDG indicators 2023*. Rome

[6] The GSDR five critical levers are: (i) governance; (ii) economy and finance; (iii) individual and collective action; (iv) science and technology; and (v) capacity development.

[7] The six transitions are: (1) food systems; (2) energy access and affordability; (3) digital connectivity; (4) education; (5) jobs and social protection; and (6) climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.

17. The outcomes of the **Pact for the Future (2024)** further reaffirm the need for global solidarity, inclusive multilateralism, and long-term investments in food security and sustainable agriculture, further aligning with FAO's commitment to eradicating hunger and fostering equitable and resilient agrifood systems.

Agrifood systems: recent evolution of their drivers and implications for their future(s)

18. Drawing from various domains (science and innovation, food safety, animal production, systemic approaches to agriculture etc.) and the large body of knowledge and experience of the Organization, the report The future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation, examined the set of complex and interlinked trends and events mentioned above, along with their possible implications for the future of agrifood systems.

19. *Table 1* shows the 18 drivers[8] (driving forces) of agrifood systems identified through the FAO Corporate Strategic Foresight Exercise, based on whose analysis, a host of signals of possible futures were categorized and portrayed in four plausible alternative scenarios for the future of agrifood systems, as described in *Annex 1*.

20. It is important to note that, of the 18 drivers, some are directly influenced by actors from within the agrifood systems themselves, while many others pertain to the broader socioeconomic, environmental, political, and financial systems within which agrifood systems operate. Through the systemic linkages between agrifood and these broader systems, all key drivers collectively determine the functioning and outcomes of agrifood systems in terms of food security, income generation, environmental impacts, etc.

21. FAO has recently undertaken a review of these drivers whose results reveal that most of the currently observed trends and dynamics signal an increasing plausibility of the most unfavourable scenarios, but also detected some positive signals in societies and global institutions. Selected positive and negative signals of possible futures are summarized against each of the 18 Drivers in *Annex 2.*

[8] A thorough analysis of the 18 Drivers and the ensuing scenarios is provided in the FAO Flagship report *The future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation*. The Future of Food and Agriculture, no. 3. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cc0959en. The 18 Drivers constitute the analytical backbone of FAO's recent Corporate Strategic Foresight exercise.

Table 1: The 18 Drivers of agrifood systems[9]

Drivers of agrifood systems
1. **Population dynamics and urbanization**, which are expected to increase and change food demand.
2. **Economic growth, structural transformation and macro-economic outlook**, which are not always delivering the expected results in terms of inclusive economic transformation of societies.
3. **Cross-country interdependencies**, which tie together agrifood systems globally.
4. **Big data generation, control, use and ownership**, which enable real-time innovative technologies and decision-making, also in agriculture.
5. **Geopolitical instability and increasing conflicts**, which include resource- and energy-based conflicts.
6. **Uncertainties**, which materialize in sudden occurrences of events in many occasions impossible to predict.
7. **Rural and urban poverty**, with a high proportion of rural people living in poverty or extreme poverty.
8. **Inequalities**, characterized by high income inequality and inequalities in job opportunities, in gender, access to assets, basic services and inequitable fiscal burden.
9. **Food prices**, which are in real terms lower than in the 70's but higher than in the 80's and 90's despite the fact that they fail to capture the full social and environmental costs of food.
10. **Innovation and science** including more innovative technologies (including biotechnologies and digitalization) and systemic approaches (inter alia agroecology, and conservation and organic agriculture).
11. **Public investment in agrifood systems**, which is often insufficient.
12. **Capital/information intensity of production**, which is increasing due to mechanization and digitalization of production, including in food and agriculture.
13. **Market concentration of food and agricultural input and output**, which represents a challenge for the resilience and equitability of agrifood systems.
14. **Consumption and nutrition patterns**, resulting from behavioural change of consumers which are increasingly being asked to make complex choices about the nutritional content and safety of what they eat and where shifting consumer demand in the direction of healthier eating patterns is key.
15. **Scarcity and degradation of natural resources**, including land, water, biodiversity, soil.
16. **Epidemics and degradation of ecosystems**, which may increase in the future due to rising trends in transboundary plant pests and diseases, agriculture encroaching in wild areas and forests, antimicrobial resistance, the increasing production and consumption of animal products.
17. **Climate change**, including weather extremes and variability of temperatures and rainfall patterns, which is already affecting agrifood systems and natural resources and is expected to accelerate hunger and poverty in rural areas.
18. **Aquatic-based economic sectors**, where the development of economic activities related to the fisheries and aquaculture sector is increasing globally, and arising trade-offs require sound policymaking integrating technical, social and economic solutions, principles of ecosystem restoration of production systems, and cross-sectoral stakeholder involvement in the context of transformative agrifood systems.

[9] Sources: Based on FAO. 2021. FAO *Strategic Framework 2022-31.* Rome, FAO, 2022. *The future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation*. Rome, the FAO FOFA Data Dashboard and Regional Overarching Strategic Foresight Reports, (unpublished, forthcoming) and specific quoted references.

22. The analysis of drivers reveals significant challenges for achieving sustainable and resilient agrifood systems, given the complex interactions between socioeconomic and environmental systems. Of particular concern is how these choices affect the distribution of benefits from technological advancement and economic growth. The evolution of these drivers is influenced by choices made by governments, citizens, companies and other actors which shape policies, investments and market structures.

Regional signals and possible future scenarios

23. The 18 drivers of agrifood systems are all of global importance, while some appear particularly significant at the regional level as emerged during the FAO Regional Strategic Foresight Exercises recently undertaken. The analysis of regional trends and related signals of possible regional futures allows for a more nuanced understanding of possible futures by capturing regional specificities, diagnosing challenges that have impeded progress, and identifying priority areas for action or 'triggers for transformation' along with related strategic options to activate them. Preliminary findings are briefly summarized in *Annex 4.*

Game-changing triggers for transformation

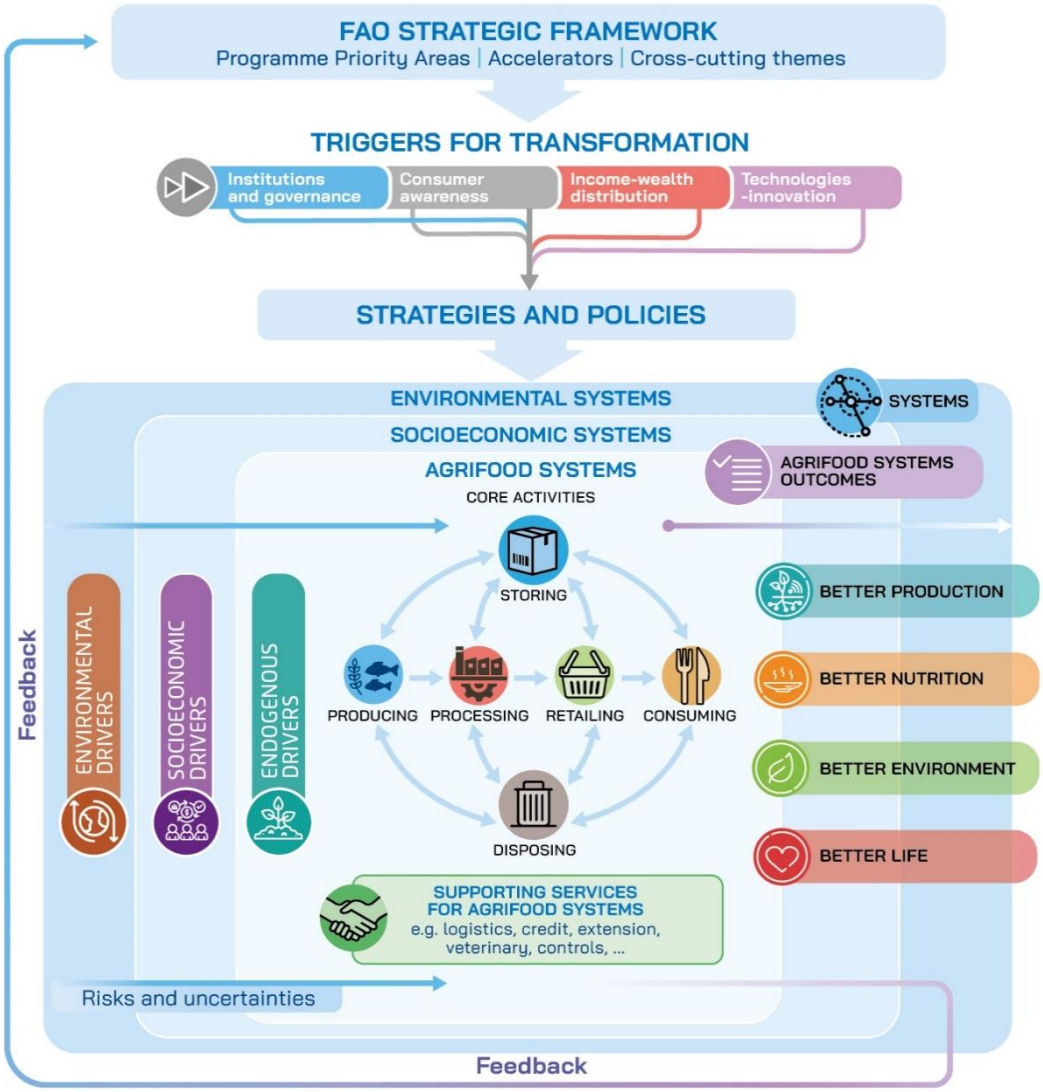
24. The above analysis paints a concerning picture of the current trajectory of agrifood systems globally and across regions. The interplay of drivers point toward potentially unsustainable futures. To avert such outcomes and move toward more sustainable and resilient pathways, bold transformative changes are urgently needed.

25. As noted in *Section A*, the Corporate Strategic Foresight Exercise has identified four key triggers for transformation: (i) institutions and governance; (ii) consumer and citizen awareness; (iii) income and wealth distribution; and (iv) innovative technologies and approaches. These triggers are considered effective starting points – or boosters of transformative processes – to move away from the currently observed unfavorable macro-level trends in socioeconomic, environmental and agrifood systems. They interact to cause broad-spectrum impacts on agrifood systems by simultaneously influencing multiple drivers and, if properly activated, help redirect agrifood systems towards the more desirable futures. The four triggers are further described in *Annex 3.*

26. Through the reviewed FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31 and its Programme Priority Areas, accelerators and cross-cutting themes, FAO aims to support stakeholders to more purposefully activate these triggers. In doing so, Members can more effectively identify strategic options, design development strategies and implement policies, practices and investments that help steer agrifood, socioeconomic and environmental systems towards the *four betters*.

27. *Figure 1* provides an overall depiction of agrifood systems in the broader socioeconomic and environmental systems within which they operate, along with their drivers and triggers as identified in the FAO Corporate Strategic Foresight Exercise. It illustrates how the FAO Strategic Framework leverages the four key triggers of transformation towards the positive agrifood systems outcomes represented by the *four betters*.

Figure 1: The FAO Strategic Framework to "trigger the triggers" for transformation[10]



28. The four triggers of transformation present specific challenges, as well as opportunities for FAO to support Members in activating these triggers through the Programme Priority Areas and improved ways of working:

a) *Institutions and governance*: A critical challenge lies in strengthening multilateral institutions to effectively govern global phenomena such as climate change, data ownership, cross-border capital flows, and international migration. An opportunity lies in establishing trade policies and incentive mechanisms for countries implementing stronger environmental and social regulations, thereby protecting them from countries practicing more lax standards and bringing underpriced agricultural commodities to market.

b) *Consumer awareness*: Although consumers increasingly demand sustainable and healthy food, translating this demand into transformative market signals remains challenging. Opportunities exist to harness growing environmental and health consciousness, particularly among youth, to drive systemic change in production practices. However, this requires addressing information asymmetries and ensuring transparency throughout value chains.

[10] *Source:* Adapted from: FAO, 2022. The future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation, Rome. Based on: Foresight for Food (F4F) Food systems model.

c) *Income and wealth distribution*: A significant opportunity lies in producing and retaining more value-added revenue within lower-middle income countries through expanded post-harvest processing, value chain development and local agribusiness growth and integration into global value chains. This requires strengthening local capacities, improving access to finance and technology, and developing supportive policies and infrastructure. Challenges include overcoming entrenched power dynamics in global value chains, enhancing the negotiating power of local actors and governments, and curbing illicit financial outflows that hinder local investment, capital accumulation and multiplier effects.

d) *Innovative technologies and approaches*: Technological advances offer promising solutions for sustainable agrifood systems but ensuring equitable access and avoiding further technological divides is critical. Combining traditional knowledge with innovations presents significant opportunities. The challenge lies in balancing innovation with inclusivity and environmental sustainability.

29. Activating these triggers successfully requires examining development patterns beyond agricultural production to ensure sustainable food security and resilient livelihoods. This involves enabling transformative investments, fostering widespread research and development, and building partnerships that democratize innovations and their governance.

30. In this context, FAO must be fit for purpose to support Members as a solidly structured independent global Organization with a deep understanding of worldwide, regional and local agrifood systems dynamics and overarching and thematic strategic foresight skills to identify and support transformative approaches at all levels. The following sections describe how the Organization intends to accomplish this.

B. FAO's basic attributes and core functions

31. FAO was created as a global knowledge Organization, and plays an indispensable role in the fields of food and agriculture and agrifood systems. The Organization's functions relating to nutrition, food and agriculture are described in its Constitution and enable it to support Members' aims of "*…raising levels of nutrition and standards of living of the peoples under their respective jurisdictions; securing improvements in the efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products; bettering the condition of rural populations; and thus contributing towards an expanding world economy and ensuring humanity's freedom from hunger*".[11]

32. The magnitude of global challenges facing food and agriculture, and the approach envisaged in the 2030 Agenda clearly suggest that these issues cannot be addressed by FAO alone. The Organization's future work thus needs to be considered in light of the key role it can play in influencing the transformation of agrifood systems,[12] through its basic attributes and the critical means of action, leveraging on its comparative advantages.

FAO's basic attributes

33. The most relevant basic attributes and strengths of an organization are those that are intrinsic and unique to it, and which define its characteristics. Intrinsic and unique to FAO are that:[13]

a) It is the United Nations specialized agency in food and agriculture, with a comprehensive mandate from its Members to work globally on all aspects of food and agriculture (including fisheries, forestry and natural resources' management), food security and nutrition across the humanitarian-development continuum.

b) Its intergovernmental status and neutrality and the authority to provide a neutral platform where nations can call on each other for dialogue and knowledge exchange.

c) It has the authority to request any Member to submit information relating to the purpose of the Organization.

d) Its Regular Budget is derived from assessed contributions that provide a minimum guaranteed amount of resources that can be committed for priority activities agreed upon by Members in the Governing Bodies, complemented by voluntary contributions to leverage FAO's knowledge and enhance outreach.

e) Its staff with a broad range of expertise across its areas of mandate working in an interdisciplinary fashion.

f) Its country-level presence, supported by regional and global teams of experts, to respond to demands articulated by countries and regions.

[11] FAO Basic Texts, Section A, Constitution

[12] FAO defines agrifood systems as all the interconnected activities and actors involved in getting food from field to fork. This broad definition encompasses everything from agricultural production and processing to distribution, consumption, and waste management. It also highlights the critical role of economic, social, and environmental factors in shaping how food reaches our plates.

[13] C 2017/7 Rev. 1, paragraph 108

Core functions

34. Core functions are the critical means of action employed by FAO to achieve results. They represent the *types* of interventions that draw on FAO's comparative advantages and which the Organization will prioritize in implementing its Programme of Work. FAO is expected to play a lead, but not necessarily exclusive role in work of this nature, working with partners and intensifying efforts to develop and operationalize strategic partnerships. The FAO core functions are to:

1. *Assemble, analyse, monitor and improve access to data and information*, in areas related to FAO's mandate, working in concert with countries and other development partners to identify consumer drivers, policy and investment gaps, promote common platforms and use emerging technological tools.
2. *Facilitate and support countries and other partners in the development and implementation of normative and standard setting instruments* for more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems, such as international agreements, codes of conduct, technical standards and related technologies, digital tools, good practices and others.
3. *Facilitate, promote and support agrifood systems policy dialogue at global, regional and country levels*, including explicit recognition and consideration of trade-offs.
4. *Support institutions at all levels, including through capacity development, to prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate evidence-based policies and programmes,* in the areas of FAO's mandate*, and leverage investments*.
5. *Facilitate partnerships and coalitions* for more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems that address inequalities and leave no one behind, including with governments, development partners, civil society organizations and the private sector.
6. *Advise and support activities that assemble, disseminate and improve the uptake of knowledge, technologies and good practices* in the areas of FAO's mandate.
7. *Advocate and communicate at national, regional and global levels,* including to consumers, leveraging the Organization's knowledge, data, position as UN specialized agency, and trusted role as neutral broker.

C. FAO's Theory of Change – strategic results framework

35. As called for in the Basic Texts,[14] since 2010, all of the Organization's work is guided by a Strategic Framework that sets out FAO's agenda for a period of ten to fifteen years, reviewed every four years. Defined by FAO's *vision* and the three Global Goals of Members, the Strategic Framework 2022-31 is firmly anchored in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and articulates how the Organization contributes to transformative and structural changes. It provides for the formulation and execution of a programmatic approach fit for tackling the SDGs, and presents a results framework shaped to ensure that its contribution to development processes at country, regional and global level best leverage its comparative advantage as a UN specialized agency.

36. In addition, as shown in *Section D* it also describes FAO's improved ways of working, including the programmatic approach and how FAO works as One and with partners to promote sustainable results and maximum impact.

FAO's vision and the three Global Goals of Members

37. The Strategic Framework is guided by FAO's vision and the three Global Goals of Members, which articulate the ultimate objectives that countries aim to achieve in areas of FAO's mandate.

38. **FAO's vision**: *A world free from hunger and malnutrition where food and agriculture contribute to improving the living standards of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner.*

39. The three **Global Goals** of Members:

1. eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, progressively ensuring a world in which people at all times have sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life;
2. elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all, with increased food production, enhanced rural development and sustainable livelihoods; and
3. sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, including land, water, air, climate and genetic resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

The FAO strategic narrative and the Sustainable Development Goals

40. The strategic narrative encapsulates FAO's purpose and the pathway to achieving its goals. It captures FAO's agrifood systems approach to supporting the 2030 Agenda, which enables understanding and addressing the complexities of the social, economic and environmental development dimensions simultaneously. The agrifood system approach provides for holistic strategies to tackle the interconnected challenges of improving food security, nutrition and livelihoods, enhancing production while mitigating and adapting to climate change and its impacts, and maintaining and restoring biodiversity and ecosystems.

[14] FAO Basic Texts, Volume II, Section F. Implementation of the IPA regarding the reform of the programming, budgeting and results-based monitoring system, Resolution No. 10/2009 of the Thirty-sixth Session of the Conference - Implementation of the Immediate Plan of Action regarding the Reform of the Programming, Budgeting and Results-based Monitoring System (IPA Actions 3.1 to 3.11).

The four betters

41. The FAO **strategic narrative** is: supporting the 2030 Agenda through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition,* a *better environment,* and a *better life*, leaving no one behind.

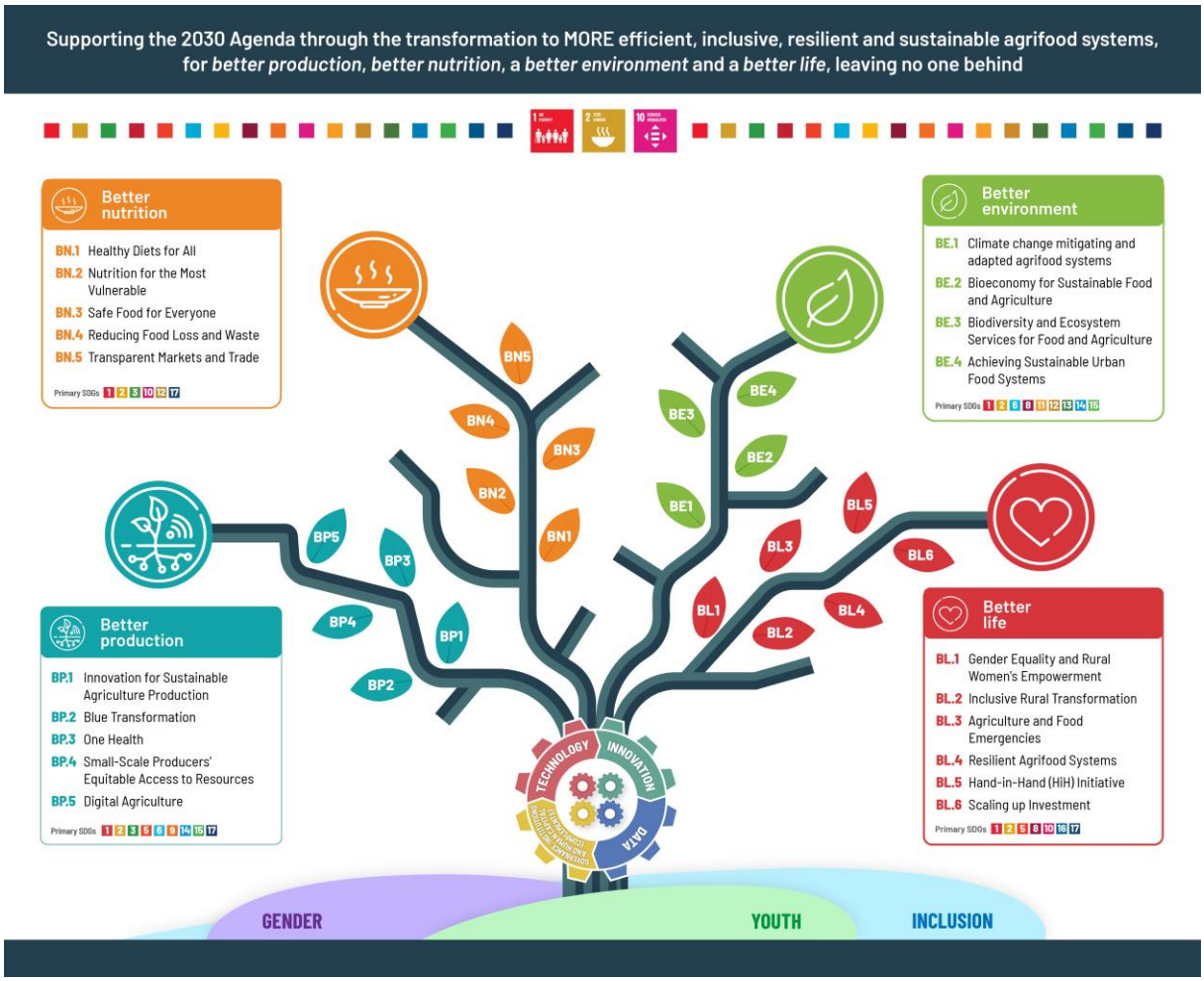
42. The SDGs are central in FAO's overall theory of change. Key SDGs and their indicators, including all indicators for which FAO is custodian or contributing agency, promote focus, track progress and express aspirations at the level of medium/long-term outcome/impact and three **guiding SDGs**, SDG 1 (No poverty), SDG 2 (Zero hunger) and SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities), help steer the Organization in assessing and balancing trade-offs. By putting the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs at the centre of the Strategic Framework, while acknowledging the interconnectivity of the SDGs and the importance of all SDGs in achieving FAO's overall vision, FAO uses a common language to articulate its mandated targets and respective results across all Organizational levels.

43. Corporate thematic strategies, policies and action plans in key cross-cutting areas of work, developed through extensive and inclusive consultation processes, further guide the Organization in actively informing priorities and programme decisions. They ensure that, in implementing the Strategic Framework 2022-31, FAO leverages its comparative advantage in responding to challenges in agrifood systems and focusing efforts to maximize impacts.

The results chain

44. FAO will implement its Strategic Framework and deliver results against its results framework through programmes around the *four betters*, using the systems approach to leverage synergies and minimize trade-offs in achieving the SDGs. As shown in *Figure 2*, the results architecture comprises a set of elements that establish a clear causal results hierarchy, complemented by elements to focus and enable the Organization's work, and accelerate impacts.

Figure 2: FAO strategic results framework



The four betters

45. The *four betters* describe the aspirational long-term development impacts, derived from SDGs, to be achieved by Members and the international community with support from FAO. They represent an organizing principle for how FAO intends to support achievement of the 2030 Agenda and encourage a strategic and systems-oriented approach, through which FAO focuses on profiling agriculture beyond production and macro-economic purposes to ensure food security and resilient livelihoods, promote innovations, and better catalyse investment and partnerships.

Programme Priority Areas

46. Programme Priority Areas represent multidisciplinary themes that articulate FAO's value-added supporting medium-term outcomes and associated SDG targets, embedding the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability. They describe how FAO will bring together the breadth and depth of its knowledge and technical expertise to contribute to addressing critical gaps and put in place the conditions needed to drive the changes in the enabling policy, legislative

and/or institutional environment that will ultimately contribute to the achievement of the selected SDG targets.

47. The Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) respond directly to the issues and challenges emanating from the Corporate Strategic Foresight Exercise, the Regional Conferences, the Technical Committees, and other formal and informal consultation processes. They are strongly anchored in one *better* but contribute to all, embodying the interconnectedness and indivisibility of the SDGs.

48. The 20 Programme Priority Areas, are outlined in *Table 2*. A more detailed presentation of the PPAs and their results frameworks is provided in the Medium Term Plan 2026-29 and Programme of Work and Budget 2026-27, including the main gaps being addressed, how these relate to SDG targets and indicators, how FAO will leverage the accelerators to fast-track progress, key thematic components, including normative aspects and those relating to FAO's core functions, and key risks and trade-offs.

Table 2: 20 Programme Priority Areas (PPAs)

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
BETTER PRODUCTION	***Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns, through efficient and inclusive food and agriculture supply chains at local, regional and global level, ensuring resilient and sustainable agrifood systems in a changing climate and environment***	
BP1: Innovation for Sustainable Agriculture Production	Sustainable crop, livestock and forestry production systems that are productive, resilient, innovative, competitive and inclusive –and create integrated entrepreneurial and business opportunities – supported through fostering innovation, technologies and an enabling environment including policies and strategies. · Innovation for more sustainable, productive and inclusive agricultural production systems, including agricultural practices and inputs. · Sustainable transformation support through integration, demonstration, validation, dissemination and up-scaling of innovations, focusing on pro-poor value chain actor support. · Sustainable policies for an enabling environment: policy formulation and enabling environments for implementation of sustainable agriculture innovation. · Enhance crop production and protection systems (e.g. tropical, drylands and urban/peri-urban agriculture) with high quality, productivity, efficiency and diversity through sustainable innovation and technologies. · Improve resource use efficiency in livestock (including insect) production and health through sustainable agricultural innovations. · Optimize the sustainable use of forests for agricultural productivity and income generation. · Efficient and sustainable use of land, soil and water resources for climate-resilient and inclusive agrifood systems.	2.3, 2.4, 6.4 9.5, 15.2

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
BP2: Blue Transformation	More efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable aquatic food systems promoted through improved policies and programmes for integrated science-based management, technological innovation and private-sector engagement. · Support a growing contribution of sustainable aquaculture to global food security and poverty eradication. · Build transformative and innovative fisheries management systems through an ecosystem approach to fisheries that deliver healthy stocks and secure livelihoods at all scales, applying them particularly in data-poor or vulnerable regions. · Upgrade aquatic food value chains to reduce loss and waste, add value, facilitate regional and global market access, promote transparency, inclusivity, accessibility and affordability of aquatic foods.	2.1, 2.2 14.2, 14.4, 14.6, 14.7, 14.b, 14.c
BP3: One Health	National, regional and global animal, aquaculture, plant, forest and ecosystem health enhanced through improved systems-based One Health approaches and capacities for pest and disease prevention, early warning, and management of national and global health threats, including chemicals, pesticides, invasive alien species, AMR, and other threats to biodiversity. · Integrated forecasting and early warning systems, biosecurity and risk management of biological threats, including animal and plant pests and diseases (APPDs) to improve agrifood health systems performance, including in sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards for better trade, food safety and food security. · Enhance capacity for prevention, preparedness and response to future pandemic threats and other health challenges to agrifood systems. · Strengthen AMR management. · Enhance country-level One Health implementation, capacities and policies to support global health and food security. · Mainstream environmental considerations – including biodiversity, pollution control, agrochemical management, soil and water health, wildlife management and ecosystem health – into the One Health approach.	1.5 3.d 15.8

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR)

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
BP4: Small-Scale Producers' Equitable Access to Resources	Enhanced equitable access of small-scale producers to natural resources, markets, services, information, education, technology and innovation, and credit and financial services ensured through improved policies, strategies and programmes, with emphasis on the engagement of women, youth and other groups in situations of vulnerability. · Promote secure tenure rights and facilitate equitable access to natural resources, with emphasis on land, water bodies, genetic resources, fish, forests and grazing lands. · Promote equitable access to and sustainable management of productive resources, including ownership and governance over resources, services and infrastructure for production and commercialization. · Strengthen data and analysis on and with small-scale producers and their organizations, through agricultural censuses, surveys, registries, geospatial data, guide policies and monitor impacts. · Equitable access to extension, information, services and training, technology and innovations, digitalization, producer-led knowledge generation, peer-to-peer advisory systems, best practices including climate change adaptation and mitigation, and market participation. · Increase access to social protection, enhance synergies between productive sectors (including agriculture, fisheries and forestry) and social policies and interventions; and support small-scale producers in managing risks. · Advocate for responsible investment, trade and markets, promote international instruments and guidelines to secure access and empower small-scale producers in all aspects of agrifood systems, and support implementation through public policies and frameworks. · Respect and promote Indigenous Peoples' agrifood systems. · Strengthen producers' collective action, promote inclusion, including into biodiversity and climate change agendas, emphasizing the key role of good governance of land and natural resource tenure.	1.3, 1.4 2.3, 6.b 9.3, 14.b

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
BP5: Digital Agriculture	Accessible digital information and communications technologies (ICT) to enhance market opportunities, productivity and resilience integrated into agrifood systems policies and programmes, with particular focus on ensuring affordable and equitable access of poor and vulnerable rural communities. · Increase the access, amount, timeliness and quality of digital solutions (data, information, knowledge and technology) available to the poor. · Promote digital learning, which itself enhances technology adoption among farmers. · Increase the transformative and innovative use of digital technologies to facilitate access to financial services and increase resilience. · Develop a comprehensive taxonomy and a shared framework for innovation in digital agriculture, utilizing data and technology to create a digital agriculture platform. · Increase investments in early-stage digital agriculture projects and innovations. · Invest in building and supporting local digital innovation ecosystems.	1.4, 5.b 9.c, 17.8
BETTER NUTRITION	***End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition in all its forms including promoting nutritious food and increasing access to healthy diets***	
BN1: Healthy Diets for All	The right to adequate food realized, and the transition of agrifood systems towards healthy diets for national populations, and towards sustainability, prioritized in integrated institutional, policy and legal environments that ensure and incentivize the engagement of actors across agrifood systems, with special emphasis on consumers and the private sector. · Support agrifood system reforms for improving access to, and affordability and practice of healthy diets from sustainable and resilient agrifood systems with special consideration of climate and biodiversity. · Influence consumer desire for healthy diets. · Engage food system actors, in particular the private sector, to produce, process, label and market nutritious foods sustainably. · Shape the policies, strategies and legislations, and support institutional coordination and programmes to mainstream nutrition and healthy diets across sector policies. · Support the education, information, capacities and awareness-raising of stakeholders and consumers.	1.3 2.1 2.2, 3.4 12.8

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
BN2: Nutrition for the Most Vulnerable	Identifying and ending food insecurity and malnutrition for the individuals with most vulnerability in all contexts made the specific focus of targeted policies, strategies and programmes developed and implemented by countries. · Enhance nutrition in emergency and resilience agriculture responses to prevent child wasting in food crises contexts as part of FAO's commitment to the UN joint Global Action Plan on Child Wasting. · Scale up implementation of school food and nutrition approaches in non-food crises contexts: this includes the implementation of a holistic approach with a right-to-food lens where the four synergistic pillars (procurement, food environments, policies, and food and nutrition education) are integrated in the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these programmes. · Enhance nutrition impact of social protection instruments in non-food crises contexts by developing culturally appropriate, locally produced food-based solutions and increase access and consumption of safe and nutritious food by consumers in greatest vulnerability through cash transfers, food vouchers, subsidized food, child and family subsidies, and food transfers (where appropriate). · Support the design of agrifood system pathways to enable access and consumption of healthier diets among individuals in greatest vulnerability, including developing contextually appropriate, age-specific dietary recommendations to address their nutritional requirements.	1.3 2.1, 2.2 3.1, 3.2
BN3: Safe Food for Everyone	Integrated, multisectoral food-safety policies and legislation across national agrifood systems adopted and implemented by governments, and capacities and awareness of value chain operators and consumers enhanced. · Strengthen the development and adoption of the Codex Alimentarius Commission's food safety and quality standards to protect the health of consumers, ensure fair practices in the food trade and address emerging food-safety challenges by adapting and developing standards accordingly. · Strengthen food-safety governance to create robust regulatory frameworks and effective national food-control systems to protect consumers and reduce food loss and waste; and proactively identify and address emerging risks in food-safety governance.	2.1, 2.2, 3.2

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
	· Bridge the gap between science and practice by translating scientific findings into practical guidance and training to ensure food-safety measures are based on the latest research; and forecast future scientific advancements to integrate them into food-safety practices. · Enhance the food-safety capacity of value chain operators by providing training and guidance to ensure food safety throughout the entire food system, from producers to retailers; and prepare value-chain operators for future food-safety challenges through continuous education and innovation.	
BN4: Reducing Food Loss and Waste	Clear, specific and contextualized roadmaps to prompt and enable all actors in the food supply chain, the food environment and at consumer level to reduce FLW put in place and implemented by governments and intergovernmental organizations. · Data deficit and SDG 12.3: Address the data gap for SDG 12.3 through custodianship of the Food Loss Index (FLI), strengthening capacities for food loss measurement and the FLI, modelling estimates for SDG reporting, generating data from case studies and crowdsourcing, and gathering evidence on FLW impacts. · Policies and strategies: Develop context-specific policies, strategies, legislation and regulatory frameworks using participatory approaches and the Voluntary Code of Conduct for FLW Reduction; promote holistic and systemic strategies that consider environmental, social and economic aspects. · Technical solutions: Partner with small-scale producers and local stakeholders to design and implement science-based technical solutions for food loss reduction in crop, livestock and fisheries sectors, support reduction of food waste in high-value commodities, and share knowledge through the Technical Platform for Measurement and Reduction of FLW. · Capacity Building: Strengthen human capital through training on climate-smart, nutrition-sensitive and inclusive approaches for food loss reduction in crop, livestock and fisheries sectors, linking with academic institutions and exchange programmes, and support consumer education leveraging behavioural sciences. · Awareness and advocacy: Enhance global and national awareness campaigns, support the International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste, and organize high-level advocacy events.	2.1, 2.2 12.3

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
	· Global coordination and partnerships: Foster collaboration and information sharing globally, support coalitions such as the UN Forum on Sustainability Standards (UNFSS) Food is Never Waste Coalition, strengthen networks and facilitate partnerships.	
BN5: Transparent Markets and Trade	Improved market transparency and equitable participation in markets, global value chains and international trade achieved through better information and analysis, policy coordination and human and institutional capacities supporting evidence-based decision making. · Provide up-to-date and neutral information and analyses – as global public goods – to enhance food market transparency and inform policy responses to crises. · Establish market intelligence and early warning systems at country and regional levels to collect and analyse market and trade data. · Assist countries in developing human capital and institutional capacities for formulating, negotiating and implementing multilateral and regional trade agreements. · Support innovative policy and technical approaches, and novel business models promoting and facilitating the integration of small-scale actors into markets and value chains. · Strengthen multistakeholder regional networks and partnerships, including with the private sector, to advance regulatory cooperation on trade facilitation measures, including on issues related to sanitation and phytosanitation (SPS), and promote trade. · Promote the adoption of ICT and digital solutions to simplify trade procedures, facilitate market integration and increase the potential for consumers and small-scale actors to reap the benefits from trade.	2.b, 2.c 10.a 17.11
BETTER ENVIRONMENT	***Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial and marine ecosystems and combat climate change (reduce, reuse, recycle, residual management) through more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems***	
BE1: Climate Change Mitigating and Adapted Agrifood Systems	Sustainable and just transformation of agrifood systems enabled through the implementation of agricultural practices, policies and programmes aimed at strengthened climate resilience, adaptation and mitigation and addressing climate-related loss and damage. · Enhance policy support for the consideration and implementation of agrifood solutions for climate action.	2.4, 6.4 13.2, 13.a, 13.b, 14.3

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
	· Enhance evidence and science-based analysis and assessments in support of climate policies and practices. · Facilitate access to climate finance targeting agrifood systems. · Strengthen the coordination and delivery of FAO's work on climate change action and finance.	
BE2: Bioeconomy for Sustainable Food and Agriculture	A sustainable bioeconomy that balances economic value, social welfare, food security and nutrition with environmental sustainability promoted through formulation and implementation of coherent evidence-based policies and practices in micro and macro environments, using technological, organizational and social innovations. · Enhance access to data, information and knowledge to help address the size, trade-offs and potential of bioeconomy for sustainable agrifood systems. · Forge partnerships between governments, development partners, civil society, research institutions, the private sector and other stakeholders at global, regional and national levels on bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture. · Enhance policy coherence and integrate bioeconomy in national development agendas. · Deploy bioeconomy innovations on the ground through innovative financial mechanisms using programmatic approaches with a focus on pollution prevention and reduction along value chains, including plastic pollution, preventing and reducing food loss and waste, and urban systems.	8.4, 12.2, 12.4, 12.5
BE3: Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Food and Agriculture	Biodiversity for food and agriculture maintained and sustainable use, conservation and restoration of marine, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems, and their services, promoted through adoption of targeted policies and practices. · Maintain and restore biodiversity for food and agriculture. · Ensure the sustainable use and conservation of natural resources for food and livelihoods. · Transform agrifood systems to prevent further loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystems. · Restore degraded marine and terrestrial ecosystems to increase food and agricultural productivity and enhance rural livelihoods. · Support countries' efforts to mobilize finance to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem restoration in national planning and implementation, aligned with the Global Biodiversity Framework and the principles of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.	2.5, 6.6 14.4 15.1, 15.3, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
	· Develop guidance and enhance advocacy and action on biodiversity mainstreaming and ecosystem restoration, including engagement of small-scale producers, Indigenous Peoples and local communities.	
BE4: Achieving Sustainable Urban Food Systems	More efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable urban and peri-urban agrifood systems transformation that addresses urban poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition, unhealthy diets and climate change while creating employment and catalyses inclusive and sustainable rural transformation while safeguarding the underlying natural resources base; promoted through the adoption of supportive policies, programmes, mutually reinforcing actions and investments that strengthen connections between urban, peri-urban and rural, national and global levels. · Support better understanding of the drivers and structure of urban agrifood systems including inequality in access to food; food environment and food supply chain; rural–urban linkages and territorial dimensions; and risks and vulnerabilities to shocks and stresses. · Strengthen capacities of local and national governments and the wide ecosystem of partners for integrated implementation of actions at the urban level through a systems approach, connecting urban, rural, national regional and global spheres of action. · Facilitate the establishment of food and nutrition governance and coordination mechanisms (such as Food Policy Councils). · Align urban and national policies through inclusive, cross-sector, and multilevel governance to ensure a complementary approach and achieve synergistic, multi-outcome solutions; provide technical support for taking a systems approach through urban-level entry points with potential for co-benefits across the *four betters*, including urban and peri-urban agriculture, urban markets, consumers and food environments, food public procurement, food loss and waste reduction and management, bioeconomy, and urban forestry and green spaces, applying gender- transformative approaches. · Support the development of infrastructure for South–South and triangular cooperation and learning between local governments and between local and national governments.	1.1 2.1, 11.a 12.1

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
BETTER LIFE	***Promote inclusive economic growth by reducing inequalities (urban/rural areas, rich/poor countries, men/women)***	
BL1: Gender equality and rural women's empowerment	Women's equal rights, access to and control over resources, services, technologies, institutions, economic opportunities and decision-making ensured, and discriminatory laws and practices eliminated, through gender-responsive and gender-transformative policies, strategies, programmes and legal frameworks. · Strengthen women's voice and decision-making power. · Ensure equal rights over natural and productive resources. · Facilitate rural women's access to market services and employment. · Promote policies, approaches and technologies to reduce and address women's work burden and unpaid care and domestic work. · Promote the uptake and scale-up of gender-transformative approaches in agrifood systems.	2.3, 5.4 5.a, 5.c
BL2: Inclusive rural transformation	Inclusive transformation and revitalization of rural areas ensuring equal participation of and benefits to poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups accelerated through implementation of targeted policies, strategies and programmes. · Strengthen countries' capacities to design and implement rural and territorial development policies and programmes. · Empower rural people and communities to undertake collective action to shape and take ownership over rural transformation and climate-change decision making, increase accountability and address power imbalances. · Support the recognition of rural people's bundle of rights. · Increase access of rural people, particularly women and youth, to natural resources, tenure rights and socioeconomic assets and services. · Facilitate income diversification and decent work. · Promote more inclusive and sustainable agrifood value chains and investments. · Strengthen and expand awareness of and access to social protection.	1.1 8.3, 8.5, 10.1, 10.2, 10.7

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
BL3: Agriculture and food emergencies	Affected populations facing or at risk of acute food insecurity provided with urgent livelihood, food security and nutrition assistance and equipped with capacities to better manage the impact of multiple shocks and stresses, through the implementation of technical, durable solutions in line with the humanitarian–development–peace nexus (HDPN) approach. · Enhance integrated multihazards monitoring, forecasting and early warning systems. · Develop preparedness plans, measures and tools to better manage the impact of context-relevant shocks and stresses. · Inclusive and equitable anticipatory action built on forecasting information to mitigate the imminent impacts of context-relevant shocks and stresses. · Effective emergency response and recovery interventions to save agriculture and food-based livelihoods of affected populations in food crisis contexts that contribute to addressing root causes of risks and vulnerabilities in line with the HDPN approach. · Conflict-sensitive approaches contributing to sustained peace and conflict prevention at local level in humanitarian contexts. · Strengthen social protection systems to deliver impact management and emergency assistance to at-risk and vulnerable populations before, during and after the impact of shocks and stresses.	1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 16.1
BL4: Resilient agrifood systems	Resilience of agrifood systems and livelihoods of the most vulnerable to socioeconomic and environmental shocks and stresses strengthened through improved multirisk management capacities at the micro-, meso- and macroeconomic levels. · Measure and understand multiple risks and resilience within and across sectors and levels, spanning from household and community to value chain and broader systemic levels, by improving and mainstreaming methods and access to data to inform decision making. · Assess, design and promote risk and vulnerability reduction measures that contribute to enhanced resilience within and across sectors throughout agrifood systems. · Enhance the development and operationalization of multirisk governance frameworks, policies, strategies plans, budgets and coordination mechanisms	1.3, 1.5 2.4

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
BL5: Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Initiative	Sustainable agrifood systems transformation and rural development accelerated through targeting the poorest and the hungry through a territorial approach and prioritization of areas of untapped agrifood potential and bringing together all relevant dimensions of agrifood systems through analysis, partnerships and enabling scaled-up agrifood investments. · Development of country typologies, including stochastic profitability frontier analysis and technical governance analysis. · Donor/partner mapping to accelerate learning, improve transparency and ensure complementarity. · HIH Member Nation-led Executive Round Tables to improve inclusive decision-making based on the HIH suite of tools and approaches. · Partner matchmaking to promote development-oriented innovation and mobilize interest and investment commitments for the provision of critical means of implementation, including finance and investment at scale. · A HIH Programme Investment Plan Note developed by Member Governments with HIH support to guide multipartner collaboration, risk sharing and engagements. · A robust HIH programme dashboard regularly updated to facilitate partner coordination and communication. · Mobilization of "whole of FAO" as a method for improving programme development and integration. · Promoting the use of HIH for supporting Member Government prioritization of overall national investments (public and private).	1.1 1.2, 2.1, 2.2, 2.a 10.1, 10.2
BL6: Scaling up investment	Transformation towards inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems, with large-scale impacts on the eradication of poverty and hunger, accelerated through increased high-quality public and private investment and improved capacities to leverage future investments. · Support strategic investment planning and policy through analytical work, policy and sector studies, and contributions to agricultural strategies and policy dialogue. · Support public investment through technical assistance for the design and implementation of investment projects. · Support private investment through sector reviews, investment opportunity studies, investment sourcing, portfolio development, public–private policy dialogue, and promotion of an enabling environment.	1.b 2.a, 8.10 10.1, 10.2, 10.b,17.3 17.5

Programme Priority Area	Outcome Statement and Key Thematic Components	SDG Targets
	· Support innovative finance through advisory services and the provision of innovative solutions. · Support innovation and knowledge for investment through evidence-based findings, studies, analysis, guidelines and recommendations. · Support capacity for better agrifood investment decision making through learning and mentoring activities, educational resources and tools.	

49. A series of flagship initiatives and supportive internal mechanisms anchored in the four betters and PPAs promote multidisciplinary collaboration across the Organization and ensure strategic and high-impact work areas receive appropriate focus, priority and funding, bringing FAO's strengths to bear for increased efficiency and effectiveness in support of the SDGs.

50. Functional Objectives and special chapters ensure a robust, supportive enabling environment and efficient, effective business processes to support all of FAO's work.

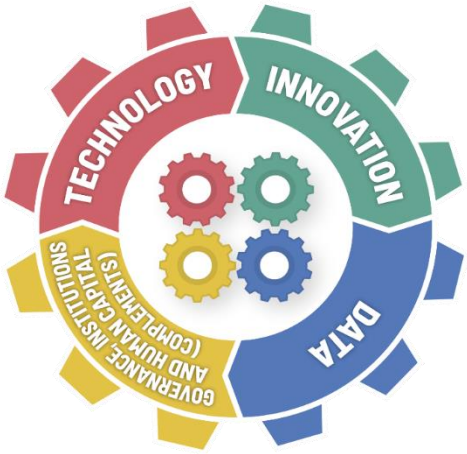
51. *Annex 5* provides a graphic depiction of FAO's results framework, putting the SDGs at the centre of the Organization's work, while *Annex 6* provides a view of how FAO results framework architecture is implemented at country level planning, with the SDGs providing the common language for linking country priorities to the overall results framework.

Accelerating progress toward sustainable agrifood systems

52. As highlighted previously, many Sustainable Development Goals, including those to which agrifood systems are expected to contribute, are off-track. The FAO foresight report (FOFA-DTT) emphasizes that business as usual is no longer an option, and that if agrifood systems remain on their current path, evidence points to a likely future characterized by persistent food insecurity, degrading resources and unsustainable economic growth. This unsustainable trajectory underlines the paramount importance of accelerating the impact of programmatic interventions while minimizing trade-offs.

53. In order to accelerate progress and maximize efforts towards meeting the SDGs and the *four betters*, FAO applies four cross-cutting/cross-sectional "accelerators": *(i) technology, (ii) innovation, (iii) data* and *(iv) governance, human capital, and institutions (together referred to as "complements"*) in all programmatic interventions. The four accelerators shown in *Figure 3* can support the achievement of both objectives. These accelerators are intended to activate the four key triggers for transformation that can help redirect agrifood systems outcomes toward more desirable futures.

Figure 3: Four cross-cutting/cross sectional accelerators



54. Emerging *technologies* are already changing the food and agriculture sector, yet most governments or agrifood systems actors have yet to harness their powerful potential. Helping farmers take full advantage of new technologies such as digital agriculture, biotechnologies, precision agriculture, innovations in agroecology, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to increase food production, access markets and manage risks, whilst respecting the environment, is of paramount importance.

55. *Innovation* in general and in particular in agriculture, is a central driving force for achieving a world free from hunger and malnutrition. Innovations, including social, policy, institutional, financial and technological innovations, which are science and evidence-based, are important drivers with the potential to achieve improvements across the full spectrum of agrifood systems activities and processes. Applying innovative approaches is also critical in the context of building back better, where innovation needs to be considered in its broadest sense including innovation on technology, management, business models, and enabling policies.

56. On *Data*, FAO's *Hand-in-Hand geospatial platform* and FAO Data Lab for statistical innovation, and statistics and information generated from new data sources and methods exemplify how data on food, agriculture, socioeconomics, and natural resources can come together to help strengthen evidence-based decision-making in the food and agriculture sectors. Data can, *inter alia*, enable monitoring of agricultural water productivity, including agricultural systems at risk due to human pressure on land and water, ascertain aquatic species distribution, and analyse precipitation trends, allowing the design of targeted agricultural interventions and investment plans through a territorial approach

which fosters equality, inclusion and sustainable food and nutrition security. The emergence of big data platforms and unprecedented analytical capabilities could trigger transformation of agrifood systems, though this requires careful governance, and adequate capacity of countries to collect and manage data, to ensure benefits are broadly shared rather than concentrated.

57. *Complements* refers to the needed governance, human capital and institutions to assure an inclusive agrifood system transformation. Transformative processes require, as a precondition (upstream enabler), much stronger, more transparent and accountable institutions and governance, including adaptive and effective regulatory governance.

58. As *technologies* revolutionize, the risks of unequal access and exclusion loom. Investments in human capital by building capacities, including through innovative training and knowledge platforms such as the FAO E-learning Academy, as well as policy and regulations minimizing such risks are required. It is central that the labour supply responds to the new demand re-shaped by new technologies and innovation. Technologies have to be affordable, so everyone can access them and use them, and other structural barriers to their application, including education and training, must be identified and addressed.

Cross-cutting themes

59. FAO's cross-cutting themes are important issues that need to be taken into account across all of FAO's work, and which require particular visibility.

60. The cross-cutting themes of gender, youth and inclusion (for reduced inequalities and leave no one behind) focus on a few, key issues of critical importance to the 2030 Agenda and in support of the strategic narrative. In doing so, the intent is to promote a systematic mainstreaming and operationalization of these issues across all of FAO's work.

Gender

61. Gender equality and women's empowerment are crucial for transforming agrifood systems. Empowering women can significantly boost their incomes and resilience – and those of their families – to socioeconomic shocks and climate change, as well as improve food security and nutrition. Significant advances in measuring women's empowerment over the past decade show that women's empowerment has a positive impact on agricultural production, food security, improved diets and child nutrition. In *The status of women in agrifood systems*[16] report, FAO outlined the tremendous potential benefits that promoting gender equality has on agriculture, estimating that closing the gender gap in farm productivity and the wage gap in agrifood systems could increase global gross domestic product by nearly USD 1 trillion and reduce the number of people facing food insecurity by 45 million.

62. Recognizing that gender equality is fundamental to sustainable development and resilient agrifood systems, FAO integrates gender work into its programmes through the FAO Policy on Gender Equality 2020-2030. In 2024, FAO launched Commit to Grow Equality, a global initiative that calls on a diverse range of actors to committing concrete actions to accelerate gender equality and women's empowerment in agrifood systems through better financing, investments and partnerships. The Organization aims to launch a FAOSTAT Gender Domain by 2026, and supports the dissemination

[16] FAO. 2023. The s*tatus of women in agrifood systems*. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cc5343en.

and uptake of the Committee on World Food Security's *Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition*.

Youth

63. The involvement of youth is essential to drive innovation, sustainability, and resilience in agrifood systems, especially in the face of a rapidly ageing agricultural workforce that threatens the vitality of global agrifood systems. Young women and men bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas making them critical to addressing current and future challenges in the sector.

64. FAO recognizes the importance of engaging youth in all of the Organization's work as a cornerstone of its mission following its internal strategy, the Rural Youth Action Plan, while aligning with global commitments such as the UN Youth Strategy (Youth 2030) and the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 2 (Zero hunger) and SDG 8 (Inclusive and sustainable economic growth). FAO will continue to build state-of-the-art research, data, and evidence on rural youth while generating cutting-edge knowledge on the ways in which rural youth engage with, benefit from, and contribute to agrifood systems.

65. By further strengthening the systematic inclusion of youth in its work, FAO aims to foster a new generation of agrifood leaders equipped with modern technologies such as digital agriculture and precision farming, alongside a commitment to sustainability.

Inclusion

66. Promoting inclusion is critical to ensure that agrifood systems transformation supports decent employment and sustainable income-generating opportunities for small-scale producers, value chain actors, family farmers and rural communities, thus contributing to eradicating poverty and realizing the Right to Food for all. This requires addressing inequalities that constrain access to resources and ensuring opportunities for people relying on agrifood systems, particularly the poor, Indigenous Peoples, marginalized groups and those in vulnerable situations, while enhancing their agency, rights and collective action.

67. FAO integrates inclusion across its programmatic, thematic and functional areas of work, as well as across Programme Priority Areas, and documents inclusive approaches for learning, visibility and scaling-up.

Corporate strategies

68. Thematic strategies, policies and action plans in key cross-cutting areas of work, developed through extensive and inclusive consultation processes, guide the Organization in actively informing priorities and programmatic decisions. They ensure that, in implementing the reviewed Strategic Framework 2022-31, FAO leverages its comparative advantage in responding to challenges in agrifood systems and focusing efforts to maximize impacts.

69. The FAO Science and Innovation Strategy provides FAO with a framework for supporting countries in harnessing science and innovation. It provides Organization-wide guidance, coherence and alignment on science and innovation for the transformation of agrifood systems, strengthening FAO's work and commitment to a leadership role.

70. The FAO Strategy on Climate Change emphasizes the relevance of efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems as part of the solutions to climate change and guides FAO in providing strengthened support to Members in their ambitions to address climate change in agrifood systems, and in the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

71. The FAO Strategy for Private Sector Engagement outlines a vision for the proactive development of partnerships with the private sector. The Strategy targets the diverse types of private sector entities, from large national and multinational corporations to financial institutions, micro, small and medium enterprises, industry and trade organizations and consortia, farmers and farmers' organizations, producers' organizations and cooperatives and philanthropic foundations.

72. The FAO Strategy on Mainstreaming Biodiversity across Agricultural Sectors aims to reduce the negative impacts of agriculture on biodiversity and promote sustainable agricultural practices and the conservation, enhancement, preservation, and restoration of biodiversity as a whole.

73. The Vision and Strategy for FAO's Work in Nutrition aims at achieving the corporate goal of reducing malnutrition through efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable agrifood systems. The Strategy seeks to tackle malnutrition in all its forms by accelerating policies and actions across agriculture and food systems to enable healthy diets for everyone, through a people-centered approach. The Vision and Strategy will be updated in 2025.

74. The FAO Action Plan on Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) serves as a roadmap for focusing global efforts to address AMR in the food and agriculture sectors. The aim of this Plan is to help accelerate progress in developing and implementing multisectoral National Action Plans to tackle AMR by calling attention to strategic priorities and areas of expertise for FAO's support. The Action Plan takes a multidisciplinary approach to ensure that all relevant dimensions and sectors are considered in protecting agrifood systems, livelihoods, and economies from the destabilizing forces of untreatable illness.

75. The FAO Policy on Gender Equality provides the Organization with a corporate framework to orient its technical and normative work towards clear gender equality objectives relevant to its mandate. The Policy recognizes that a gender responsive environment is necessary to achieve progress towards FAO's objectives and includes a set of minimum standards for gender mainstreaming across all organizational functions.

76. The FAO Strategic policy framework for multilingualism recognizes multilingualism as a defining characteristic of FAO as an international, intergovernmental agency. The policy framework aims to provide a practical approach to meet the demand for improved performance and optimized resource mobilization on multilingualism in the Organization.

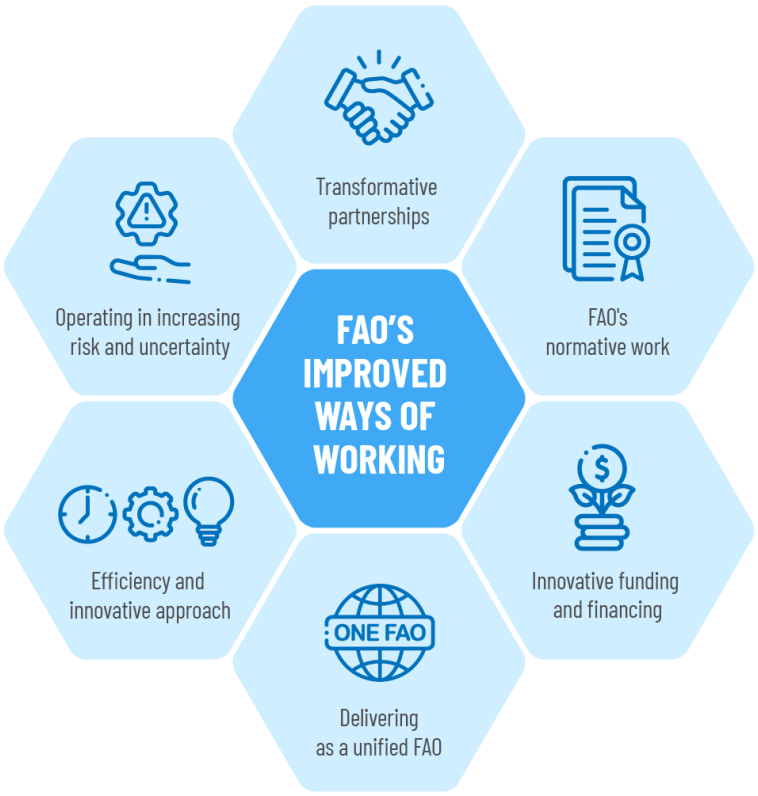
Areas for transformational impact

77. To accelerate impact, FAO has identified a set of strategic "areas for transformational impact" as further elaborated in the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget. Building on the foresight triggers and leveraging FAO's comparative advantage, these are work areas that can fundamentally accelerate progress by acting on key triggers of change. They represent opportunities requiring additional financial support to effect systemic change across agrifood systems by addressing critical impediments that currently constrain achievement of results at scale.

D. FAO's improved ways of working

78. In an increasingly complex global landscape, the challenges of the 2030 Agenda demand not only clear goals and priorities, but also a paradigm shift in how we work to better align to the transformative nature of the Agenda goals. Hence, achieving impactful results requires an explicit focus on both "doing things right" and "doing the right things." FAO's improved ways of working emphasize leveraging its unique strengths' – global knowledge, neutral status, and convening authority ─ to catalyse systemic change, and to support Members achieve lasting impact at scale. This approach ensures that FAO's efforts remain targeted, evidence-based, and responsive to the diverse needs of its stakeholders.

79. To achieve this, FAO emphasizes transformative approaches that capitalize on its comparative strengths, acting coherently across all Organizational layers as OneFAO. By fostering inclusive partnerships, leveraging normative work to set global standards, and adopting/promoting innovative funding mechanisms, FAO seeks to activate the priority triggers for transformational change. This approach is further strengthened by embracing innovation, including digitalization, ensuring that all sectors and stakeholders benefit equitably from emerging opportunities. At the same time, FAO prioritizes managing risks and uncertainties to build organizational resilience and adaptability in a rapidly changing world.



80. The following sections elaborate on these key pillars of action, that together represent a holistic framework to maximize the Organization's value proposition.

Working together across Organizational boundaries as OneFAO

81. Central to FAO's improved ways of working is the ability to deliver as one coherent Organization across all levels. With the SDGs at the centre of the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-31, the Organization has established an integrated results framework that enables it to work seamlessly across technical, geographical and organizational boundaries while strengthening its contribution to UN system-wide efforts.

82. FAO is deepening its programmatic approach through enhanced engagement in United Nations Development System coordination mechanisms, bringing its unique technical, policy and investment expertise to support transformative change at country level through the six SDG transitions identified in the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) 2023. By strategically positioning FAO as key leader in the (agri)food systems transition within Common Country Analyses (UN CCA) and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) processes, FAO ensures its comparative advantages directly contribute to national priorities within the context of UN joint programming.

83. FAO's Country Programming Frameworks, derived from UNSDCFs, provide the operational mechanism to deliver unified support, while the Programme Priority Areas bring FAO's global knowledge and technical capacities to bear on national priorities, ensuring coherent contributions to the SDGs across all levels of the Organization.

Transformative partnerships

84. Partnerships are central to reaching the goals of the 2030 Agenda and highlighted as one of the 'five Ps'[17] for sustainable development and are encapsulated in SDG 17, which calls upon all actors to work in alliance towards the SDGs. While partnership is not an end in itself, it is an essential means to address the complex challenges ahead.

85. FAO recognizes the critical need to move beyond the traditional partnership model which often treated partnerships as an "add on" and move towards a transformative model that better harnesses the resources, expertise, and innovative potential that all sectors of society possess, in order to achieve systemic and transformational impacts. Transformative partnerships integrate diverse resources and expertise from multiple stakeholders, breaking down traditional silos and fostering collaboration, driving structural changes across policies, institutions, and systems.

86. Transformative partnerships are enabled by:

a) *Integrated policy and governance*: Transformative partnerships must bridge sectoral divides, aligning investments and policies across economic, social, and environmental domains. For FAO, this involves embedding agrifood systems into national and regional policy frameworks to ensure they remain central to sustainable development agendas.

b) *Catalytic financing mechanisms*: The success of transformative partnerships hinges on leveraging diverse financing flows—public, private and international. FAO is actively working to align national budgets with sustainable development financing needs, in addition to mobilizing third-party resources. This includes engaging international financial institutions, multilateral development banks, and private sector actors.

c) *Multistakeholder engagement*: Multistakeholder engagement ensures that diverse actors—governments, private sectors, civil society, academia, and development institutions—contribute meaningfully towards collective efforts. This inclusive and collaborative approach fosters dialogue, strengthens trust, and enables the co-creation of solutions that align with shared goals and priorities.

87. This approach to partnering aligns with the integrated approach of the "six transitions" of the United Nations, which emphasizes addressing systemic challenges through coordinated, inclusive, and long-term solutions. FAO's partnerships aim to connect relevant stakeholders to create policy coherence, mobilize financing, and design solutions that amplify collective efforts while addressing cross-sectoral SDG priorities.

88. Similarly, the corporate strategies, including the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy underscores partnerships as crucial for leveraging expertise and accessing research. Partnerships with academia, research consortia, and networks like CGIAR are particularly important for advancing agrifood system transformation.

89. FAO is also strengthening coordination and partnerships with United Nations system entities, in the first instance with the Rome-based Agencies.[18] At the country level, FAO has reinforced its leadership within UN Resident Coordinators and UN country teams, focusing on integrating agrifood systems into national frameworks and fostering coordinated efforts with UN entities.

[17] United Nations Sustainable Development Group. The five Ps – People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, Partnership
[18] CL 176/16 Update on FAO's collaboration with other United Nations system entities

90. FAO continues to reinforce partnerships across the spectrum to amplify systemic impacts, including:

a) *The World Food Forum*: Launched in 2021, the World Food Forum represents a dynamic inclusive platform for engaging youth to drive global action, showcasing science and innovation, and catalysing investment for agrifood system transformation. Its focus on policy, education, and culture exemplifies how partnerships can catalyse systemic change by uniting diverse stakeholders.

b) *Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty*: Supported by the G20, this alliance aims to mobilize high-level political commitment and technical expertise to eradicate poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. Its framework incorporates innovative financing and leverages FAO's technical expertise and leadership, with FAO serving as host of the Support Mechanism, to ensure a unified and coordinated global effort.

c) *Joint SDG Fund*: Through the joint pooled funding mechanism for policy support and strategic financing, FAO has strengthened its leadership in promoting policy coherence and resource mobilization. This strategy ensures that agrifood systems remain a central focus of government agendas.

d) *Global Hub on Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems*: The Global Hub, hosted in FAO, is a platform that highlights and supports the role of Indigenous peoples in sustainable food systems and biodiversity conservation. It fosters collaboration, shares resources, and amplifies Indigenous voices in global efforts to combat hunger and environmental degradation.

e) *The Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS)*: Launched in 2011 by the G20 Agriculture Ministers as a platform to enhance food market transparency and policy responses to safeguard global food security, AMIS brings together the principal trading countries of food commodities, provides timely and objective information on global food market conditions, and offers a platform to coordinate policy action in times of increased market uncertainty. The inter-agency secretariat of AMIS is composed of ten international organizations and is hosted in FAO.

FAO's normative work

91. FAO's normative work stands as a key comparative advantage, positioning the Organization as a prominent global knowledge hub in agrifood systems and sustainable management of natural resources. Thanks to the Organization's multidisciplinary technical expertise and unique capacity to integrate this with evidence-based policymaking, FAO addresses the interlinked complexities of these systems, and serves as a cohesive and universally recognized platform for its Members to develop coherent policies. For example, FAO produces global public goods in the form of knowledge products and data and statistics to support the development of norms and standards and their implementation at different levels.

92. As such, FAO's normative and programmatic work are mutually reinforcing. As a centre of technical excellence, FAO generates and provides high-quality norms, data, statistics and expertise to inform policies, programmes, investments and also FAO's programmatic work in the field. At the same time, FAO's normative work is constantly reinforced by lessons learned in the field. This combination gives FAO its comparative advantage and demonstrates the unique "value added" which FAO provides to Members.

93. As described in *Section B,* FAO's support towards the development and implementation of normative and standard-setting instruments[19] is a core function of the Organization, interdependent with, and integral to the other core functions.

94. FAO´s normative work is fully integrated into the results framework and Programme Priority Areas. To improve relevance, visibility and impact of its normative work, FAO will support Members and partners to build capacity to develop, adapt and use those norms, standards, knowledge products, data and statistics required to achieve SDGs related to food, nutrition, agriculture and sustainable management of natural resources, based on tangible, concrete country demands.

95. Prioritizing demand-driven normative work that responds dynamically to emerging issues will ensure that FAO continues to innovate, maintaining its global profile and technical leadership role in agrifood systems. By fostering strong partnerships with governments, international organizations, private sector actors and civil society, FAO can amplify the reach and adoption of these norms and standards, thereby enhancing their impact.

Innovative funding and financing

96. Integral to FAO's improved ways of working are innovative financing mechanisms and sources to complement its traditional funding modalities, in order to meet the required development objectives under the 2030 Agenda. It is estimated that getting on track towards meeting SDG Targets 2.1[20] and 2.2[21] requires additional resources from now until 2030 ranging from USD 175 billion to USD 4.0 trillion to eradicate undernourishment, escalating to USD 15.4 trillion when adding transformational policies to increase the affordability of healthy diets.[22] Official Development Assistance, at USD 224 billion in 2023,[23] can provide only a fraction of this. Progress will require leveraging major financial flows from a wide range of sources, with particular emphasis on the private sector and capital markets.

97. FAO resource mobilization has had a strong focus on operations at a decentralized level, mirroring a trend by most main resource partners who have largely decentralized their funding decisions. FAO's global activities include leading resource mobilization for: major global programmes, humanitarian funding, interaction with the private sector, and for International Financial Institutions and vertical funds, such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), while also providing key resource mobilization support functions and an enabling environment for country level resource mobilization efforts.

[19] FAO's normative work includes the development of norms and standards in conventions, declarations, regulatory frameworks, agreements, guidelines, codes of practice and other standard setting instruments, at global, regional and national level.

[20] Target 2.1 - By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round

[21] Target 2.2 - By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons

[22] FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2024. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024 – Financing to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cd1254en (*Executive Summary*, page xxiv).

[23] OECD: Official development assistance (ODA) 2023 figures and trends - Global Donor Platform for Rural Development

98. In recent years, FAO has increasingly stepped up its technical and operational assistance to Members to mobilize resources for their development needs, leveraging the expanding scale and scope of vertical funds and international financial institutions. This process of 'recipient led funding and financing' is the logical transition of countries progressing to middle-income status, where they are no longer eligible for traditional grant mechanisms, except short-term humanitarian interventions. FAO's role is also evolving in these contexts, from that of direct aid provider to being a collaborative partner that empowers countries to build sustainable capacities and drive their own development trajectories.

Flexible funding and programmatic approaches

99. At present over 95 percent of the extrabudgetary contributions managed by FAO are fully earmarked at the project level. This provides minimal space to redirect resources based on changing needs or underfunded priorities. FAO is working to encourage a programmatic approach and increase the proportion of resources reaching direct beneficiaries. As such, FAO has established various multi-donor pooled funding mechanisms, but only two have reached critical mass: the FAO Flexible Voluntary Contribution Mechanism and the Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities.

100. FAO will continue to work closely with resource partners to explore financing modalities aligned with the FAO Strategic Framework that enhance funding flexibility while ensuring effective and efficient use of resources in the context of global economic challenges. Such modalities would seek not only to strengthen programmatic funding but also to support the type of normative activities for which FAO is renowned, but which are normally funded and delivered through the diminishing Regular Programme budget.

Emergency and resilience funding

101. In 2023, 281.6 million people in 59 countries/territories were acutely food insecure (IPC Phase 3).[24] Long-term, global trends in food insecurity reveal that the share of food insecure people is increasing over time and that food insecurity has become protracted in many settings. Drivers of acute food insecurity include conflicts, weather-related extremes and economic shocks. In response, FAO has set a corporate target to reach 80 million people through emergency and resilience interventions to reduce the impact of shocks and stresses on their agriculture livelihoods and reduce future risk.

102. To sustainably reduce food insecurity and protect and promote agriculture livelihoods in a more efficient, effective and impactful manner, FAO is promoting a programmatic approach that enables systematic sequencing of complementary interventions for enhanced community resilience. In protracted crisis settings, interventions will be bundled in a "big-push package" so as to (re)-build viable and resilient agriculture and food related livelihoods. Such an approach is expected to reduce needs of emergency agriculture assistance in the medium term. Achievement of the 80 million target and implementation of context-specific graduation strategies will require substantial scaling up of current resources.

[24] Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC)

Climate and environment finance

103. FAO facilitates countries' access to international financing related to environment and climate change, mainly GEF and GCF, providing technical support for the formulation and implementation of national and multi-country projects within FAO's mandate.

104. The GEF serves as the financial mechanism for five multilateral environmental agreements and its programming reflects the priorities of these major Conventions to conserve and sustainably utilize biodiversity, mitigate and adapt to climate change, combat desertification, and remove hazardous agricultural chemicals. The FAO-GEF Programme serves as a catalyst for achieving FAO's strategic priorities, aligning well with the PPAs under *better environment*, and guided by the FAO-GEF Strategy and Action Plan (2020).

105. The GEF also serves as a financial mechanism for the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement), under which FAO has earned the distinction of having been specifically designated by the GEF to provide support to eligible countries.

106. The GCF is the primary financial mechanism of the Paris Agreement. The Fund's "50by30" vision will enable GCF to manage USD 50 billion by 2030 and empower the Fund to realize its full potential as a climate action catalyser for developing countries goals. FAO's engagement with the GCF focuses on supporting Members to invest in sustainable, climate-resilient and low-emissions development pathways for the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use sector advancing multiple SDGs through climate action.

107. GCF projects support Members in implementing their Nationally Determined Contributions, characterized by transformative innovations, sustainability, and scalability. These interventions contribute to the *four betters* through context-specific actions that enhance agricultural production, ecosystem health, climate mitigation and adaptation, and resilient value chains. FAO is expanding its GCF engagement to prioritize fragile and vulnerable countries, leverage public-private partnerships, and strengthen national capacity for direct access to GCF funding.

Investment support

108. The financing gap noted earlier, coupled with high levels of public debt in many developing countries, underscores the critical importance of mobilizing substantial private sector investment, including investments by farmers and other actors, complemented by public financial investments. FAO's work on investment operates through an integrated business model engaging the Organization with governments, International Financial Institutions and multilateral partners. It is estimated that each USD spent from the FAO Regular Programme leverages approximately USD 655 in new investments for Members, complementing ongoing portfolio support, knowledge products, and capacity development. FAO's role focuses on facilitating, de-risking, and leveraging scaled investments for SDG achievement.

109. To meet the enormous financing needs across agrifood systems, FAO is strengthening existing partnerships and developing new collaborations to address agrifood systems financing needs, including exploring new frontiers for private investment with established partners such as the World Bank and other international development banks, and pursuing new partnerships with development finance institutions, impact investors, national financial institutions, business coaches and advisors. FAO is redoubling its efforts to meet country demand for nature-based solutions, agrifood systems that benefit from or contribute to improved energy access and efficiency, sustainability and decarbonization, digitization, and innovative finance, including impact investing and sustainability-linked loans.

Innovative approaches and efficiency

110. As articulated in the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy, FAO aspires to become an Organization that leverages science, technology and innovation to accelerate progress toward achieving the SDGs through agrifood systems transformation. FAO is strengthening its role as a knowledge hub that brings together multidisciplinary expertise while promoting innovative approaches aligned with the Strategy, including through innovative platforms such as the *FAO Museum and Network* which aims to promote knowledge sharing and highlight the rich traditions and innovative approaches that have shaped agrifood systems around the world. The Organization continues to advance digital solutions and emerging technologies across the *four betters*, and ensuring these innovations are inclusive and leave no one behind.

111. A future-ready FAO means fully embracing digital transformation and innovation across all aspects of its work – from knowledge management and technical delivery to partnerships and programming. The Organization also recognizes that digital transformation goes beyond technology to fundamentally change how FAO delivers on its mandate. This includes cultivating an innovative organizational culture that encourages creative problem-solving, calculated risk-taking, and new ways of working.

112. FAO's commitment to modernization also extends to embracing innovative approaches for understanding and supporting behavioral change, recognizing that successful agrifood systems transformation fundamentally depends on behavioral change across diverse stakeholder groups. Through evidence-based behavioral insights and experimentation, FAO is developing more targeted interventions that bridge the gap between best practices and actual practices in agrifood systems, while also streamlining internal processes to reduce administrative burdens.

113. FAO is committed to continual enhancement of organizational efficiency and effectiveness through modern ways of working across administrative, financial and operational functions, while ensuring robust internal controls and risk management. FAO has established an FAO Efficiency Agenda, and related governance and reporting mechanisms to ensure a coordinated approach to efficiency initiatives covering all FAO efficiency areas, going beyond the UN efficiency agenda.

Operating in the context of increasing risk and uncertainty

114. FAO is committed to strong enterprise risk management throughout the Organization. Comprehensive risk management policies and procedures are in place, integrating risk considerations in planning, programme implementation and process design. Risk management is embedded at all stages of the organizational management processes, from strategic thinking to detailed workplans. The original strategic planning process, as well as the review taking place in 2025, have therefore been accompanied by an analysis of risks, both those influencing the process itself and those affecting the achievement of the objectives and programmes.

115. The reviewed FAO Strategic Framework spans five more years in a rapidly changing world, and the assumptions and dependencies which are an integral part of the framework are affected by the volatility of the external political, economic and social environment, as well as by developments in priorities of partners and other stakeholders. Assumptions underpinning the framework may change as time progresses which introduces risks and uncertainty. Strategic planning therefore requires the incorporation of careful risk management to adapt dynamically towards the achievement of relevant goals.

116. *Table 3* shows how the key risks identified affecting the review and adjustment of the Strategic Framework, i.e. the events or circumstances which may significantly impact the achievement of objectives, were addressed.

Table 3: Key risks affecting the review and adjustment of the Strategic Framework and mitigating action

Risk	Mitigating action
The Strategic Framework does not lead to significant progress towards the Organization's overall goals, including the transformational change called for by the 2030 Agenda.	A robust theory of change is at the core of the development of the Strategic Framework. Further, the Organization has put in place mechanisms to strengthen the linkage of FAO action with the triggers of change identified in the Foresight exercise, as well as improved ways of working to best leverage the Organization's comparative advantage for contribution to impact.
The Strategic Framework does not adequately reflect the priorities of Members, key contributors and donors.	The review of the Strategic Framework has taken into consideration Governing Body discussions, evaluations and other feedback.
The Strategic Framework does not focus on FAO's comparative advantages and FAO's place in the overall UN family and global development context.	The Programme Priority Areas (PPAs) have been formulated and reviewed based on analyses of FAO's comparative advantage and also the potential value added of other actors.
The Strategic Framework does not allow the development of a meaningful results framework, and does not enable quality monitoring and reporting.	The PPAs have been carefully developed with a view to a well-structured results framework and incorporating the differences across regions in consultation with Regional Conferences and Regional and Country Offices. Moreover, monitoring and reporting approaches have been enhanced to respond to external reviews and Member guidance and will continue to be reviewed and refined based on implementation experience and oversight recommendations.
The outputs, outcomes and impacts of the Strategic Framework are delayed because of potential risks.	The PPAs incorporate risk management strategies to increase resilience of the agrifood systems.

117. The most significant risks and uncertainties to the implementation of the overall framework are presented in *Table 4*.

Table 4: Risks and uncertainties to the implementation of the overall framework

Risk/Uncertainty	Mitigating action
Unexpected political uncertainty or conflict.	FAO has strong PPAs on emergencies and on shock responsive and resilient agrifood systems.
Significant health shocks or pandemics.	The inclusion of a dedicated PPA on *One Health* approach to prevent the emergence of new zoonotic reservoirs.
Uncertainties on climate shocks.	The PPAs include innovations on agricultural insurance combining index-based insurance, traditional insurance and access to finance. In addition, FAO supports climate resilient practices and crop varieties and promotes fair and transparent trade including to avoid market distortions in the face of shocks.
New potential uncertainties affect the agriculture sector and food security and nutrition.	The PPAs include innovations to increase early warning systems and capacity to better respond to unforeseen events when they occur.
Significant reduction in voluntary funding and/or assessed contributions could severely constrain FAO's ability to deliver on its mandate and achieve Strategic Framework objectives, particularly for essential normative functions and catalytic programmes that enable transformative change.	FAO will actively work to demonstrate clear value and results to maintain Member support for assessed contributions while diversifying funding sources, developing innovative financing mechanisms and pursuing efficiency in all its aspects. The Organization has highlighted areas with transformative impact potential to facilitate discussions on additional funding priorities and will strengthen mechanisms to receive flexible funding. Effective management of this risk is also dependent on the response of Members and resource partners, in their funding decisions.

118. Risks and uncertainties affecting each programme, as well as relevant mitigating actions, were identified as part of the Programme Priority Area formulation process. The risk analysis, as well as the related mitigation plan have been updated as part of the formulation of the Medium Term Plan 2026-29.

***Annex 1: Alternative futures for agrifood systems*[25]**

More of the same (MOS). Muddling through reactions to events and crises, while doing just enough to avoid systemic collapses, leads to degradation of agrifood systems sustainability and to poor living conditions for a large number of people, thus increasing the long-run likelihood of systemic failures.
Adjusted future (AFU). Some moves towards sustainable agrifood systems are triggered to attempt achieving some Agenda 2030 goals. Some improvements in terms of well-being are achieved, but the lack of overall sustainability and systemic resilience hampers their long-term impact.
Race to the bottom (RAB). Gravely ill-incentivized decisions lead the world to the worst version of itself after the collapse of substantial parts of socioeconomic, environmental and agrifood systems; with costly and almost irreversible consequences for a very large number of people and ecosystems.
Trading off for sustainability (TOS). Increased education and awareness triggered a new development paradigm based on shared power, social commitment, responsibility and non-predatory cooperation across countries. Short-term GDP growth and final consumption were traded off for huge investments for sustainability and resilience of agrifood, socioeconomic and environmental systems.

119. Based on the vision and mandate of FAO, “Trading-off for sustainability” and, albeit to a lesser extent, the ‘Adjusted future’ are clearly the more desirable scenarios. Under these scenarios, the pathways towards the FAO *four betters*, looks more plausible than in alternative ones.

[25] *Source:* FAO 2022. The future of food and agriculture - Drivers and triggers for transformation. Rome

Annex 2: The 18 Drivers of agrifood systems and recent signals of possible futures

Drivers of agrifood systems	Selected trends and recent signals of possible futures[26]
1. **Population dynamics and urbanization**, which are expected to increase and change food demand.	Global population continues to grow, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and salt-affected soils countries, although at diminishing rates. Most recent UN projections to 2050 and 2100 are lower than in 2020. A recent spike of outmigration from sub-Saharan Africa is reported.
2. **Economic growth, structural transformation and macro-economic outlook**, which are not always delivering the expected results in terms of inclusive economic transformation of societies.	Geoeconomic dynamics prolonged sluggish growth in some areas and debt distress, maintaining or widening the divergence between lower-middle income countries and high-income countries. Recent wars triggered cost-of-living crises. "Job-less growth" in some areas is also reported.
3. **Cross-country interdependencies**, which tie together agrifood systems globally.	COVID-19 and international instability triggered domestic onshoring and reindustrialization, to become more self-reliant and reduce globalized interdependence. Worsening exchange rates impacted food prices in food-importing countries, and deteriorated debt positions.
4. **Big data generation, control, use and ownership**, which enable innovative technologies and decision-making, also in agriculture.	Concerns about privacy, legal actions regarding copyright and more stringent legislations on big data generation, use, ownership and artificial intelligence (AI) started emerging in some countries. Countries with relatively weaker institutions raise concerns of disempowerment in big data and AI, beyond the mere digital divide.
5. **Geopolitical instability and increasing conflicts**, which include resource- and energy-based conflicts.	Greater fiscal revenue is used for military expenditure in many countries, despite claims to disarmament in the UN Pact for the Future.
6. **Uncertainties**, which materialize in sudden occurrences of events in many occasions impossible to predict.	Perceived uncertainties continue to increase and may have negative impacts on bilateral and multilateral agreements and proposed common goals.
7. **Rural and urban poverty**, with a high proportion of rural people living in poverty or extreme poverty.	As an outcome of many drivers, progress on poverty reduction, hunger and food security have been reversed or not improved, particularly in the most vulnerable countries. These are key missed achievements of the 2030 Agenda that deserve strong focus.
8. **Inequalities**, characterized by high income inequality and inequalities in job opportunities, in gender, access to assets, basic services and inequitable fiscal burden.	Driven by macroeconomic, climate and conflict events, income and wealth inequalities continued to increase, affecting the most vulnerable countries. However, UN actions for improved global fiscal cooperation signals a possible step towards reducing global inequalities.[27]

[26] The recent trends and signals of possible futures reported in this table draw, where applicable, from the FAO FOFA Data Dashboard https://foodandagricultureorganization.shinyapps.io/FOFA-DASHBOARD/, the Strategic Regional Foresight exercises and related forthcoming reports, whose preliminary findings were portrayed to the 2024 FAO Regional Conferences.

[27] UN General Assembly resolution 79/235, Promotion of inclusive and effective international tax cooperation at the United Nations, 31 December 2024. https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/ltd/n24/356/30/pdf/n2435630.pdf

Drivers of agrifood systems	Selected trends and recent signals of possible futures[26]
9. **Food prices**, which are in real terms lower than in the 70's but higher than in the 80's and 90's despite the fact that they fail to capture the full social and environmental costs of food.	Cost-of living crises are still the norm, with food prices at consumer level increasing more than overall inflation. Pressure may continue, should food externalities be increasingly internalized and/or additional stressors on the natural resource base occur.
10. **Innovation and science** including more innovative technologies (including biotechnologies and digitalization) and systemic approaches (*inter alia*, agroecology, and conservation and organic agriculture).	Science and innovation technologies contribute to addressing many sustainability and resilience issues of agrifood systems. However, the development, testing, control, scaling up and access of key technological solutions remain challenging as they require significant investment and strong governance.[28]
11. **Public investment in agrifood systems**, which is often insufficient.	Globally, the public expenditure in agriculture compared to the value-added share of the sector is stable, but huge regional disparities remain.
12. **Capital/ information intensity of production**, which is increasing due to mechanization and digitalization of production, including in food and agriculture.[29]	In the last few years, investment in agriculture relative to agricultural production value remains globally below levels achieved in previous years. Important differences and growing gaps exist between low- and middle-income countries and high-income countries.
13. **Market concentration of agrifood inputs and outputs**, which represents a challenge for the resilience and equitability of agrifood systems.	Agrifood markets remain concentrated.[30] Global data is irregular, but some evidence signals that global agricultural Mergers & Acquisitions from 2021 to 2023 have slowed.[31] Future implications require further exploration.
14. **Consumption and nutrition patterns**, resulting from behavioural change of consumers which are increasingly being asked to make complex choices about the nutritional content and safety of what they eat and where shifting consumer demand in the direction of healthier patterns is key.	Access to healthy diets remains problematic for more than 3 billion people, with negative consequences on nutrition and wellbeing. Disparities by income level and geographical regions are apparent. Some progress on stunting and wasting has recently been observed, but prevalence of low birthweight remains stagnant.[32]

[28] Alexandrova-Stefanova, N., Nosarzewski, K., Mroczek Z..K., Audouin, S., Djamen, P., Kolos, N. & Wan, J. 2024. *Shaping sustainable agrifood futures: pre-emerging and emerging technologies and innovations for impact - An extended global foresight report with regional and stakeholders' insights*. Rome, FAO and Paris, CIRAD. https://doi.org/10.4060/cd2743en

[29] Measured as gross capital formation as share of GDP. See World Development indicators, World Bank. https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators/Series/NE.GDI.TOTL.ZS

[30] See FAO 2022,The future of food and agriculture – Drivers and triggers for transformation, Rome, section 1.12.

[31] IMAA,2024. Institute for mergers and acquisitions. The M&A landscape of agricultural products and services. New York. https://imaa-institute.org/publications/the-m-and-a-landscape-of-agricultural-products-and-services/

[32] FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2024. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2024 – Financing to end hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cd1254en

Drivers of agrifood systems	Selected trends and recent signals of possible futures[26]
15. **Scarcity and degradation of natural resources**, including land, water, biodiversity, soil.	Targets for climate and biodiversity impacts continue to be significantly out of range. High-income countries use six times more material inputs *per capita* and are responsible for ten times more climate impacts *per capita* than low-income countries. Companies keep investing in extractive economies.[33]
16. **Epidemics and degradation of ecosystems**, which may increase in the future due to rising trends in transboundary plant pests and diseases, agriculture encroaching in wild areas and forests, antimicrobial resistance, the increasing production and consumption of animal products.	Slight improvements have been observed given that COVID-19 was surpassed and economies reopened and recovered. Focus on One Health has increased, but the degradation of ecosystems and encroachment continue to happen regionally and at country level.
17. **Climate change**, including weather extremes and variability of temperatures and rainfall patterns, which is already affecting agrifood systems and natural resources and is expected to accelerate hunger and poverty in rural areas.	Global carbon emissions, extreme weather events, floods and droughts continue to increase, leading to substantial human, economic and environmental costs. While efforts to adopt metrics beyond GDP have been recognized in the UN Pact for the Future, current decision-making continues to prioritize economic growth without fully accounting for environmental and social costs.[34]
18. **Aquatic-based economy**, where the development of economic activities related to the fisheries and aquaculture sector is increasing globally, and arising trade-offs require sound policymaking integrating technical, social and economic solutions, principles of ecosystem restoration of production systems, and cross-sectoral stakeholder involvement in the context of transformative agrifood systems.	Aquaculture has now surpassed capture fisheries in aquatic animal production. Aquaculture remains dominated by a small number of countries, with many low-income countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean not exploiting their full potential.[35]

[33] UNEP, 2024: Global Resources Outlook 2024: Bend the Trend – Pathways to a liveable planet as resource use spikes. International Resource Panel. Nairobi. https://wedocs.unep.org/20.500.11822/44901
[34] UN 2024. Pact for the Future, Action 53.
[35] FAO. 2024. The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2024 – Blue Transformation in action. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cd0683en

Annex 3: FAO Corporate Strategic Foresight Triggers for Transformation

120. ***Institutions and governance**:* Transformative processes require as a precondition (upstream enabler) stronger, more transparent and accountable institutions and governance, including adaptive and effective regulatory governance. These are required both within and outside agrifood systems because governance and institutions influence all the drivers and the channels that link the various elements of agrifood systems with the other 'external' systems. These comprise, for instance, processes and rules for climate change and other disaster and crisis risks and emergencies, governance of agrifood systems at all levels (food production and processing, food trade, food safety, food quality and food consumption, etc.), mechanisms for contributing to sustained peace and conflict prevention, and institutions for poverty and hunger eradication. Given the multiple issues at stake and their inter-relationships, clear, specific, well-designed institutional mechanisms with effective compliance rules need to be in place. Overall, the institutional vacuum is particularly evident given the discrepancy between the growing importance of the issues at stake, such as international capital flows, global climate impacts, international conflicts or local conflicts fed by external dynamics, big data generation, storage, use and control, on one hand; and the increasing weakness of most sovereign countries to govern such issues. With very few exceptions, most countries are too small to influence significantly these global dynamics.

121. ***Consumer and citizen awareness***: The awareness of consumers regarding the type, quantity and safety of food to consume, as well as food waste and the social, economic and environmental impacts of consumption choices have the potential to influence producers and their production processes. This could drive a shift towards more virtuous outcomes of agrifood systems and, via feedback effects, also selected drivers. Increasingly, the younger generation is eager to change, for instance in relation to climate action. Youth feel their future is at stake, thus are more likely to pursue ethical ideals and progressively lead development and policy processes. They could trigger substantial changes, including for environmental and social problems considered to be linked to certain food production processes, but also structural problems described in the preceding sections. Consumer awareness regarding food and non-food consumption is important in the light of existing sectoral and cross-country interdependencies. Social media and the Internet are increasingly influencing consumer views and behaviour. On the one hand, consumers' associations, governments and businesses can increasingly convey information regarding the features of food products and production processes; on the other, consumers and citizens should be able to critically assess this information.

122. ***Income and wealth distribution:*** Improving income and wealth distribution among and across societies is a means through which inequalities, including urban and rural poverty, can be reduced. Improving food security and nutrition is difficult if income and wealth distribution are not improved. Reducing inter- and intra-country inequalities may also improve geopolitical stability. Providing more income opportunities implies that the channels through which income is distributed throughout the economic system are enlarged and maintained active also during economic downturns. Equitable employment opportunities across economic sectors should be ensured, while equitable profit sharing should be required for capital owners. Improving income distribution is also important considering recent FAO findings regarding the 'true cost of food' which could significantly increase food prices, with significant distributional impact implications.[36]

123. ***Innovative technologies and approaches**:* Heavy reliance is placed on technological innovations to produce more with less (water, land degradation, food loss and inputs, loss of biodiversity etc.); maintain the level of food supply in line with population increases; and reduce the risks of epidemics and pandemics, amongst others. Innovative technologies are also expected to increase transparency in transactions, create new earning opportunities and boost overall technical

[36] See FAO 2024. The State of Food and Agriculture 2024 – Value-driven transformation of agrifood systems. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cd2616en

progress while promoting social inclusion. Systemic approaches, including conservation agriculture, integrated agriculture, agroforestry, and agroecology are seen as entry doors to support the development of emerging sectors, such as the aquatic-based economic sectors. In order to ensure equitable and inclusive deployment of such innovations and technology, further research, in addition to better governance, is needed to address structural issues such as the excessive concentration in big-data ownership, use and control, and to improve income distribution through better profit sharing.

124. There is also a growing recognition of 'digitalization' and so-called 'new technologies' spanning all available approaches, systems, tools and innovations. This is an area of rapid evolution where regulatory guidance and oversight is critical. It is important to note that technology can be an enabler but could also lead to a technological divide impacting smallholder farmers, whom due to the high initial investment costs and need for training and education, may not have access to the benefits. However, a strategic deployment of technology and innovation has the potential to resolve and minimize trade-offs among the SDGs. This said, in addition to technological innovations, social, policy, institutional, and financial innovations are considered relevant and essential throughout agrifood systems.

125. The four triggers should be activated by means of public strategies and policies, and through the participation and agreement of all concerned stakeholders. Short-term goals will have to be traded off for longer-term sustainability and resilience. Depending on how these triggers are activated through appropriate strategies and policies, various futures may materialize.

Annex 4: Summary of Regional Foresight Exercises

126. **Asia and the Pacific region.** The Region faces multiple interconnected challenges in transforming agrifood systems toward sustainability and resilience, including: population growth and urbanization; external migrations and increased reliance on remittances, particularly affecting Pacific Islands and South Asia; and the degradation of natural resources and marine ecosystems. In the last few years, the region has dramatically increased its food trade deficit, thereby increasing its dependence on other regions – notably, Latin America – with important potential implications for the future of agrifood systems in both regions and for mutual geostrategic aspects. The different demographic, economic growth and urbanization patterns in the various subregions signal that future significant intra- and inter-regional migrations may materialize, with implications for agrifood systems in both origin and destination countries. The region's economic transformation experiences offer important insights for agrifood systems development. Climate change and the degradation of natural resources highlight the emerging trade-off with rapid economic growth. Changes in consumption patterns, including rising prevalence of overweight and obesity, signal the need for attention to nutrition transitions. Investment patterns in agriculture and differences in technological adoption capacities present both opportunities and challenges for future agrifood systems development.

127. **Near East and North Africa.** The region faces distinct challenges in transforming agrifood systems, including: impacts of climate change; water scarcity; and diverse economic conditions across countries. Agricultural production capacity and food import dependencies require careful consideration in light of demographic trends. Considering the increased external debt so far, Mashreq and Maghreb countries may continue to face limited capacity to borrow and, unless realistic and implementable new fiscal policies are adopted, little room is left for public spending on safety nets and jobs creation for a growing share of young people. Until oil-importing countries transition to renewable energy sources, Gulf Cooperation Council countries may continue to have strong incentives to maximize oil revenues, but if the region remains of global geostrategic importance, unresolved tensions may continue to flare up into conflicts, with critical implications for food and input prices within the region. Regional cooperation mechanisms and water resource management remain important considerations for future agrifood systems development. Climate adaptation needs, and resource management challenges require particular attention in policy frameworks.

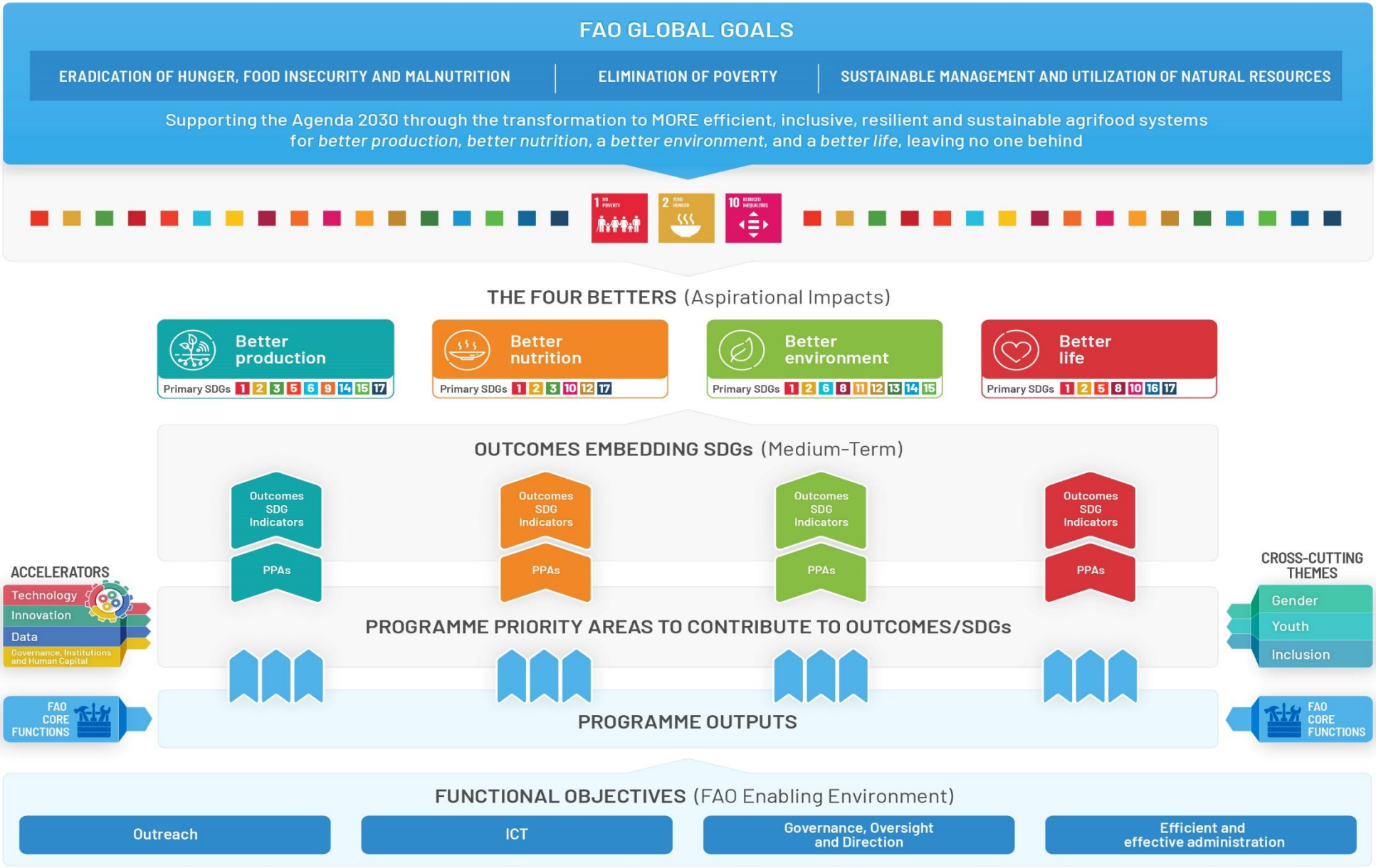
128. **Latin America and the Caribbean region.** Key characteristics affecting agrifood systems transformation include: structural constraints affecting income distribution; demographic transitions; investment patterns; and social protection systems. The region has strengthened its position as a global food exporter with potential future implications. Subregions in Latin America and the Caribbean suffer from either export or import commodity-dependence, which adds to macroeconomic volatility. Extreme weather events, including droughts and floods, disrupt lives and economies, fueling the high debt-GDP ratios. Climate change is already accelerating the degradation of ecosystems, while the loss of soil fertility and biodiversity due to monoculture, soil erosion, and the high use of pesticides is raising serious concerns. Slow GDP per capita growth might hinder the transition to more sustainable agrifood systems as this limits fiscal space. Insufficient formal job creation, high and persistent inequalities and increased violence may prevent further reductions in poverty and food insecurity and potentially drive further outward migrations. Agrifood systems development pathways need to consider employment generation, social inclusion, and environmental sustainability objectives.

129. **Africa region.** The region presents distinct demographic and urbanization patterns that affect agrifood systems development, including a continuously growing population, a high urbanization rate and a steady GDP per capita over the last 40 years that remains at three to ten times less than neighbouring regions. Indeed, in many African countries, rapid urbanization is not associated with the dynamism of non-agricultural sectors. This may exacerbate the endemic dimension of poverty

and existing food security emergencies. Urbanization without industrialization and significant subregional economic disparities might signal the absence of structural socio-economic transformation and the continuation of challenges and unsatisfactory outcomes from the past 40 years, including the exacerbation of food crises and the persistence of multidimensional poverty. Despite representing a large source of income in Africa, the agricultural sector consistently shows much lower labour productivity compared to non-agricultural sectors. Increasing political instability, mainly in rural areas where natural resources are being degraded, triggered by climate change, reduces the availability of land and water and raises serious concerns about the future of agrifood systems. Agricultural production increases, particularly for those products that have traditionally ensured the variety and quality of diets, sustainable productivity enhancement, natural resource management, and climate resilience emerge as key considerations for future agrifood systems development.

130. **Europe and Central Asia region.** Lower-middle income countries in the region have made significant progress towards the eradication of extreme poverty. However, pockets of poverty remain and GDP per capita is not converging with high-income countries. In lower-middle income countries, average incomes are typically lower in rural areas and poverty has a strong gender dimension. Agricultural systems in those countries are severely affected by unsustainable practices and climate change through unpredictable temperatures and rainfall, and weather extremes. Farm structures lack dynamism, while smallholder producers have difficulties accessing commercial value chains from which they remain marginalized. Employment in agriculture is diminishing, although the share of agricultural value added in GDP remains constant. The future of agrifood and socioeconomic systems will depend on whether non-agricultural sectors can expand and provide decent employment to fill the gap of diminishing agricultural jobs. Persistent disparities in economic performance and limited convergence may restrict some countries in a ‘middle-income’ status. This structural gap could widen as high-income countries in the region maintain a competitive edge in diversified industries, leaving some lower-middle income countries marginalized, but the recent convergence of the orientation index of public expenditure in agriculture between these groups of countries could contribute to narrowing the gap. The protracted war in Ukraine affects power dynamics of the region and all its systems, and indications point to continued geopolitical tensions in this region.

Annex 5: FAO's results framework



Annex 6: FAO's results framework depiction of country level planning