



Coalition of Action on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All



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UNFSS+2 Stock Taking Moment 2023

Food Systems transformation amid a polycrisis: Addressing climate, food insecurity, malnutrition, and conflicts - Outcome Document

Food systems in fragile settings are facing a polycrisis feeding off conflicts, economic crises, climate change, food insecurity, and malnutrition. Millions of individuals struggle to secure their basic needs and access to nutrient-rich diets, with conflict as a primary driver of acute hunger. Climate change intensifies crises, leading to the destruction of food systems and escalating conflicts. In many regions, protracted conflicts have disrupted food systems, increased food insecurity and malnutrition, compounded by high levels of forced displacement which have added further strains on resources and altered livelihoods. This highlights the interconnectedness of food insecurity, nutrition, conflict, and climate change. To address the current polycrisis, sustainable food systems transformation is pivotal as it has the potential and the duty to simultaneously tackle multiple challenges at once.

The Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA), the Swedish Government, the Coalition of Action for Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All (HDSFS Coalition), the Social Protection Coalition, the Climate Resilient Food Systems Alliance, and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus Coalition organized a side-event during the UN Food System Summit Stock Taking Moment in July 2023 to raise awareness and strengthen global understanding of the vital role of food systems transformation to act as a poly-response in addressing the interconnectedness of food insecurity, malnutrition, conflict, and climate change. It was an opportunity to hear from country representatives about their experiences in implementing successful actions addressing these drivers of crises, and facilitate cross-country knowledge exchange.

From a rich exchange of thoughts, emerged six main take-away points:

- 1. A call for urgent action:** with hard-won progress from recent decades under threats, it is time to focus on how we can advance change practically. Panelists shared some concrete experiences from Lebanon, Yemen, and Timor-Leste of working across stakeholders and sectors using a food systems lens. Additionally, participants provided their insights on issues related to food security in fragile contexts, such as the role of food banks and the importance of agricultural research for arid areas. Other country officials, such as the Ministry of Agriculture from Syria and the embassy delegation from Sudan, shared experiences about food systems changes in their respective countries. Local-led efforts are taking place now and need support.
- 2. Long-term solutions must be encouraged and sustained:** from incorporating social protection in food systems interventions in Timor-Leste, to applying an HDP approach in Lebanon and

Yemen, prioritizing structural interventions towards institutions is key to responding to the poly-crisis.

- 3. A common vision of food systems transformation:** A wide range of stakeholders must come together and share a common understanding of what healthy and sustainable food systems will look like tomorrow. This requires use and management of clear and accessible data, and support to inclusive policy dialogues.
- 4. Building Trust towards a shared objective is central:** in contexts of fragility and fragmentation, there must be a people-centered and depoliticized approach to food systems discussions. In Yemen, this approach led to the development of a single national pathway endorsed by all parties, despite political and security issues.
- 5. Nutritious food is a right, not a luxury:** the right to adequate food is essential and should be the backbone of food systems transformation discussions in fragile contexts.
- 6. The financing gap remains:** the right financing schemes for the right countries at the right time is still lacking. The poly-crisis will not be tackled through short-term project funding. Tailored investments in climate and nutrition such as non-determined contributions must be leveraged to advance food systems transformation.

This event was co organized as part of the ESCWA-Swedish government cooperation on Climate Resilience in the Arab region, under the stream of work focused on finding regional solutions for food systems transformation. [+ information.](#)