



The Scientific Group for the  
UN Food Systems Summit  
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## ***Scientific Group Report Summary***

# **ENSURING ACCESS TO SAFE AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD FOR ALL THROUGH TRANSFORMATION OF FOOD SYSTEMS**

by

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Action Track 1 of the Food Systems Summit offers an opportunity to bring together the crucial elements of food safety, nutrition, poverty and inequalities in the framework of food systems in the context of climate and environmental change to ensure that all people have access to a safe and nutritious diet. Achieving Action Track 1 goal is essential to the achievement of the goals of the other Action Tracks.

With less than a decade left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), most countries are not on target to achieve the World Health Organisation's nutrition targets and SDG 2 targets. The COVID pandemic has exacerbated malnutrition and highlighted the need for food safety. The pandemic has also exposed the deep inequalities in society and food systems. Yet, future food systems can address many of these failings and ensure safe and nutritious food for all.

Several interconnected socio-economic and biophysical food systems drivers affect access to safe and nutritious food. Nutrition is both a health and food system concern. While some drivers of food systems are global (e.g. trade liberalization, climate change), others are regional, national and sub-national (e.g. conflicts). At the same time, many are differentiated across

geographies (e.g. poverty, demography, technologies, land degradation). The figure below provides a brief overview of the main drivers. At the centre of the diagram is the food system, driven by socio-economic, supply chain and climate change and land-use drivers (depicted by the segmented circle). The drivers and the food system are influenced by globalisation and the global COVID-19 pandemic. In certain contexts, the drivers and the food system are also affected by conflict and fragility.

Structural change is necessary to address the socio-economic drivers behind malnutrition, inequalities and the climate and environmental impacts of food. Adopting a whole-system approach in policy, research and monitoring and evaluation is crucial to manage trade-off and externalities from farm-level to national scales and across multiple sectors and agencies. Supply chain failures will need to be overcome and technology solutions adopted and adapted to specific contexts.

A transformation of food systems requires coordinating changes in supply and demand in differentiated ways across world regions: bridging yield gaps and improving livestock feed conversion, largely through agro-ecological practices, deploying at scale soil carbon sequestration

and greenhouse gas mitigation, reducing food losses and wastes, as well as over-nourishment and shifting the diets of wealthy populations. Global food systems sustainability also requires halting the expansion of agriculture into fragile ecosystems, while restoring degraded forests, fisheries, rangelands, peatlands and wetlands. Shifting to more sustainable consumption and production patterns within planetary boundaries will require efforts to influence food demand and diets, diversify food systems, careful land-use planning and management. Integrative policies need to ensure that food prices reflect real costs (including major externalities caused by climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss, and public health impacts of malnutri-

tion), reduce food waste and, at the same time, ensure safe and healthy food affordability, decent incomes and wages for farmers and food system workers.

Harnessing science and technology solutions and sharing actionable knowledge with all players in the food system offers many opportunities. Greater coordination of food system stakeholders is crucial for greater inclusion, greater transparency and more accountability. Sharing lessons and experiences will foster adaptive learning and responsive actions. Careful consideration of the trade-offs, externalities and costs of not acting is needed to ensure that the changes we make benefit to all and especially the most vulnerable in society.

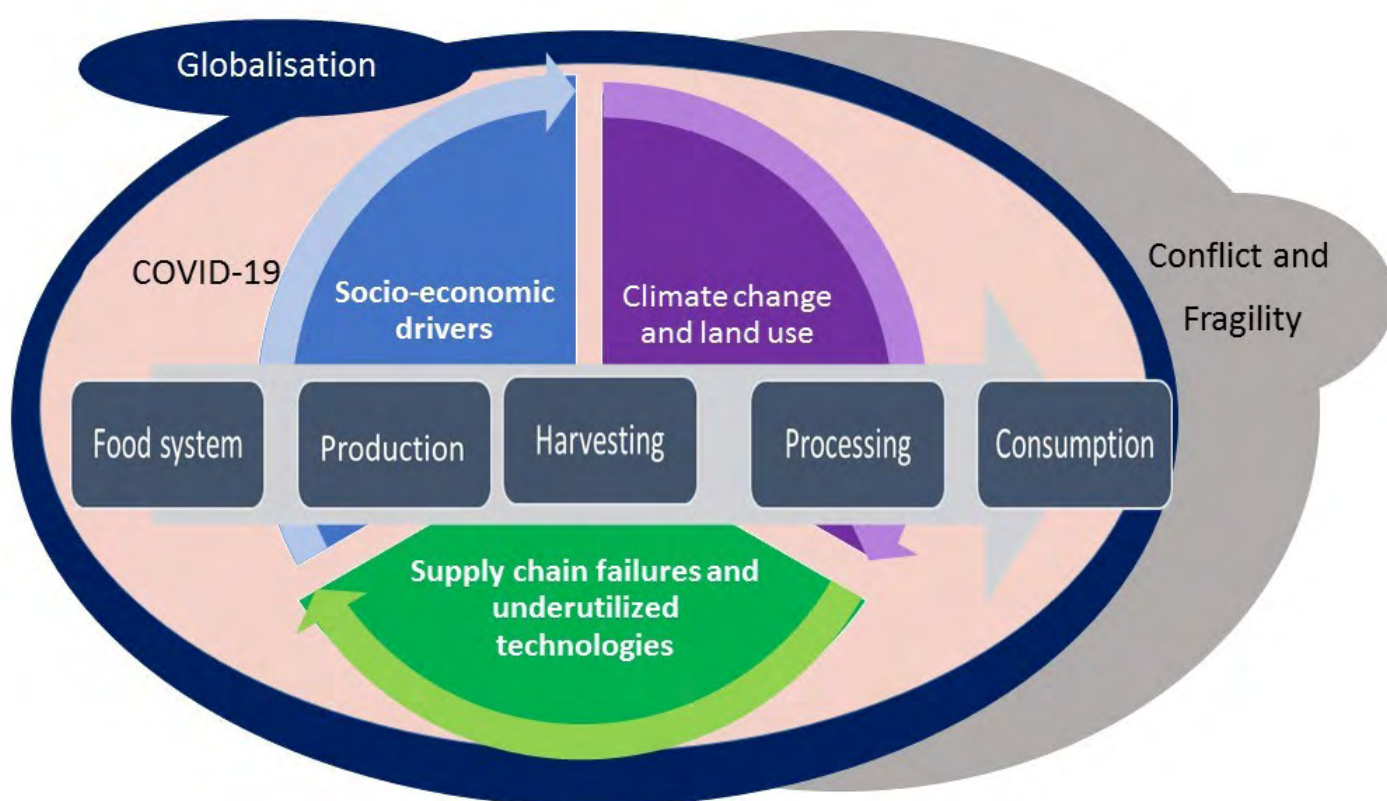


Figure: Food system context and drivers related to Action Track 1.

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