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World Food Forum 2024

Results report

World Food Forum 2024

Results report

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

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About the World Food Forum



The World Food Forum (WFF), launched in 2021 as an independent network of partners hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), serves as the premier global intergenerational platform to actively shape agrifood systems for a better food future, accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Through youth action, science and innovation, and investment, the WFF forges new paths of action and multi-sector partnerships for agrifood impact at the local, regional and global levels to achieve a more sustainable, resilient, inclusive and hunger-free food future for all.

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Abbreviations

COAG	Committee on Agriculture
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
HIH	Hand-in-Hand
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
SIF	Science and Innovation Forum
UNDF	United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028)
UNFSS	United Nations Food Systems Summit
UNGIYF	United Nations Global Indigenous Youth Forum
WASAG	Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture
WFF	World Food Forum
YFL	Youth Food Lab
YSG	Young Scientists Group





Introduction

“The World Food Forum is where agrifood systems transformation can truly take shape through concrete actions, partnerships, alliances and crucial financing. By ensuring good food for all for today and for tomorrow we uphold the principle that the right to food is a basic human right and assures a better life based on healthy foods and healthy environment for all – and leaves no one behind.”

–Qu Dongyu, FAO Director-General

The 2024 World Food Forum (WFF) marked a significant milestone in the global movement toward a better food future that benefits all. Now in its fourth year, the WFF brought together a diverse coalition of participants, including policymakers, scientists, innovators, industry leaders, investors, Indigenous leaders, family farmers and young changemakers. With tens of thousands of participants from around the globe and reaching an impressive 1.7 billion social media accounts worldwide surrounding its flagship event, the WFF continues to grow as a powerful force in addressing the most urgent challenges facing agrifood systems.

At a time when agrifood systems continue to contribute one-third of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, account for 90 percent of global deforestation and consume 70 percent of freshwater resources, the 2024 WFF acknowledged the crucial imperative of transformation. It highlighted the pressing need for resilience and sustainability within agrifood systems, as well as the immense potential for progress. As FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu emphasized in his opening address to the Forum, “We must maximize the opportunities available and make the most of the resources we have.”

In 2024, the WFF flagship event was held from 14 to 18 October at the headquarters of FAO in Rome, Italy, and online. Similar to previous years, it was structured around three main pillars: Global Youth Action, Science and Innovation, and Hand-in-Hand Investment. Through these pillars, the Forum emphasized intergenerational collaboration and cross-sector partnerships across policy, science, education and investment. This year, it also hosted pivotal discussions and events, including the annual World Food Day celebrations, the High-Level Rome Water Dialogue on WASAG (the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture), the Global Family Farming Forum and the Indigenous Peoples’ Advocacy Nomadic Tent. Bringing together over 8 000 participants in Rome and more than 50 000 online, these dialogues and sessions highlighted the WFF’s commitment to fostering inclusive dialogue and action, addressing not only food security but also water scarcity, sustainable family farming and the urgent need for comprehensive, climate-resilient solutions.

Under the banner of “Good food for all, for today and tomorrow” the WFF rallied participants to engage in learning, knowledge-sharing and partnership-building. It celebrated innovative solutions, fostered investment in agrifood systems transformation, mobilized support for cutting-edge research, and forged connections among leaders and youth who are shaping a more resilient food future.

In 2024, the WFF remained committed to fostering inclusivity and innovation. It created an empowering space for youth, Indigenous Peoples, women and marginalized communities to lead and influence change. It continued to inspire and mobilize a growing community, pushing the boundaries of what is possible. Through a shared mission to sustainably transform our agrifood systems, the Forum set a course toward a future where no one is left behind, food security is a universal reality, and the right to healthy diets and a healthy planet is secured for all.



2024 theme: “Good food for all, for today and tomorrow”

In 2024, the WFF focused its efforts on the theme: “[Good food for all, for today and tomorrow](#)”. It set out to achieve this goal by fostering innovation, partnerships, increased investments in agrifood systems, science and evidence-backed activities, and above all inclusiveness – with youth, women, Indigenous Peoples and farmers leading the way.

The 2024 theme invited people from around the world to explore what “good food” means to them and offered an array of working definitions:

Good food means healthy diets for all, through the sustainable production of livestock, fisheries and crops. It means nurturing biodiversity and responsibly managing our forests, wetlands, soil and water. It means curbing food loss and waste, scaling up clean energy, and leveraging inclusive, innovative, evidence-based policies and data for progress. It means increasing investments in agrifood systems, while addressing complexities, synergies and trade-offs, acknowledging that there is no one-size-fits-all solution, and we must innovate and adapt our actions to diverse local contexts.

Above all, the 2024 WFF stressed how good food means coming together across cultures, generations and sectors to identify, invest and act on agrifood systems solutions for the greater good of our planet and humanity.

In this context, the WFF mobilized people of all ages from around the world through a range of events, innovations, targeted agrifood investments and climate finance, and solutions designed to spark holistic, strategic and at-scale sustainable agrifood systems transformation. By forging new paths of action and multi-sector/multi-agent partnerships for agrifood impact at the local, regional and global levels, the WFF aimed to achieve a more sustainable, resilient, inclusive and hunger-free food future for all.



World Food Forum 2024 in numbers

Flagship event attendance



19 734 registrations from 147 countries from all regions of the world



8 000+ in person attendees at FAO



50 000+ online views and visits



200+ sessions and exhibitions

Outreach



1.7 billion social media accounts reached

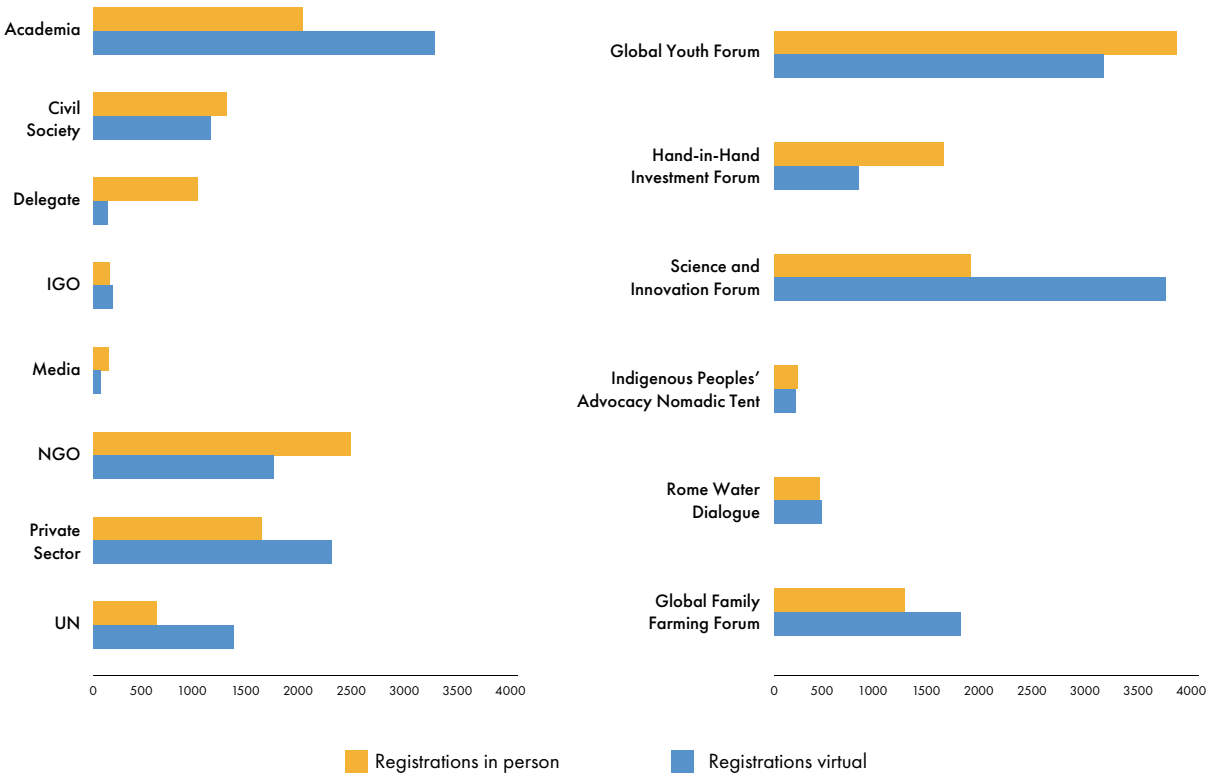


1 280 press clippings



234 000 visits to WFF and World Food Day websites

Participation



World Food Forum flagship event

The [opening ceremony of the 2024 WFF flagship event](#), held on 14 October, gathered global leaders, young changemakers, innovators, scientists, investors and a wide range of stakeholders to address urgent challenges in building sustainable and resilient agrifood systems. Hosted at FAO headquarters, the event was opened by FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu who discussed how the 2024 theme reflects the core of FAO's mission together with the importance of FAO's [four betters](#).

In a powerful display of global solidarity, esteemed leaders highlighted their shared commitment to addressing the challenges facing our agrifood systems. Youth advocates also delivered inspiring messages, stressing the urgent need for collaborative action. Key speakers at the event included: Director-General of the World Trade Organization Dr Ms Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, King Mswati III of Eswatini, King Letsie III of Lesotho, President of the Dominican Republic H.E. Luis Rodolfo Abinader Corona, President of Liberia H.E. Nyuma Boakai, President of Peru H.E. Dina Ercilia Boluarte Zegarra, Prime Minister of Barbados H.E. Mia Amor Mottley, President of Cuba H.E. Miguel Díaz-Canel, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan H.E. Tshering Tobgay and President of Paraguay H.E. Santiago Peña Palacios.

Three youth panel discussions were held during the opening event on the themes of "Leaving no one behind", "Knowledge and innovation for agrifood systems transformation", and "Financing and trade in agrifood systems for good food for all, for today and tomorrow". The ceremony also included cultural youth performances by UNIMA Indonesia and Gens D'Ys Irish Dancers. It closed to the music of the 2024 WFF Anthem.



"As we look to the future, this week has reaffirmed the vital role of youth, women and diverse stakeholders in shaping the future of our agrifood systems."

—Qu Dongyu, FAO Director-General

The event transpired with inspiring intergenerational dialogue, demonstrations and solution development across the Global Youth Forum, the Science and Innovation Forum, the Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum, Indigenous Peoples' Advocacy Nomadic Tent, the Global Family Farming Forum, the Rome Water Dialogue, and World Food Day. With 8 000 attendees in person, more than 50 000 online visits, and more than 200 sessions, it was a week full of both words and action.

The event came to a conclusion with a [closing ceremony](#) which was held on 18 October and brought together global leaders, renowned speakers, performers and youth representatives to celebrate the week's achievements and reinforce commitments to transforming agrifood systems. The event opened with a moving performance by singer [Putri Ariani](#) and a [video recap](#) showcasing highlights from the 2024 Forum. This was followed by keynote addresses by the President of the Co-Operative Republic of Guyana H.E. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, and the Minister of Agriculture of Thailand Narumon Pinyosinwat, on behalf of the Prime Minister of Thailand H.E. Paetongtarn Shinawatr.

The session then moved into panel discussions to present the outcomes of the sessions held under the umbrella of the WFF. This included a panel on the outcomes of the High-Level Rome Water Dialogue on WASAG, the Global Family Farming Forum and the Indigenous Peoples' Advocacy Nomadic Tent, led by Deputy Directors-General Maurizio Martina and Beth Bechdol. This was followed by a panel on Global Youth Action, led by WFF Youth Policy Board member Chemora Mcknee. Similarly, two panels were also held on the Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum and the Science and Innovation Forum, led by FAO Chief Economist Máximo Torero Cullen and FAO Chief Scientist ad interim Beth Crawford, respectively.

FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu gave the closing remarks, expressing gratitude for the collective efforts that made the flagship event a success, highlighting the importance of collaboration in transforming global agrifood systems. He praised the week's accomplishments, and emphasized the importance of an inclusive approach, urging young people to build friendships and adopt open attitudes. He also celebrated initiatives such as the WFF Youth Food Lab (YFL) and the [FAO elearning Academy](#), underscoring FAO's commitment to "Good food for all, for today and tomorrow". He then brought the 2024 WFF flagship event to a close with renewed inspiration for global collaboration and sustainable action going forward.



Draft Global Youth Action Plan 2025-2026



WFF Global Youth Forum highlights

Overview

The Global Youth Forum aims to harness the passion, creativity and potential of young people to drive transformative action within agrifood systems. As a catalytic movement, it serves as both a platform for youth participation in food governance and a centre for innovation, fostering youth-led solutions that can address critical challenges facing our agrifood systems.

The Global Youth Forum includes a diverse set of thematic programmes that encourage cross-sectoral collaboration, innovation and investment across generations. These programmes include the Youth Assembly, the Youth Innovation Lab, the Youth Education programme, the Youth Culture programme, and the Local Youth Action programme. Each of these initiatives plays a crucial role in empowering young people, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to agrifood systems transformation at local, national and global levels.

The 2024 Global Youth Forum, as the culmination of the efforts of all programmes over the year, provided a dynamic and inclusive space where youth from all sectors could unite, share ideas and shape the future of agrifood systems. Through this collaborative framework, the Global Youth Forum amplified the voices of youth to ensure their active participation in creating a more sustainable, resilient and equitable food future for all.

Objectives

The 2024 Global Youth Forum aimed to:

- Empower youth leadership in agrifood systems by equipping young leaders with tools, knowledge, networks and platforms to champion sustainable and inclusive agrifood practices.
- Inspire youth to actively engage in policy, governance and the broader global dialogue on agrifood systems transformation.
- Provide a space for youth to share knowledge, build networks and ignite collaborative initiatives, thus directly contributing to the implementation of the United Nations Youth 2030 Strategy and strengthening youth engagement in the ongoing follow-up to the 2021 United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS).
- Facilitate global dialogue around agrifood systems transformation by creating an inclusive space for multigenerational discussions among youth, policymakers and experts from around the world to address critical challenges, discuss new ideas, share lessons learned, and connect with a wide array of cultural traditions.
- Showcase and champion innovation and education by highlighting and supporting youth-led solutions and projects that demonstrate scalable, sustainable innovations to transform agrifood systems.
- Promote local action by supporting the establishment and growth of WFF National Chapters to drive localized initiatives tailored to specific regional challenges.
- Foster intergenerational collaboration by strengthening partnerships across sectors, enabling multi-stakeholder collaboration for impactful outcomes.

Key outcomes and takeaways

- **Flagship event participation facilitated:** The 2024 Global Youth Forum engaged over 1 500 youth delegates and more than 7 700 registered participants from around the world, including youth leaders, experts and policymakers, in discussions focused on transforming agrifood systems. In addition to 14 mainstage events, 42 youth side events were organized, 35 youth-related exhibitions were showcased and 11 Regional Youth Forum events were hosted by FAO country offices around the world.

- **National Chapters engaged and launched:** 60 youth leaders representing 24 WFF National Chapters gathered at the WFF flagship event to showcase their impactful work from the past year. The event “WFF National Chapters: Inspiring Local Youth Leadership in Agrifood Systems Transformation” on 17 October underscored the crucial principle of “thinking global, acting local”, brought together National Chapter leaders and FAO Country Representatives, and served as the launching platform for new National Chapters in Argentina, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Italy, Mauritania, Peru and Qatar. National Chapters also led six side events and contributed to the 11 Regional Youth Forum events during the WFF.
- **Youth-led solutions highlighted and supported:** The Forum showcased over 50 youth-led initiatives that demonstrate innovative approaches to various aspects in agrifood systems transformation, emphasizing the potential of young innovators, entrepreneurs, researchers and leaders in driving change. These efforts were supported with over USD 350 000 in grants, seed funding, mentorship opportunities and other prizes.
- **Consultations for the Youth Assembly’s Global Youth Action Plan fostered:** The Forum included consultations with over 880 youth participants across six regional workshops, allowing youth to contribute to the Global Youth Action Plan for 2025–2026, focusing on actionable items tailored to local needs. The Plan was launched on 18 October and identified two actions per region aimed at addressing each region’s policy priority, which will form the basis of the future work of the WFF’s Youth Policy Board.
- **Diverse thematic Youth Assembly sessions facilitated:** Participants engaged in thematic Youth Assembly sessions covering critical topics such as youth as catalysts for policy transformation; the road to the 2024 United Nations Climate Change Conference; the Rome Water Dialogue; the forestry and agriculture nexus; combatting desertification, land degradation and drought; achieving SDG 2 without breaching the 1.5 °C threshold; the Committee for World Security (CFS); youth leadership for implementing a systems approach to agrifood systems transformation; aquatic food systems; and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. These sessions enabled participants to propose solutions and share best practices with more than 1 300 participants.
- **WFF Young Scientists Group (YSG) Report launched:** The WFF YSG unveiled its report, “Digital technologies for multidimensional youth engagement for agrifood systems transformation”, emphasizing the role of technology in driving youth-led change and offering insights into how youth can utilize, develop and engage with digital technologies to actively transform agrifood systems.
- **Funding needs highlighted:** Discussions focused on the need for increased funding and investment in youth-led agrifood initiatives, emphasizing financial support as essential for implementing sustainable practices.
- **Interactive educational opportunities provided:** The Forum featured interactive intergenerational panels, question and answer sessions, discovery stations, hackathons, innovative education programme demonstrations, competitions and more, fostering direct engagement between youth and experts, which encouraged collaborative problem-solving and knowledge sharing among participants.
- **Global partnerships strengthened:** The Global Youth Forum actively fostered collaboration across a wide spectrum of stakeholders, including governments, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector. These partnerships were pivotal in amplifying youth involvement in agrifood systems transformation. By connecting with key entities such as the FAO, regional and local chapters, and international youth organizations, the Forum ensured the alignment of youth-led local and global strategies for sustainable development. Significant efforts were made to integrate multilateral discussions into actionable frameworks, thereby enhancing the capacity for youth to lead change within their communities. Events like the Youth Innovation Lab’s competitions and the Youth Assembly’s thematic consultations further highlighted the importance of collective action in addressing global challenges such as food insecurity, climate resilience and biodiversity conservation.
- **Commitment to inclusivity fortified:** Inclusivity was a cornerstone of the Global Youth Forum, with deliberate efforts to amplify the voices of marginalized groups. From Indigenous communities and smallholder farmers to youth from underserved regions, the Forum ensured that diverse perspectives were prominently represented. Programmes like the Local Youth Action initiative and Regional Youth Assembly consultations emphasized

the need for meaningful and equitable participation, particularly from youth groups traditionally excluded from decision-making processes. The Forum also hosted sessions aimed at addressing systemic inequalities in agrifood systems, promoting gender equality and providing platforms for young leaders to contribute to policy dialogues. By prioritizing inclusivity, the Global Youth Forum demonstrated a commitment to building resilient, equitable agrifood systems that reflect the needs and aspirations of all young stakeholders.

- **Cultural traditions celebrated:** Showcasing the importance of creativity in engaging youth, cultural performances enriched the Forum experience and promoted sustainable practices within our agrifood systems. The Global Youth Forum presented three art installations and 42 performances across 26 WFF events, showcasing a mix of film, visual arts, poetry, dance, music and spoken word – all conveying critical messages and information related to our agrifood systems. Cultural segments also included coffee talks and tastings, networking receptions and cooking demonstrations.



Global Youth Forum in numbers

Events, sessions and reach

- 56 sessions held
- 41 artists
- 42 artistic performances
- 1 700+ people reached with youth consultations

Flagship event attendance

- 7 765 Global Youth Forum registrants from 100+ countries
- 1 500+ Youth representatives and observers, and 21 National Youth Delegations
- 60 National Chapter leads

Youth-led solutions

- 50+ youth-led solutions showcased
- USD 350 000+ in prizes and support awarded to youth



FAO Science and Innovation Forum highlights

Overview

The third edition of the FAO Science and Innovation Forum (SIF) was organized from 14 to 18 October 2024 under the umbrella of the WFF. The main theme of SIF 2024 was “Inclusive Science and Innovation for Agrifood Systems Transformation, Leaving No One Behind”, aligned with the 2024 WFF overall theme of “Good food for all, for today and tomorrow”.

Inaugurated by FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu, the SIF brought together recognized scientists, innovation experts and policymakers, as well as small-scale producers, Indigenous Peoples, women, youth and the private sector, in a bid to encourage a diversity of perspectives based on science. It aimed to facilitate inclusive debate and showcase how science and innovation can be leveraged for agrifood systems transformation.

Some of this year’s notable participants included Costa Rica’s Agricultural Minister Victor Carvajal Porras, Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency Rafael Mariano Grossi, Nobel Laureate for Economics Michael Kremer and Nobel Laureate for Peace Carlos Nobre, and many others.

The sessions at the SIF were organized around three critical topics:

- **Biotechnologies:** Exploring the latest advancements and applications in biotechnology to enhance agricultural productivity, resilience and sustainability.
- **Community-driven innovations:** Highlighting grassroots innovations and community-led initiatives that drive local and regional agrifood systems transformation.
- **Digital agriculture:** Examining the role of digital technologies, such as precision farming, the Internet of Things, and artificial intelligence, in revolutionizing agricultural practices and improving supply chain efficiencies.

Some of these topics were selected not only for their significant role in transitioning towards efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems, but also because of the questions they raise and the sometimes-polarizing viewpoints they elicit. These areas are also FAO’s priorities in innovation, as laid out in the FAO medium term plan 2022–2025, and in line with the FAO Science and Innovation Strategy.

The three selected topics were explored in-depth, alongside discussions of how to close the science, technology and innovation gap in low- and middle-income countries; scaling up successful solutions; increasing their impacts; and harnessing the power of behavioural science. These topics took centre stage at the WFF opening ceremony, particularly during the panel “Knowledge and innovation for agrifood systems transformation” where young women scientists from diverse regions presented their views.



Objectives

SIF 2024 aimed to:

- Facilitate scientific debate on agrifood systems transformation, identifying emerging trends, exploring scientific and technological advances and associated challenges and opportunities.
- Showcase inclusive science and evidence-based innovative solutions, especially in support of small-scale producers, processors and other groups in situation of vulnerability.
- Promote cross-learning and co-creation of knowledge for sourcing, testing, and scaling technologies and innovations.
- Strengthen science and evidence-based decision-making for the transformation of agrifood systems, ensuring that inequalities are adequately addressed.
- Apply innovative approaches to make scientific knowledge more widely accessible, useful, usable and used.
- Create a safe space for innovation, including creativity, disruptive thinking, revisiting of internal processes, mindset change and learning fast from failures.

Key outcomes

- SIF 2024 had a total of 15 sessions, some of which were jointly organized with the Global Youth Forum, Rome Water Dialogue, Global Family Farming Forum and the Indigenous Peoples' Advocacy Nomadic Tent.
- SIF 2024 saw the launch of two reports: the YSG report, [Digital technologies for multi-dimensional youth engagement in agrifood systems transformation](#), and the foresight report, [Shaping sustainable agrifood futures: pre-emerging and emerging technologies and innovations for impact](#).
- SIF 2024 witnessed the launch of the [Accelerator Mentorship Programme for Women-led Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Africa](#), a component of the jointly led FAO–International Agri-Food Network initiative.
- SIF 2024 presented the first-ever Farmer Field Schools Innovation Award to famers from Egypt, Syria and Uganda.
- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and FAO on the establishment of the Acceleration Zone. In parallel, pioneering solutions were showcased at the Exhibition Area during the flagship event, and many activities were organized at the Acceleration Zone throughout the week.
- SIF 2024 also collaborated with two artists who created live drawings at several sessions as they took place. Their drawings innovatively captured the dynamic debates and discussions throughout the SIF.
- The SIF gave particular attention to the critical roles of women and girls in science by organizing a side event on the topic with the YSG and facilitating participation of young women scientists in several sessions.



Takeaways

The 15 sessions of SIF brought together a diversity of ideas, insights and expertise. They reiterate that the availability, accessibility and affordability of science, technology and innovation, and equitable access to these critical tools are central to agrifood systems transformation. On the other hand, there is a need to harness the power of foresight to identify and analyze emerging technologies and innovation, and their enabling environment, as well as develop future-oriented strategies for policymakers and other key stakeholders.

On the first topic, biotechnologies, SIF 2024 discussed that the scope of biotechnology should be broadened beyond genetically modified organisms and staple crops. Policies, regulations and funding mechanisms should reward academia and innovators for engaging with small-scale producers and under-resourced communities. At the same time, frameworks that protect the most vulnerable should be developed and ensure that technology reaches those who need it most.

Gene editing application in agrifood systems can be harnessed to improve crops and livestock resistant to pests and diseases and tolerant to abiotic stresses, as well as provide opportunities for improving nutrition and food safety. However, the potential environmental and food safety concerns, as well as ethical and regulatory concerns should be observed.

For these regulations to serve as incentives for innovation, there should be clarity in what they seek to accomplish, and they should be achievable, transparent, non-discriminatory and consistent in their application. They also need to remain relevant, especially when considering their application to rapidly advancing fields of technology.

On the second topic, digital agriculture, SIF 2024 highlighted that for artificial intelligence and digital innovations to contribute meaningfully to poverty reduction and food security, they must bridge, not widen, the triple divide of digital, rural and gender equity. Governance and collaboration across sectors, coupled with open access to foundational data services in the pre-competitive space, are essential for enabling change-makers to deliver impact where it's most needed. Innovations need to be supported by systems change for better adoption. Change must help to unlock viable funding, develop new implementation models, and create enabling policies and institutions.

On the third topic, community-driven innovations, SIF 2024 underscored how innovation must respond to local, national and regional needs and priorities. Empowering local actors through inclusive innovation ecosystems and bridging the gap between traditional and scientific knowledge systems is key. Farmer Field Schools, for instance, can serve as innovation hubs, where farmers test and refine ideas, driving advancements in agricultural practices.

Furthermore, harnessing behavioural science cannot be practiced in a vacuum, especially when it comes to agrifood systems. All types of natural and social science, including innovation, technology, nutrition, agronomy, economics and psychology, must be leveraged to better understand people in their specific context.

Moving forward, FAO's agenda for scaling up innovation means drawing on strengths and fostering a culture of innovation and risk-taking. For innovation to scale, we must better measure its impact and understand its full potential. Metrics should reflect food security, nutrition and resilience.

Finally, partnerships are vital for innovation and key to lasting impact. Governments, civil society, the private sector and communities must unite. This is how we will build solutions that last. The global divide in capacity must be addressed. Low- and middle-income countries deserve equal access to science and innovation. They need investment, resources and training to thrive.



Science and Innovation Forum in numbers

Events, sessions and reach

- 123 speakers from 38 countries of all regions, and 48 global and regional institutions
- 2 SIF plenary sessions
- 13 Technical SIF sessions
- 20 exhibitors
- 4 Regional SIF events

SIF attendance

- 5 996 registrants
- 2 309 in-person attendees
- 3 687 online attendees
- 1 256 in-person technical SIF session attendees



FAO | WORLD FOOD FORUM | HAND-IN-HAND INVESTMENT

WELCOME TO THE HAND-IN-HAND INVESTMENT FORUM 2024



FAO Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum highlights

Overview

The Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Investment Forum is the annual culmination of the FAO HIH Initiative, providing a unique platform for FAO Member governments to present their country prioritized agrifood investment opportunities to a global audience of agrifood investors including international financial institutions, foundations and impact funds, the private sector, donors and other development partners.

The 2024 edition of the FAO HIH Investment Forum, held from 15 to 17 October at FAO headquarters, was the third and largest HIH Investment Forum to date. The Investment Forum complemented the WFF 2024 theme by focusing its discussions around the question “How can we facilitate investments to support countries to transform their agrifood systems to sustainably deliver good food for all, for today and tomorrow?”.

This year’s HIH Investment Forum showcased agrifood Investment Plans from 29 Member governments and five regional initiatives. The presentations of the 29 national agrifood investment plans were grouped according to geographical location, resulting in a total of 13 individual investment sessions with two to three countries presenting their agrifood investment plans in each session. The number of regional initiatives presenting at this year’s Investment Forum more than doubled from 2023, with three new initiatives – Amazonia, Caribbean Small Island Developing States and Southern Africa – joining the previously established Dry Corridor and Sahel.

This year, each agrifood investment presentation was followed by an in-depth discussion on the investment opportunities led by agrifood investment experts from multilateral and regional development banks with the participation of other investment partners, including the private sector. This new innovative format fostered a more interactive and dynamic discussion that helped to draw out and highlight the potential in the agrifood investment plans.

Each of the five regional investment plans – which were developed by the governments of the countries involved in the regional initiative in collaboration with the regional bodies and FAO – were presented separately.

The official opening of the HIH Investment Forum on 15 October 2024 consisted of keynote speeches followed by two panel discussions. The keynote speeches were delivered by presidents and vice-presidents of development banks as well as the private sector. The panel discussions involved ministers and senior representatives from FAO Members, development banks and the private sector. The first day of the HIH Investment Forum concluded with a networking reception with the private sector hosted by FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu, which included two interventions from senior private sector representatives.

The second day of the HIH Investment Forum began with a high-level panel discussion focused on accelerating financing for agrifood systems transformation to achieve SDG 2. This high-level panel included representatives from Member agencies, foundations and impact funds and innovative financing initiatives. In addition, a roundtable on coffee investments was arranged, building on the foundations created in previous HIH Investment Fora to provide a more focused, expert-driven and in-depth discussion on investing in global coffee value chains.

The 2024 HIH Investment Forum facilitated increased networking among investors and FAO Members as a key priority. The first ever Investor Networking Lounge was introduced, which provided an exclusive area for Investment Forum participants to meet, network and catalyze collaboration around increasing investment in agrifood systems. This dedicated networking space was accessed by 291 participants and contained free-standing totems that provided real-time access to the HIH Bilateral Matchmaking App, making the booking of bilateral meetings with Member governments by investors more accessible.

Objectives

The 2024 HIH Investment Forum aimed to:

- Present agrifood investment plans that were developed through the HIH Initiative to support governments to transform their agrifood systems to end poverty (SDG 1) and hunger (SDG 2), and reduce inequalities (SDG 10).
- Through the HIH Investment Forum dedicated Bilateral Matchmaking App, provide unique opportunities for bilateral engagements between investors and governments to further advance collaboration on sustainable agrifood investment opportunities.

Key outcomes and takeaways

- The HIH Investment Forum is now recognized as a go-to annual international event for agrifood investors and governments. The HIH Initiative is in increasing demand by FAO Members with 75 countries signed up to date.
- Strong government ownership and leadership was highly effective in engaging investors with over 50 ministers and vice ministers participating, including on high level panels as well as in presenting government prioritized agrifood investments.
- With its focus on reducing poverty, and using the unique Geospatial Platform, HIH is proving to be an innovative and effective means of mobilizing support and investments for at-scale agrifood systems transformation.
- High demand for HIH matchmaking meetings with governments was recorded from investors. Over 600 requests were recorded this year, an almost 50 percent increase from last year.
- There was a strong interest in climate smart agrifood investments from investors, including climate financiers as well as regional banks and international financing institutions in particular. Mainstreaming of the ExACT Carbon accounting tool in investments has proven useful and needs to be further advanced in future HIH Investment Fora.
- Follow-up support planned on engagements is ongoing with indicative investments of USD 3.97 billion already identified for further discussion with countries.



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Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum in numbers

The 2024 HIH Investment Forum successfully attracted a larger and more diverse range of stakeholders, including multilateral, regional and national development banks, private sector representatives, impact investors and funds, FAO Members, intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations, civil society and United Nations Agencies, reaching more than 1 500 in person registrations. This increased engagement facilitated a more inclusive and holistic discussion on accelerating investment in agrifood systems transformation for sustainable development.

The Investment Forum provided a unique opportunity for FAO Members to present their agrifood investment plans and to engage with agrifood investors on a bilateral basis. This year, 605 requests for bilateral matchmaking meetings were received for the 29 HIH countries and five HIH regional initiatives that presented their investment plans. The bilateral matchmaking meetings, held between representatives of the governments of the HIH countries and various stakeholders interested in investing in the transformation of agrifood systems, are being followed up at the country, regional and global levels.

A total of 115 agrifood investment cases, with a combined value of USD 15 billion in sustainable agrifood investment reaching more than 120 million beneficiaries, were presented at the Forum. Based on feedback from countries, engagements are ongoing with indicative investments of USD 3.97 billion already identified for further discussion with countries by investors.

Events, sessions and reach

- 29 HIH countries and 5 regional initiatives presented a total of 115 sustainable agrifood investment cases
- 120 million potential beneficiaries
- 23 sessions and events
- 22 interviews arranged with senior-level representatives of 16 countries and IGOs, and 6 private sector entities
- 155 speakers
- 605 bilateral matchmaking meetings requested

HIH Investment Forum attendance

- 2 330 registered participants
- 1 555 in-person participants from 143 different countries
- 776 online participants from 132 different countries
- 291 networking lounge attendees

Sustainable agrifood investment cases value

- USD 15 billion combined value of presented cases
- USD 3.97 billion in investments prioritized for immediate follow up discussion

بيئة أفضل

更好环境

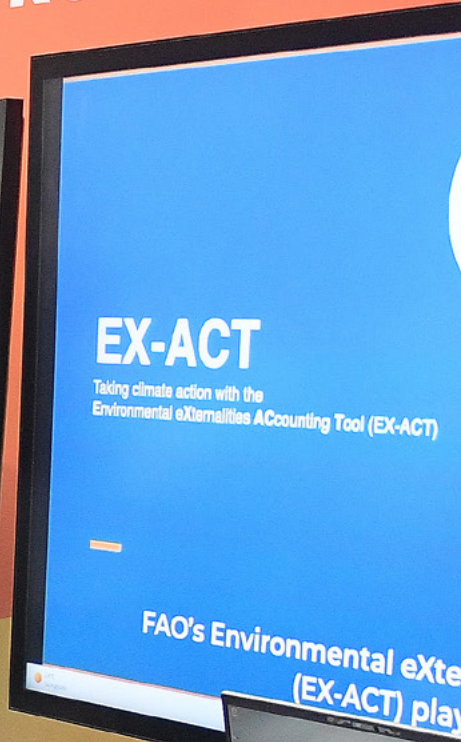
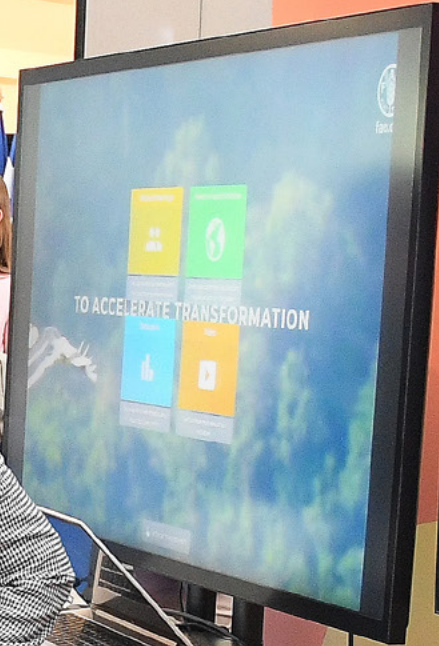
Better environment

Amélioration
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улучшение состояния
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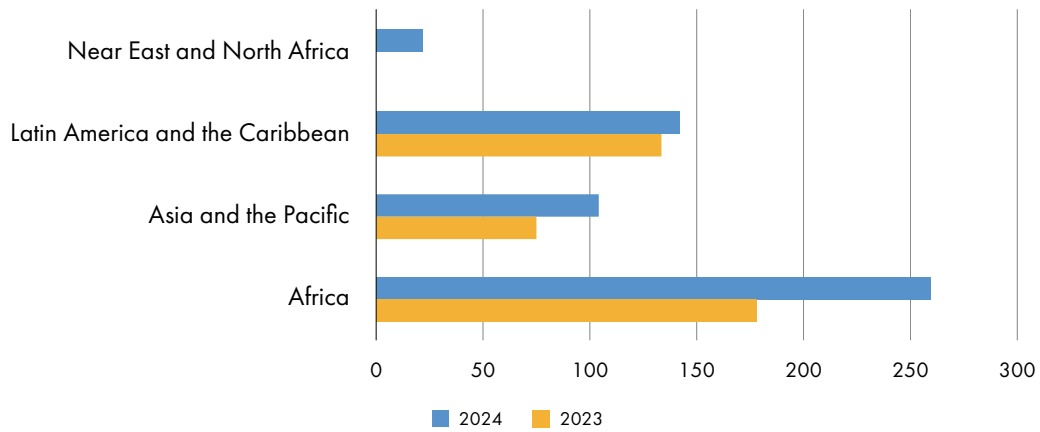
HAND-IN-HAND INVESTMENT FORUM



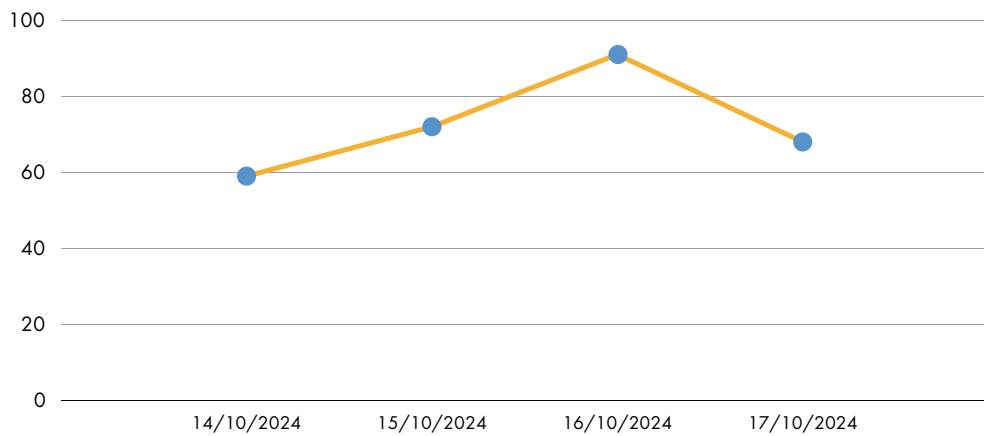
FAO's Environmental eXtremities AAccounting Tool (EX-ACT) play



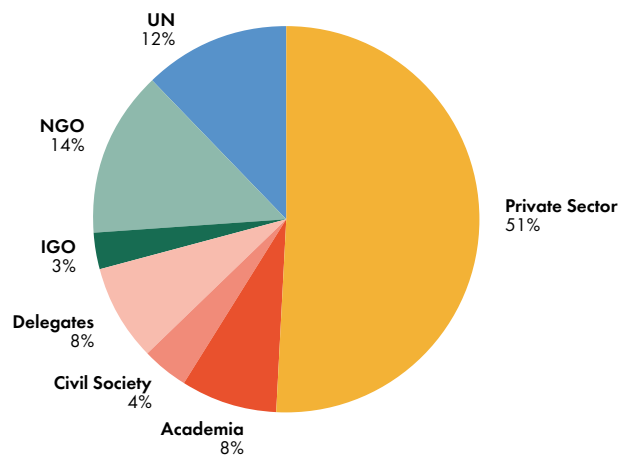
Bilateral meetings by region 2023 & 2024



Networking lounge attendees per day



Networking lounge attendees by category





Indigenous Peoples' Advocacy Nomadic Tent highlights

Overview

From October 14 to 18, two Saami Indigenous Nomadic Tents (Lavvo), coming from Norway, were hosted at FAO headquarters for the third consecutive year. These tents have become a symbol of the importance FAO gives to meaningfully include Indigenous Peoples in its work. The Lavvo served as a vibrant space for a wide array of events, talks, exhibitions, food and music, related to Indigenous Peoples' issues and to advocacy activities around the sacred fire in its middle: the *boaššu*, the hearth.

Over the week, the tent welcomed more than 100 Indigenous and non-Indigenous leaders, chefs and artists from the seven socio-cultural regions of the world to participate in the different discussions and manifestations about the relevance of Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems in the transformation of more sustainable food systems.

Given that this was an intersessional year of the United Nations Global Indigenous Youth Forum (UNGIYF), the only United Nations forum entirely dedicated to Indigenous Youth, the activities within the tent were particularly significant. They not only celebrated Indigenous Peoples' voices but also built momentum for the upcoming third session of the UNGIYF in 2025, reinforcing the importance of Indigenous youth engagement in policy-making processes. In addition, a delegation of 14 Indigenous youth, took part in various activities and events organized by the WFF, highlighting the increasing commitment of FAO to include Indigenous Peoples' perspectives.

Objectives

The Indigenous Peoples' Advocacy Nomadic Tent aimed to:

- Give visibility to Indigenous chefs, musicians, activists and experts from all over the world to showcase their traditional cuisines, exchange knowledge, and raise awareness about the importance of preserving Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems.
- Ensure technical content to highlight the importance of engaging with Indigenous Peoples, recognizing them as knowledge and rights holders.
- Advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples as active actors in policy-making processes, ensuring their perspectives and rights are respected and protected.
- Enhance Indigenous Peoples' participation in the WFF agenda, addressing requests from Indigenous youth who participated in the previous two editions of the WFF.

Key outcomes

The Indigenous Peoples' Advocacy Nomadic Tent hosted eight Tent Talks, where world-class experts presented a burning topic in 10-minute long passionate interventions; five Fire Talks, which served as intimate moments of discussions on Indigenous Peoples' issues around the sacred fire; and 15 side events organized by other FAO technical offices (the International Year of Camelids, the Food and Nutrition Division and the Social Protection team under the [Rural Transformation and Gender Equality](#)) and various external partners (the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, the government of Panama, the Pacific Island Food Revolution and the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs). The Talks and side events put Indigenous Peoples at the centre of the discussion, highlighting how their role is vital in fighting food insecurity, the climate crisis and biodiversity loss.

In 2024, there was a significant increase in Indigenous Peoples' representation and involvement across all WFF activities and events, including technical panels, policy discussions and cultural events. Key moments featured Indigenous Peoples, including the WFF grand opening ceremony, the high-level opening of the FAO SIF, the WFF Global Youth Forum opening, the WFF youth concert and the WFF closing ceremony.

Under the umbrella of the WFF Global Youth Forum and the Youth Education programme specifically, two sessions were organized during the week: a masterclass titled "Safeguarding Indigenous Peoples' food systems for Better Nutrition" and a better life session titled "The right to adequate food – tools for youth to ensure this right for all", respectively with the FAO Food and Nutrition Division and Right to Food team, with the final aim of supporting young people in gaining access to the expertise of Indigenous youth.

A particularly remarkable development in 2024 was the inclusion of Chair of the Expert Mechanism on Indigenous Peoples' Issues Valmaine Toki as a high-level speaker of the SIF opening, and inclusion of an Indigenous youth from the Arctic, Sara-Elvira Kuhmunen, in the panel of the side event "Women and Girls in Science", organized by the YSG. This signifies a growing recognition of Indigenous Peoples' food and knowledge systems as game changers in the transformation of our food systems in more resilient and sustainable.

The week culminated in the mainstage event "Indigenous Youth Voices in the Implementation of the UN Global Indigenous Youth Forum Outcome", in which seven Indigenous youth representatives from the seven socio-cultural regions discussed the outcomes of the 2023 second session of the UNGIYF, and the progress underway during the intersessional year regarding the implementation of the Rome Declaration on Safeguarding Seven Generations in Times of Food, Social, and Ecological Crises. They also discussed the campaign "My Food Vision is...", which was launched during the WFF in 2022. On this occasion, FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu, delivered a speech in which he stated that the Rome Declaration is not just a document, but is a call to action that reflects the collective wisdom of Indigenous youth globally. He also remarked on the commitment of FAO to host the third session of the UNGIYF in 2025.



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Takeaways

- Indigenous Peoples' food systems are vital to addressing global challenges such as climate change and biodiversity loss.
- Indigenous youth are the key to the future of their food and knowledge systems, and their culture.
- Indigenous youth are crucial in the fight against ultra-processed foods consumption. Efforts should focus on educating and mobilizing youth to preserve traditional knowledge and advocate for food sovereignty.
- Indigenous Peoples, in particular Indigenous youth, need to be empowered through capacity building and resource support.
- Indigenous Peoples are not just guardians, they are also the protectors and defenders of biodiversity and the planet.
- Indigenous Peoples view their food systems as deeply intertwined with nature, emphasizing that the two cannot be separated.
- It is essential to advocate for the inclusion of Indigenous governance systems in biodiversity policies.
- Poverty for many Indigenous Peoples' communities is tied to the loss of land, cultural identity and self-determination rather than merely material deprivation.
- It is fundamental to decolonize rural development policies and include Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes.
- It is important to give Indigenous communities ownership over the research process and recognize their contributions in scientific discoveries and intellectual property.

Indigenous Peoples' Advocacy Nomadic Tent in numbers

Events, sessions and reach

- 14 Indigenous youth delegation members from 6 socio-cultural regions*
- 8 Tent Talks
- 5 Fire Talks
- 15 side events
- 10 chefs
- 8 musicians
- 53 Indigenous and non-Indigenous experts and researchers
- 13 Indigenous-led organizations and networks

Nomadic Tent attendance

- 154 registrants
- 140 in-person attendees

*The delegation of Indigenous youth was only composed of six of the seven socio-cultural regions because the Indigenous youth representing Central and Eastern Europe, Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia could not obtain their visa on time, which prevented not only their participation but also a better coverage of their expertise and perspectives on the region.

FARM VENUE

16 October 2024, 9:30 - 11:00 CET



GLOBAL FAMILY & FARMING FORUM

ROUNDTABLE



SESSION 4

Trends affecting the future of small-scale family farming, rural employment and rural transformation



Abdoulaye Mohamadou

Executive Secretary, Comité permanent Etat-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILS)



Guillaume Soullier

Agricultural Economist of the Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIADI)



Haroon Akram Lodhi

Professor of Economics, Global Justice and Development in the Department of Global Justice and Development at Trent University, Peterborough, Canada



Tahng Lixia

Professor and Deputy Director at the College of International Development and Global Agriculture, China Agricultural University



Antonio Onorati

Member of Associazione Rurale Italiana, Member of European Coordination Via Campesina and Honorary President of Centro Internazionale Crocevia



Global Family Farming Forum highlights

Overview

In 2024, the UN Decade of Family Farming 2019–2028 (UNDIFF) is at its halfway point. To mark this important milestone, a Global Family Farming Forum was held at FAO headquarters from 15 to 18 October 2024. Co-organized by FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the event celebrated family farming as the backbone of diverse, innovative and dynamic agrifood systems. It identified policy innovations that support family farming and showcased examples of successful experiences from all over the world. With innovation, gender equality, science, investment and support for family farming at its forefront, the Global Family Farming Forum has been led by young farmers, who guided discussions on priorities for the future of agrifood systems.

The Global Family Farming Forum paid homage to family farmers worldwide, taking place in a special farm building on FAO premises. Participants had the chance to explore an exhibition celebrating the diversity of family farming, examples of innovative and interactive solutions, an exciting programme of sessions and an on-site radio station, which broadcasted additional discussions and interviews to listeners all over the world!

Objectives

The Global Family Farming Forum had the following objectives:

- Take stock of the progress made in the first half of the UNDIFF.
- Re-affirm commitment to implement the UNDIFF by state and non-state actors.
- Increase visibility of successful and necessary policy innovations, initiatives and experiences that can improve the governance of agrifood systems.
- Identify and highlight priority actions and strategies for the second half of the UNDIFF.
- Establish follow up proposals to facilitate exchanges on governance and policy innovations for family farming.

Key outcomes

The Global Family Farming Forum provided a platform for exchange on family farming and created links to the discussions on youth, science and innovation, and investment being held during the WFF, additionally contributing to the outcomes of the WFF with the meaningful participation of family farmers, ministers, parliamentarians, researchers and other actors involved in the UNDIFF's national and intergovernmental coordination. Thousands of people visited the barn – a farm-like structure built on the FAO premises during the flagship week that paid homage to family farmers worldwide. Around 2 000 participants joined the sessions in person and remotely during the four days.

It was an occasion to re-affirm state and non-state actors' commitment to the implementation of the UNDIFF, as well as to identify priority actions and strategies for the second half of the UNDIFF. Visibility was given to successful and necessary policy innovations, initiatives and experiences that can improve the governance of agrifood systems, for effective and inclusive policy implementation on family farming.

Follow-up proposals to support the future implementation of the UNDIFF have been identified and discussed by FAO, IFAD and other key partners and contributors of the UNDIFF.

Takeaways

Discussions held during the Global Family Farming Forum resulted in the following takeaways:

- Family farmers must be part of the solution to the complex and interconnected challenges facing agrifood systems, in particular, leveraging family farmers' potential is key to develop and implement conducive strategies to address climate change and environmental degradation.
- The role of women and youth is essential, and gender equality is the necessary precondition to achieve for food security and nutrition for all, leaving no one behind. We must work together to untap youth potential to achieve sustainable and resilient agrifood systems.
- Family farmers are key actors in the process of creating effective innovation tailored to their needs.
- There is a need to adapt public policies to the varying conditions and heterogeneity of family farmers at different stages of development.
- Small- and medium-scale family farmers are not disappearing, but evolving, transforming, and adapting to cope with instability and unpredictability.
- Cooperatives and farmers organizations are crucial to strengthen the positioning of family farmers in value chains but need good governance and a conducive policy environment.
- The UNDDF is a unique opportunity to connect different instruments, bring people to mobilize, participate and claim agency over their food systems and prompt governments to enact national action and food plans that are right to food-based, comprehensive, and informed by public participation.
- Family farmers organizations must be seen as providers of solutions and access to the ground. Support to farmers organizations must continue through complementary schemes and small strategic short-term investments with decisive impacts, along with long term flexible funding to address structural challenges.
- It is necessary to secure collective rights through innovative legal tools to protect communities' ownership, access and use of natural resources, with particular attention to women, who only own 15 percent of agricultural land while representing the majority of land workers.
- We must address the risk that climate solutions marginalize family farming, excluding it from major development policies and investments, and relegating it to compensatory policies or a peripheral role in ecological transition agreements and governance.
- Supporting access to both local and traditional food markets and public food procurement programmes has the potential to keep the benefits of value addition within territory, contributing to local, social and economic development, and helping to create employment and increases the autonomy of family farmers, cooperatives, and micro, small and medium enterprises.
- Youth delegates from farmers organizations called for the establishment of institutional mechanisms at national level (i.e. colleges of youth) to raise the voices of youth in policymaking spaces.

Global Family Farming Forum in numbers

Events, sessions and reach

- 167 model rural radio station broadcast interviews, with a total of 105 speakers in 3 languages
- 12 youth sessions
- 35 innovation stories shared
- 191 videos contest entries from 43 countries
- 53 000+ social media views of “Family Farming is...” campaign
- 8 million+ potential radio station listeners

Global Family Farming Forum attendance

- 3 000 registrants
- 300 in-person attendees
- 1 700 online attendees



© FAO

The production of in-season fruits and vegetables requires less water.

FAO



High-Level Rome Water Dialogue on WASAG (The Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture) highlights

Overview

The third edition of the Rome Water Dialogue was organized at FAO headquarters in Rome from 14 to 18 October 2024, as part of the annual WFF.

Since its launch in 2022, the Rome Water Dialogue has served as a critical platform for advancing collaboration on Integrated Water Resources Management, in particular bringing the water and agricultural sectors together for concerted actions. With climate change intensifying water scarcity and threatening global food production, this year's discussions are more important than ever.

During the flagship event, the WFF hosted a number of events and sessions related to the Rome Water Dialogue, including a dedicated session on "Innovative Approaches to Agricultural Water Management" at the Science and Innovation Forum, a special youth-led session on Water Innovation and a presentation on family farmers' access to land and water at the Family Farming Forum.

The main highlight of the 2024 dialogue focused on the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture ([WASAG](#)), a partnership hosted by FAO and launched in 2016 to address the global challenge of water scarcity in agriculture to ensure food security for all. The [High-Level Rome Water Dialogue on WASAG](#) was held on 17 October 2024.

Throughout the week, attendees also had the opportunity to visit a special exhibition on water, offering a visually immersive experience on the importance of sustainable water management in agriculture for global food security and nutrition.



© FAO/Gianfranco Chirichilli

Objectives

The objectives of the High-Level Rome Water Dialogue on WASAG were:

- Enhance collaboration among FAO Members and mobilize commitments to make WASAG more impactful and effective.
- Agree on key WASAG operating mechanisms for efficient delivery.
- Highlight the priorities in addressing water scarcity in agriculture, strengthening the connections between the agriculture and water sectors.

Key outcomes

FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu reaffirmed the importance of WASAG for FAO, providing the following three reasons:

- WASAG is one of the eight commitments that FAO made to the Water Action Agenda at the United Nations Water Conference in New York in March 2023.
- WASAG is part of FAO's contribution to the United Nations System-wide Strategy for water and sanitation.
- WASAG is part of the FAO Water Journey.

Ministers, Heads of Delegations and partners of WASAG gathered in Rome adopted the [Rome Declaration on Water Scarcity in Agriculture](#) including ten commitments which aim at addressing water scarcity increasingly exacerbated by the climate crisis – one of the world's greatest challenges affecting global food security, natural resources and the lives and livelihoods of millions of people, particularly in vulnerable regions.

FAO Members have accepted to provide strategic oversight and direction to WASAG. Six of the seven Regional Groups nominated Members of the new Steering Committee of WASAG with Prime Minister of Cabo Verde Minister José Ulisses de Pina Correia e Silva as Chair, and Special Water Envoy of the Netherlands Meike van Ginneken as Vice Chair.

The WASAG Strategy for 2025–31 was presented through a hybrid business model that seeks to mobilize resources through developing project proposals, enabling WASAG partners to implement innovative pilot projects and to rapidly scale up promising approaches to develop the political will at national level to manage scarce water better.

Members and partners agreed that FAO will convene a WASAG plenary assembly every second year in its headquarters in Rome, starting from 2026.

Members and partners also agreed that every second year, a FAO Member Nation will host a WASAG international forum – preferably on a rotating basis among regions – for WASAG partners to share experiences and advance the knowledge base. The next forum will be in 2025. The new Technical Advisory committee will oversee the technical preparation of the International WASAG forum together with the working groups and task forces.

WASAG will report to the FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG) through the WASAG Secretariat hosted by the FAO Land and Water Division.

Takeaways

- **Strengthened FAO commitment to water management:** FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu underscored WASAG's critical role in FAO's Water Action Agenda, reinforcing water scarcity as a priority issue aligned with the United Nations System-wide Strategy for water and sanitation.
- **Biennial WASAG plenary assembly in Rome:** FAO will convene a plenary assembly every two years at its headquarters in Rome, beginning in 2026, to strengthen collaboration between FAO Members and WASAG partners, and review progress.
- **New WASAG Steering Committee:** The establishment of a new WASAG Steering Committee provides strategic oversight, with leadership from FAO Members aiming to drive forward collaborative efforts in managing agricultural water scarcity.
- **Biennial WASAG forum:** To facilitate knowledge-sharing and collaboration, a WASAG international forum will be hosted every two years by different Members, starting in 2025.
- **WASAG Strategy 2025–31:** Aligning with the FAO's Strategic Framework 2025–31, the Strategy defines priorities for mobilizing resources for project implementation and scale up innovative solutions, helping to translate the political commitment into effective water management.
- **Direct Reporting to COAG:** WASAG's activities and progress will be reported directly to COAG through the WASAG Secretariat hosted by the FAO Land and Water Division, ensuring continued visibility and integration within FAO's priorities.

The High-Level Dialogue underscored the importance of collaboration, innovation and strategic planning in addressing water scarcity for sustainable agriculture and food security globally.

Rome Water Dialogue in numbers

- Rome Water Dialogue attendees
 - 923 registrants
 - 250 in-person attendees
 - 131 online attendees



BETTER
PRODUCTION



BETTER
NUTRITION



BETTER
ENVIRONMENT



World Food Day highlights

World Food Day, celebrated annually on 16 October, commemorates the founding of FAO in 1945. This global UN observance ([Resolution 35/70](#)) raises awareness of critical issues like hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity, emphasizing the need for equitable access to nutritious, safe and affordable food. Since 1981, this global multilingual campaign has grown exponentially to become one of the most celebrated days in the UN calendar calling for action in over 150 countries and over 50 languages. The 2024 theme, “Right to foods for a better life and a better future”, resonated across continents, cultures and generations reaffirming the universal human right to adequate food and called for transformative action to create sustainable agrifood systems. At this link you can read the complete [Marketing, Media and Outreach Report](#).

World Food Day ceremony

World Food Day events at FAO headquarters welcomed nearly 3 000 participants in-person. More than 28 000 connected online via Zoom webinar, webcast, and social media live streaming to these events. The 2024 global World Food Day ceremony brought together policymakers, leaders and stakeholders to discuss pressing challenges in agrifood systems. In his opening remarks, FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu emphasized the urgency of creating agrifood systems that are efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable. He highlighted the critical role of smallholder and family farmers in providing nutritious, diverse foods and preserving traditional food cultures. Qu warned that with 730 million people facing hunger and over 2.8 billion unable to afford healthy diets, immediate action is imperative.

Key speakers at the event included: Pope Francis; FAO Special Goodwill Ambassador for Nutrition King Letsie III of Lesotho; UN Secretary-General António Guterres; Italy Minister of Agriculture, Food Sovereignty, and Forestry Francesco Lollobrigida; Executive Director of the World Food Programme Cindy McCain; Vice-President of IFAD Gérardine Mukeshimana; Parliamentary State Secretary of the Germany Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture Ophelia Nick; and US Ambassador to the United Nations Agencies in Rome Jeffrey Prescott.

FAO Achievement Award

During the World Food Day ceremony, the FAO Achievement Award was presented to the Institute of Plant Protection of the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science for their groundbreaking work in combating the Fall Armyworm. This innovative research has had a profound global impact, helping to secure food supplies and protect crops.

FAO 80th Anniversary initiatives

World Food Day events at headquarters launched the “80-1 anniversary countdown” campaign through “365 days of action” calling on Members, employees, and partners to mark the occasion throughout the year with the aim to strengthen the impact of FAO’s work and vision for creating a sustainable food-secure future. The logo for the new FAO Food and Agriculture Museum and Network was unveiled by FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu, announcing how this new initiative, supported by Italy’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, is set to open on 16 October 2025 as a permanent, interactive exhibition exploring FAO’s mission and showcasing global agriculture and food cultures. This ceremony included the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property.

The event also featured the launch of the 80-1 Anniversary Countdown exhibit, a year-long showcase of FAO’s history with a different decade launched each month on ascending floors of the marble staircase in the lead up to FAO’s 80th anniversary. Representing Italy was Director-General for International Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Stefano Gatti.

Junior World Food Day School Assembly at the World Food Forum

For its fourth edition, the Junior World Food Day joined forces for the first time with the World Food Forum's School Assembly. FAO Director-General was joined by Chief Economist Máximo Torero, Deputy Director-General Beth Bechdol, #FoodHeroes the Harlem Globetrotters, renowned chef Max Mariola and sustainable fashion activist Matteo Ward, School Food Advocates, young activists Andile Mnguni and Shreyaa Venkat, musicians and dancers. Almost 1 000 young students participated in interactive quizzes and games that reinforced the importance of sustainability in food systems. Watch the webcast of the joint event [here](#) and see the highlights on [Flickr](#).

World Food Day around the world

Over 450 events marked World Food Day 2024 called for action to realise the “Right to foods for a better life and a better future”. Through strong partnerships with members, municipalities, outdoor advertisers, and public transport, retail and entertainment companies, pro bono advertising increased 42 percent from 2023 bringing the call to action to audiences in over 125 cities in 53 countries. In the media, over 5 200 online news articles (14-20 October) mentioned and covered World Food Day, while over 41 million people listened worldwide to the radio PSA and over 90 TV broadcasters shared World Food Day messages. Finally, over 1.8 billion accounts were reached on social media since the campaign's launch in June, and World Food Day content on FAO.org garnered 474 000 views. See the [Marketing, Media and Outreach Report](#) for more information.



Looking forward: The WFF 2025 flagship event

The 2025 WFF flagship event, to be held from 13 to 17 October, will be a historic milestone, marking both the fifth edition of this transformative Forum and FAO's 80th anniversary. As the WFF continues to grow as a global movement fostering intergenerational collaboration, the 2025 flagship event will showcase the WFF's commitment to driving progress and sparking solutions to the world's most pressing agrifood systems challenges. It promises to be a momentous occasion, uniting leaders, innovators and changemakers of all ages from around the globe in a shared vision for a sustainable food future.

Set to take place at the FAO headquarters in Rome, and online, the 2025 flagship event will be even more inclusive, dynamic and impactful. It will celebrate eight decades of FAO's unparalleled contributions to eradicating hunger and improving livelihoods, while emphasizing the WFF's pivotal role in fostering global youth action, driving scientific innovation and promoting sustainable investments in agrifood systems. This unique convergence of anniversaries will underscore the transformative power of collective action in building resilient, equitable and inclusive agrifood systems.

The 2025 WFF will also amplify its role as a catalyst for change, providing a platform for diverse voices and groundbreaking ideas. From inspiring discussions and innovative solutions to impactful partnerships, the event will spark action to address urgent global issues like climate change, biodiversity loss and food insecurity. With its bold vision and global reach, the 2025 WFF will set a new benchmark for progress, bringing together stakeholders of all ages, and empowering individuals and communities to take meaningful steps toward a better, more sustainable food future for all.





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