

COUNTRY SUPPORT PORTFOLIOS THROUGH STARTUP FUNDS FOR FOOD SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION PATHWAYS

As of October 2022, 117 countries have developed National Pathways, which demonstrates sustained interest and momentum. However, in most countries, pathways still need to be rapidly operationalized in order to support their effective early implementation. For this to happen, with National Convenors in the lead, countries will need to develop multi-year strategies and action plans that clearly map and spell out targets, timeframes, different actors' roles and responsibilities, means of implementation including investment plans and flagship programs, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, etc. These strategies and plan will also need to be anchored into the countries' national development/SDGs policies and plans.

Support for the operationalization of the Pathways has been asked by the majority of middle and low income countries in the Survey that the Hub contacted early this year to understand the needs of the countries. The countries consider such support to be urgently needed for systemic policy and institutional strengthening as a first step towards the implementation of the pathways and on developing national narratives for the 2023 stock-take moment

In order to support this critical, time-sensitive work, under this key priority intervention, the Hub will support requesting countries, on a demand-basis, in fast-tracking the operationalization and implementation of their Food Systems Transformation National Pathways to ensure that critical transformation catalysts are in place. This includes, *inter alia*, support for the following activities

- Coordination, policy development and governance:
 - practical guidance on how to translate and mainstream the National Pathways into the national development strategies and frameworks;
 - promote a transition from an agriculture-focused to a broader and comprehensive food system approach; enable an inclusive multi-stakeholder and multi-sector food system approach;
 - set up conducive governance structures to promote impactful food system transformation;
 - develop monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track the implementation of pathways
- Financing the implementation of pathways
 - synergize bilateral and multilateral assistance to food systems;
 - linking public-private funding and shift country financing landscape for food systems transformations;
 - assess country readiness in terms of (a) how financial resources to support food systems are allocated and spend and (b) if those resources are achieving the expected results in terms of transformation
 - assess the performance and resource allocation of the most important food and agricultural companies in countries in terms of their contribution to food systems transformation
- Ensure a multi-sector, multi-stakeholder approach
 - empower the Youth and other stakeholders to co-develop and implement with governments and other actors innovative solutions for SDGs-based food system transformations;
 - engage youth, women, indigenous people, producers and the private sector in the planning in the implementation of National Pathways;

- Identify opportunities for local entrepreneurship and support startups in the food systems sector.

In doing so, the Hub will leverage the UN system presence in country and work closely with the Ecosystem of Support - such as food system coalitions, IFIs, development partners, alliances, foundations, think tanks, academia and private sector - to facilitate the delivery of timely and integrated technical and financial assistance and support services. Means of delivering technical and financial assistance will be selected based on a granular analysis of each countries' priorities as articulated in the national pathways, as well as based on specific capacity and national circumstances.

In each requesting country, the Hub will rally a subset of actors from the Ecosystem of support, based on their footprint and comparative advantage in the country, to develop and implement a solid multi-pronged country-support portfolio made-up of prioritized initiatives selected for their potential to help the country leapfrog towards transformation.

Hub-led activities under this work will significantly enhance the depth, reach and quality of partnerships for food systems transformation in each supported country by strengthening coordination between ministries, UN agencies, development partners (including Team Europe), sectors and actors involved in leading the agriculture, health, nutrition, inclusion, rural development, social protection, employment and decent work, digitalization, finance, environment and climate, resilience agendas.

Through this priority intervention area, the Hub will also document best practices on prioritizing national food system needs and matching them efficiently with offers and services from the Ecosystem of Support. Such learning and best practices will be actively shared with the Ecosystem of Support in order to create virtuous circles of effective support to countries.

This work will also be critical in ensuring that important actors whose voice are normally marginalized (women, youth, small-holder farmers, indigenous people, rural populations, etc.) are fully integrated not only in consultations but also in concrete implementation of the national pathways.

In addition, in view of the impact of the triple crises of food, fertilizer, energy and finance and the need to build stronger and more resilient food systems to withstand these and future shocks, the Hub's support will help countries further resilience-proof their National Pathways and ensure that their implementation is not derailed by the crisis, building critical connections between the crisis response and the longer-term structural changes that are needed to keep the transformation of food systems on track. In doing so, the project will also help strengthening the humanitarian, development and peace nexus, which is essential for countries in an era marked by recurrent crises.

Countries without National Pathways will also be considered for targeted assistance under this output, offering much-needed support to countries lacking the necessary technical capacity to develop National Pathways.

Support portfolios and resources necessary to implement them will differ in each country. Based on Government requests for assistance, a mix of countries (stable and crises countries) and income-groups (LIC, MIC, SIDS) will be selected to ensure a variety of countries in different contexts, including those profoundly impacted by the global food, energy and financial crises.

As per current deployment, the Hub is supporting relevant interventions as per the table below. Dozens of additional countries they request support. This intervention is supporting the implementation of deliverables D.1.7 and D.4.6 of the work plan of the Hub.

COUNTRY	TYPE OF SUPPORT
Bhutan	Mobilise resources and build national structures to implement and finance the Pathways: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of an agri farm with modern technologies model • Development of 1-2 investment proposals for the establishment of the Renewable National Resources Economic Hub
Burkina Faso	Operationalizing and financing Pathways through resource mobilization and development of Pathways budgeted action plan and a M&E system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a budgeted action plan for the operationalization of the Pathways • Identification of potential sources of resource mobilization for the implementation of the Pathways • Design of a monitoring and evaluating system for the Pathways
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action plan for the implementation of the national pathway
Lesotho	Build national structures and capacities to implement the Pathways, guided by a multi-agency steering committee: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of food system lab to promote food system research and innovations • Development of a national funding proposal for investment in infrastructure, technologies and post-harvest management • Farmer capacity built on resilient and sustainable food systems
Nepal	Localizing Pathways and integrate them in the provincial and local government planning and budget process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 provincial food systems plans updated based on food systems reviews • Food system transformation plans produced in 5 municipalities • National training manual developed for planning and implementing Pathways
Nigeria	Operationalizing Pathways and enhancing accountability and learning through the design of M&E systems for Pathways' implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of costed Pathways' implementation plan • Development of M&E framework for tracking of the Pathways implementation plan at both national and zonal level
Uruguay	Nutrition study to support the implementation of the Pathways and to develop public policies and assess impact on health outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dietary intake and total diet study
Horizontal intervention in 10 countries (specific countries are TBC)	Support to agrifood systems start-ups for SDGs acceleration through agrifood system transformations. A total of ten start-ups will develop one of the followings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • business plans for new start-ups; • marketing plans for existing products/services of recent start-ups; • investment plans, and; • bankable finance plans.