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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

REPORT

ARAB REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS DIALOGUE ONLINE VIRTUAL MEETING, 29 MARCH 2021

Summary

In preparation for the 2021 Food Systems Summit (FSS), the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in cooperation with regional offices of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health organization (WHO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) organized the Arab Regional Food Systems' Dialogue on 29 March 2021 virtually via ZOOM as a special event during the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development (AFSD) 2021. The meeting brought together about 250 participants including a wide range of stakeholders from universities, ministries, farmer's groups, research institutions, unions, civil society, industries, and United Nations agencies.

The Dialogue's provided an integrative and engaging platform that enabled regional actors to share perspectives, experiences, and issues on making the region's food systems healthier, more inclusive and more sustainable, and enhancing their resilience within the COVID-19 context. Participants called for involvement of all stakeholders in dialogues, ensuring strategic reserves of essential commodities, establishment of an Arab Centre for Food Security and provided key provided consolidated key messages from the regional dialogues. The Regional input of the dialogue will be submitted to the Summit Secretariat in preparation for the Food Systems Summit in September 2021.

The Arab Regional Dialogue was divided into three parts. Part I the background information about the food system summit was presented, in Part II participants shared views and perspectives on challenges and priorities to transform arab food systems, while Part III used an interactive discussion platform including MURAL and open discussions to allow participants to identify game changing solutions.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The United Nations Secretary-General called for the Food Systems Summit (FSS) to be convened in September 2021 with a broad vision to launch actions, solutions and strategies and identify pathways to accelerate progress towards more sustainable, inclusive and healthy food systems that are resilient to shocks like the COVID-19. Food systems, the way the world produces and consumes food, need a revolutionary transformation to deliver on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
2. In preparation for the 2021 FSS, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in cooperation with regional offices of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), World Food Programme (WFP), World Health organization (WHO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) organized the Virtual Arab Regional Food Systems' Dialogue on 29 March 2021 as a special event during the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development (AFSD) 2021.
3. Owing to COVID-19 restrictions, the dialogue was organized as a 90-minute online meeting using the Zoom platform on Monday, 29 March, from 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm Beirut time. A diverse range of stakeholders were brought together to consolidate regional views, perspectives and experiences regarding pathways and potential actions for equitable and sustainable food systems transformation and support the implementation of the SDGs within the context of current realities.
4. The dialogue modality allowed for active participation of stakeholders where participants provided solutions and actions either through direct intervention or by writing in chat box. Organizers simultaneously copied all proposals into the interactive online platform called "Mural" to make them graphically visible for all to see and comment on.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND KEY MESSAGES

5. Call for all stakeholders to work together for implementing game changing actions in the food systems. They all share the responsibility to shift food systems and change the rules of the game to achieve sustainable food security and nutrition for all.
6. Develop and adopt regional guiding legislations to ensure strategic stocks of essential commodities (food or non-food) to avoid shortages during any crisis such as the Covid-19 pandemic.
7. Establishment of an Arab Centre for Food Security, that brings together successful Arab initiatives related to enhancing food systems sustainability and facilitates investments for promising regional initiatives.
8. Below are the key messages emanating from the dialogue. These messages, along with other regional processes' outcomes undertaken in the Arab Region (Arab Youth and Arab Stakeholders Dialogues), will be included, in a dedicated document that organizers will be submitting to Secretariat of the Food Systems Summit. The document will present pathways and key propositions for sustainable Arab food systems
 - (a) Need for improved coordination and cooperation as transformation is a shared responsibility that involves partnerships among all sectors of society and transparency is a prerequisite for the success of those partnerships.
 - (b) Adoption of a food systems approach that acknowledges inter-system and intersectoral linkages and the multiple outcomes of the food system: food security and nutrition, environmental, social and economic.

- (c) Development of an evidence-based decision-making process by collecting, analysing, and sharing food system data and scientific analysis for the purpose of supporting the transformation process.
 - (d) Adoption of a context-specific approach to food systems resilience and sustainability at individual, household, social class and regional levels, taking into account shocks and stresses.
 - (e) Addressing issues of inequalities associated with gender, age and marginalization, especially but not exclusively those relating to the food system and that impinge on food security and nutrition and equitable, sustainable and resilient livelihoods including equal pay for equal job, access and ownership of resources, and forced child labor.
 - (f) Providing incentives for the adoption of nature-friendly technologies, entrepreneurs, climate smart agriculture, with special focus on the water, food and energy nexus as main derivatives for agricultural development and food security in the region
 - (g) Building capacities to adapt to climate change encourages use of renewable energy for food production and processing and using modern and appropriate technologies throughout the food systems value chain.
9. The resulting document and meeting report will be shared with member countries to guide and support the national dialogues when undertaken.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

A. OPENING SESSION

10. **Ms. Reem Nejdawi**, Chief of Food and Environment Policies Section, ESCWA welcomed participants and partners and provided few instructions on the dialogue's logistics then introduced the curator of the dialogue, Ms. Nawal Al Hamed.
11. **Ms. Nawal Al Hamed**, Deputy Director General, Public Authority for Food and Nutrition, Kuwait, welcomed participants, thanked organizers for the important dialogue and informed participants of the dialogue's objectives. She then introduced **Ms. Rola Dashti**, Executive Secretary of ESCWA and **H.E. Mr. Dy Ould Zein**, Minister of Rural Development, Mauritania, Chair of General Assembly of the Arab Organization for Agriculture – AOAD and invited them to provide their welcoming remarks.
12. **Ms. Rola Dashti**, welcomed participants on behalf of the Regional UN Agencies organizing the dialogue, thanked partners and regional organizations for holding this timely dialogue to support member states in improving and transforming their food systems towards achieving the 2030 Agenda. She emphasised on importance of holding dialogues in various forms to enable discussion, exchange of ideas between a variety of stakeholders aiming to present to the United Nations Food Systems Summit proposals for actions to achieve sustainable food systems in the Arab region. She also indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the fragility of food systems, with 50 million people suffering from undernutrition, and a third of women of childbearing age suffering from anaemia. She added that the fragility of food security in the region was mainly due to poverty, unemployment, occupation, and conflict. Limited food production due to water and arable land scarcity, and the rise in food import bill also contributed to worsen the situation. Ms. Dashti concluded by emphasising the need to implement policies and measures to enhance the food systems in the region addressing the challenges related to natural resources, agricultural sector, trade, industry, food support and consumer awareness.

13. **H.E. Mr. Dy Ould Zein**, Minister of Rural Development, Mauritania, Chair of General Assembly of AOAD, in his recorded intervention indicated that the Arab food systems suffer from diverse difficulties and limitations. He indicated the key role that ministers responsible for agriculture in Arab countries can play through coordination and cooperation with other sectors to transform Arab food systems into healthier, more sustainable, and equitable food systems that cater for Arab citizens. He clarified that to achieve tangible result, all stakeholders need to work together: the governments, the private sector, and other stakeholders from local, regional, and international organizations. He also mentioned that bold new measures to achieve progress across all the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals are essential. H.E. Mr. Dy Ould Zein concluded by indicating that Arab Governments should seize this opportunity to review food systems along the five action tracks and to review the ministries' roles towards achieving greater progress in regional cooperation for food production and import encouraging intra-regional food trade .

B. THE 2021 FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT: INTRODUCTION AND DIALOGUE PROCESSES

14. **Mr. Martin Frick**, Deputy to the Special Envoy for 2021 Food Systems Summit, provided a global perspective to the United Nations World Food System Summit and its objectives indicating that it comes at a very pertinent time that is witnessing a broken food system as we witness high levels of malnutrition and obesity at the same time. Mr. Frick stressed that food deals with producers (farmers, fishers, herders) and all processes related to food as a system (cooling, shipping, waste, safety, processing). As such, the summit convened by the Secretary General of the United Nations aims at underpinning how food systems are affecting the achievement of SDGs and how the summit can become an agent to fulfilling these SDGs especially for the Arab region who is facing many challenges. He further elaborated that this people's summit activates everyone in society to think and participate around food systems dialogues. The national country level dialogues are taking place and need to bring together all related government ministries (agriculture, health, youth education climate, etc...) and encouraged governments to engage civil society (consumer organization, farmers, small holders, city mayors, among others) to discuss food as a system in a holistic manner. He concluded that Dialogues are needed to build a new narrative and new way to operationalize food systems. He referred the participants to websites that display dialogues undertaken by diverse conveners around the world.

15. **Mr. David Nabarro**, Senior Advisor for the FSS Dialogues, discussed the significance of convening food system dialogues that include a multiplicity of actors and processes that enable people to access the food they need and at the same time regeneration of the precious resources of the planet. Therefore, to enable people to participate in changing systems, they need to be engaged and given a chance to express their points of view. He also went through the summit dialogue process in which governments and stakeholders can explore options to change food systems to become more sustainable and equitable in line with all 17 SDGs. He also indicated that more than 80 countries have so far registered their national dialogues and have either convened or will convene soon their dialogues. Mr. Nabarro indicated the three expected outcomes of the summit which include shaping the pathway of future food systems of the future good for people and the planet, identifying needed changes now to get on pathway, and exploring what different stakeholders in countries can do to commit to making the changes happen. He stressed that this is not a straightforward process because Food policy touches many sectors and involves multiple actors if it is to be shifted. As such, countries participating in dialogues are working on three different stages including identifying participants, convening the dialogues, and consolidating outcomes and emerging with pathways. He indicated that countries that were able to finalize their dialogues early can participate in the Pre- Summit happening in July, whereas countries that need further time will have a chance to participate in September.

C. VIEWS AND PERSPECTIVES ON CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES TO TRANSFORM ARAB FOOD SYSTEMS

16. **H.E. Ms. Jehad Abdullah Alfadhel**, Member of Shoora Council of Bahrain, Deputy Chairman of the Parliamentarian Network for Food Security and Nutrition in Africa and Arab World, made reference to the global food security index, indicating that Arab region is performing poorly and therefore the urgent need to unify efforts. Ms. Jehad Alfadhel reviewed some of the regional legislations related to food security and indicated that COVID-19 pandemic exposed the need to realign strategies, and revise and close gaps in the legislations. She also provided examples of countries that formulated, prior to the pandemic, legal frameworks to contribute to food security, specifically through laws to govern strategic food stock including Oman (passed in 2017) and Sudan (passed in 2000). Then, Ms. Alfadhel discussed the role of the Parliamentary Network. She mentioned that the members of the network hold consultations with the Arab Parliament to encourage laws that enhance food security including strategic food stock/storage for certain essential commodities. She also proposed developing a model law guiding the strategic stocks for essential commodities that include food and non-food products and adopting this proposal to avoid any future risks. She also recommended to establish an Arab Centre for Food Security to focus efforts on country initiatives and provide adequate funding for these initiatives. She also reiterated that the Parliament need to work with partners to make sure the legislations are implemented and proposed holding a Food Security Year as an outcome of the food system Dialogues.
17. **Ms. Fatima Eltahir Alhassan**, Secretary General of the Food Security Technical Secretariat (FSTS), Sudan, discussed the vulnerability of food systems in Sudan which was further exacerbated by COVID-19 pandemic. She explained Sudan suffered in 2020, in addition to COVID-19 pandemic, climate change impacts reflected in major floods damaging crops and livestock. She indicated that the weekly rise in prices of food commodities and agricultural inputs impacted vulnerable individuals and communities the most. This situation contributed to the further weakening of the agricultural production systems especially for small holder farmers. Ms. Eltahir also indicated that Sudan is in the process of developing strategies to reduce food loss and waste, to enhance food security in the country. She concluded by stressing on the need for further Dialogues especially in terms of building resilience in response to crisis
18. **Mr. Tareq Hassan**, Head of the Arab Youth Sustainable Development Network (AYSDN) highlighted the need to review and discuss challenges for transforming current food systems into healthy and nutritious food systems. He indicated that many factors are essential to move towards healthy consumption patterns. These include availability of affordable healthy food, enhancing information, and raising awareness on sustainable consumption patterns. He also shed light on agriculture and water policies that need to be revisited to ensure sustainability. Other challenges identified included poor management of land and high levels of food waste and loss. Mr. Hassan reiterated the important role of the Arab youth in raising awareness on sustainable food consumptions patterns. He emphasized the psychological impacts facing youth and communities due to poverty and conflicts which in turn affects their choice of food and ultimately impact their health. Mr. Hassan concluded by highlighting the initiative to hold the Youth Food Systems Dialogue which took place on March 9 and uniting efforts of youth for better food systems.

D. INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION ON TRANSFORMING FOOD SYSTEMS IN THE ARAB REGION

19. The curator, Ms. Al Hamed, introduced **Mr. Rami Zurayk**, Professor, American University of Beirut, Lebanon who will facilitate the participants' interactive discussion. Mr. Zurayk presented the framework for food systems, external drivers, outputs, and constraints and outlined the five action tracks of the summit namely: i) ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all; ii) shifting to sustainable consumption pattern, iii) boosting nature-positive production at sufficient scale, iv)

advancing equitable livelihoods and value distribution, and v) building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses. He also identified cross cutting issues that impact these action tracks including climate change, innovation, women, youth, and finance.

20. Mr. Zurayk reviewed the main outputs and messages from the two regional dialogues held earlier by ESCWA and FAO early in March for Arab youth and Arab organizations and stakeholders. Main messages included call for adopting a food systems approach, developing evidence-based decision-making, building national food security and nutrition policies, enhancing resilience of food systems, addressing issues of inequality, providing incentives for the adoption of environmentally friendly and climate-smart agriculture, and the shared responsibility between all sectors and actors in society for improving these systems.
21. In the interactive discussion session, Mr. Zurayk requested participants to share game changing actions in the chat box that were simultaneously added on the Mural application to be graphically displayed for participants to see. He also encouraged and invited participants to share their views and solutions through direct intervention from the floor.
22. **Ms. Razan Zuayter**, Arab Network for Food Sovereignty (ANFS), indicated that access to food is a right and more efforts are needed to protect small holder farmers and local production systems. Countries need to maintain this right to access food and provide reserves. She indicated that peace building mechanisms should be enhanced to stop the root causes of wars and conflicts and highlighted the need to prevent politicizing food aid. She also underlined providing civil society organisations opportunity to be active in food system discussion and she hoped that the collaboration between Food Systems Summit and the World Economic Forum will not impact small businesses.
23. **Ms. Jehad Al Fathel** called for collaboration and organization of a fund dedicated for food security in the Arab region. She provided the example of Bahrain’s initiative in increasing the reserves to enhance food security. She also highlighted other initiatives in Bahrain such as opening markets for farmers, training youth interested in agriculture, and initiating laboratories for improving agriculture sector.
24. **Mr. Ayoub Aljawaldeh**, Regional Advisor in Nutrition, WHO- EMRO indicated that there is a need to take into consideration the diversity of Arab region in terms of socio-economic levels which consequently impacts levels of Food systems performance. Therefore, it is expected to have different countries expressing solutions that not necessarily meet the priorities of all countries.
25. **Mr. Zurayk** started then discussion on the first identified track for the food systems summit: ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all. Discussion from the intervenors included **Mr. Mohamad Sleiman**, Advisor at the Ministry Environment and Agriculture, Saudi Arabia, that indicated the need to share experiences especially on how countries responded to COVID-19 and to develop practical solutions. He also shared that Saudi Arabia developed an emergency unit to deal with crisis which was very successful and could be used as a model. Afterwards **Ms. Fatima Altahir** reiterated the need for the proper management of natural resources in each country to ensure availability of local food production. She also unindicated the importance of cooperation and collaboration amongst Arab countries to meet the food needs of Arab countries based on the points of economic and endowment in natural resources strengths of each country.
26. Written Solutions provided in chat box and copied onto the Mural application were as follows: (results provided by participants are available in Annex 1)
 - i. *Tack 1: Ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all*
 - Monitor the quality of the raw materials involved in the production process (basic and secondary materials)

- Support the inclusion of fish in the food and nutrition program
- Monitor local markets in terms of food quality and compliance with standards of healthy food
- Establish micro-scale food production systems in cities and villages distributed among the population and including the entire agriculture chain
- Support civil society organizations in food systems and encouraging related projects
- Increase collaboration between Arab countries especially those with common issues and establish mechanism between countries that aid in establishing a food security fund that supports food baskets
- Develop food banks and food-for-work programs
- Secure strategic Arab stocks that are not subjected to political tensions and establish an Arab food security centre
- Improve government support for food factories (large and medium) such as stockpiling raw materials and considering them initial parts of strategic food storage
- Develop policies that control the food market and form regional operations unit that reports movement of the global stockpile of major food commodities and global price expectations
- Create data centres that provide advice to food industries in Arab region
- Implement an Arab regional strategy to ensure food safety
- Launch the International Year of Food Security to raise awareness and develop solutions
- Promote consumption of traditional food
- Initiate technical, administrative, and marketing units for food factories, that can prepare food industry managers and provide quality control
- Provide resources, consultations, and education to farmers and livestock keepers on how to maintain healthy and proper production. Further enhance training and specializations related to agriculture
- Establish an emergency committee during crises
- Encourage adoption of health standards and environmental labels, especially data related to product life-cycle analysis during the various stages of procurement, supply, storage and distribution

27. For discussing action track two, **Mr. Zurayk** requested participants to propose actions that motivate and empower consumers to make informed, healthy, safe and sustainable choices and thus changing consumer behaviour. **Ms. Marie Therese Seif**, President of Human Environmental Association for Development, indicated that challenges to achieving sustainable and resilient food systems are similar for many countries and as such recommended to develop mechanisms of coordination between countries to help each other for example through ensuring sufficient nutritious food baskets. **Mr. Said Zurouali**, High Commission for Planning of Morocco, encouraged the consumptions from local markets to ensure achievement of track two objectives. **Ms. Oumaima Lfakir**, Regional Director for the International Association of Students in Agricultural and Related Sciences MENA branch, reinforced the need for responsible and knowledgeable media to move forward the sustainable development agenda.

28. Written Solutions provided in chat box and copied onto the Mural application were as follows: (results provided by participants are available in Annex 1)

ii. Tack 2: Shifting to sustainable consumption pattern

- Enable dialogues with all the actors to reach healthy food systems
- Reconsider the freedom of children to choose and buy their meals before going to school
- Support production of high-quality homemade food while ensuring their affordability and promote local food production and traditional ways and educating consumers about the importance of supporting local products

- Propose a World Nutrition Day
- Increase consumer awareness and motivate and enable them to make good and healthy choices through social media, training and educational workshops, and providing offers on health products
- Raise awareness among media workers of the importance of healthy food
- Raise awareness among media workers of importance of healthy food and building on consumers' interests and perceptions of nutritional risks to change their food behaviour
- Set up appropriate educational programs, courses and group activities targeting children and youth to changing consumer behaviour, and use social media to achieve this goal
- Prepare a national action plan to develop sustainable consumption and production systems
- Exchange experiences and success stories and educate consumers and producers to move towards sustainable consumption and production patterns.
- Review national social protection programs, and replicate successful experiences from other countries
- Establish laws to ensure product quality, impose quality control and penalties on violators, and apply food taxes
- Ensure the establishment of an institutional framework concerned in transforming food systems into sustainable and healthy consumption and production systems and developing legislations that contribute to accelerating this transformation.
- Enhance the role of health institutions in raising consumers' awareness of the need to change their unhealthy
- Enhance food integration departments, where each department coordinate among its members to address the quantitative or qualitative food shortage under the supervision of the United Nations as technical support.
- Provide financing to private institutions on projects that adopt sustainable production systems and establish new consumption behaviours that take into account the requirements of sustainability and waste reduction
- Increase investment in innovation and logistics systems such as climate-smart agriculture and improve post-harvest operations, infrastructure, packaging and cooling centres to reduce food waste and loss.

29. Mr. Zurayk also asked participant to determine actions to sustainably manage existing food production systems considering scarcity in water and arable land and existing environmental degradation to address action track three. **Mr. Walid Abdo**, projects & programs coordinator for the Yemen Development Foundation, indicated that all proposed actions and solutions need to reflect specific needs and requirements of the country and he encouraged the development of evidence-based policies for more impact.

30. Written Solutions provided in chat box and copied onto the Mural application were as follows: (results provided by participants are available in Annex 1)

iii. Tack 3: Boosting nature-positive production at sufficient scale

- Reclaim and rehabilitate agricultural lands, encourage good management of resources and increase efficiency of resources used, especially ground and surface water and agricultural lands through the use of modern technology
- Enhance provisions related to technology transfer and capacity building included in the UN Climate Change Agreement
- Improve skilled professional and provide the necessary infrastructure
- Enhance the role of research and encourage scientific agricultural studies to solve problems of agricultural production, especially applied research

- Improve regional cooperation in scientific research, Arab partnerships, and exchange of capabilities according to the comparative advantage of agricultural production
- Promote genetic improvement programs for quantitative and qualitative production
- Endorse national campaigns on environmental challenges, and include in the education curriculums and disseminate pioneering experiences in agriculture and food processing
- Establish pilot projects that improve water and energy use and reduce pollution to support countries in crisis and with funds from World Bank, Green Climate Fund and FAO
- Support entrepreneurial projects and grant provision for youth initiatives
- Implement educational program on leadership in the field of agriculture and specializations related to urban agriculture
- Provide support for vehicles transporting crops and reduce transportation costs and provide qualified warehouses designated for storage and packaging
- Develop local plant varieties and animal breeds to increase production and productivity
- Develop post-harvest services through improving packaging, grading, transportation, storage, and manufacturing
- Enhance information availability on capabilities and provide a modern and up-to-date database
- Expand the use of digital solutions such as e-commerce platforms
- Reduce industrial costs by reducing taxes imposed on food factories and inviting them to exploit the largest available percentage of production capacity, adopting special prices for fuel (especially electricity) and supporting use of renewable energy equipment
- Find working storage for Arab food factories in the manufacture of grains, sugar, oils, and edible fats, dairy, red meat, production of broiler chicken and table eggs.

31. In addressing the fourth action track, participants identified policies and actions needed to advance equitable and sustainable livelihoods across the food system. **Mr. Osama Rayes**, Lead Scientist in the Nile Tech in Sudan, stressed on addressing three important issues: building knowledge, developing a financing mechanism for food production, and use of energy related technology. **Mr. Mahmood Radi**, Arab Union of Fish Producers, highlighted the significant role of fish production for enhancing food security in the Arab region, and suggested incorporation fish production in all food security policies and plans as it's a natural source of needed proteins for healthy diets.

32. Written Solutions provided in chat box and copied onto the Mural application were as follows: (results as provided by participants are available in Annex 1)

iv. Tack 4: Advancing equitable livelihoods and value distribution

- Provision of financing mechanisms
- Focus specializations in universities based on qualifications and available resources
- Create youth leadership positions
- Encourage self-production and educating consumers about the importance of supporting local products
- Improving practical education on agriculture in communities, homes and buildings so that everyone can produce food
- Strengthen effective social protection networks based on sustainable financial resources and enhance the concept of social security through the preparation and support of the food basket and food banks
- Integrate social justice in the distribution and allocation of agricultural resources (land and water)

- Implement digital solutions such as e-commerce platforms, digital payments and simple digital technologies to enable smallholders to access data and knowledge to make timely and informed decisions and to connect them directly with markets and finance
- Focus on vulnerable groups, especially small farmers through providing support and financing and introducing modern technologies that increase productivity and production and improve their income.
- Integrate disaster risk reduction considerations into sustainable development strategies and policies to mitigate losses.
- Support animal breeders
- Activate the role of food cooperatives
- Resolve local and regional conflicts and alleviate the effects of wars, disasters and political sanctions to shift focus on productivity rather than conflicts
- Provide basic services in the countryside and enhance the methods and tools of rural finance so that the rural producers can enter the countryside and engage in production
- Support agri-food microfinance projects such as microfinance banks
- Facilitate access to agricultural lands for young women
- Promote and support women and youth participation in value chains by providing capital and financing mechanisms to invest in agriculture, as well as creating job opportunities and developing needed skills such as negotiation and project management.
- Use of modern technology, creating appropriate conditions for rural employment, and ensuring the sustainability of supply chains for various agricultural products.
- Review national legislations and regulations and integrate environmental protection policies adapting to climate change and limiting its effects, in line with conditions of each Arab country.

E. CLOSING SESSION

33. **H.E. Mr. Ibrahim El Dukhairi**, Director General, AOAD, thanked participants and organizers of the timely organization of the Dialogue. He indicated that the Arab vision is clear and that the proposed actions in this dialogue require regional collaboration. He highlighted that the challenges faced in the region hinder the implementation of SDGs and thus the achievement of sustainable food systems. These challenges include climate change, land degradation, low productivity, low purchasing power, and population growth in addition to others. Mr. Dukhairi further explained that Dialogues at local, national, and regional levels are necessary for transforming current food systems into sustainable food systems. He further gave examples of upcoming Dialogues such as the Kuwait National Dialogue on Food Systems, Youth dialogue, Global Dialogue on Water, and presummit in July 2021, all leading to a Global Food System Summit in September 2021.
34. Ms. Nawal Al Hamad thanked the participants for their active participation and their valuable feedback throughout the dialogue. Ms. Reem Nejdawi, closed the dialogue by reiterating that ESCWA and partners are ready to support the Arab Countries in organizing national and independent dialogues to better inform the FSS in September.

ORGANIZATION

A. DATE AND VENUE

35. The meeting was held virtually via Zoom on 29 March 2021. The dialogue modality, that included direct interventions, interactive discussion and use of chat box, allowed for active participation of stakeholders where participants could either comment, provide remarks or write their game changing actions directly in the chat box and ESCWA's team copied them simultaneously on the interactive online platform called "MURAL.

36. The recoding of the event is available on the following link with Access Passcode: **f7aLvD7***

https://fao.zoom.us/rec/share/8oU9SznIUUKbi0T15fo6NNG1XYvsC4f-B4pZFQlacABpK228OgiUfSNFomeZxO-m.1563xS58TLD_ru4

B. PARTICIPANTS

37. A diverse group of stakeholders attended the virtual meeting. They either represented Arab member States, academia, regional, sub regional and national organizations, institutions, private sector, farmers' groups, Union of Arab Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, Arab Agricultural Engineers Union or various civil society organizations engaged in food system issues in Arab States. International experts and organizations were also invited to the dialogue to share their expertise, views, perspectives and to propose solutions on making the region's food systems healthier, inclusive, sustainable, and resilient. The full list of participants is provided in Annex 3.

III. Game changing actions to optimize sustainable production

How can we sustainably manage existing food production systems, in light of the water and arable land scarcity, and environmental degradation?

كيف يمكننا إدارة نظم الإنتاج الغذائية القائمة على نحو مستدام في ظل ندرة المياه والأراضي الصالحة للزراعة وتدهور حالة البيئة؟

الحرس على إقامة إطار مؤسسي يبنى بمسألة دفع عقد الاستهلاك والإنتاج نحو الاستدامة، وتعزيز التشريعات التي تشاهد في تسريع نقل التحول نحو هذه النظم	تأهيل كوادر مهنية ماهرة وتوفير البنية التحتية اللازمة لهم	زيادة كفاءة الموارد المستخدمة وبالأخص المياه الجوفية والسطحية والأراضي الزراعية	استصلاح الأراضي الزراعية والإدارة الجيدة للموارد والتأهيل الجيد للقائمين بالأمر	العمل على حسن إستغلال البتود المتطرفة بنقل التكنولوجيا وبناء القدرات المصممة في الإنتاجية الأسمية لتغيير المناخ	تعزيز دور البحوث وتشجيع الدراسات العلمية الزراعية لحل مشاكل الإنتاج الزراعي وخاصة الأبحاث التطبيقية
دعم سموات نقل المصاحبات أو دراسة تخفيض تكاليف النقل للسلع الزراعية عبر النجوة لتتبعين مشتركاً عليها إجراء العمليات الأولية عليهم من أماكن حصادها إلى مواقع تصنيعها وتغليفها مغازن مؤهلة مخصصة لخزنها وتوزيعها	استغلال المساحات الزراعية في البلدان التي تعاني من نقص بالمحاصيل و توظيف مستوق دعم لهذه البلدان	توفير المنح للمبادرات التنموية في تحقيق برامج بيئية زراعية تركز المحاصيل والنقص المتواجد	تبادل الخبرات وتبادل قصص النجاح مع تكثيف العمل حول توعية المواطنين لتغيير أنماط الاستهلاك والمصنعين لتغيير أنماط إنتاجهم نحو الاستدامة	الشراكة العربية وتبادل الإمكانيات حسب الميزة النسبية لإنتاج الزراعي بين الأقطار	تعزيز برامج التحسين الوراثي للإنتاج الزراعي الكمي والنوعي
زيادة الإنتاج والإنتاجية واعتماد التقنيات الحديثة في الزراعة والتحكم على الغزاة البيئية والسلاطات الحيوانية المحللة باتجاه زيادة الإنتاج والإنتاجية	المعمل على تطوير الأصداف البيئية والتقليدية حسب الميزة النسبية المحلية باتجاه زيادة الإنتاج والإنتاجية	نشر التجارب الرائدة في الزراعة والتصنيع الغذائي مثل تجربة الزراعات الأسرية ووحدات التصنيع الغذائي المنزلية	تعزيز المشاريع الزراعية الحافظة والزراعة التكنولوجية لزيادة الإنتاج الزراعي	دعم المشاريع الريادية والعمل على توفير بيئة وبرنامج أكاديمي للريادة في مجال الزراعة	National campaign/ awareness on environmental challenges, and include these themes in the education curriculums
توسيع استخدام الطول الرقمية مثل منصات التجارة الإلكترونية	الإكتفاء الذاتي من المحاصيل الزراعية والموارد الغذائية	معرفة معلومات مسجحة حول مقرراتنا تأمين قاعدة معلومات حديثة وعصرية	تعزيز المناهج التدريبية وتأهيل التخصصات المتعلقة بالزراعة وخاصة الحضرية	الإستفادة من التوصلات المتاحة من البعث العلمي والتمويل الأجنبي للتمويل في مشاريع نموذجية من شأنها تحسين إستعمال المياه والعلقة والحد من التلوث	الإهتمام وتطوير الأوعية التراثية والتقليدية
التعاون الإقليمي في البحث العلمي والشراكة العربية وتبادل الإمكانيات حسب الميزة النسبية لإنتاج الزراعي بين الأقطار	إيجاد الفرص العامل للمصانع الغذائية العربية في تصنيع الحبوب السكر، الزيت، والخبز الغذائية	تعزيز الكفاءات الصناعية من خلال تفضي الشركات الفعالة على التصنيع الغذائية ودعم القدرات الإنتاجية و اعتماد عمل خاصة ترقى وعلمة تكويدها ودعم مبات العلة المتجددة	إعداد خطة العمل الوطنية المتعلقة بتطوير نظم الإنتاج والاستهلاك و الإبتكار المستدامة في كل دولة	تطوير استخدام التكنولوجيا الحديثة في مجالات الإنتاج والتحويل الزراعي	تطوير استخدام الطول الرقمية مثل منصات التجارة الإلكترونية

IV. Game changing actions to respond to risks

What policies and actions are needed to advance equitable and sustainable livelihoods across the food system?

ما هي السياسات والإجراءات اللازمة للتهوض بسبل الجش المائلة والمستدامة عبر النظم الغذائية؟

تعزيز شبكات الحماية الاجتماعية الفاعلة القائمة على موارد مالية مستدامة وتوزيع مفهوم الضمان الاجتماعي من خلال اعداد ودعم السلة الغذائية	تسهيل وصول الشباب المناسبين الريادية والتعاون مع أصحاب الممنعة ليكون لهم دور فعال	التشجيع على الإنتاج الذاتي وتوعية المستهلكين بأهمية دعم المنتجات المحلية عبر كافة الوسائل	تعزيز عملي على الزراعة في المنزل و الحي و العيقي و ذلك من ضمن التعليم العام بحيث يتمكن الجميع من إنتاج غذاء	إيجاد آليات الملائمة للتمويل والتي تختلف من مشروع إلى آخر بحسب المجال والأهداف وطرق التنفيذ وإختصاص جهة التمويل
إعطاء أولوية في تخصيص الموارد (الزراعية) لأراضي ومياه	توسيع تجربة بنوك الطعام للأسر الضعيفة	تعليم عملي على الزراعة في المنزل و الحي و العيقي و ذلك من ضمن التعليم العام بحيث يتمكن الجميع من إنتاج غذاء	إعطاء أولوية في تخصيص الموارد (الزراعية) لأراضي ومياه	إعداد كليات ومدارس متخصصة في تأهيل كوادر زراعية
دعم مربيين الحيوانات كما يتم دعم المزارعين	تفعيل جانب التكنولوجيات الغذائية	إعطاء أولوية في تخصيص الموارد (الزراعية) لأراضي ومياه	تعليم عملي على الزراعة في المنزل و الحي و العيقي و ذلك من ضمن التعليم العام بحيث يتمكن الجميع من إنتاج غذاء	إعطاء أولوية في تخصيص الموارد (الزراعية) لأراضي ومياه
الدعم الحكومي لمشاريع التمويل الأصغر الزراعية	تسوية وحل النزاعات المحلية والإقليمية لتفكيك من آثار الحروب والكوارث والتغيرات السلبية والتركيز على الانتاجية بدلاً من النزاعات التي تعيق حرية إستغلال الموارد الطبيعية	توفير الخدمات الأساسية بالريف تعزيز أساليب وأنوات التمويل الريفي حتى يتمكن الريفيين المعتمدين على الريف وممارسة الإنتاج	إعطاء أولوية في تخصيص الموارد (الزراعية) لأراضي ومياه	إعداد خطة لجنة للمخاطر واقتراض اسوء السيناريوهات بعد كوفيد ١٩
تسهيل الحصول على أراضي فلاحية خاصة للشباب الحامل لمشاريع زراعية ذات قيمة مضافة	إعطاء أولوية في تخصيص الموارد (الزراعية) لأراضي ومياه	توفير الخدمات الأساسية بالريف تعزيز أساليب وأنوات التمويل الريفي حتى يتمكن الريفيين المعتمدين على الريف وممارسة الإنتاج	إعطاء أولوية في تخصيص الموارد (الزراعية) لأراضي ومياه	عرض المنتجات محطية الصنع للمستهلكين مع ضمان جودتها وأن يكون سعرها يمثل جميع الفئات

ANNEX 2: AGENDA OF THE DIALOGUE

Introduction: Ms. Reem Nejdawi, ESCWA

Welcoming Note

- Ms. Nawal Al-Hamad, Deputy Director General, Community Nutrition Sector, Public Authority for Food and Nutrition- Kuwait

Opening Remarks

- Ms. Rola Dashti, Executive Secretary ESCWA on behalf of UN agencies
- H.E. Mr. Dy Ould Zein, Minister of Rural Development, Mauritania, Chair of General Assembly of the Arab Organization for Agriculture - AOAD

The 2021 Food Systems Summit: Introduction and dialogue processes

- Mr. Martin Frick, Deputy of the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Food Systems Summit 2021
- Mr. David Nabarro, Senior Advisor for the FSS Dialogues

Views and Perspectives on Food Systems

- H.E. Ms. Jehad Abdullah Alfadhel, Member of Shoora Council of Bahrain, Deputy Chairman, Parliamentarian Network for Food Security and Nutrition in Africa and Arab World
- Ms. Fatima Eltahir Alhassan, Secretary General of the Food Security Technical Secretariat (FSTS), Sudan
- Mr. Tareq Hassan, Head of the Arab Youth Sustainable Development Network (AYSDN)

Interactive Discussion on Transforming Food Systems

- Facilitator: Mr. Rami Zurayk, Professor, American University of Beirut

Interventions from the floor from a variety of stakeholders and requesting from participants to share game changing actions in the chat box that would be added on the whiteboard/ Mural application

Closing Remarks and Way Forward

- H.E. Mr. Ibrahim El Dukhairi, Director General, AOAD

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