



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



The Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition

Advancing knowledge
Supporting policy-making
Impacting lives

A global dialogue on trends, issues and policy responses

In 2007, the FAO Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN Forum) launched a dialogue across borders and disciplines in support of a world free of food insecurity and malnutrition. Since then, government officials, experts and advocates from more than 190 countries have joined the conversation. Together, they have established one of the world's leading online forums for facilitated policy dialogue on all matters related to food security and nutrition, in keeping with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

This booklet provides an overview of the unique, neutral and multilingual space that is the FSN Forum, where knowledge and innovative ideas are shared on the complex policy issues that affect food security and nutrition.





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Engaging the development community

The **Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition** is an inclusive platform for people and institutions to share knowledge and support policy-making.

The Forum exists primarily (though not exclusively) online, and is managed by the **Agricultural Development Economics Division (ESA)** of the **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**. It reflects the UN's move towards more inclusive decision-making processes within the development community.

Towards better food security and nutrition results

The FSN Forum is based on the open participation of a broad spectrum of citizens, governments, and non-governmental and private entities at the global, regional and national levels. Forum members from across the globe can take part remotely in consultations, webinars, workshops and the sharing of case studies.

Exchanges between members and facilitators have fostered awareness, debate, mutual learning and informed decision-making all over the world.

They have also helped to strengthen and shape the thinking of experts and decision-makers on food security and nutrition issues, and to improve the effectiveness of development initiatives.

The Sustainable Development Goals

In September 2015, world leaders agreed on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which included the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), formulated to succeed the Millennium Development Goals.

These interconnected global objectives range from ending poverty and hunger to responding to climate change and sustaining the world's natural resources, and will shape national development plans in the years to come.

The SDG formulation process favoured the involvement of a wide range of voices in the discussion of how to advance social and economic development.

Achieving the SDGs

While reaching an agreement on the 2030 Agenda was a major step forward, the greatest challenge still lies ahead. The FSN Forum is committed to supporting achievement of the SDGs by helping experts, practitioners and communities around the world to share ideas, experiences and knowledge.



A QUICK LOOK

WHAT

The FSN Forum is...

- ▶ an inclusive, multilingual platform for online and face-to-face dialogue on food security and nutrition;
- ▶ a global, regional and national system for knowledge sharing and policy support;
- ▶ a convener and moderator of targeted consultations, surveys, webinars and workshops;
- ▶ a network of experts and professionals who connect with and inform each other.

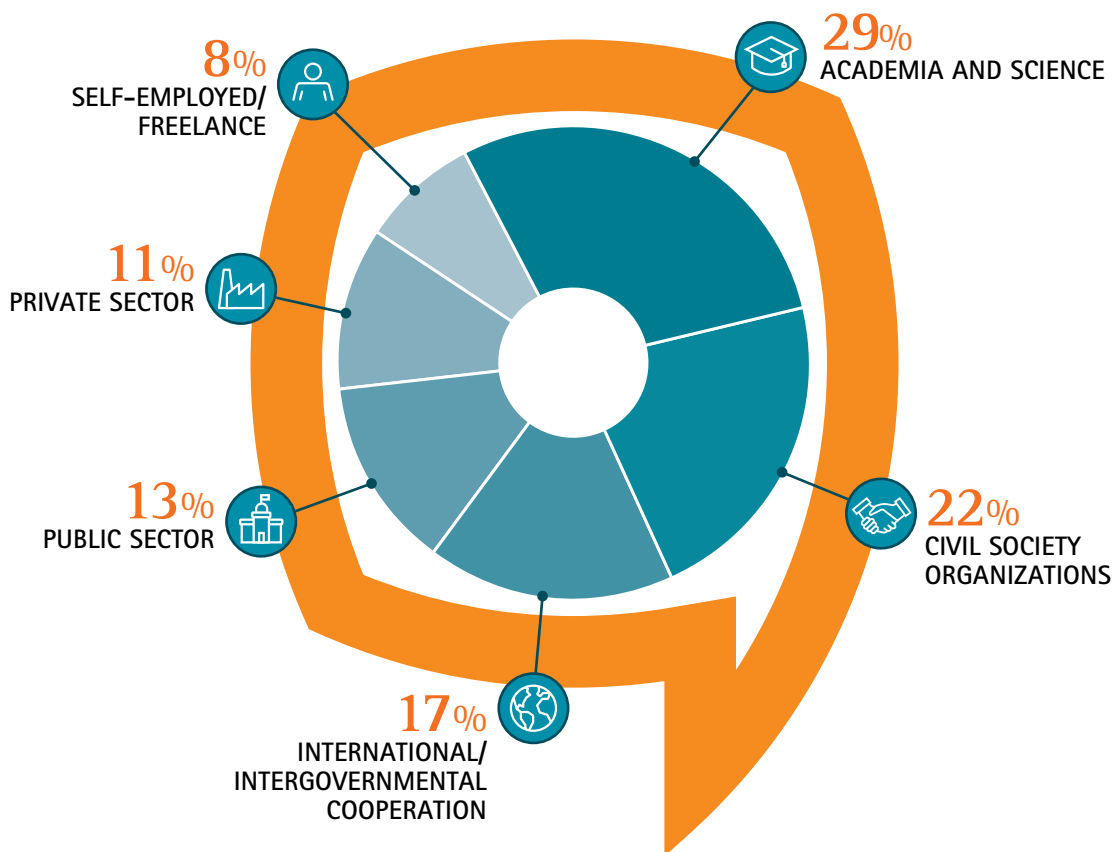
WHO

- ▶ 15 000+ people from over 190 countries and territories;
- ▶ people from academia, governments, donors, civil society, private sector entities and international organizations;
- ▶ professional networks and organizations focused on the achievement of the SDGs.

WHERE

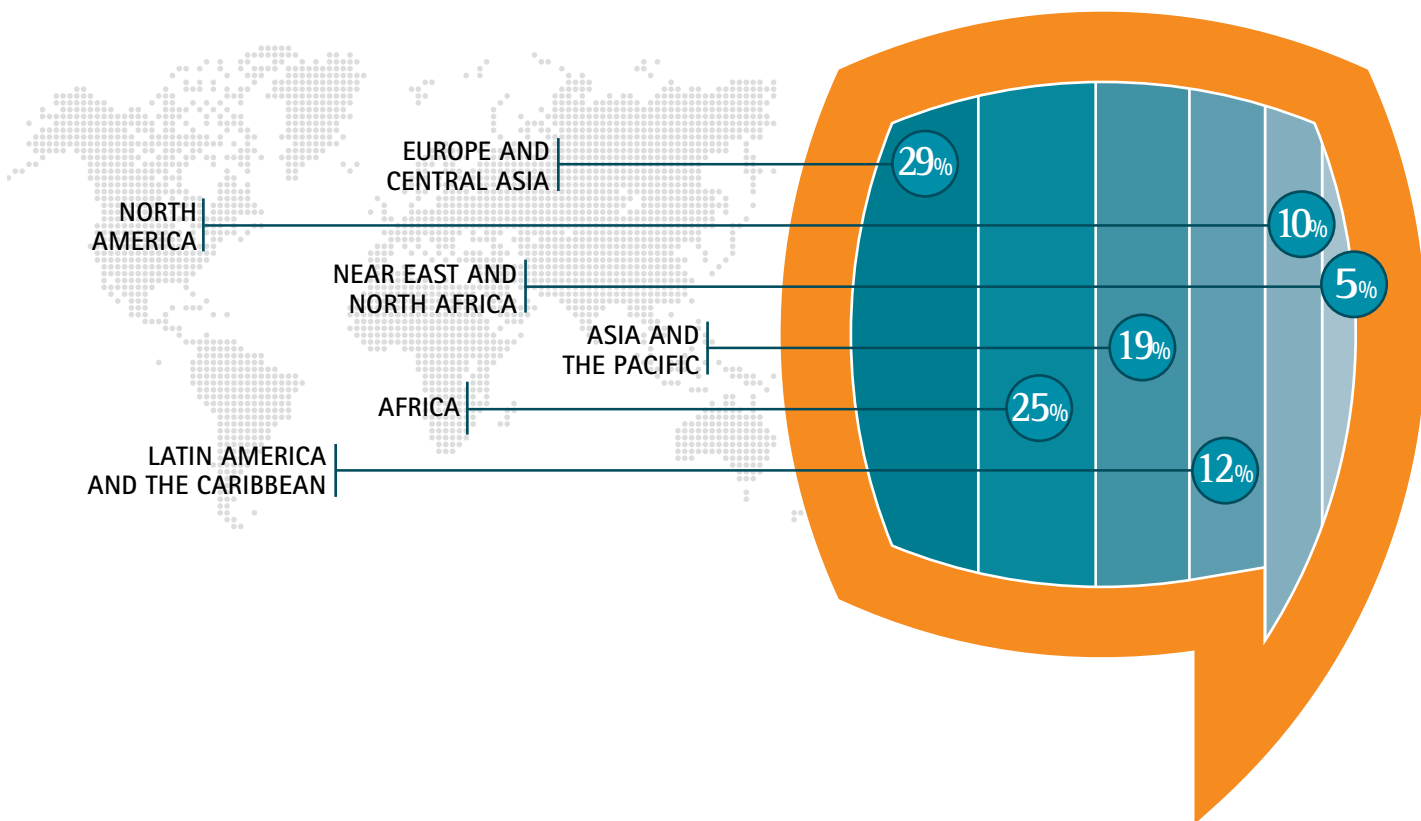
- ▶ based at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) since 2007;
- ▶ managed by the FAO Agricultural Development Economics Division.

AFFILIATION of FSN Forum members





DISTRIBUTION of FSN Forum members according to FAO regions



Ideas, experience and know-how for sustainable development

The concept

Imagine a town square where people can go to exchange news and ideas and share advice. The FSN Forum is based on similar principles of open access and participation, only with the aim to advance the food security and nutrition dialogue through facilitated online discussions, expert workshops and other knowledge-sharing activities. Since ancient times, a forum has been a gathering place for problems and solutions to be discussed, debated, and analysed – and for new ideas to be proposed. At the FSN Forum, these encounters can be national, regional or global.

Open access

People are at the core of the Forum. FSN Forum membership is open to individuals and institutions from all walks of life, anywhere in the world. While the Forum operates primarily through an online knowledge platform, it also brings people together directly in face-to-face workshops, focus groups and other meetings.

Dialogue, knowledge and action

Since 2007, the FSN Forum has brought together experts and institutions who are motivated towards, and professionally engaged in processes aimed at ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. It also reaches out to the broader community of those who are interested in related topics to share technical information, research, policy advice, and practice-based experience.

The Forum has driven the food security and nutrition dialogue in new directions, giving participants the opportunity to raise new questions and issues, and lend their voices to high-level discussions which otherwise might not be accessible to them.

For example, when the UN General Assembly proclaimed 2016–2025 the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition, the FSN Forum supported the process and promoted inclusiveness by facilitating the initiation of online consultations, leading up to the drafting and finalization of the work programme for the Decade.



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Three things to know about the FSN Forum

1. It is an open platform for peer-to-peer engagement on policies, trends and challenges affecting food security and nutrition.
2. It brings together individuals and organizations who would not otherwise have the opportunity to be involved in food security and nutrition policy debates.
3. It facilitates knowledge sharing and constructive feedback among participants.

Voices that count

Providing a dedicated space for people to contribute their voices to the formulation and implementation of policies on food security and nutrition can improve the effectiveness, credibility and legitimacy of decisions ultimately taken by governments – and can also contribute to a better balance of interests. In this way, the FSN Forum contributes to inclusiveness and innovation in policy-making.

Membership

Forum members break through academic and sector silos, across countries and regions, to participate in or follow discussions on food security and nutrition issues.

Members register on an individual basis, but may participate on behalf of groups, companies or institutions.

Participants engage in discussions, consultations, surveys, webinars and workshops on relevant topics proposed by FSN Forum members and partners within or beyond the UN community.

While many contribute perspectives from diverse backgrounds, others may read contributions or listen in, then take what they have learned and pass it on, or apply it in their own day-to-day work.



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►► PERSPECTIVES

BEYOND “TEMPORAL” RESILIENCE

How long should an individual, community or system remain resilient before being recognized as such? FSN Forum members addressed this question in a March 2017 online discussion introduced by Walter Mwasaa of the Bangladesh office of CARE, an international non-profit organization.

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Background

“Resilience is increasingly emerging as the tipping point for development programming,” explained Mwasaa. “When programme results cannot be sustained due to shocks, then investments are lost and so is the interest in future funding. So, there is a clear need to weave the resilience discussion into almost every development and emergency programme. Resilience in my opinion puts a human face on development interventions. It acknowledges the challenges a person, household, community and system have to overcome to keep on the path to development.”

Outcomes

“Many development programmes use statistics that are often programme-defined and may not always match the most critical issues that households and individuals have to deal with, some of which are often hidden and complex,” noted Mwasaa.

“The Forum online discussion shared a number of practices and acknowledgment of how much still needs to be done in mainstreaming resilience, enhancing measurement and keeping it real.”



SNAPSHOT

RURAL WOMEN AND GLOBAL AGENDA-SETTING

In recent years, the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) has paid particular attention to the challenges facing rural women and girls – and to finding ways to accelerate transformations that can improve their lives. Women play essential roles in food security and nutrition and the management of natural resources.

While many women have gained improved access to markets, information and financial services, greater engagement with the private sector, and skills development and other advantages, the lives of many rural women remain unchanged.

In 2017, the FSN Forum was called on to inform the CSW agenda-setting process by gathering perspectives on the gender dynamics of rural livelihoods. An online discussion led by FAO (together with IFAD, UN Women and WFP) looked at critical gaps and priority areas for action. The discussion included such questions as:

- ▶ Is our understanding of the challenges facing rural women and girls still up to date?
- ▶ Are we using the right approaches and policies to close the gender gap?

- ▶ What are the emerging economic opportunities for rural women?
- ▶ Are current capacity-development programmes enhancing the right set of skills for rural women and girls?
- ▶ Are men and boys being involved adequately in gender initiatives in order to ensure their buy-in?

A major thread throughout this discussion has been the recognition of the need to address the root causes of gender inequalities in order to achieve sustainable development. It is only through the involvement of the entire society that a full realization of gender equality can be reached.

A BROAD SPECTRUM OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION ISSUES

TOPICS

FSN Forum members have addressed a long list of topics over the years, reflecting the many factors which affect food security and nutrition. The subjects are various, including agriculture, fisheries, forestry, climate change, smallholders, food value chains, resilience, rural-urban dynamics, poverty, gender equality, and youth employment.

POVERTY
Rural-urban dynamics

BIODIVERSITY **GENDER**
 FISHERIES SCHOOL FOOD

Nutrition-sensitive agriculture

AGRICULTURE *Forestry*

Smallholders **RIGHT TO FOOD**

SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS
 INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE *Education* WATER

NUTRITION **SOCIAL PROTECTION**
Rural youth employment RESILIENCE

FAMILY FARMING *Food value chains*

CLIMATE CHANGE RURAL MIGRATION
Livestock *Food loss and waste*

RESPONSIBLE AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENTS
Soil **DIGITALIZATION**

Three examples offer a glimpse of the broad range of subject matter covered by FSN Forum interactions:

- ▶ During an online discussion facilitated by the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, Forum contributors identified several areas for addressing overweight and obesity, which is a large and growing concern in Central and South America. Many contributions introduced examples of initiatives, which have been successfully implemented and could be applied elsewhere.

- ▶ In another discussion, members looked at the nutritional value of pulses and shared perspectives on how government policies might help to address production challenges and change attitudes towards consumption.
- ▶ Two FSN Forum approaches were combined to address the use (and potential) of information and communication technology (ICT) in agriculture in Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) economies. An online discussion and a workshop organized by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) looked at existing methodologies, advanced technologies and best practices, with a view to training young researchers.



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SELECTED TOPICS

Towards the establishment of an International Digital Council for Food and Agriculture

Beyond "temporal" resilience: results that withstand the test of time

Open discussion on the first draft work programme of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition

Using information technology in the agriculture of APEC economies and beyond

CFS policy process on the development of the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition

How can we protect pollinators and promote their role in environmental and agricultural practices?

Transforming gender relations in agriculture through women's empowerment: benefits, challenges and trade-offs for improving nutrition outcomes

Are there any successful policies or programmes to fight overweight and obesity?

Urbanization, rural transformation and implications for food security

Development of a Code of Conduct on Food Loss and Food Waste Prevention

Online consultation for developing the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management

The Future UNIDROIT-FAO-IFAD Legal Guide on Agricultural Land Investment Contracts (ALIC)

Integrating nutrition into the curricula of agriculture education institutions

Towards a common understanding of Sustainable Food Systems

Various HLPE e-consultations on early drafts regarding the following themes: nutrition and food systems; sustainable forestry for food security and nutrition; multistakeholder partnerships to finance and improve food security and nutrition in the framework of the 2030 Agenda

Online consultation for review and comments on the zero-draft International Code of Conduct for the Use and Management of Fertilizers

Mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture, fisheries and forestry for improved food security and better nutrition

Youth – feeding the future: challenges faced by rural youth aged 15–17 in preparing for, and accessing, decent work

SNAPSHOT

STREET FOODS

The FSN Forum held an online discussion on the potential of street foods, not only as affordable and easily accessible sources of nutrition, but also as viable income opportunities, especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Participant contributions came from locations as disparate as Bangladesh, Canada, Mexico, and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Some pointed out that street food production and service required little or no formal training, had only minimal start-up costs, and could make use of urban and peri-urban agriculture as a source of fresh, nutritious and less-expensive ingredients. They also discussed the need for street food service to comply with safety and hygiene standards, in order to live up to its full potential. It was noted that government policies could provide support through processes related to urban planning, the issuance of permits, and food safety regulations and guidance.

This discussion helped the FAO Regional Office for Africa to refine its strategy regarding the safety, quality and nutritional value of street foods.

SNAPSHOT

HARNESSING THE POWER OF EGGS

Including eggs in daily diets, especially of young children and pregnant/lactating women, can generate substantial cost-effective benefits in terms of nutrition and health. Yet, the consumption of eggs is not particularly widespread in many developing countries due to their relatively high cost.

On occasion of the launch of a special supplement on the topic of eggs in the *Maternal & Child Nutrition Journal*, the FSN Forum hosted a discussion facilitated by GAIN to explore how eggs could be made more accessible to poorer populations.

Participants discussed problems that can affect small-scale producers of eggs such as high cost of fodder and high mortality of livestock. Issues also arise around large-scale production, which introduces new challenges linked to animal well-being, antibiotics and environmental issues.

Misconceptions about eggs and a general lack of knowledge of their benefits contribute to low consumption. Participants pointed out that governments have implemented schemes by which schoolchildren are provided one egg per day as part of their school lunch, which also helps the development of local egg production.

Finally, the discussion highlighted the need to make the poultry and egg business more interesting to young people by providing financial and technical support.





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SNAPSHOT

THE NEXT GENERATION

How can young people be kept from leaving rural agriculture in search of urban work? A productive and prosperous agriculture sector, carried forward by each new generation, is a fundamental part of a food-secure world; yet young people increasingly leave the countryside for urban amenities and to seek work in the cities.

This issue was addressed in an FSN Forum discussion facilitated by FAO on decent rural employment for youths aged 15–17. The online discussion was meant to be a building block for a 2016 expert meeting on the subject; as a follow-up, some of the contributors were invited to participate directly in that meeting.

The written summary of the discussion prepared by the FSN Forum, as well as the outcome document of the meeting, have both contributed to further thinking on effective policies and actions which could enable rural youth aged 15–17 to prepare for and find decent work.

How the FSN Forum works

Flexibility and transparency are central to the FSN Forum's success in connecting people and institutions of diverse backgrounds.

Methodology

Flexibility and transparency are central to the FSN Forum's success in connecting people and institutions of diverse backgrounds. The Forum uses different but complementary methods to access and share knowledge, adapting them, as needed, to the theme, geographical relevance and time constraints. It provides open, multilingual access through user-friendly infrastructure, allowing people to comfortably participate in the conversation.

The FSN Forum's website is the central hub for all its activities. The Forum acts as a repository for the vast range of knowledge gathered from discussions, consultations, surveys and webinars, in addition to reports and other publications which consolidate the outcomes of virtual and face-to-face meetings. The written materials remain online for future reference and learning.





FSN FORUM TOOLS



● **Online discussions and consultations.** These form the backbone of Forum activities and allow for the deepest level of engagement. They capture the widest possible audience and provide a platform for a transparent sharing of ideas and information. They typically take place over various weeks, allowing participants to share structured and insightful contributions.

- ▶ **Online discussions** focus on innovative topics, sharing knowledge, exploring linkages, and allowing FSN Forum members to help shape global food security and nutrition approaches.
- ▶ **Online consultations** open policy processes to input from people from around the world. By including voices which otherwise might not be heard, the FSN Forum's online consultations play an important role in strengthening and democratizing policy dialogue.



Online discussions and consultations can be complemented by:

● **Webinars** which offer opportunities for live engagement with renowned experts. Webinars are recorded and made available to the public, becoming knowledge products in their own right;



● **Workshops** which integrate face-to-face encounters with online exchanges;



● **Surveys** to elicit specific responses from a particular group of people;



● **Calls for good practices, case studies and reports.**

In addition, the Forum also offers to its members:



● **Contact forms** and a searchable database, which allows members to get in touch with their peers across borders, both geographical and thematic.



● **Information resources** including digests, summaries, updates, and news of upcoming events and publications, which are available on the website and disseminated through email.

The FSN Forum discussion

PILLARS OF THE FSN FORUM FACILITATION METHOD (FSN FORUM WORKFLOW)

TIME FRAME: up to four weeks of engagement

LANGUAGE COVERAGE: up to six languages

TECHNICAL FACILITATION: one or more experts

MULTIPLE FEEDBACK CHANNELS: online, real-time exchanges, via email and other means

ACTIVE OUTREACH through a targeted mailing list, involving sector-specific platforms, institutions and experts

UPDATES sent via email, with feedback from the facilitator and most recent comments

CONCLUDING REMARKS drafted by the technical facilitator

SUMMARY prepared by the FSN Forum team and shared with Forum members

FEEDBACK collected from facilitators and participants

WEBINARS: a keynote speech and a Q&A session can complement the online discussion

Results oriented

FSN Forum discussions normally feed directly into preparations for specific processes, such as conference and project planning, defining norms and standards, or policy-making. The online portion of an FSN Forum discussion typically lasts three to four weeks, though the duration of the discussion may vary, depending on the topic.

Diverse voices

The diversity of the Forum's membership is reflected in almost every discussion, with participation from academic and research institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society, UN agencies, public sector institutions and intergovernmental organizations. Any single discussion can receive input from dozens of countries.



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Summary reports

A discussion ends with a set of concluding remarks from the facilitator, touching on key issues and findings that may have emerged. The moderators then prepare a summary of the discussion. The FSN Forum website serves as a repository of all past online exchanges.

Networking

Topics discussed through the Forum help to build networks of people who may be interested in (or already working on) similar themes, and who, without the Forum, might not have learned about each other.

When relevant, the FSN Forum sets up parallel consultations with platforms within or outside of FAO, which may be interested in the chosen topic. Examples include Food for the Cities, the World Bank Group's SecureNutrition Knowledge Platform, and the Young Professionals' Platform for Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD).

Facilitators

Each new discussion is launched with a brief introduction by the topic facilitator, who is an expert in the chosen topic area. The facilitator lays the groundwork for the discussion by providing general background information and highlighting key questions to be considered. The introduction also helps to explain the objectives of the discussion.

Moderators' team

Moderators support the facilitator and keep the online conversations flowing, helping members to stay current by providing periodic digests, references and further information related to the topics discussed. They may also identify and invite specific individuals and organizations from the Forum's extended network to comment on and contribute to a particular discussion.

How it works

Members participate by logging onto the FSN Forum's website and posting their contributions online, or by emailing them to the Forum team. During the discussion, the facilitators may post follow-up messages which reflect or summarize the various contributions. They may also suggest specific subject areas for further comment and response.

Digests

While the discussion is ongoing, periodic digests are prepared and sent out to the FSN Forum's mailing list to consolidate key contributions, facilitator feedback, and news related to the discussion. These digests help to ensure that all participants are up to date.

Knowledge and capacity development

From knowledge to impact

In the fight against food insecurity and malnutrition, access to knowledge and participation in decision-making processes can make an enormous difference to those seeking to improve food security and nutrition.

FAO and non-FAO teams, FSN Forum members, and institutions regularly turn to the Forum to collect input and foster more inclusive development processes.

People who engage in FSN Forum discussions and other activities find a neutral space in which to share their opinions and experiences regarding the complex issues that affect food security and nutrition. They interact with both members and facilitators alike, increasing awareness, knowledge sharing and developing capacities.

Exchanges on the Forum can:

- ▶ raise awareness of topics and issues of concern;
- ▶ provide access to information on relevant global processes;
- ▶ open policy processes to input from a broader spectrum of voices;
- ▶ contribute to a convergence of ideas on how to deal with food security and nutrition-related issues;
- ▶ promote the opportunity for collective and effective action;
- ▶ convey knowledge that can be applied and shared by participants in broader contexts;
- ▶ introduce and explore new ideas, concepts and approaches.





FSN Forum networking

Contacts made through the FSN Forum go beyond the scheduled activities.

Forum participants form networks by connecting with people who work on the same issues, but who might not normally know where or how to find each other.

For instance, those FSN participants who are professionals with detailed knowledge on FSN-related issues can get in touch with their peers across borders, both geographic and thematic.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR FORUM MEMBERS can be searched through a database, facilitating networking and opening the door to new conversations.

From research to practice

The diversity of backgrounds and fields of expertise among FSN Forum members has made it possible to share different types of knowledge. Results from research and academic work, for example, are shared alongside practical experience and real-life observations. Members also share their experiences in dealing with the challenges of implementing policy, and of moving from decision-making to action.



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►► PERSPECTIVES

INNOVATION IN AGRICULTURE TO IMPROVE NUTRITION

Agricultural policies and practices can improve both food security and nutrition. An international research partnership, Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition in South Asia (LANSA), partnered with the FSN Forum in May-June 2015 to gather knowledge about innovations in agriculture that could potentially be applied in the South Asian region.

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Background

Many promising local and grassroots-led innovations in agriculture and livestock/fisheries production require evidence of their impact on nutrition status to justify upscaling and broader implementation. In this case, information and evidence of impact was shared. Participants offered wide-ranging experiences, such as the use of community-based service providers and volunteers to promote nutrition-sensitive products, services and training; the use of slower-growing, free-range chickens to increase the nutritional quality and market value of resulting meat and egg products, and low-pollution techniques for applying fertilizers.

Perspectives

Professor M.S. Swaminathan and Dr Alan Dangour, facilitating the discussion on behalf of LANSA, commented: "We specifically are looking for new interventions in agriculture that require formative research to aid their design, and/or research to understand their feasibility before being tested in large intervention studies. We also have an eye on the future and on the likely impact of environmental change on agricultural production." LANSA used the information gathered during the online discussion to put together a call for research in nutrition-sensitive agricultural innovations. "LANSA would not have been able to get in touch with the wide gamut of professionals if it had not been for the FSN platform. The level and quality of engagement is a definite bonus to our work."



SNAPSHOT

MAKING MIGRATION WORK FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

A major international migration flow in the Europe and Central Asia region is that of labour from the South Caucasus and Central Asia to the Russian Federation. An online consultation looked at how this migration flow affects countries of origin.

Comments reflected both the belief that migration boosts development

as well as the idea that it poses a threat to it: high levels of remittances have helped reduce poverty, but at the same time migration hampers the development of agricultural regions due to the labour loss it causes.

To help make agriculture a driver of economic and social growth the investment of remittances in

agricultural activities should be promoted. This, in turn, requires the creation of a favourable investment climate, while migrants and their families should also be provided with the technical support they need in developing agricultural businesses.

Supporting global policy discussions

Inclusiveness and transparency

The FSN Forum has helped to steer the global policy dialogue on food security and nutrition towards greater inclusiveness and transparency, thus helping to shape a growing trend in the UN and other development circles.

The Forum has brought a wide and diverse group of people and institutions (many of whom might not have participated otherwise) into high-level policy discussions. Some of them have raised new development issues to be considered in policies, action plans and reports.

Through these processes, the Forum has helped to set the stage for the implementation of agreed-upon frameworks for action. Over time, this has led to an important cultural shift: a growing number of institutions are using the FSN Forum to channel their official positions on issues related to food security and nutrition, which then feed into global policy processes.

Major policy processes

Issues raised by FSN Forum participants were reflected in the Executive Summary for the World Food Summit (WFS) 2009, a landmark gathering which set the tone for much of the food security and nutrition work which continues to this day.

The Forum discussion highlighted the growing concern within the development community about the impact of high-input agriculture.

Indeed, the Forum was one of the first places in which this concern was voiced and brought to the attention of the global community.

Forum participants and the WFS also called for stronger emphasis to be placed on local knowledge, stressing the need to find solutions through the full involvement of local producers, traders and processors.

The Committee on World Food Security

CFS, the foremost intergovernmental and international platform dealing with food security and nutrition, has turned to the FSN Forum for support in developing several of its products. These include, among others, the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition, the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems and the Framework for Action for Food Security and Nutrition in Protracted Crises.

In addition, the FSN Forum supported calls for experience sharing and case studies, which constitute integral parts of the CFS monitoring and evaluation process.

This level of participation has raised the bar for the inclusiveness of the work of CFS, and reflects the global reach of the Forum.



The High Level Panel of Experts

HLPE is an independent advisory body created to make CFS more effective, by keeping it up to date on scientific and technical knowledge as well as emerging trends in food security and nutrition. The HLPE has developed a long-standing collaboration with the FSN Forum, relying on it to gain access to a broad range of development actors. The HLPE holds two open consultations for each of its major reports (in the exploratory and drafting stages), and benefits from collective statements shared on the FSN Forum on behalf of governments and organizations around the world. A growing network of experts, governmental and non-governmental institutions, and others have joined in these consultations, as they see their contributions feeding directly into the development of the HLPE's influential reports.

The FSN Forum played a relevant role in ensuring an open, participatory approach to the post-2015 development agenda consultation process, which led to the identification of key priorities for the Sustainable Development Goals. This was a major step forward within the UN.

In contrast with the earlier Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) process, the importance of an inclusive vision and approach was strongly echoed, especially in SDG2 and in numerous SDG targets and indicators.

The Forum is currently well positioned to help keep the 2030 Agenda implementation process open and participatory.



Working with countries

Fostering country policy dialogue

Country-based approaches are central to the work of FAO, and crucial to achieving the SDGs. Countries have turned to the FSN Forum to expand public debate on food security and nutrition, and to develop and evaluate policies, legislation and action plans.

Tailored support at the country level

Depending on national needs and circumstances, the FSN Forum can work in a number of ways at the country level:

- ▶ by supporting target-oriented mobilization of stakeholders, bringing them together in a dedicated space for facilitated dialogue, in collaboration with national partners;
- ▶ by enabling the development of appropriate conditions for future discussions;
- ▶ by facilitating the sharing of knowledge and experience among national experts, connecting them with regional and global experts.

Facilitation methods and outcomes vary from country to country and are adapted according to needs and opportunities.

The FSN Forum also bridges global agendas and regional perspectives to help inform national policies (and vice versa), while promoting the sharing of best practices.

SNAPSHOT

PARTICIPATORY LEGISLATIVE PROCESSES IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Food security and nutrition in the Dominican Republic have faced a number of challenges, including unemployment, high food imports, price volatility and climate risks.

When the government decided to take a major step forward in strengthening its food security and nutrition policies, a member of parliament facilitated an online discussion through the FSN Forum. This discussion, coupled with focus group meetings held around the country, played a key role in drafting what would eventually become the nation's Law on Sovereignty and Food Security and Nutrition.

The draft was developed in close consultation with members of civil society, government technicians and local authorities, with the support of FAO, WFP and UNDP.



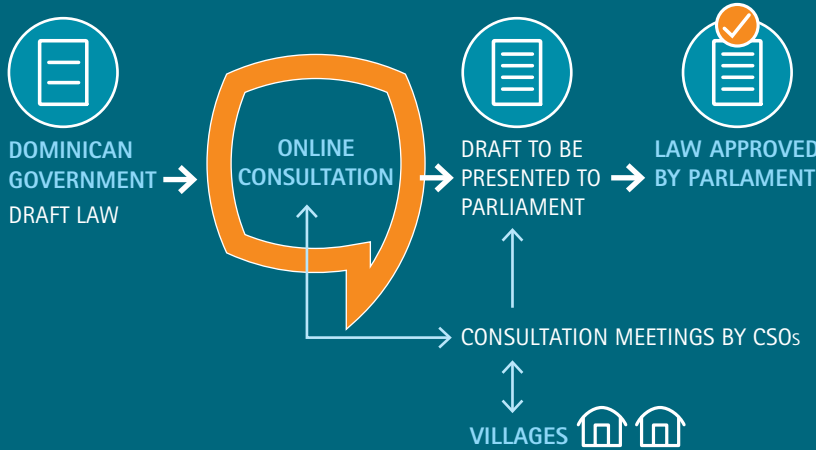
SNAPSHOT

A PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA

True to its commitment to increasing stakeholder dialogue at regional and country level, the FSN Forum engaged in a close collaboration with the FAO Project “Developing capacity for strengthening food security and nutrition in selected countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia” funded by the Russian Federation.

This partnership served to extend the involvement of key stakeholders from the Project’s focus countries Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in policy dialogue on how to strengthen food security and nutrition.

The joint activities also improved the project’s outreach and gave stakeholders and practitioners from other regions the opportunity to share their experiences and to engage in a fruitful learning dialogue with experts from the project’s focus countries. The consultations involved relevant stakeholders from a diversity of sectors, resulting in a strong representation of experts from academic and research institutions, NGOs, civil society, the private sector, UN agencies, public sector institutions and intergovernmental organizations.



Through the discussion and focus groups, citizens and civil society organizations had the opportunity to be involved, from the very beginning, in the design and layout of the draft law. The FSN Forum served as a hub for the comments and information gathered, linking the outputs

of the face-to-face focus groups with those shared directly online. More than 45 organizations from 24 provinces took part, substantially increasing the ownership of the entire legislative process, which led to the law’s approval by Parliament in 2016.



Working together

The FSN Forum collaborates with a wide range of organizations and institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, to promote inclusive and effective policy dialogue and provide practical guidance on how to deal with food security and nutrition issues and challenges.

From its unique position, the Forum provides a flexible and proven platform that partners can use to connect with a wide range of stakeholders across borders and disciplines. The Forum can help to frame issues and approaches, as well as shaping decision-making agendas and processes.

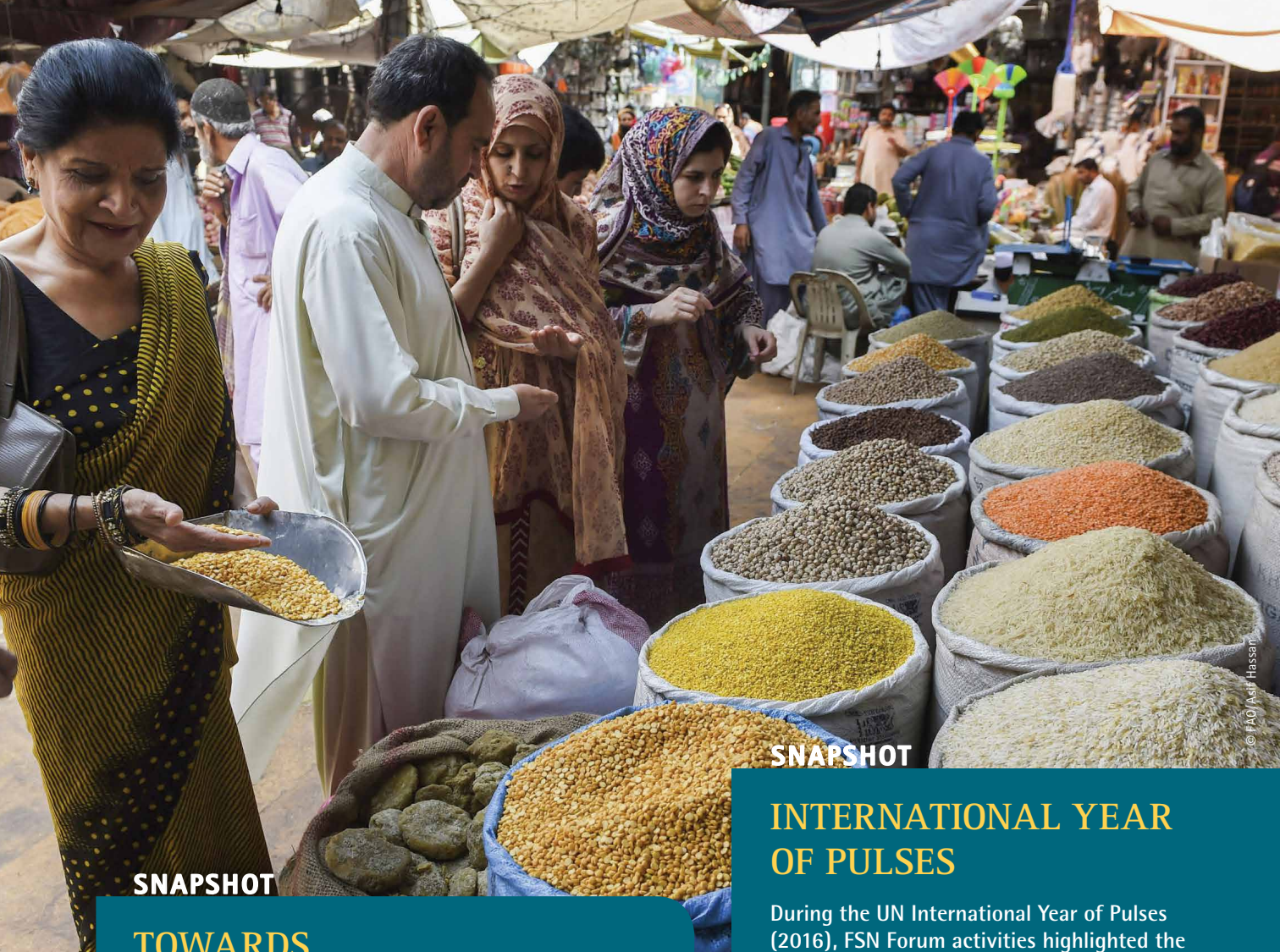
COLLABORATIONS

Organizations

- Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
- High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE)
- Eurasian Center for Food Security (ECFS)
- Iniciativa de América Latina y Caribe sin Hambre
- Caribbean Community (CARICOM)
- The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)
- Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP)
- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
- Zero Hunger Initiative
- Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS)
- Leveraging Agriculture for Nutrition in South Asia (LANSA)

Processes

- Decade of Action on Nutrition
- Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)
- Post-2015 development agenda
- International Year of Family Farming 2014
- International Year of Pulses 2016



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SNAPSHOT

TOWARDS NUTRITION-SENSITIVE VALUE CHAINS

FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP) and Bioversity International have looked at various ways to strengthen their work towards ending malnutrition in all its forms. They have identified nutrition-sensitive value chains as a key area for improving their work together, along with that of governments, the private sector, civil society and academia. FSN Forum discussions have helped these agencies to refine their approach to nutrition-sensitive value chain development, including advisory services and technical support to country and regional teams in the design and implementation of country programmes and other initiatives.

SNAPSHOT

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PULSES

During the UN International Year of Pulses (2016), FSN Forum activities highlighted the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead.

In a series of online discussions, webinars and face-to-face presentations, participants stressed the importance of promoting production and consumption of pulses by supporting seed and mixed cropping systems, facilitating access to markets and value addition, and establishing stronger networks between the different actors in the pulse value chain. They also emphasized the need to raise awareness of the health and nutrition benefits of pulses when addressing malnutrition and non-communicable diseases.

Taking part in the discussions gave people the chance to bring in new views on the challenges and benefits of pulses, as experienced in national and local contexts.

New ideas, concepts and methods

The FSN Forum provides access to a wide range of experts and practitioners who are able to communicate with each other freely on policies, trends and challenges affecting food security and nutrition. As they look to the future, FSN Forum members are exploring new ideas, information, concepts and methods – contributing to reshaping the policy agenda at all levels.

SNAPSHOT

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION INDICATORS

What is the impact of development work on people's lives, and how can it be measured? This question captures one of the key challenges in designing, implementing and evaluating food security and nutrition policies and programmes.

The FSN Forum supports stakeholders in mapping, needs assessment, and evaluation of programmes and projects, in part by organizing online surveys and analysis. When the FAO Statistics Division decided to develop a new suite of indicators for monitoring food security and nutrition at the global level, it called on the FSN Forum to organize a stakeholder consultation with representatives of national governments, regional and international institutions, NGOs, and the private sector.

The Forum supported a similar process concerning forests, partnering with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) to host an online consultation on the development of a global core set of forest-related indicators. These indicators are for use not only in the forest sector, but also in the broader contexts of food security and nutrition, livelihoods, and environmental services, which are crucial for agricultural production.





► PERSPECTIVES

NUTRITION IN AGRICULTURE CURRICULA

How can the next generation of experts and practitioners be better prepared to promote nutrition-sensitive agriculture? This question was the impetus for a November 2015 online discussion on the integration of nutrition-related curricula into agriculture education. The facilitator was Mebit Kebede, an education advisor in Ethiopia for ENGINE (a USAID-funded nutrition project).

Background

The lack of nutrition training for agricultural workers is acknowledged globally as a significant barrier to combating malnutrition through agriculture and food systems. "Nutrition needs a multisectoral approach," according to Kebede. "In Ethiopia, a country with a high prevalence of malnutrition, the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources designed a five-year NSA (Nutrition Sensitive Agriculture) strategy. But agriculture graduates, who are expected to implement this strategy, do not have any nutrition background. This is because their university agriculture curricula lack nutrition competencies."

Perspectives

The FSN Forum helped Kebede, a plant and soil scientist by training, to gather the views and experiences of individual project leaders, institutions and countries on how to strengthen pre-service nutrition education for agriculture students. "I realized that the issue which I raised was a concern of professionals around the globe," Kebede said. "The Forum was very important for sharing different experiences and thoughts. It helped me to think about the whole food system and food environment. As a result, we convinced higher officials at the Ministry of Education of the importance of the nutrition dimension, and started to integrate it into the Bachelor of Science Agriculture curricula."

Moving the dialogue forward

Eliminating food insecurity and malnutrition in a truly sustainable way is indispensable to achieving the broad ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, which are central to the work of FAO. As a champion of a zero-hunger world, FAO recognizes the fundamental importance of taking a multistakeholder, partnership approach to its mandate – and the FSN Forum is helping to put this into practice.

Achieving the SDGs

Since its inception in 2007, the FSN Forum has contributed to transforming the way in which the international community reaches consensus on development priorities. The Forum, with its unequalled access to experts and institutions from around the world, helped bringing new and diverse voices into global discussions that led to agreement on the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. FSN Forum online consultations led to greater inclusiveness and transparency and supported FAO in ensuring that the real needs of countries and communities worldwide were more closely reflected in SDG2 (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture).

From consensus to action

Now that there is broad consensus on what to aim for, countries face the crucial task of formulating coherent policies and programmes and turning them into concrete improvements on the ground. This is a fresh opportunity to promote the large-scale, transformational changes espoused by the SDGs and, in the process, improve lives in lasting ways.

Amplifying FAO knowledge and policy dialogue support

FAO is substantially enhancing its support to countries, increasingly acting as a knowledge broker and neutral arbiter. It supports countries' decision-making processes, in part by ensuring them access to some of the world's most valuable information and expertise.

The FSN Forum's culture of open exchange across borders and areas of knowledge helps to amplify the organization's strengths in these areas.

Moving forward, the FSN Forum will continue to facilitate knowledge- and experience-sharing among many of the most innovative and practical minds working on solutions to food security and nutrition challenges.

The Forum has proven itself to be a multidisciplinary mechanism for promoting the highest standards of transparency, and has become a trusted name for facilitated food security and nutrition policy dialogue.



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From global to national

Global reach is important, but so is localized focus. The geographical, cultural and social specificities of each country call for locally relevant policy solutions. But these solutions need not be developed in isolation. They could benefit from other national and regional experiences, and participation in the Forum facilitates access to such perspectives. Since the FSN Forum mirrors the diversity of its participants, it plays an increasingly important role in bridging international and national networks of experts. By adapting its proven methodology to specific national and local contexts, the FSN Forum can help reach those most affected by policy change, thus enabling them to have an impact on decision-making processes.

In other words, the potential of the FSN Forum is anchored in its vast network of people and institutions that interact with each other across borders and disciplines, sharing knowledge and building capacities to address the common goal of a food-secure world.

Adaptable solutions

The FSN Forum is expanding on its strengths, striving to remain innovative, flexible and relevant, and keeping abreast of changing global and regional dynamics. The Forum will continue to enhance participants' access to both knowledge and policy discussions. It will foster policy convergence and enable people who focus on FSN-related issues to remain connected and provide input to each other's efforts. It will strengthen its partnerships with FAO regional and country offices, while increasing collaboration with national institutions and organizations.

The Forum will also build on its fundamental role as a knowledge hub by expanding the variety of channels and tools used, adapting to local contexts and to the audience it aims to reach. It will explore new ways to harness and analyse the virtual vault of knowledge and information which it has gathered over the years from participants, and make it available for future use.

To achieve the SDGs and improve food security and nutrition, everyone needs to be involved.

The FSN Forum offers a trusted, efficient and ever-evolving public space where people, institutions and organizations can be part of this effort.

We encourage you to join and partner with the FSN Forum.

FSN Forum publications

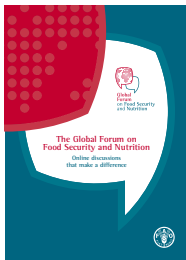
Booklets

Full-fledged publications covering FSN Forum activities and outcomes.



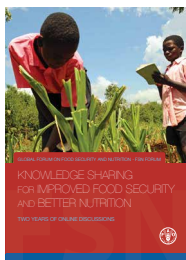
Food security and nutrition policy dialogues in Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia 2016-2019
A retrospective

www.fao.org/3/ca7110en/CA7110EN.pdf



The Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition
Online discussions that make a difference

www.fao.org/3/a-i2736e.pdf



Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition
Knowledge Sharing for Improved Food Security and Better Nutrition

www.fao.org/3/a-i0594e.pdf

Latest summaries

The FSN Forum summaries provide impartial syntheses of the positions shared during each online discussion and include lists of the resources referenced by the participants.



Addressing the challenges and realizing the potential benefits of migration to improve nutrition and food security in the Europe and Central Asia region

www.fao.org/3/ca5169en/ca5169en.pdf



Strengthening the linkages between agriculture and social protection. Designing coherent approaches for improving food security and nutrition in vulnerable households

www.fao.org/3/ca4112en/ca4112en.pdf



Eggs: harnessing their power for the fight against hunger and malnutrition

www.fao.org/3/CA3569EN/ca3569en.pdf



Mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture, fisheries and forestry for improved food security and better nutrition

www.fao.org/3/CA0978EN/ca0978en.pdf



Addressing water scarcity in agriculture: how can indigenous or traditional practices help?

www.fao.org/3/CA2109EN/ca2109en.pdf



Promoting sustainable food systems for healthy diets in Europe and Central Asia: the key role of school food and nutrition programmes

www.fao.org/3/I9598EN/i9598en.pdf



Youth Employment in Agriculture as a Solid Solution to ending Hunger and Poverty in Africa

www.fao.org/3/CA1688EN/ca1688en.pdf



The 11th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC11) and its significance for food security in Africa

www.fao.org/3/I8452EN/i8452en.pdf



Eradicating extreme poverty: What is the role of agriculture?

www.fao.org/3/CA0989EN/ca0989en.pdf



Sustainable farming systems for food and nutrition security

www.fao.org/3/I8603EN/i8603en.pdf

Latest briefs

FSN Forum briefs offer an overview of the topics discussed. They also include issues raised and recommendations shared by participants across more than one online discussion or consultation.



In Brief: Rural migration, agriculture and rural development

www.fao.org/3/I8722EN/i8722en.pdf



In Brief: Policies and programmes to fight overweight and obesity

www.fao.org/3/a-i6691e.pdf

**MORE INFORMATION ON RESOURCES
CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT:**

www.fao.org/fsnforum/resources/outputs





The Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition

Advancing knowledge
Supporting policy-making
Impacting lives

The FAO Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition (FSN Forum) is an inclusive, neutral platform for people and institutions to share knowledge and support policy-making.

Over the years, the FSN Forum online discussions have played an important role in strengthening and democratizing policy dialogue in line with the UN's move towards more inclusive decision-making processes within the development community.

The FSN Forum engages a broad spectrum of citizens, experts, governments, non-governmental and private entities at the global, regional and national levels, fostering awareness, debate and mutual learning on the broad range of issues that affect food security and nutrition.

This publication presents the work of the FSN Forum, offering an overview of how Forum activities and its vast network of participants around the world help FAO to tackle the root causes of poverty and hunger and support countries, organizations and communities in their efforts to improve lives.

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