



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
OF THE REPUBLIC
OF UZBEKISTAN

Declaration on the Sustainable Transformation of Agrifood Systems in Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs)

Preamble

We, the government representatives of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs)¹, European Union along with representatives of international organizations, private sector, civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders, have assembled at the *International Forum of Landlocked Developing Countries on Food Security and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on 5-6 September 2024;

- Recognizing the specific challenges faced by the 32 Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) - 17 of which are also classified as Least Developed Countries (LDCs) -, due to their lack of direct territorial access to the sea, which severely restricts their trade capabilities, limits economic growth and hinders their progress towards sustainable development,
- Acknowledging the significant untapped potential within these countries, particularly in the realm of food and agriculture, and recognizing the urgent need to leverage this potential to accelerate progress in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in the context of global challenges such as, food insecurity, all forms of malnutrition, climate change, poverty and inequality,
- Recognizing the critical role that women play in shaping and sustaining agrifood systems in landlocked developing countries, where they are often the primary producers, processors, and distributors of food, and the unique challenges faced by women in these contexts, including limited access to land, resources, and markets,

¹ Armenia, Azerbaijan, Chad, Central African Republic, Eswatini, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Mongolia, Nepal, South Sudan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Zimbabwe

- Recalling that food security and nutrition is an essential human right and will not be achieved without the transformation to more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems,
- Recalling the Call for Action issued at the FAO High-Level Ministerial Event: *Transforming agrifood systems to increase resilience and achieve the 2030 Agenda: Harnessing the potential of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs)* (June 2023), the Samarkand Declaration (September 2023) and the 2024 FAO Regional Conferences that addressed the needs of LLDCs²,
- Underscoring the importance of resilient agrifood systems to support the sustainable development of LLDCs and reaffirming our collective commitment to the principles of international cooperation,

We are convinced that transforming agrifood systems requires concerted action and effective international efforts, we hereby make the following declaration:

1. Recognition of Unique Challenges and Opportunities

We recognize that LLDCs face unique challenges, including geographical isolation, high transportation costs, and vulnerability to climate change, that hinder their food security and nutrition and economic development. Despite these challenges, LLDCs possess significant potential that, if properly harnessed, can contribute to sustainable agrifood systems across the world.

We commit to address persisting challenges and identify new opportunities to support LLDCs, including the “FAO Global Roadmap for Achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2) without Breaching the 1.5°C Threshold” which offers a common framework to unite actors for a transformative shift in agrifood systems to provide good food for all, for today and tomorrow.

2. Commitment to Sustainable Agrifood Systems

We recognize that rapid population growth in LLDCs, urbanization, growing wealth and consequent changes in consumption patterns, are challenging our agrifood systems’ ability to provide nutritious food, and to contribute to enhanced livelihood opportunities in an environmentally sustainable way.

² FAO Regional Conferences: APRC - Asia-Pacific Regional Conference, ARC - African Regional Conference and ERC - European Regional Conference.

We commit to adopting and implementing a holistic agrifood systems approach that ensures food security, nutrition, environmental sustainability, and socio-economic development in LLDCs. This approach will address the specific circumstances of LLDCs, focusing on enhancing productivity, resilience and market access for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, to ensure that the agrifood systems are inclusive, efficient, sustainable and address the needs of marginalized groups in rural areas and leave no-one behind.

3. Climate Change and Resilience

We emphasize the urgent need to build resilience to climate change, recognizing that LLDCs are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change on land, ecosystems and water resources.

We encourage sharing knowledge, resources, and best practices, including the promotion of climate-smart agriculture and sustainable water management.

We must prioritize integrating climate adaptation and mitigation strategies into every aspect of agrifood systems to ensure long-term sustainability. This includes also focusing on specific vulnerabilities of women, youth and other marginalized groups and strengthening the capacity of local communities to anticipate and respond to climate-related challenges, thereby safeguarding food security, nutrition and livelihoods.

4. Innovation and Technology

We recognize the critical role of innovation and digital technologies in overcoming the geographical and infrastructural barriers faced by LLDCs.

We commit to fostering the adoption of new technologies in agrifood systems, including digital tools, precision farming, and climate information services, to enhance productivity and resilience in an inclusive manner, that tap into the innovative potential of young women and men.

5. Trade and Market Access

We underline the importance of improving trade facilitation and market access for LLDCs, which face significant logistical challenges in trading agricultural products and in turn access to healthy diets.

We commit towards utilizing international trade corridors effectively with transit countries that enhance the competitiveness of LLDCs in global markets.

We commit to explore ways to technically support the reduction of barriers that disproportionately affect small-scale producers and traders, and facilitate cross-border trade for rural women and youth.

6. Enabling access to healthy diets for all

Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. We reaffirm the right of everyone to have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger.

We commit to transform agrifood systems to serve the health and nutrition needs of the growing LLDCs population by providing access to safe and nutritious foods, considering socio-cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability.

7. Public-Private Partnerships

We recognize that private sector engagement is essential for sustainable agricultural growth and affordable healthy diets and stress the importance of mobilizing private sector investment in the agrifood systems of LLDCs,

We commit to promote public-private partnerships to support infrastructure development, technology adoption, and market access, including via specific instruments such as, among others, the FAO Flagship Hand-in-Hand Initiative.

8. Financial Support and Investments

We will continue to encourage international financial organizations and development partners to provide increased financial support and investments for the development of sustainable agrifood systems in LLDCs. This includes funding for infrastructure, technology, research and development, and capacity building, but also investing in programmes that meet the needs of women in agriculture, ensuring their access to land ownership, financial services and modern farming techniques.

9. Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing

We commit to fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange among LLDCs and between LLDCs and other developing or developed countries, including via South-South and Triangular Cooperation modalities. We recognize the importance of platforms for sharing best practices, lessons learned, and innovative solutions to common challenges in agrifood systems, including the informal Ministerial network for SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs requested in the Call for Action referred to in the preamble

We, the participants of this Forum, hereby adopt this Declaration as a manifestation of our collective efforts to transform agrifood systems in Landlocked Developing Countries. We pledge to work together in partnership with all relevant stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of the initiatives/commitments outlined in this Declaration, with the aim of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals- particularly SDGs 1, 2 and 10- and improving the livelihoods of people in LLDCs, with a special emphasis on the most vulnerable groups such as women and youth.

We request the Government of Uzbekistan to share this Declaration with relevant United Nations bodies and other key stakeholders for further action as well as in relevant intergovernmental processes, such as the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries" (LLDC3), to be held in Gaborone (Botswana), from 10 to 13 December 2024, to ensure that agrifood systems transformation remains a priority in these processes and subsequent action plans.

Adopted/Issued in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on 5 September 2024

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