

Food Systems Summit

Jordan's Pathway to Transforming to Efficient and Sustainable Food Systems by 2030

1- The vision of Jordan to 2030 food system, how the food system in Jordan should look in 2030.

Guided by the instructions of H.M. the King Abdullah II Ibn Al-Hussein, who announced 2021 as the year for Food Security, Jordan has embarked on major exercise and initiated the work to formulate its **First Food Security Strategy 2021-2030 which was endorsed by the Cabinet this month**, followed by the preparation of the **Strategic Action Plan 2022-2024**, which is expected to be endorsed this month.

The UN Secretary-General António Guterres will convene a Food Systems Summit in September 2021 as part of the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The Summit constitutes a major awakener at the global level to the fact that the world needs to stop and/or reverse the deterioration in the food systems and to transform into more efficient, healthier, equitable and sustainable food systems, which inevitably requires rethinking the way we produce, consume and think about food. The Summit is a **people's Summit** where everybody is and should be a doer and contributor to the transformation process at family, local, national and global levels.

Jordan, as a member state, was invited to hold national and subnational dialogues engaging all stakeholders in preparation for the Global Summit in September 2021. Consequently, three sub-national and one national dialogue have been held during June-July 2021. The dialogues coincided with the formulation of the first Food Security Strategy and its Action Plan; in fact, the results of the national dialogues have been well integrated into the Strategy; accordingly, the transformation of the food system will be guided by the strategic objectives and guiding principles of the Strategy.

Jordan's vision is to transform its food systems to more efficient and sustainable ones that contribute to improved availability and self-reliance, access to nutritious food and healthy diets for all inhabitants at all times by 2030.

The Food Systems Summit constitutes an opportunity and challenge for Jordan to optimize the use of its natural, human and financial resources, restructure the relevant governance system and reconsider its priorities to achieve the above-mentioned vision, building on the high priority and momentum given to food security and food systems at national and international levels during the third decade of the 21st century.

So, by 2030 Jordan will achieve and be characterized by the following among others:

1. Jordan's food systems are efficient, healthy, just, resilient and sustainable
2. Having in place a robust and vibrant governance system and legislative frameworks
3. Effective partnerships with all stakeholders mainly, the private sector, civil society and international community, are built
4. Policy coherence and cooperation among different policies, strategies and institutions at sectoral and national levels are achieved
5. Appropriate budget and financial resources and the enabling environment to sustain the efficient food systems are in place
6. Jordan is a dependable regional hub for food security and an example for sustainable food systems transformation
7. Remarkable progress in achieving SDGs relevant goals and targets materialized
8. Active role of the private sector and investors
9. No one is left behind

2- Identity what needs to change now, identify the concrete priorities, identify changes to be made and decisions that must be worked through in the coming three years. What changes are needed for national food systems to meet the defined expectations by 2030? Which decisions must be worked through? Consider the challenges that must be addressed and the ways in which equity, justice, empowerment and sustainability are taken into consideration for all people.

Jordan is a resource-poor country, mainly water and energy, facing growing economic challenges that have been exacerbated by the outbreak of COVID19, which in turn added to poverty and unemployment. Moreover, Jordan is located in a troubled region that exposed Jordan to several waves of refugees; the last was the hosting of around 1.3 million Syrian refugees. In order to achieve successful transformation in the food systems, the following need to change and to be placed high on the national priority agenda:

1. Government and other stakeholders' commitment to the transformation process, which in turn requires a proper identification of the present status of food systems, their challenges and constraints and what should be changed, how, by whom and when?
2. The multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional nature of food systems require reconsidering the roles and responsibilities of the different institutions and stakeholders, more importantly, identifying/creation a national entity that will serve as the national umbrella for food security and transformation of food systems, it should be appropriately empowered and equipped to do so.

3. In light of the protracted nature of the Syria crisis, the refugees as a global public good, shared international community responsibility and considering the economic challenges Jordan is facing, there is an urgent need to come up with a new compact between Jordan and the international community to ensure that refugees in Jordan live in dignity and their responsibility is shared fairly and on a sustainable manner.
4. The awareness and understanding of the status, nature and priority of changing food systems are very limited, which requires concerted efforts in this regard, including decision-makers, practitioners, producers, consumers and services providers.
5. The capacities and capabilities of all involved in the food systems chains should be enhanced
6. Women and youth should be granted more attention as their role in the change process is vital
7. The legislative framework that governs food systems in Jordan is scattered and fragmented and far from being comprehensive, so a new and effective legislative structure needs to be in place.
8. More emphasis and support are needed to boost applied research, technology transfer and innovation system.
9. Proper database for food and other relevant fields is a high priority in addition to responsive and smart monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems.
10. The not used food (loss and waste) is a resource that should be minimized, and the rest should be optimally used.
11. The efforts towards improving available water use are still far from being appropriate or efficient. This is mainly due to the water loss, uncharged for water, inefficient use of ground, surface, low quality and sewage water.
12. The food habits and consumption patterns, especially during social and religious occasions, contribute to the inefficiency of the present food systems; swift actions are needed to rational them as much as possible.
13. Creation of decent work, safety nets and equitable access to resources and services, coupled with smart and fair incentive and disincentive tools.
14. A better understanding of the push and pull powers and who gains and loses from the transformation is a very important factor to achieve smooth and sustainable change.

3- Indicate key milestones along the timeline of the pathway. These milestones can help identify how to share progress, identify emerging challenges and reconsider the approach of the pathway as needed.

The pathway to efficient and sustainable food systems will pass through major steps and milestones that will show the progress and achievements; at the same time, it will serve as stations for review, adjustments, deriving lessons learned and ultimately

feedback in the transformation process. Below are the key milestones for Jordan's pathway:

- Identification and diagnosis of the major food systems taking in consideration different socio-economic and geographical factors. It is expected to prepare the diagnostic report before the end of February 2022.
- Preparation of the road map/pathway for the transformation of the food systems that identify the most appropriate and feasible interventions by the end of June 2022.
- Conduct national hearings/dialogues on the road map during July-August 2022.
- Endorsement of the road map by the end of September 2022
- Restructuring and adjustment of the institutions and legal framework by the end of December 2022.
- Implementation of the interventions and actions included in the pathway, starting January 2023.
- Continuously and periodically monitor, evaluate, review and adjust the pathway. This will include a mid-term review towards the end of 2025, accordingly, coming up with a new/modified transitioning road map/plan for 2026-2030.
- Periodically, share experiences and lessons learned with other countries in the region and elsewhere.

4- How to make it happen, thinking on governance structure.

Of paramount importance for the transformation and change to happen and succeed are the following:

1. Strong ownership and buy-in by the relevant stakeholders; equally important is to create/identify champions of change to manage and lead the process at local, regional and national levels.
2. Consensus building and commitment of the stakeholders being government, private sector, civil society, donors and UN organizations.
3. Create a national umbrella and think tank to guide and supervise the process and empower it with adequate finance and authority.
4. Ensure policy coherence and harmony with other strategies and plans.
5. Build linkages and communication platforms at national and regional levels.
6. Continuously upgrade and enhance the capacities and capabilities of institutional and human resources.
7. Create responsive and smart monitoring, evaluation and reporting system.

5- Highlight and reinforce connections between the pathway and other planning documents. Connections may include existing policies, national budgets, as well as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and, as relevant, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks.

As mentioned earlier, the pathway formulation came at a time while Jordan was preparing its first food security strategy, so great adherence and coherence were sought between both documents as both documents are mutually inclusive and complementary. Moreover, the pathway is well aligned with the objectives of the agricultural Strategy 2020-2025, the social protection strategy 2019-2025 and the NDCs related to agriculture, water and energy. Jordan's pathway is closely linked and in different degrees to all 17 of the SDGs through a food systems approach, leveraging the interconnectedness of food systems to global challenges such as hunger, climate change, production and consumption, decent work, poverty and inequality, among others. The transitioning pathway for Jordan will materialize through the implementation of a wide range of interventions that are part and parcel of other sectors' interventions, while the pathway interventions will complement and reinforce certain aspects and respond to immediate needs that are not part of the existing and ongoing strategies and plans.

6- Define how stakeholders can work well together for collective action. This may include forging powerful partnerships and creating mutually reinforcing interventions that foster a cycle of continuous learning. Collective action should draw on strong foundations of science and traditional knowledge and sharing of policy choices and practices that contribute to sustainable food systems. Include and an appreciation of who sees value in supporting the change and who opposes it.

As with any change process, the transformation of the food systems in Jordan will be faced with different degrees of support and resistance at the same time. Each group has its own reasons and motives to do so. A major challenge is how to sustain and strengthen the supports while minimizing resistance. This will be achieved by following an active and participatory approach that will be the base for the transparent and informed decision-making process and benefit from the adoption of the results derived from the research, appropriate technology, good practices and lessons learned. Small farmers, producers, consumers, rural and urban poor need to work collectively in order to gain strength and serve their interests, mainly in minimizing costs, adopt innovation, marketing and lobbying. This could materialize through the establishment of cooperatives, organizations and lobbying groups benefitting from social media and the advancement in technology and knowledge transfer and dissemination.