



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Sustainable food systems in North and Central Asia

A systematic approach for
transitioning to healthier and
more nutritional dietary patte

4th Sub-regional Multi-Stakeholder Forum
on Implementation of the SDGs

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Introduction

1. **Role of Sustainable Food Systems (SFS)** in transitioning to healthy and nutritional diets and achieving the SDGs
2. **State of the food system** in the NCA subregion
3. **Way forward in the NCA region:** Challenges and opportunities for SFS transformation



The Sustainable Food System approach

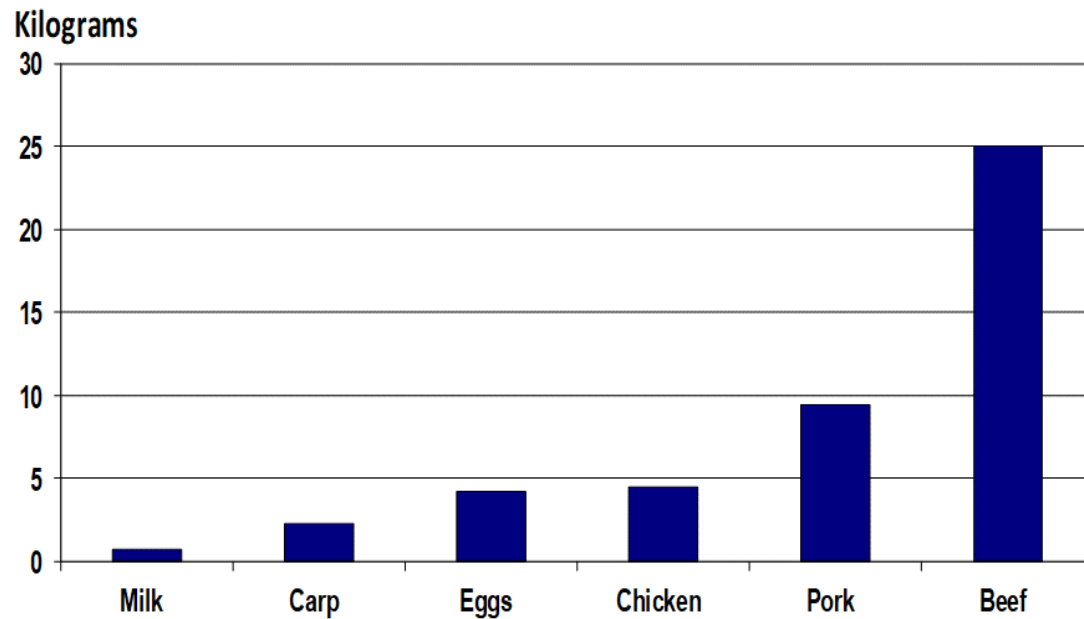
- SFS comprise all functions and actors and their interlinked value-adding activities involved in the **production, processing, distribution, consumption and disposal of food products**
- SFS approach assesses food system activities against priority outcomes
 - 1. Economic development:** inclusive incomes, jobs & livelihoods
 - 2. Social equality:** secure and safe food and nutrition
 - 3. Environmental protection:** environmentally sustainable practices and resilience agriculture to climate
- Understanding **interconnectedness and trade-offs** between social, economic and environmental impacts
- Aims at finding sustainable solutions for sufficient supply of healthy food

Examples of trade-offs

Grain requirements for feed

Feed conversion rate

Kilograms of feed per kilogram of edible weight



Source: Smil, Vaclav (2002). Eating Meat: Evolution, Patterns, and Consequences
Population and Development Review, 28(4):599–639

HOW MUCH WATER IS NEEDED TO PRODUCE...



1 KILO
OF MEAT
15,000
LITRES



1 KILO
OF WHEAT
1,500
LITRES



DAILY DRINKING
REQUIREMENTS
2-5
LITRES

To produce
enough food to
satisfy a person's
daily needs takes
about 3000 litres
of water.

How can SFS contribute to SDGs?

Within the 2030 Agenda, food systems transformation can help countries to deliver on all 17 SDGs

The 2021 UN Food Systems Summit will work to deliver these aspirations through five objectives:

1. Ensuring **access to safe and nutritious food** for all
2. Shifting to **sustainable consumption** patterns
3. Boosting **nature-positive production** at sufficient scales
4. Advancing **equitable livelihoods and value distribution**
5. Building **resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stresses**





“Making food systems sustainable, resilient and inclusive, and healthy diets accessible and affordable for everyone is paramount to building back better from COVID-19” .”

Dr QU Dongyu

FAO Director-General

Where do we stand regionally



- Prevalence of hunger at the chronic or severe level is mostly very low (below 3.2%; FIES)
- Moderate and severe undernourishment between 16% and 20% of total population (FIES)
- Stagnation between 2014-18 (threatening attainment of SDG target)
- Multiple burden of malnutrition:
 - Obesity and overweight are on the rise
 - Prevalence of stunting mainly low (some medium declining trend)
- Inequality and under-investment in agriculture among main drivers behind the above trends

Where do we stand regionally? (cont'd)

- Slowdown in production growth in several countries in the NCA region, especially in Central Asia.
- Output growth more volatile in recent years (climate, trade, migration and remittances, and economy-wide fluctuations).
- Over-use of inputs (agro-chemical) and natural resources (water)
- Degradation of natural resource base (land, water, forest)
- The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the supply of and demand for food and reduced the purchasing power of rural households and the capacity, especially of women farmers, to produce and market their produce.

Way forward – SFS Transformation

Key priorities in the region:

- Improved institutional and policy environment to **reduce inequalities** and promote inclusive growth, and foster **improved use and management of natural resources**
- Increasing adoption of **technical and institutional innovations** along the supply chains
- Strengthening capacity to enhance **food safety and access to nutritious** food for all
- Increasing the capacity to **reduce food loss and waste** in an inclusive and sustainable way
- Attracting investment for **green growth and carbon neutrality**
- Harnessing **digital innovations** and technologies



Way forward – SFS transformation

Actions Required

- Improved governance, systems-thinking, policy coherence and coordination.
- Data, evidence, and multi-sectoral analysis to understand synergies and trade-offs within the food system and between the three dimensions of sustainability, determine clear priorities and change in behavior and choices.
- Evidence-based, inclusive multi-stakeholder policy dialogue to manage trade-offs between the different dimensions of sustainability, take the most balanced decisions and build stakeholder buy in around these



THANK YOU!