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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)  
Regional Forum on Accelerating Food Systems Transformation in the Arab Region  
The Sheraton Amman Al Nabil Hotel, Jordan, 30-31 October 2024

**AGENDA**

**Wednesday, 30 October 2024**

08:30 – 09:30

**Registration**

*The meeting will be held at the Sheraton hotel in Amman, Dushara Room, Floor BR  
Sponsored participants are kindly asked to bring their passport, visa receipt and airline ticket stubs to the meeting registration desk.*

*To participate virtually, kindly register and connect through the following link:*

[https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_85DaiGUxRRqSdgO1OVz5Tg](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_85DaiGUxRRqSdgO1OVz5Tg)

**Opening Session**

Moderator: Mr. Lawrence Al-Majali, Ministry of Agriculture, Jordan

09:30 – 10:00

**Opening remarks:**

- Ms. Rola Dashti, United Nations Under-Secretary-General; Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), on behalf of the organizers
- H.E Dr. Jaafar Hassan, Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, Jordan

**Introduction and Reflections from Partner Organizations**

Moderator: Mr. Lawrence Al-Majali, Ministry of Agriculture, Jordan

10:00 – 10:45

- Mr. Ibrahim Eldukheri, Director-General, Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD)
- Mr. Abdulhakim Elwaer, Assistant Director-General; Regional Representative, FAO Regional Office for Near East and North Africa
- Ms. Anna Rosendahl, Head of Section for Regional Development Cooperation, Embassy of Sweden, Jordan
- Ms. Corinne Fleischer, Regional Director for the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe, World Food Programme
- Mr. Patrick Jean Gilabert, Regional Representative, UNIDO Sub-Regional Office, Egypt
- Ms. Holly Welborn Benner, Jordan Resident Representative, The World Bank

## Scene-Setting: Status of Food Systems in the Arab Region

10:45 – 11:00 *In this session, speakers will present the current state of food systems in the Arab region, providing facts, figures, and analyses on the key challenges facing these systems.*

- Ms. Reem Nejdawi, Chief of Food and Environment Policies Team, Climate Change & Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster, ESCWA
- Mr. Ahmad Mukhtar, Senior Economist, Food and Agriculture Organization Regional Office (FAO-RNE)

## 11:00-11:30 Coffee break and networking

## Session I High-Level Dialogue: Policies for Advancing Food Systems Transformation

*In this session, ministers from various Arab countries will provide an overview of the current state of food systems in their respective nations. Each minister will address the key challenges their country faces in this area, while also highlighting the policies and initiatives implemented to promote food systems transformation and achieve food security.*

*Ministers will share the top 3 challenges and priority policies and programs for their countries to accelerate food system transformation.*

Moderator: H.E. Mr. Ibrahim Eldukheri, Director-General, Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD)

### 11:30 – 12:30 Ministers participating in the Forum:

- H.E Mr. Khaled El Hneifat, Minister of Agriculture, Jordan
- H.E. Mr. Wael Al Moubarak, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Agriculture, Bahrain
- H.E. Mr. Abou Baker Al Bouchra, Minister of Agriculture and Forests, Sudan
- H.E. Mr. Fayez Al Mokdad, Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, Syrian Arab Republic
- H.E. Mr. Asad Abdirizak Mohamed, State Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, Somalia
- H.E. Mr. Abbas El-Maliki, Minister of Agriculture, Iraq
- H.E. Mr. Naser Mohamad Taki, Director of the Public Authority for Agriculture Affairs and Fish Resources, Kuwait
- H.E. Mr. Abbas El-Hajj Hassan, Minister of Agriculture, Lebanon
- H.E Mr. Hussein Atiya Al Qatrani, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Libya
- H.E. Mr. Alaa Zaki Al Sayed, Minister of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, Egypt
- H.E. Mr. Sherif Farouq, Minister of Supply and Internal Trade, Egypt

## Session II Financing Food Systems Transformation in the Arab Region

*This session will focus on strategies for funding and supporting the shift toward more resilient and sustainable food systems in the Arab region. Panelists will discuss*

*innovative financing mechanisms, collaboration between public and private sectors, and the types of investments needed to promote acceleration towards Food Systems Transformation in the region.*

Moderator: Ms. Carol Chouchani Cherfane, Cluster Lead, Climate Change and Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster, & Director of Arab Centre for Climate Change Policies, ESCWA

12:30 –13:30 **Keynote speakers:**  
Economic Benefits of Transforming Food Systems and Implications for Public and Private Investment

- Mr. Steven Lord, Senior Researcher in Food System Economics, University of Oxford (*online*)

Financing and Investment in the Upcoming Regional SOFI Report

- Mr. Ahmad Mukhtar, Senior Economist, Food and Agriculture Organization Regional Office (FAO-RNE)

**Panelists:**

- Ms. Svetlana Edmeades, Lead Agriculture Economist, World Bank
- Mr. Amgad El Mahdi, Regional Manager for MENA Region, Green Climate Fund (GCF) (*online*)
- Mr. Massoud Jarallah El Mourri, Director of Food Security Management, Ministry of Municipality, Qatar
- Mr. Ignace Begium Billecocq, Head, Food Systems Programme, UN Global Compact (*online*)
- Mr. Mageed Yahia, Iraq Country Director, World Food Programme

13:30 – 13:45 Q&A

13:45 –14:45 Lunch Break

**Spotlight Segment 1 Foresight for Food and Nutrition Security in the Region: Participative Scenario Building**

Moderator: Ms. Radia Sidaoui, Chief of Section, Economic Affairs, Climate Change & Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster, ESCWA

14:45 – 15:45 Ms. Vanina Forget, Senior Agriculture Economist, The World Bank, USA

15:45 – 16:00 Coffee break

**Session III Right to Food as a Catalyst for Food Systems Transformation**

*In this session, the discussions will center around how the right to food, as a fundamental human right, can serve as a driving force for transforming food systems in the region. Panelists, including parliamentarians, experts, and government officials from various Arab countries, are expected to address legal and policy frameworks and the challenges and opportunities for implementing the right to food, especially in fragile and vulnerable countries.*

Moderator: Mr. Khaled Eltaweel, Senior Programme Coordinator, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub/FAO, Italy

16:00 – 17:00

**Panelists:**

- H.E. Ms. Inaya Ezzeddine, Member of the Lebanese Parliament; Chairperson of Women & Children & SDG 2030, Agenda Parliamentary Committees, Lebanese Parliament; Food Systems Convener, Lebanon (*online*)
- H.E. Ms. Jihad Abdullah Al Fadhel, Second Deputy Chairman of the Shura Council, Bahrain (*online*)
- Mr. Bader A. I. Alhawamdeh, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, State of Palestine
- Mr. Amr Aljowaily, Assistant Minister for Multilateral Affairs and International Security, National Food Systems Convener, Egypt
- Mr. M'hamed Tifouri, Director of Statistics, Digitalization, and Foresight, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR), Algeria
- Mr. Bashar Goneimat, Project Manager, National Alliance Against Hunger and Malnutrition (NAJMAH), Jordan

17:00 – 17:15

Q&A

17:15 – 17:30

Wrap-up and End of Day 1

**Thursday, 31 October 2024**

**Spotlight  
Segment 2**

Moderator: Hammou Laamrani, Economic Affairs Officer, Climate Change & Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster, ESCWA

09:00 – 09:30

Food Systems and Climate Convergence Initiative

- Mr. Khaled Eltaweel, Senior Programme Coordinator UN Food Systems Coordination Hub/FAO, Italy

Annual Arab Food Security Report -2024

- Mr. Raed Hattar, Director of Technical Program Directorate, Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD)

Climate Action for Resilient Food Systems

- Mr. Omar Ali Alrifai, Regional Head of Resilience and Climate, World Food Programme

**Session IV**

**Innovative Approaches for Accelerating Food Systems Transformation**

*Speakers will explore innovative strategies and technologies to fast-track the transformation of food systems, including topics such as the role of food security management information systems, the use of innovative frameworks such as true cost accounting or circular economy, and the impact of R&D, and technology transfer on regional food security.*

Moderator: Mr. Nabil Assaf, FAO Representative to Jordan, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

09:30 – 10:45

**Speakers:**

The Role of ACSAD in Cultivating High-Yield Wheat Under Drought Conditions

- Mr. Naser Edin Obeid, Director-General, Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Drylands (ACSAD)

Guidelines to Accelerate Food Systems Transformation

- Mr. Rami Zreik, Professor of Ecosystem Management at the Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture at the American University of Beirut (AUB), Lebanon (*online*)

Cultivating Innovation through Joint R&D and Technology Transfer as Catalysts for Regional Food Security

- Mr. Muddassir Shafique, Agribusiness Sector Lead in Upstream/Advisory, IFC (*online*)

Food Systems MIS in Jordan

- Mr. Haidar Fraihat, Director General, Department of Statistics, Jordan

WFP's Food Systems Challenge Project in Lebanon, Investing in Private Sector

- Mr. Kassem Jouni, Regional Resilience Officer, World Food Programme

Foresight and Scenarios as Effective Tool for Food System Transformation in Jordan

- Mr. Asem Nabulsi, Deputy Country Coordinator, Foresight for Food Systems Transformation

Research, Innovation and Technology Transfer in Syria and its Role in Accelerating the Transformation of Food Systems.

- Mr. Mohamed El Shehabi, Head of the Food Technology Department, General Commission for Scientific Agricultural Research, Syrian Arab Republic

10:45 – 11:00

Q&A

11:00 – 11:30

Coffee break & networking

**Session V**

**Planning Food Systems Transformation in Arab Least Developed Countries and Conflict-Affected Countries**

*This session will address the unique challenges that least developed countries and fragile countries in the Arab region face in transforming their food systems. Panelists are expected to share insights on national-level initiatives, policy interventions, and international cooperation to support sustainable food systems in these developing and fragile contexts.*

Moderator:

Mr. Mageed Yahia, Iraq Country Director, World Food Programme

11:30 – 13:00

**Keynote Speakers:**

Food Systems in Emergency Contexts

- Ms. Corinne Fleischer, Regional Director for the Middle East, North Africa, and Eastern Europe, World Food Programme

## Regional Overview of Food Security in Conflict-Affected Countries

- Mr. Ibrahim Eldukheri, Director-General, Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD)

### Panelists:

- Mr. Mohamed Abdi Farah, Adviser on Social Sector and SUN Focal Point; Food Systems National Convenor, Office of the Prime Minister, Somalia
- Ms. Karima Ahmed Al-Hada'a, Planning and Liaison Specialist; Scaling-Up Nutrition Secretariat (SUN-YEMEN), Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, Yemen
- Mr. Mohamed Taleb Isselmou, Curator of Food Systems Summit Dialogues, Ministry of Economy and the Promotion of Productive Sectors, Mauritania
- Mr. Ammar Hasan Bachir Abdallah, Director of Food Security, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Sudan
- Mr. Salem Darwich, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Agriculture, Lebanon
- Mr. Hassan Al-Ashqar, Director-General of Planning and Policies, Ministry of Agriculture, State of Palestine

13:00 – 13:15 Q&A

13:15 – 14:15 Lunch Break

### Spotlight Segment 3

Moderator: Hammou Laamrani, Economic Affairs Officer, Climate Change & Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster, ESCWA

14:15 – 14:45 Re-thinking foreign land investments in the Arab region: towards food security and environmental preservation

- Ms. Maria Pilar Ouro Paz, Economic Affairs Officer, Climate Change & Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster, ESCWA

Advancing Inclusive Food Systems in Egypt: WFP's Partnership with the Government for Sustainable and Equitable Food Security

- Mr. Jean-Pierre Demargerie, Egypt Country Director, World Food Programme

### Session VI Inclusive Food Systems Transformation

*This session will focus on ensuring that food systems transformation efforts are inclusive of various groups, such as refugees, people with disabilities, the youth, women farmers, and food entrepreneurs. Discussions will address the challenges that these stakeholders are currently experiencing and will discuss how governments and development partners can better support them and engage them in policymaking.*

Moderator: Ms. Sulafa Mdanat, Country Representative, United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), Jordan

- 14:45 – 15:45
- Mr. Michael Haddad, UNDP Regional Goodwill Ambassador for Climate Action
  - Ms. Razan Zuayter, President of the Arab Group for the Protection of Nature (APN) and Founder of the Arab Network for Food Sovereignty (ANFS)

- Mr. Ammar Al Rfou and Mr. Mostafa Al Khawaldeh, Founders of R-feed
- Ms. Fatima Fattoukh, Communications Deputy Director, MENA Youth Network
- Mr. Fadi Jabr, Secretary-General, Arab Federation for Food Industries (AFFI)

15:45 –16:00 Q&A

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**Final Remarks, Key Messages and Closing**

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16:00 –16:45 Key messages to inform regional processes by partners