HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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# Uniting Forces:

# Integrating Science, Policy and Society to Achieve Zero Hunger

## 2024 HLPF Side Event

**in person**

**10 July 2024, CR-9, UN HQ**

**13:15-14:30 (held in New York time)**

**Co-organizers:** FAO, DESA, European Union

The 2024 Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on SDG 2 underscored the urgent need for innovative approaches to accelerate progress towards ending hunger and achieving food security and nutrition for all. Recognizing the critical role of the science-policy-society interface in driving transformative change, this 2024 HLPF side event aims to build upon the insights and recommendations from the EGM to catalyze action towards SDG 2.

## Background

Eight years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs and past the halfway point to 2030, progress to achieve the 2030 Agenda is off track and the world is facing multiple and interlinked crises, impacting the capacity of countries to provide healthy diets and adequate, safe and nutritious food for all. Interconnected and often mutually reinforcing challenges and drivers, including climate change, conflict and recurrent crises, economic shocks, uncertainty and structural inequalities, hinder and in some areas reverse, progress across SDG 2 targets and interlinked objectives. Among the most affected are those already further behind and on people and communities in vulnerable situations, including people living in rural areas. Adequate and comprehensive interventions, including access to finance, capacity building and inputs and services, often fail to reach critical actors, particularly small-scale producers, family farmers, rural women and youth, Indigenous Peoples and ethnic groups. These interconnected and multilayered challenges require more articulated and yet concrete and urgent responses.

Over 50 experts representing non-governmental and civil society organizations, the private sector, academia, scientists and researchers and UN entities convened at FAO headquarters in Rome to review progress on SDG 2 and its role in advancing sustainable development across the 2030 Agenda before the 2024 HLPF review.

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The meeting brought together multidisciplinary experts and practitioners working on SDG 2 to take stock of progress and lessons learned based on evidence and concrete examples; review promising and innovative solutions to catalyse action and bring results at scale; analyse trends and challenges, including with regard to the intensifying climate crisis, the recovery from COVID-19 pandemic, increased frequency and scale of conflicts, economic slowdowns and downturns, structural inequalities within and among countries; and to consider how to strengthen governance for effective collaboration across institutional and non-institutional actors, increase ownership, effectiveness and accountability of results.

The intense and profound discussions at the SDG 2 EGM led to crafting policy messages and recommendations, reflecting the variety of actors and viewpoints represented at the EGM as input to 2024 HLPF deliberations.

## Objectives

The side event aims to:

- Synthesize the key findings and recommendations from the SDG 2 EGM and identify opportunities for leveraging the science-policy-society interface.
- Showcase examples of successful initiatives and partnerships that integrate scientific research, evidence-based policymaking and active societal engagement to advance SDG 2.
- Facilitate dialogue and collaboration among diverse stakeholders to develop actionable strategies for accelerating progress towards Zero Hunger.

The side event will feature a facilitated panel discussion bringing together experts, policymakers, practitioners and representatives from civil society organizations and the private sector to share experiences and explore the co-creation of innovative solutions to accelerate progress towards Zero Hunger.

As we strive to overcome global challenges, it is imperative that we harness the collective wisdom, expertise and resources of the science-policy-society interface to accelerate progress towards SDG 2. This side event serves as a platform for translating knowledge into action, forging partnerships, and driving transformative change towards a world where no one suffers from hunger or malnutrition.

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The panellists will put a deeper focus on the following key SDG 2 EGM findings:

**Evidence-Based Decision-Making:** Highlighting the importance of scientific research, data-driven analysis and monitoring frameworks for informing policy formulation and implementation strategies to address hunger and malnutrition effectively.

**Policy Integration and Coherence:** Exploring approaches for enhancing policy coherence across different sectors and levels of governance to promote sustainable agriculture, improve food systems and ensure equitable access to nutritious food for all.

**Community Empowerment and Participation:** Recognizing the role of local communities, Indigenous Peoples knowledge systems and civil society organizations in shaping policies, implementing sustainable agriculture practices and fostering resilience to food insecurity.

**Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships:** Showcasing successful partnerships between governments, research institutions, international organizations, the private sector and civil society to mobilize resources, share expertise and drive collective action towards achieving SDG 2.