



Initiative on Climate Action and Nutrition (I-CAN)



Introduction

Climate action is not scaling up rapidly enough.¹ Climate change impacts and risks are becoming increasingly complex and more difficult to manage. Simultaneously, the world is facing the complex challenges of hunger and multiple forms of malnutrition, where over 30% of the world's population is facing micronutrient deficiency, and 828 million people are undernourished, while 676 million are obese.² Climate change is impacting food, diets, health, social protection, and water/sanitation systems that are fundamental for good nutrition. The impact of climate change further threatens global food security and nutrition through a variety of forces. These include a predicted decline in global crop productivity, a steep increase in food prices — which will impact overall calorie consumption, as well as the nutritional quality of diets, as people shift to cheaper, less nutrient-rich foods³ — and changes in nutrient levels in some crops.⁴ Furthermore, extreme weather events increase agriculture and food losses.⁵ At the same time, the food and diets that we eat affect climate change. Food systems release greenhouse gases (e.g., CO², methane, and nitrous oxides) into the atmosphere directly, drive land-use changes that release additional CO², and cause reduction of carbon sinks when forests are cleared, wetlands drained and soils are tilled. Dietary choices steer different production systems and result in varied emissions and environmental footprints.

The bidirectional relationship between nutrition and climate change means that sustainable, resilient, and healthy diets are a critical link between nutrition and climate change⁶, a prerequisite to good nutrition and a necessary condition for addressing all forms of malnutrition, as well as a driver of sustainable development.⁷ A shift towards sustainable, climate-resilient, healthy diets would help reduce health and climate change costs by up to US\$ 1.3 trillion⁸ while supporting food security in the face of climate change.

However, ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition while leaving no one behind depends not only on food systems but also health, social protection, and WASH systems. Therefore, climate action positively impacting health and water and sanitation systems can also benefit nutrition, and thus sustainable development, for win-win solutions.

By addressing these two priorities in an integrated way we can accelerate progress in both. Business as usual will not allow countries to realize their targets of Agenda 2030, including those of SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG2 (End Hunger) and SDG3 (Health). Transformative policy and action is needed to deliver sustainable, resilient and healthy diets to generate multiple benefits across SDGs.

¹ IPCC Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability.

² FAO/IFAD/UNICEF/WFP/WHO. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World. Rome, 2022.

³ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World. Building climate resilience for food security and nutrition. Rome, 2018.

⁴ Soares J, Santos C, Carvalho S, et al (2019). Preserving the nutritional quality of crop plants under a changing climate: Importance and strategies. *Plant and soil*, 443(1--2), 1--26.

⁵ FAO. The impacts of disasters and crises on agriculture and food security. Rome, 2021.

⁶ FAO. Climate change, biodiversity and nutrition nexus. Rome, 2021.

⁷ UNICEF Conceptual Framework on the Determinants of Maternal and Child Nutrition. Grosso et al. (2020). Nutrition in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. *European Journal of Public Health*.

⁸ FAO. Valuation of the health and climate-change benefits of healthy diets. Rome, 2020.

Vision of the Initiative on Nutrition and Climate Change (I-CAN)



In response, Egypt as COP27 Presidency, in partnership with WHO, FAO, other UN agencies and partners such as GAIN, are developing a multistakeholder, multisectoral global flagship initiative, I-CAN, that will help foster collaboration to accelerate transformative action to address the critical nexus of climate change and nutrition.



I-CAN will be officially launched at the “Adaptation and Agriculture” thematic day during the 27th session of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP27) in Sharm ElSheikh, 6--18 November 2022.



The initiative will leverage the current heightened global attention on food systems transformation and deliver technical and high-level support from parties, UN agencies, NGOs, and the private sector to focus on win-win policies and actions that work to reduce climate change and improve nutrition, particularly for children and vulnerable groups.



Worldwide, currently less than 12% of national policies consider climate, biodiversity and nutrition, only 32% of National Action Plans (NAPs)⁹ included adaptation actions related to food safety and nutrition, and few NDCs commit to actions that aim to tackle climate and nutrition.



The aspirational goal of I-CAN is to support Member States in delivering climate change adaptation and mitigation policy action which simultaneously improves nutrition and triggers transformative action to deliver healthy diets from sustainable food systems thus contributing to achieving the global targets for SDG 13, SDG3 and SDG2. The inclusion of climate action and nutrition in the NDCs and NAPs is an important indicator.

Objectives and Outcomes

The objectives of I-CAN are as follows: (a) to champion the need to connect actions to accelerate progress in both climate (mitigation and adaptation) and nutrition; (b) to outline deliverables that will monitor progress in integrated action; (c) to facilitate the provision of technical and high-level support to Member States to achieve these deliverables; (d) to provide practical examples of what all stakeholders can implement to advance integrated action; and (e) to outline what the convenors of this initiative will do to advance integrated action.

The outcomes of I-CAN are organized around four pillars of action: (1) implementation, action and support; (2) capacity building, data and knowledge transfer; (3) policy and strategy; and (4) investments.

⁹ Health in national adaptation plans: review. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2021. (<https://www.who.int/publications/item/9789240023604>)

The table in Annex 1 specifies the priority action areas in each of these four pillars of action, with examples of actions that are ongoing globally, with specific examples of what the convenors will contribute.

Deliverable 1: Detailed baselines and targets will be delivered by June 30, 2023, ready for COP28, with a compendium of actions that are being undertaken to advance these integrated goals and commitments.

Guiding Principles and Governance



The initiative will be co-led by the Egyptian Ministry of Health and Population and WHO as secretariat to the ATACH (including the WHO Country Office for Egypt, who will act as main focal point to the Egyptian Government).



As the official UN host agency WHO will work in collaboration with other UN agencies and partners to progress and monitor the key deliverables. Specifics of these deliverables will be informed through a series of multi-stakeholder consultations and in partnership with the High-Level Champions under the Marrakech Partnership. Details will be part of the Terms of Reference of the initiative to be discussed and finalized during the inception year. Key principles will be respect for evidence, transparency, accountability, and inclusion

Annex I. I-CAN Outcomes, Baselines, Targets and Examples of Actions

Outcomes	Baselines (to be established)	Targets (to be developed)	Examples of actions that can be taken by stakeholders	Examples of actions that can be taken by I-CAN convenors
1. Implementation, action and support (including resilience and partnerships)				
1.1 Number of NDCs that include nutrition related actions			<p>Support NDC processes to integrate climate resilient and sustainable food systems and nutrition commitments</p> <p>Develop consensus on key messages and priority nutrition policy actions for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, articulated in a policy paper</p>	<p>Coalition of Action on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All</p> <p>The Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH) Working Group on Climate-resilient, Sustainable, and Healthy Diets and Food Systems</p>
1.2 Number of climate NAPs that include nutrition related actions			Support NAP processes to integrate climate-resilient nutrition and food systems	The Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health
1.3 Number of climate informed nutrition interventions and programmes			Support implementation of nutrition related actions in NDCs and NAPs	<p>The Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health</p> <p>WHO Guidance on Climate Change and Health</p>
1.4 Number of National Nutrition Plans (NNPs) that refer to climate			Support scaling up nutrition movement to build climate markers into NNPs	
1.5 Number of significant multilateral partnerships in the climate nutrition area			Map significant climate-nutrition partnerships and build a community of practice around them	<p>The Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health</p> <p>The GAIN-WWF partnership</p> <p>Coalition of Action on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All</p>
2. Capacity building, data and knowledge transfer				
2.1 Value of public R&D funding programmes that bridge climate and nutrition			Advocate for increased public financing directed towards R&D that is positive for nutrition and climate, CGIAR and NARs	

Outcomes	Baselines (to be established)	Targets (to be developed)	Examples of actions that can be taken by stakeholders	Examples of actions that can be taken by I-CAN convenors
2.2 Number of countries that have conducted a climate change and health vulnerability assessment (V&A) which included nutrition			Provide technical support to facilitate generation of more evidence from Africa and around the world that link dietary data to environmental metrics to advance evidence-informed decision-making	<p>WHO/UNFCCC Climate Change and Health Country Profiles</p> <p>GAIN and partners bring together climate and nutrition data in the food systems dashboard</p> <p>FAO/WHO Global Individual Food Consumption Data Tool integrates environmental indicators into publicly available data</p> <p>FAO Evidence Platform for Agrifood Systems and Nutrition Evidence and Tools to support governments and stakeholders in the uptake of the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition (VGFSyN) of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) updated</p>
2.3 Number of References To nutrition Science articles In IPCC reports			Work with IPCC authors to strengthen relevant connections to nutrition evidence and reviews	
2.4 Global Nutrition Report tracks nutrition promoting climate adaptation actions			<p>Develop consensus on key messages and priority nutrition policy actions for climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, articulated in a policy paper</p> <p>Work with GNR to highlight examples of nutrition-promoting climate actions and climate promoting nutrition actions</p>	<p>The Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health</p> <p>FAO, WHO, GAIN work with GNR stakeholder group</p>
3. Policy and strategy				
3.1 Number of countries which are promoting climate-smart nutritious foods such as neglected underutilized species (NUS) and fortified/ biofortified crops and staple foods			Advocate for scale up of locally appropriate neglected and under-utilized species (NUS) and fortified/ biofortified crops and staple foods	<p>GAIN and partners work with governments in 6 countries to scaleup biofortified staples</p> <p>FAO/INFOODS advance food such composition tables globally and expand information available on NUS for policy decision-making</p> <p>FAO hosts the Commission on Genetic Biodiversity and elevates linkages amongst biodiversity, climate and nutrition</p>

Outcomes	Baselines (to be established)	Targets (to be developed)	Examples of actions that can be taken by stakeholders	Examples of actions that can be taken by I-CAN convenors
3.2 Number of country food based dietary guidelines that include climate considerations			<p>Advocate for and support implementation of food-based dietary guidelines that incorporate environmental considerations</p> <p>Setting of targets for healthy and sustainable consumption, including setting consumption targets for red and processed meat</p>	<p>Coalition of Action on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All</p> <p>FAO launches and supports countries in implementing guidance on developing FBDGs that include environmental considerations</p>
3.3 Number of countries that factor climate into food procurement decisions for food in public settings (e.g. school meals and school feeding, health and care facilities), as well as safety nets and emergency programmes			Disseminate technical guidance and support implementation of public procurement and service policies	<p>School Meals Coalition</p> <p>Coalition of Action on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All</p>
3.4 Number of healthy diet campaigns that also refer to sustainability, especially for children			Implementation of campaigns for healthy diets that incorporate nutrition and climate considerations	<p>GAIN and partners work with the Demand Generation Alliance to build health and sustainability into integrated labels</p> <p>Coalition of Action on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All</p>
3.5 Number of countries with food control systems adapted to the increased food safety risks associated with climate change			Support strengthening of national food control systems in line with the WHO Global Strategy on Food Safety 2022--2030	<p>EatSafe Consortium</p> <p>The Food is Never Waste Coalition</p>
4. Investments				
4.1 Value of Green Climate Fund initiatives that include nutrition considerations			Work with the GCF to examine their application and evaluation criteria to incentivize climate-nutrition initiatives	<p>The Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (Financing WG)</p> <p>Good Food Financing Network</p>
4.2 Value of World Bank loans that are nutrition and climate supporting			Work with the World Bank to assess the value of their climate-nutrition portfolio	

Outcomes	Baselines (to be established)	Targets (to be developed)	Examples of actions that can be taken by stakeholders	Examples of actions that can be taken by I-CAN convenors
4.3 Value of food impact investing funds that build in climate considerations			Work with the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN) to assess the value of global investments which integrate climate and nutrition	GAIN and partners, Nutritious Food Financing Facility (N3E)
4.4 Number of companies in World Benchmark Alliance that score well on nutrition and sustainability			Work with the WBA to assess and improve the nutrition-sustainability scores of the 350 companies they work with Call out poor scores and work to improve	Coalition of Action on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All
4.5 Value of ODA to climate that is linked to nutrition			Raise visibility on gaps in funding for ODA to climate-smart/nutrition sensitive investments Improve methodology to quantify funding allocation within financing arrangements that are deemed climate-smart, nutrition-sensitive	FAO quantifies percentage of projects and extrabudgetary resources allocated to projects that are climate-smart and nutrition sensitive

Annex 2. Mapping Existing Initiatives and Building on African Strategies on Climate Change, Health and Nutrition

The proposed new initiative is intended to build on and complement:

1. The ICN2 Framework for Action Policy Recommendations
2. The Rome Declaration on Nutrition
3. United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition
4. The UN Food Systems Summit 2021 outcomes including:
 - a. The Coalition of Action on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems for Children and All
 - b. The Food is Never Waste Coalition
 - c. The School Meals Coalition
 - d. The Blue/Aquatic Foods Coalition
5. Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture Comprehensive Review on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (GRFA) and Nutrition and Health
6. WHO Guidance on Mainstreaming Biodiversity for Nutrition and Health
7. FAO Biodiversity and Nutrition: A Common Path
8. FAO Framework for Action on Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture
9. UN Committee on World Food Security Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
10. WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable diseases
11. COP26 Special Report on Climate Change and Health to Promote Healthy, Sustainable and Resilient Food Systems
12. WHO Global Strategy on Food Safety 2022–2030
13. COP26 Health Commitments
14. Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health

Regional

1. African Union's Declaration of 2022 as the Africa Year on Nutrition
2. Strategic Plan to Reduce the Double Burden of Malnutrition in the African Region (2019–2025) adopted by the 69th Regional Committee Meeting of the World Health Organization (WHO)
3. Strategy on Nutrition for the Eastern Mediterranean Region 2020–2030, which was endorsed by the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean in October 2019

