



Initiative on Climate Action and Nutrition



What is I-CAN? I-CAN is a multistakeholder, multisectoral global flagship

initiative that will catalyze, mobilize, connect and advocate to address the critical nexus of climate change and nutrition. Developed by the Government of Egypt, as COP27 President, in partnership with WHO, FAO, the UN-Nutrition secretariat, GAIN, the SUN Movement, and other partners, **I-CAN** was launched at COP27 on 12 November 2022. The initiative leverages current global attention on food systems transformation for healthy people and a healthy planet to foster collaboration to accelerate transformative action on climate change and nutrition.

Governments, UN agencies, NGOs and the private sector need to focus on win-win policies, actions, and investments that simultaneously work to address **climate change** and improve **nutrition** for all, and in particular for children and vulnerable groups. **I-CAN** aims to support Member States to tackle climate change and nutrition through transformative action, accelerating progress in both.

Why I-CAN? Climate change and malnutrition are two of the greatest challenges facing humanity today and are intrinsically intertwined. By addressing these priorities in an integrated way, we have one solution to two of our biggest barriers to sustainable development.

Climate change is impacting agrifood systems, health systems, social protection systems and water systems - all of which are fundamental for good nutrition (*Figure 1*).

Climate change

- Likely that warming will **exceed 1.5°C** during the 21st century
- **More than 40% of the world's population** is highly vulnerable to climate change
- Projected to push **more than 100 million** additional people into extreme poverty by 2030
- Projected to result in **250,000** additional premature deaths per year by 2050

Malnutrition¹

- **As many as 828 million** people are undernourished
- **2 billion** people or more are affected by micronutrient deficiencies
- **676 million** people suffer from obesity
- An underlying cause in **nearly half** of all deaths of children under 5 years of age

At the same time, inefficiencies and maladaptation in these four systems are further contributing to the drivers of climate change; namely greenhouse gas emissions and the degradation of natural resources. The impacts and exposure to risk factors of climate change and nutrition are not gender neutral. Inequalities in access to health and nutrition services and social protection, control over resources, agency and decision-making power are underlying drivers of malnutrition and climate change. As a result women and girls are differently exposed and have different abilities to respond to or cope with shocks. Over two-thirds of women and adolescent girls are affected by undernutrition, anaemia and/or micronutrient deficiencies², the rise in obesity in the past four decades has been 14.9% in women (10.8% in men). Compared to men, women and children are over 14 times more likely to be killed by climate fuelled disasters.³ Elevating the education, power and status of women needs to be central to the debate about solutions to address the global syndemic of obesity, undernutrition and climate change.⁴

¹ FAO. Climate change, biodiversity and nutrition nexus. Rome, 2021.

² UNICEF Undernourished and Overlooked: A Global Nutrition Crisis in Adolescent Girls and Women. UNICEF Child Nutrition Report Series, 2022. UNICEF, New York, 2023.

³ UNHCR, 2022 Gender, displacement and climate change. <https://www.unhcr.org/media/40595>

⁴ Swinburn et al, 2019. The Global Syndemic of Obesity, Undernutrition, and Climate Change: The Lancet Commission report. Lancet . 2019 Feb 23;393(10173):791-846. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(18)32822-8. Epub 2019 Jan 27

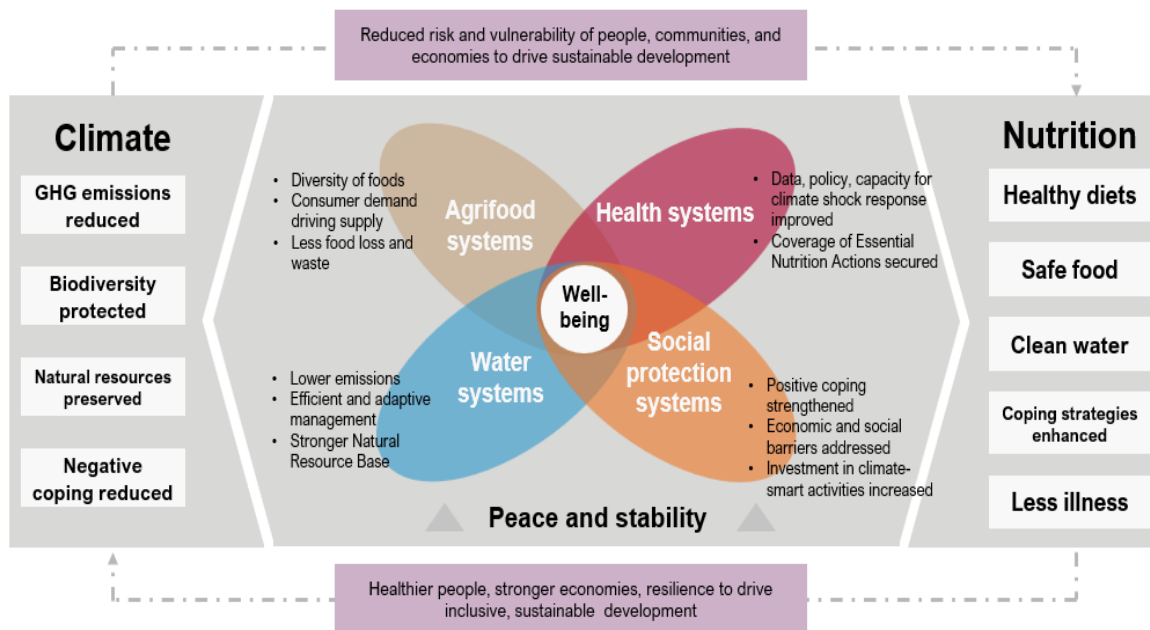


Figure 1 Outcomes of nutrition-sensitive, climate-smart systems drive sustainable development

If each of these systems were designed, and functioned, with nutrition and gender equality in mind, the results would be (1) affordable and accessible healthy diets; (2) safe food, free from pathogens and toxins that cause disease; (3) clean and safe water, efficiently managed for drinking and food production, well-functioning sanitation systems and good hygiene; and (4) enhanced care and services, particularly for children and women.

If these systems are designed and managed in a climate-smart way, they can significantly reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions, protect biodiversity, preserve natural resources, and reduce negative coping strategies – meaning each system has the potential to mitigate climate change. There are also numerous ways for each of the systems to maintain robust functioning in the face of climate change through integrated management that is adaptive to increasing temperatures, and climate-induced stresses and extreme events.

I-CAN Goals, Activities and Deliverables

The goal of **I-CAN** is to support Member States to deliver integrated nutrition and climate change adaptation and mitigation policy, action and investment at the national level to accelerate progress towards the achievement of their existing commitments. This will simultaneously improve nutrition, and trigger transformative action to deliver healthy diets, clean water, resilient communities and robust health systems, thus contributing to achieving the SDG 2030 Agenda, and specifically SDG2, SDG3, and SDG13.⁵ **I-CAN** offers tools and resources for Member States, provides a platform to share knowledge and best practices, disseminate the latest evidence, and build nutrition and climate partnerships. **I-CAN** will achieve its objectives through the following deliverables and activities:

⁵ 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.

Deliverables - 2023



Build a strong alliance across nutrition and climate communities



Articulate a common, compelling narrative around climate and nutrition



Develop and share evidence base on integrated nutrition and climate action



Strengthen existing efforts and take action to address gaps

Activities - 2023

- Strengthen nutrition and climate partnerships
- Integrate I-CAN with UNFCCC COP processes
- Draft, refine and amplify a narrative around climate change and nutrition action
- Establish current baselines for indicators linking nutrition and climate
- Identify and share best practices
- Develop targets for nutrition and climate actions
- Facilitate new action to address gaps identified

Member States can support I-CAN by advocating for action at the climate nutrition nexus in the run up to COP28, championing actions taken and sharing best practices to inspire others.

I-CAN Principles and Governance



I-CAN is co-led by the government of Egypt and WHO.⁶ It is institutionally linked to [ATACH](#)⁷; as an I-CAN Working Group, co-chaired by Egypt and GAIN. Under ATACH, meetings will be organized every six months to drive forward the agenda, ensuring political relevance, continuity, and leaving no-one behind.



WHO, as the official UN host agency, works in collaboration with FAO and other UN agencies and other partners such as GAIN and the SUN Movement to progress and monitor the key deliverables as outlined in the ToR. Key principles are respect for evidence, transparency, accountability and inclusion.

⁶ WHO in capacity as secretariat to the Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH), including the WHO country office for Egypt, who will act as main focal point to the Egyptian Government.

⁷ Alliance for Transformative Action on Climate and Health (ATACH) is a WHO-led initiative co-convened by the UK and Egypt as Presidents of COP26 and COP27 respectively; <https://www.who.int/initiatives/alliance-for-transformative-action-on-climate-and-health>

I-CAN Roadmap to COP28

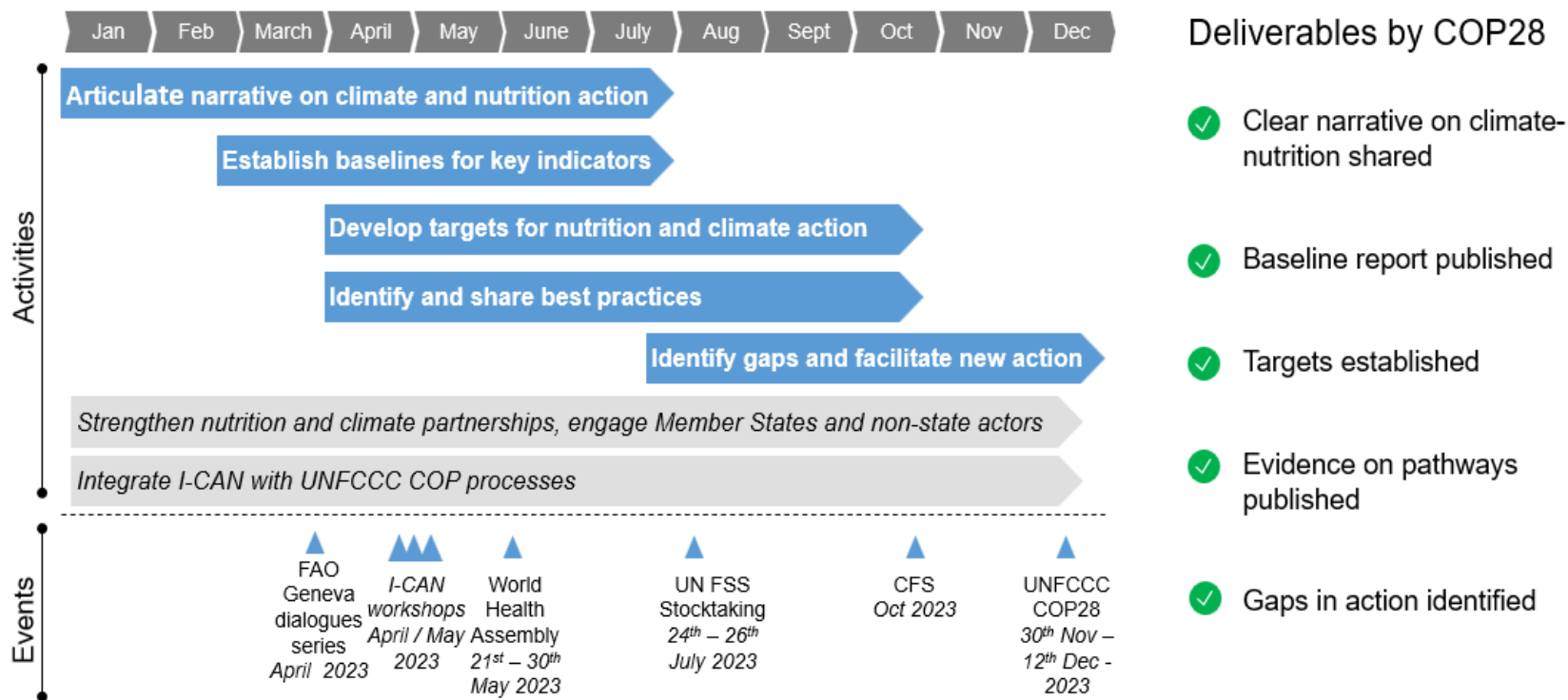


Figure 2 Timeline to COP28