

UN DAY FOR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION 2021 CONCEPT NOTE

Food Systems
Transformation and Voices
from the Global South

17 September 2021 (14:00 – 15:30 hours) Rome time

UN Day for SSC and the UN Food Systems Summit (FSS): mutually reinforcing agendas

For the fifth consecutive year, the Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) (1) are jointly organizing the celebration of the **UN Day for South-South Cooperation** (UN Day for SSC) – an annual event marked on 12 September 2021. This year, the UN Day for SSC also coincides with the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit (hereafter “the Summit”, the FSS) to be convened by the United Nations Secretary General in September 2021.

The FSS **has elevated the discussions** and awareness on the need for food systems transformation by creating a growing **momentum, engagement and commitment** from a diverse set of stakeholders and partners to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), leaving no one behind. The Summit has several objectives:

- i) to provide a platform for transformative and coordinated new actions and **innovative solutions** to transform food systems;
- ii) to raise awareness on food systems’ centrality to the entire sustainable development agenda;
- iii) to align stakeholders around a common understanding and narrative of a food system framework;
- iv) to enable global recognition of the need for inclusivity and innovation in food systems governance and action; and to catalyze collective action.

The FSS agenda is articulated into five Action Tracks (ATs), which offer stakeholders from a wide range of backgrounds a space to share and learn, to build new partnerships and identify actionable solutions to deliver more sustainable and inclusive food systems. Each AT is designed to address synergies and possible trade-offs, as well as to identify bold new actions, innovative solutions and strategies that can deliver wide-reaching benefits across all SDGs. The RBAs are the anchor agencies for specific action tracks and are expected to provide technical assistance, link into the broader experience and expertise of the entire UN system, and to oversee support for the Summit follow-up activities.

(1) The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme (WFP) offer a vast range of knowledge, financial and technical expertise, and internationally recognized fora for discussing policy issues related to food security, agriculture, and nutrition.



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A large number of proposals of “Game Changing Solutions” have been received by the five Action Tracks, representing ideas from Member States, civil society, food producers and the private sector. These proposals have been further developed, drawing on evidence assembled by an Independent Scientific Group, into about 60 solution clusters which provide a repository of ideas that can be taken forward in implementing the transformative pathways towards more sustainable food systems that are being identified through national dialogues in over 130 countries. The Pre-Summit (Rome, Italy, 26-28 July 2021) and the Summit will bring together these diverse ideas and stakeholders with the aim of building a global discourse and narrative on food systems transformation, and mobilizing coalitions to ensure better aligned and coordinated public and private sector support and investments.

RBA brokered South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) has proven to date to have a catalytic and complementary role in coalescing **synergies(2), solutions(3) and skills(4)**. Promoting SSTC, which enables the sharing of knowledge, experiences, technologies, resources among countries in the Global South, has an important role to play in sharing and bringing effective approaches for more sustainable and inclusive food systems.

2021 UN SSC Day: Mobilizing Synergies, Solutions and Skills for Food Systems Transformation in the Global South.

Given the recognition that the Summit is the starting point for future collective action, this year’s RBAs Celebration of the UN Day for SSC will focus on making voices from the Global South heard on their challenges, approaches and plans for food systems transformation.

The RBA celebrations will attract the participation of Government counterparts and non-state actors and will provide the opportunity to highlight a number of game-changing solutions that are particularly impactful for the Global South. The event will also provide a space for Member States to discuss how they can better leverage SSTC to mainstream key game-changing solutions in the post-Summit, building on previous successful SSTC experiences. The findings of the event will help to shape the joint agenda for RBAs on SSTC for the coming years, to ensure that RBA-facilitated SSTC remains relevant to support country-led progress on food security and nutrition.

(2) Promoting dialogue, cooperation and joint action for regional and inter-regional SSTC on agri-food systems transformation.

(3) Identifying and sharing replicable and adaptable agri-food innovations and solutions from around the world, especially from developing countries.

(4) Mobilizing Southern knowledge and expertise through leveraging existing technical institutions, networks, communities of practitioners, centers of excellence and universities as key partners for technical assistance and cooperation.



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