



## Women's Nutrition: A Commitment-making Guide for the U.N. Food System Summit



**June 2021**

This is a living document which will be regularly updated: the most up-to-date version can be found [here](#).

## Context

*As a global community, we have a unique opportunity to elevate women – their voices, their empowerment and their nutrition - within global and national efforts taking place in preparations towards and beyond the U.N. Food Systems Summit. This Guide details narratives, opportunities and information on Summit architecture that you may wish to draw from in your advocacy efforts.*

*Section 1 gives a summary of connections between women’s empowerment, their nutrition and our global food system.*

*Section 2 provides a description and guidance on the U.N Summit architecture. Section 3 details information on the five Action Tracks.*

*Section 4 provides additional guidance on the Summit Dialogues and the pre-Summit in July 2021.*

*Section 5 provides example commitments to advance maternal health and nutrition.*

***For anyone interested in supporting women’s nutrition and for regular updates on the Women’s Leadership and Empowerment Cluster on Nutrition join the HMHB mailing list at: [HMHB@micronutrientforum.org](mailto:HMHB@micronutrientforum.org).***

*For additional support you can contact the HMHB secretariat any time.*

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## 1. Connections Between Women’s Nutrition and Our Global Food System

**Women’s nutrition is foundational for health, well-being, agency and empowerment - conversely, wellbeing, agency and empowerment are vital ingredients for good nutrition.**

Good nutrition for women is in part, an outcome of equitable and sustainable food systems. Before the pandemic, the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, global inequity, dramatic increases in food production, global population growth and persistent, systemic failures in the current food system led the U.N. Secretary General to call for a U.N. Food Systems Summit.

Since then, COVID-19 has served to highlight structural inequity inherent in the global food system, which, in turn, is having an impact on people’s ability to purchase healthy and nutritious foods – resulting in more women, men and children at risk of hunger and all forms of malnutrition. Now, more than ever, **targeted investment in women’s nutrition is needed to protect and build the immune response and resilience of women, children and communities. Ultimately, failing to invest in women’s nutrition will be a collective failure to recover and rebuild healthy and sustainable futures for all.** We will not achieve our global nutrition goals without addressing women’s empowerment and nutrition, nor can we expect to make progress across many of the other Sustainable Development Goals without also investing in women.

A consortium of scientists and experts from across disciplines have modelled the impact of the pandemic on nutrition outcomes. Given the rapid rise of the pandemic south Asia, **the world is facing the most pessimistic of all scenarios:** By 2022 COVID-19 could result in an additional 13.6 million wasted children, 3.6 million stunted children, 283,000 additional child-deaths, 4.8 million maternal anemia cases, 3 million children born to low BMI women and 44.3 billion future productivity losses due to excess stunting and child mortality. [Standing Together for Nutrition](#), 2020. These economic projections do not account for all forms of malnutrition in all people.

To mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the above projections for child and maternal under-nutrition, **an additional US \$1.7 billion per year** is required, on top of the \$7 billion per year called for by the [Global Nutrition Investment Framework](#).<sup>1</sup> This estimate relates only to the above modelling and does not include all the additional costs of obesity and other forms of malnutrition in adults and children. Additional evidence released in April 2021 by the Standing Together for Nutrition Consortium confirms that the: “economic, social and food system impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have increased the risk of weight gain in adults and children”<sup>2</sup>.

**While women’s empowerment has been discussed in global policy settings, we are still fighting for women’s rights. Women’s nutrition is an equity issue** – across Africa 75% of undernourished women do not live in the poorest households<sup>3</sup>, illustrative of the fact that men have lower rates of undernutrition, globally. At the same time, women have higher nutritional requirements, particularly during reproductive age where women need 2.5 times more daily iron. Unacceptable rates of anemia

<sup>1</sup> Scaling Up Nutrition Movement, *SUN 3.0 Strategy* (2021), page 7, <https://scalingupnutrition.org/about-sun/the-sun-movement-strategy/>

<sup>2</sup> Hawkes and Gallagher Squires, (2021), A double duty food systems stimulus package to build back better from COVID-19; <https://openaccess.city.ac.uk/id/eprint/25799/>

<sup>3</sup> Brown, C; Ravallion, M; de Walle, D; (2019); Most of Africa’s nutritionally deprived women and children are not found in poor households. [Link](#).

in countries of all wealth status mean that no country is on track to reach the World health Assembly's anemia target. Anemia in women is a sign of poor health and nutrition driven by poor quality diets, low intakes of nutritious foods, untreated infections and inflammation. At the same time, women are less likely to afford a nutritious diet than men and often eat last and least.

The linkages between food systems and women's nutrition are complex and hugely interdependent. Malnourished women and children experience limited potential benefits from food systems on the one hand, while also reducing the extent to which food systems could benefit from women's custodianship of different elements of food systems. Women make up 43 percent of the agricultural workforce in developing countries - in South Asia, two thirds of agricultural farmers are women<sup>4</sup>.

As well as working across all aspects of the value chain, women are care givers. **As the First Lady of Nigeria has articulated: "women's work is unquantifiable."** The burden of care - for the ill, for shelter, for water, for food on the table, often lie on a woman's shoulders, and in times of crisis, these burdens are growing. Within broader commitment-making efforts for COVID-19 recovery plans, food systems and nutrition this year, **investments to protect women's health and nutrition and improve their immunity and resilience – for instance with proven micronutrient interventions - need to be universally supported for their multiplying effect on the resilience of communities.**

Investments are urgently needed in interventions to promote women's empowerment within her home, within her workplace, and to enable her to have greater economic and earning opportunities. Women's earning power is highly correlated to her ability to send children to school, access health services and buy nutritious foods for herself and her children.

Insufficient investment targeting female farmers and entrepreneurs results in inequitable access to credit, insurance, training, technology, information and markets for women. Digital technology can be a useful tool in improving access to information and resources, and consequently reduce the gender gap in agriculture. Women farmers need the right support and skills training to transform into competitive entrepreneurs and be better connected to international markets. Investment in these domains, and in other cost-effective interventions that support women's nutrition, would help to reduce some of the unhelpful trade-offs within food system. **Given the millions of women working in subsistence farming or in other aspects of the food value chain, the U.N. Food Systems Summit provides considerable commitment-making opportunities to support women's resilience, empowerment and economic prospects.**

While women nutrition is a fundamental enabler of women empowerment and leadership, the world has failed to make sufficient progress on women nutrition. With this in mind, at both global and country levels, continued failure to invest in women and maternal nutrition will result in hindered economic and social progress<sup>5</sup>. The wellbeing of women and their children is essential to the strength of families, communities, and nations. Good women and maternal nutrition begins at birth into adolescence and enables a woman to transition healthily into adulthood – and later, motherhood if she chooses. Children who remain well-nourished have up to an 18-point higher IQ<sup>6</sup>. For girls, this creates a positive cycle of staying in school, marrying later and having higher earning potential<sup>7</sup>. As

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<sup>4</sup> Oxfam (2020); <https://www.oxfam.org/en/empowering-women-farmers-end-hunger-and-poverty>

<sup>5</sup> Halim, N., Spielman, K. & Larson, B. The economic consequences of selected maternal and early childhood nutrition interventions in low- and middle-income countries: a review of the literature, 2000–2013. *BMC Women's Health* 15, 33 (2015). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-015-0189-y>

<sup>6</sup> Waber, D; Bryce C; Girad J; Zichlin M; Fitmaurice G; Galler J (2015); Impaired IQ and Academic Skills in Adults Who Experienced Moderate to Severe Infantile malnutrition: A Forty Year Study; <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3796166/>

<sup>7</sup> Global Nutrition Report (2020); <https://globalnutritionreport.org/blog/why-tackling-malnutrition-matters-womens-empowerment/>

the Global Nutrition Report and 1,000 Days have highlighted – [‘nutrition interventions are an underleveraged tool in the fight for women’s rights’](#).

We only have to look to the negative impacts of poor women and maternal nutrition to see the impact of failing to invest. The results are wide ranging, particularly in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) and include women’s ability to contribute to and take leadership in the workforce, maternal anemia, and negative pregnancy and infant outcomes - such as: low birth weight (LBW) , small for gestational-age (SGA), pre-term birth, and infant mortality. The scientific evidence base behind multiple micronutrient supplementation (MMS) during pregnancy is mainly related to the short-term positive birth outcomes (reduction of LBW, SGA and still-birth) but there are also indications for long-term impacts, for instance on cognition<sup>8, 9, 10</sup>.

Better women’s nutrition requires a combination of food and health system interventions and strong social protection to ensure that all women are supported to meet the nutritional requirements, particularly during pregnancy and lactation. Considerable new and targeted investment is needed to overcome global inequity in access to maternal health services, to enhance the quality of these services and to ensure that all women can have diverse and nutritious diets. Within the enormously wide ranging and catalytic efforts taking place under the umbrella of the Food Systems Summit, **investments to protect women’s health and improve their empowerment must be recognised for their multiplying effect on the resilience of communities.**

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<sup>8</sup> Smith, E. R.; Shankar, A. H.; Wu, L. S.-F.; Aboud, S.; Adu-Afarwuah, S.; Ali, H.; Agustina, R.; Arifeen, S.; Ashorn, P.; Bhutta, Z. A.; et al. Modifiers of the Effect of Maternal Multiple Micronutrient Supplementation on Stillbirth, Birth Outcomes, and Infant Mortality: A Meta-Analysis of Individual Patient Data from 17 Randomised Trials in Low-Income and Middle-Income Countries. *Lancet Glob. Heal.* 2017, 5 (11), e1090–e1100. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29025632/>

<sup>9</sup> Keats, E. C.; Haider, B. A.; Tam, E.; Bhutta, Z. A (2019) Multiple-micronutrient Supplementation for Women during Pregnancy. *Cochrane Database Syst. Rev.* (2019), 3, CD004905. <https://doi.org/10.1002/14651858.CD004905.pub6>

<sup>10</sup> Prado et al (2017); *Maternal multiple micronutrient supplementation and other biomedical and socioenvironmental influences on children’s cognition at age 9-12 years in Indonesia: follow up of the SUMMIT randomised trial (2017)*, *The Lancet Global Health*; <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28104188/>.

## 2. The U.N. Food Systems Summit Architecture

The U.N. Food System Summit provides a platform for national and global commitment-making. In the run up to September 2021, Member States are instigating country-wide consultative Dialogues to develop national food system plans that are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, looking ahead to 2030. Other actors – such as multinationals, donors, philanthropy, civil society and the private sectors are considering commitments that will accelerate action on sustainable and equitable food systems. Collectively, **within the Maternal Nutrition and Maternal Health communities, we have a unique opportunity to engage various constituencies to ensure that investments in women and maternal empowerment and nutrition are made as part of the wider commitments** by multilateral agencies, country governments, multinationals, businesses, donors, philanthropy, civil society, social impact investors and other actors in food value chains. In particular, there is a need to scale investment in women’s nutrition interventions within national whole of food systems roadmaps to 2030.

Over the course of 2021, further engagement between HMHB Consortium members and stakeholders will be important in prioritizing and aligning actions to ensure possible commitments to support women’s nutrition.

The Summit is built on seven [Principles of Engagement](#), which support the engagement of a diverse set of stakeholders through inclusive Dialogues and processes - for instance, youth empowerment is integrated into every aspect and is integral to all aspects of the Summit architecture.

The U.N. Food Systems Summit communities provide everyone with an opportunity to engage at country and global levels. The following sections equip constituencies with knowledge on how to explore the Food Systems Summit in the development of and advocacy for commitments and actions on women’s nutrition. An outline of the Summit Architecture is given below.

### **7 Principles of Engagement**

1. Act with urgency
2. Commit to the Summit
3. Be respectful
4. Recognize complexity
5. Embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity
6. Complement the work of others
7. Build Trust

Table 1: Food Systems Summit Architecture and how to engage

	What does this entail ?	Who can participate or lead?	How can I engage?
<a href="#">Action Tracks</a>	<p>There are Five Action tracks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure access to Safe and Nutritious Foods for All</li> <li>2. Shift to Sustainable Consumption Patterns</li> <li>3. Boost Nature Positive Production</li> <li>4. Advance Equitable Livelihoods</li> <li>5. Build Resilience to Vulnerabilities, Shocks and Stress</li> </ol> <p>Actions Tracks develop propositions (also called game changers) for actions across different aspects of the food systems.</p>	<p>Individuals and organisations are participating in Clusters across the Action Tracks. <u>Anyone can be involved in the Food Systems Summit and the Summit is designed to incorporate the views and perspectives of those not normally included.</u></p>	<p>Action Tracks enable diverse stakeholders across and within countries to come together and share evidence and perspectives.</p> <p>You may wish to host a Food System Summit Dialogue, identify and contact your National Convenor for Member State Dialogues (for more information on Convenors see Section 4 of this Guide), or engage in Solution Clusters (as described below).</p>
Solution Clusters	<p>Propositions and game changing solutions have been clustered within Action Tracks to address specific problems.</p>	<p>A diverse set of stakeholders and member states can support these proposals and contribute with commitments specific to women nutrition</p>	<p>Solution clusters are coalitions driven by stakeholders from all over the world – from individuals to large organisations and multilaterals, to governments and small and medium enterprises.</p>
<a href="#">Four Levers of Change</a>	<p>Levers of change are cross-cutting areas that have the potential to deliver wide impact. The Summit has identified four areas: Finance, Gender, Human Rights, Innovation.</p>	<p>Anyone can engage in sharing ideas and propositions across the Levers of Change.</p>	<p>Connections between women’s nutrition and the four levers of change can be found in the synthesis reports from the proposition that came out of the first wave on the <a href="#">Summit Community platform</a>. Messaging in this document can help support advocacy for investment in women’s nutrition, in particular, by making the case for investment in wider food, health and social protection systems.</p>
<a href="#">Summit Dialogues</a> (for more information on Summit Dialogues see Section 4 of this Guide and refer to the <a href="#">Reference Manual for Convenors of Food Systems Summit Dialogues</a> .)	<p>The Dialogue process offers a chance to explore trade-offs and options for equitable and sustainable food systems – and it is important that within this process investments and actions to support women’s nutrition are brought to the attention of a diverse set of stakeholders.</p>	<p>Dialogues are hosted at Global or Member State level, or by Independent actors.</p>	<p>All Dialogues must follow the Summit Principles of Engagement, be designed to engage diverse stakeholders, and use the Official Summit Feedback Forms to be considered an official Summit Dialogue.</p>
<a href="#">Summit Champions Network</a>	<p>Galvanise knowledge, action and evidence about sustainable and equitable food systems.</p>	<p>Anyone can register to become a Food System Hero. National Food Systems Heroes are also nominated at Member State level.</p>	<p>You may wish to engage Food Systems Heroes with messaging provided in this guide. You may also wish to become a Food Systems Hero yourself!</p>

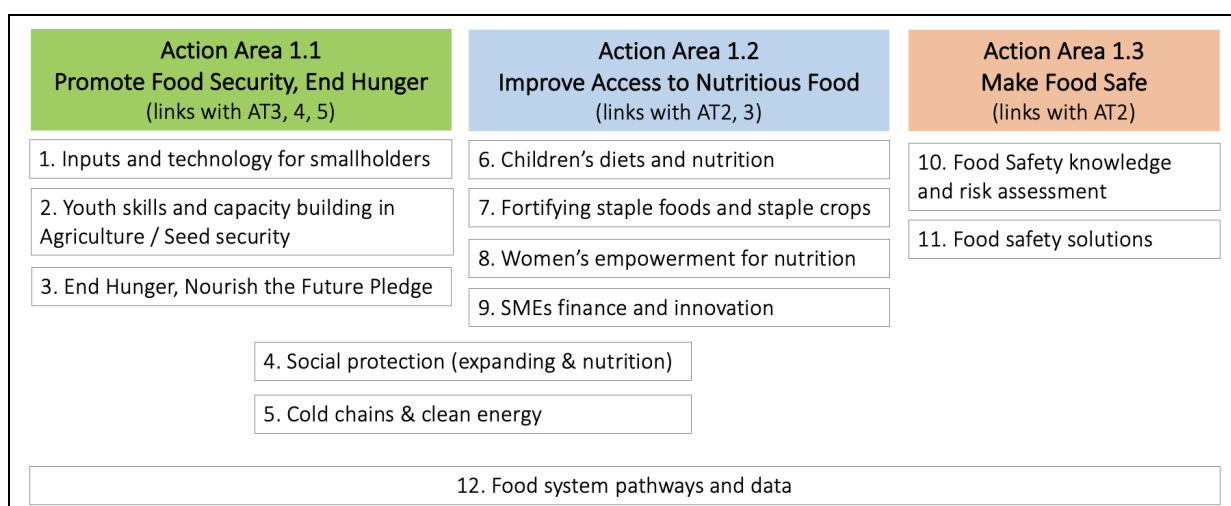
		Existing institutional leaders are nominated to become a Food System Champion in a more formal capacity.	
<a href="#">A Global Food Systems Community</a>	Conversations are structured around Summit communities (Action Tracks, Levers of Change, the Scientific Group and others). This is a space to share, comment, engage and inspire action!	Anyone can sign up.	Connect with members, share posts, evidence and latest actions. This is a great place to source up-to-date information on all of the Action Tracks.
<a href="#">An Independent Scientific Group</a>	Responsible for making sure that the latest and most robust evidence feeds into the Summit outcomes. and informs the Summit's synthesis reports.	The Scientific Group works closely with the Special Envoy.	Engage on the evidence behind investment in women's nutrition. on the global food systems community platform.



### 3. Action Tracks and Solution Clusters

Action Tracks enable diverse stakeholders across and within countries to come together and share evidence and perspectives. There are Five Action Tracks, each with multiple Action Areas that bring together a diverse set of stakeholders. Within Action Areas, propositions and solutions have been grouped into Solution Clusters. In many cases, Clusters will be showcased at the U.N Food Systems Pre- Summit, after which the organisations involved in their development will progress into coalitions for commitment making. Within many of the Solution Clusters across Action Track 1 outlined below, stakeholders can take action and make commitments to enable women’s empowerment and nutrition. Solution Cluster 8 has the potential to make significant progress for women’s empowerment and nutrition and is likely to be formally announced during the U.N. Food Systems Pre-Summit.

#### Action Track 1: Ensure Access to Safe and Nutritious Foods for All



#### Action Track 1 and The Women’s Leadership Cluster

Within Action Track 1 - Ensuring Access to Safe and Nutritious Food for All – a Women’s Leadership and Empowerment for Nutrition Cluster has been formed across member states, civil society, donors, philanthropy, academia, and the private sector.

### **Women's Leadership Cluster: Action on women's nutrition, empowerment, and leadership in food systems.**

Millions of women work within production and trading, yet there are fewer women higher up the value chain. This Solution Cluster aims to catalyze the gender-equitable transformation of the food system by addressing fundamental gaps related to women's nutrition, women's empowerment, and women's leadership. This Cluster aims to create systemic change, going beyond single interventions to improve women's empowerment, influence and participation.

Within this cluster, an **Anemia Alliance** has been proposed to develop an integrated research agenda to discover new evidence for effective actions, to develop a global investment strategy and to mobilise increased investment for women's anemia reduction.

**The Food Systems 5050 initiative** will inform, inspire and incite action and accountability for gender equality and food systems equity. This coalition of organizations will elevate women's voice and leadership in food systems, providing members with guidelines on how to best achieve gender equality in leadership, work culture, and in the outcomes of their work. Post-summit, the Food Systems 5050 initiative will develop additional gender indicators relevant to the food system, and produce a full report that will gather data and assess organizations active in food systems.

If the initiatives taking place within the Women's Leadership Cluster are relevant to your work or that of your organisation, you can find out more by contacting The Micronutrient Forum at: [info@micronutrientforum.org](mailto:info@micronutrientforum.org).

## **Action Track 2: Shift to Sustainable Consumption Patterns**

Given the evidence that women are more likely to allocate household spending on food for the family, increasing women's access to nutritious foods, enhancing their knowledge and promoting the choice for healthy and sustainable diets is especially important. Within Action 2, Action Area 2.1: Enabling, inspiring and motivating people to enjoy healthy and sustainable options provides many opportunities for commitments and actions that support women's nutrition. Women play an important role in shifting to sustainable consumption patterns and policy and program options that support this may include diversifying and localizing diets.

In addition to efforts to support positive social norms of women's nutrition, Food Systems Dialogues have already highlighted the importance of making the ancestral knowledge and knowledge of rural, indigenous women on food and agrobiodiversity central to collective action. The Synthesis Report from the First Wave of propositions to emerge from Action Track One recognises that women's role is "crucial throughout the food chains, for example, from production to food preparation, to

distribution within the household, as traders in the markets, as food processors, and as laborers in food systems, as well as consumers”<sup>11</sup>.

Suggestions for how to improve women’s empowerment across the value chain from production to consumption are provided in this report and include: 1. Enhancing women’s access to, and control over, means of food production to reach markets, including education, training and skills development to enhance their ability to make decisions and seize emerging employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. 2. Incentivizing gender-responsive research food loss reduction, behavioral change, gender equitable consumption practices, food labeling, and technology that responds to women’s needs and preferences. 3. Enhancing women’s decision making in framing legal frameworks, policy design, programs, businesses governing food systems and shifts towards sustainable production and healthy consumption patterns.

Regulation of the informal food sector is critical to safeguard women’s earning opportunities and rights. Nearly 80% of the female African labor force works in the non- agriculture informal sector<sup>12</sup>. Women are the primary sellers of street foods and perishable goods. The Second Wave of solutions have developed a proposition to empower the informal food sector to deliver healthy, safe and affordable diets and support livelihoods and income in rural areas. It is essential that commitments from all actors overseeing the informal urban vendors protect women’s rights.

### Action Track 3: Boost Nature Positive Production

Women have an important role to play across all three action areas within Action Track 3: 3.1: Protect Natural Ecosystems; 3.2: Managing Sustainably Existing Food Production Systems; 3.3: Restore Degraded Ecosystems. Women play an important role in protecting, managing and restoring ecosystems. Commitments that support women’s nutrition related to this Action Track are inherently linked to ensuring that women’s knowledge of agroecology and rural farming is protected. Propositions that can accelerate progress on women’s nutrition include the need for inclusive models of conservation led by indigenous people. U.N. Food System’s Dialogues to date have highlighted this – affirming the importance of strengthening indigenous and tribal people’s capacity to protect and manage their land and the importance of land rights for women. Nature-positive can also mean shorter supply chains, which has the potential to supportive women involved in local production and consumption.

Other Member State Dialogues have discussed the need to overcome the gender gap as women often do not have access to the same level of resources as men. Member State and Independent Dialogues have also explored the need for new and positive narratives around farming in the global south – whereby farming is associated with pride and joy. These are important considerations when thinking about the role of women in agriculture and the cross-cutting linkages with women’s nutrition. [AGREA](#) is a Filipino organization that embodies these principles - advocating for an ecology of dignity. AGREA has made significant contributions to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment in context of the pandemic and provides an example of what can be done at country level when women are placed at the heart of farming. Empowerment initiatives led by AGREA include redesigning the farm school, ethical micronfinance and changing policies for banks and rural banking.

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<sup>11</sup> Action Track 2: *Synthesis of Propositions. Wave One.*

<sup>12</sup>International Labour Organization (ILO). Women and men in the informal economy. Geneva, Switzerland: International Labour Organization; 2018. 156 p.

## Action Track 4: Advance Equitable Livelihoods

All three Action Areas within Action Track 4 have the potential to catalyse women's nutrition: 4.1: Rebalancing Agency Within Food systems; 4.2: Eliminating Worker Exploitation and Ensuring Decent Work in Food Systems; 4.3: Localising Food Systems. The Second Wave of potential solutions under this Action Track have identified the overall goal of building the agency of the underrepresented. To do this, fundamental shifts are required to change relations and transform structures in order to alter the power imbalances that prevent women from exercising their power and rights. The Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index is one tool that could be more broadly employed to support women's nutrition.

Commitments and actions to improve market linkages for women farmers are needed to address power imbalances that inhibit women's earning parity in the agricultural sector. Women and men have many and varied roles within food value chains – from farmers, waged agricultural workers and fishers, to food processing and manufacturing workers, transport and distribution workers, supermarket and shop workers, and food preparers and servers. Commitments aimed at female farmers may include access to land, credit and insurance for women, as discussed above, alongside investment in affordable gender friendly farming and processing equipment. National governments should be encouraged to implement and ratify international labour standards. Investment and innovation that enables 'direct selling' by small women agricultural producers to local consumers can better empower women farmers.

Promoting economic and other advantages for women in the workplace can also help rectify imbalances; for example: maternity protection, child care at the workplace (with nutritious meals); government programmes favoring procurement from women farmer associations for social protection or school feeding programmes and direct support for women farmer and entrepreneur associations to establish child care and midday meal programmes.

## Action Track 5: Build Resilience to Vulnerabilities, Shocks and Stress

Examples of commitments that support women's nutrition relating to this Action Track include the integration of essential nutrition services that target women into early warnings and shock responsive safety nets. The incorporation of a women's nutrition indicator in Early Warning Systems, such as anemia and low BMI (under 18 or 17.5) would advance existing systems beyond wasting as the main nutrition indicator. This type of commitment requires investment in nutrition information systems and improved data collection on the drivers of women's nutrition, including dietary diversity markers.

There are several propositions within Action Track 5 that have the potential to drive better nutrition for women, such as Universal Food Access and Institutional Demand Driven Transformation. Again, a coalition to increase women's agency for resilience through economic empowerment is being developed with the aim of bringing affordable capital and blended finance to local economies through public-private partnerships. More information on what this requires can be found in the Synthesis Report for Action Track 5 from the First and Second Wave of Propositions.

Additional commitments in support of girl's and women's nutrition that align with this Action Track may include investment in the prevention of early marriage, climate adaptation and mitigation programmes that support women farmers.

Given that mothers will always try to protect their children, and feed their children at their own expense – propositions and actions within Action Track 5 must respond to locally adaptive coping

mechanisms. Other coping mechanisms may also include calling in favors of friends and family (which need to be re-paid in kind or cash afterwards,) she may sell (deplete) her own livelihood assets before she will turn to her husband or other family members asking for support. Approaches to build resilience for communities require a holistic understanding of a woman's position and her own sense of agency within them.

## 4. Additional Guidance on Summit Dialogues and the U.N. FFS Pre Summit

U.N. Food Systems Dialogues allow a diverse set of stakeholders from all ages, genders, countries, professional backgrounds, sectors and stakeholder groups to come together. Dialogues can focus on any aspect of the food system and are designed to enable participants to discuss pathways, options, actions, and areas of convergence and divergence in moving towards sustainable and equitable food systems by 2030. Dialogues follow a standardized approach, which includes up to ten Discussion Groups, each consisting of 8-10 people. For more on how to convene a Food Systems Summit Dialogue and the different roles involved, visit the [Dialogue Gateway](#) and refer to the Official Convenor Reference Manual.

Independent Dialogues can be convened as one-off events or as a series. This differs from Member State Dialogues, which are convened as a broader programme, focusing on developing national pathways to sustainable and equitable food systems by 2030. It is likely that there will be a parallel session on women's nutrition as part of the Pre-Summit. If you want to be kept abreast of further developments contact the HMHB Consortium at [HMHB@micronutrientforum.org](mailto:HMHB@micronutrientforum.org).

Official feedback from every Dialogue is used in the Dialogue synthesis reports, which, in turn, feeds into Summit processes. All Dialogue feedback is [publicly available](#). Dialogues provide a platform to explore potential commitment-making ambitions, plans and processes of varied stakeholders. If you are interested in hosting a Dialogue relating to women's nutrition or MMS, why not visit the Training and Orientation Sessions on the [Dialogue Gateway](#). You can find further guidance, toolkits and a full [Dialogue programme](#) on the Gateway.

The U.N. Food Systems Pre-Summit will be held by the Italian Government as part of the G20 presidency in the last week of July. The Pre-Summit will be a platform for many of the solution clusters and will be an important commitment making moment, where domestic and donor countries, multilaterals, philanthropy, multinationals, civil society organizations, and other private sector entities are expected to make commitments.

## 5. Example Pledges to Advance Women’s Nutrition

<b>Domestic Governments – Ministries of Health, Finance, Gender and Social Welfare, and Agriculture</b>	
<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Type</b>
Women’s nutrition is integrated into national COVID-19 recovery and response planning. Women nutrition indicators are included in monitoring, budget lines are earmarked for nutrition sensitive and specific interventions, as well as broader interventions to promote women’s empowerment and income generation.	<i>Policy/Operational</i>
Undertake multi-sector needs analysis in humanitarian response and to include wider measures of need and progress for women’s health and nutrition, for example commitments to measure BMI and minimum dietary diversity for women.	<i>Policy</i>
Integrate preventative health interventions into social protection and food systems – for example, into agricultural extension services and work place programs.. Targets to include number of people treated and reached, including mothers, adolescents and other vulnerable population groups.	<i>Policy</i>
Implement and ratify international labour standards with a focus on protecting women. Adopt and strengthen policies and enforceable legislation for gender equality – including maternity protection policies (maternity and/ or parental leave) and other workforce policies that promote gender equality, such as breastfeeding spaces and breaks at the workplace and refridgerator to store expressed breastmlk.	<i>Policy/ Operational</i>
Implement and ratify national regulations and legislation to protect women’s indigenous people’s land rights. Ensure that women’s knowledge of agroecology and rural farming is protected.	<i>Policy</i>
Earmark x amount of budget to policy and programmes focusing on women’s access to agricultural extension services, agricultural inputs and financial services, alongside health services and women’s empowerment programmes.	<i>Policy</i>
Invest in skills training, insurance, access to credit, and business development for women-led SME’s, producing nutritious foods, and women farmers.	<i>Operational</i>
Develop and implement an integrated social and behavior change communication plan to promote women and maternal nutrition and healthy eating.	<i>Policy/ Operational</i>
X amount in social behaviour change communication (SBCC) to improve nutrition counselling for women and maternal nutrition, including	<i>Financial</i>

vulnerable populations – reaching x people over x years with targets to reach vulnerable populations	
<p>Women’s nutrition indicators and indicators for targeted women’s nutrition interventions are streamlined into national action health plans, policies and frameworks and/or into Universal Health Coverage. In order to be considered SMART the policy will need to align with key sectors, include coverage targets (including to reach the most vulnerable), over corresponding timeframes.</p> <p>Women’s nutrition policies, plans and programmes have a dedicated budget line in national health budgets.</p>	<p><i>Policy</i></p> <p><i>Financial</i></p>
X amount in anemia diagnosis, prevention and care -reaching x women of reproductive age. Comprehensive Country Action Plans for anemia and increased multisector coordination to improve integrated implementation.	<i>Financial/Policy</i>
Plans and policies to increase the capacity of frontline workers on women and maternal nutrition interventions through antenatal care services , in particular nutrition and healthy diet counselling and multiple micronutrient implementation (MMS) for pregnant women.	<i>Policy/ Operational</i>



## Donor Governments and Philanthropy

<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Type</b>
Undertake multi-sector needs analysis in humanitarian response and to include wider measures of need and progress for women's health and nutrition, for example commitments to measure minimum dietary diversity for women.	<i>Monitoring, reporting and researching</i>
Women's nutrition is integrated into COVID-19 recovery and response programming and funding, including in resources allocated for nutrition in IDA20 Replenishment.	<i>Financial/Operational.</i>
Invest in and build on the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) protocols for early warning to incorporate more and better data on the drivers of women's nutrition outcomes (MDD.W) and women nutrition indicators (BMI).	<i>Operational</i>
Integrate essential nutrition services that target women into safety net programmes and nutrition emergency response in fragile and conflict affected states.	<i>Operational</i>
X amount allocated to a flexible funding mechanism and contingency budget to allow women's nutrition interventions to be delivered as part of a shock response.	<i>Financial</i>
Increase access to affordable gender friendly farming and processing equipment.	<i>Operational</i>
Support women farmers with training, access to finance and agricultural inputs to ensure they cultivate a diversity of nutritious food crops, where possible, biofortified.	<i>Operational</i>
X amount in women's skills and business development.	<i>Operational/Financial</i>
Increase access to quality health services for hard-to-reach populations. This would include the adoption of responsive service delivery models, for example nomadic mobile clinics.	<i>Policy</i>
X amount of ODA funding dedicated to improving women's nutrition and scaling of interventions over x years, reaching x women.	<i>Financial</i>
X amount in anemia prevention and interventions to improve access to multiple micronutrient supplementation for women of reproductive age. Financial and technical support to country action plans on anemia prevention and treatment.	<i>Operational</i>

## Civil Society and Research Organizations

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Type</i>
Advocate for countries to strengthen women's nutrition interventions and pursue coherent introduction and scaling of maternal nutrition interventions through national platforms and COVID-19 response plans. Commit to developing a transparent accountability mechanism to track commitments.	<i>Operational</i>
Provide nutrition treatment for adolescent girls and pregnant and lactating women and provide micronutrient supplementation to women.	<i>Operational</i>
X amount in skills training and business development for women's agribusiness SMEs.	<i>Monitoring, reporting and researching</i>
Vocational programs for rural young women that offer training in multiple skills.	<i>Operational</i>
X amount in programmes to reduce gender-based violence, prevent the incidence of child marriage, increase family planning coverage and secure improvements in the quality, equity and gender responsiveness of public services.	<i>Operational</i>
Strengthen and professionalize women-led community support networks and associations. Invest in professional community child day care services.	<i>Operational</i>

## Private Sector and Social Impact Investors

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Type</i>
Innovative financing mechanisms developed for women's leadership in food systems.	<i>Financial</i>
Adopt and strengthen policies and enforceable legislation for gender equality – including recruitment and advancement in the workforce, equal pay for equal work, non-discriminatory approaches towards care and family responsibilities.	<i>Policy</i>
Enforcement of legislation to ensure that women's and indigenous knowledge of agroecology and rural farming is protected.	<i>Policy</i>
Commitments to foster competition in specialised nutritious food to bring prices down –eg. fortified staple foods, fortified complementary foods for children > 6 months to 2 years, ready-to use supplementary foods for children under five, energy- and protein dense supplements for pregnant women. Commitments should be compliant with food-based dietary guidelines / Codex Alimentarius / nutrient profiling models (available in all WHO regions). Special focus to be given to reaching marginalised people and pregnant and lactating women.	<i>Operational</i>
X amount in capacity development to support smaller domestic women-led businesses to develop and market high-quality, low-cost nutritious products. Targets for affordability and market growth of the product by x% in x years.	<i>Operational</i>
Innovations to improve women farmer's access to markets and investment in women farmer's cooperatives.	<i>Operational</i>
X amount in workforce nutrition policies and programmes to improve the nutrition of workers. Implement paid maternity leave for 6 months for all pregnant and lactating women and support for breastfeeding mothers.	<i>Policy</i>
X amount in innovations for more efficient and effective anemia prevention and treatment for women of reproductive age, including adolescent girls.	<i>Financial</i>
Scale up the supplementation of fortified foods for adolescent girls, through collaboration with NGO partners and government programs.	<i>Operational</i>