
Progress report on Rome-based agencies collaboration

Document: GC 49/INF.5

Date: 8 January 2026

Distribution: Public

Original: English

FOR: INFORMATION

Action: The Governing Council is invited to take note of the progress report on Rome-based agencies collaboration.

Technical questions:

Ronald Hartman

Director
Global Engagement, Partnership and Resource
Mobilization Division
e-mail: r.hartman@ifad.org

Maija Peltola

Senior Partnership Officer
Global Engagement, Partnership and Resource
Mobilization Division
e-mail: m.peltola@ifad.org



I. Introduction

A. Purpose and scope

1. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) have jointly prepared this annual progress report for 2024–2025 to highlight the coordinated efforts of the Rome-based agencies (RBAs) over the past year. The report details key achievements that have resulted from their collaborative actions at global, regional and country levels.
2. In 2024, despite a modest decline – with 8.2 percent of the global population down from 8.5 percent in 2023¹ – between 638 and 720 million people faced hunger globally. Progress in parts of Asia and Latin America contrasts with persistent and rising hunger in Africa, projected to account for 60 percent of the global total by 2030. Malnutrition patterns are also evolving. While some regions report reduced stunting and better diet diversity, affordability remains a major barrier, with over 2.6 billion people unable to access a healthy diet, including more than 1 billion in Africa².
3. According to the 2025 Global Report on Food Crises (GRFC), 295.3 million people in 53 countries faced high levels of acute food insecurity in 2024, 22.6 percent of the analysed population. Two-thirds of them are in just ten countries. Projections available suggest that 231.2 million people in 37 countries could face such conditions in 2025. Displacement further compounds these challenges, with 95.8 million people displaced in food crisis contexts in 2024, driven largely by conflict³.
4. On the financing side, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) data show that in 2024, official development assistance (ODA) from Development Assistance Committee (DAC) member countries fell by 7.1 percent in real terms compared to 2023, which is the first decline in six years⁴. Although ODA for food systems has grown over the past decade, the slowdown in overall aid flows adds pressure on resources already stretched by overlapping crises.
5. These dynamics underscore the growing importance of financial support to address the food crisis, yet with available resources declining, RBA collaboration has become even more critical. Furthermore, addressing both immediate humanitarian needs and longer-term systemic challenges requires coordinated, multi-level action. The 2024–2025 RBA progress report demonstrates how joint action is delivering integrated solutions at global, regional, and country levels to build more sustainable, inclusive, and shock-resilient food systems with complementary mandates, operational reach and technical expertise to this task.

¹ FAO, IFAD, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WFP and the World Health Organization (WHO). 2025. [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025 – Addressing high food price inflation for food security and nutrition](#).

² *Ibid.*

³ Global Network Against Food Crises and Food Security Information Network. 2025. [Global Report on Food Crises 2025](#).

⁴ OECD. [Official Development Assistance](#).

B. Overview of collaboration 2024–2025

6. At the global level, the RBAs continued to engage collaboratively in high-level political forums such as the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC), the 2025 Nutrition for Growth (N4G) Summit, and the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4), while supporting the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty. The successful execution of the 2nd United Nations Food Systems Summit Stocktake (UNFSS+4), supported by the RBAs, has provided a crucial platform for countries to share their food systems journeys while reaffirming the need to accelerate progress for food systems transformation. The RBAs have also contributed actively to the Secretary-General's UN80 initiative, together and through their respective workstreams, sharing experiences based on RBA collaboration to benefit broader discussions on system-wide coordination and efficiencies.
7. Furthermore, the RBAs continued to collaborate at regional and national levels, including in the Sahel through the Joint Sahel Programme (SD3C), while working together on gender equality and women's empowerment, and around South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), and increasing joint programming through the Joint SDG Fund.

II. 2024–2025 RBA collaboration across global, regional and country levels

8. RBA collaboration continues at all levels and across thematic areas of focus in order to transform agrifood systems and achieve zero hunger. The 2023 five-year tripartite memorandum of understanding (MoU) establishes a framework that includes a steadfast focus on results, and ensures sustained exchange of technical knowledge, lessons learned, and good practices. In 2025, the RBAs have strengthened their collaboration around food systems, nutrition and private sector engagement, while ensuring strategic alignment throughout the development of WFP strategic plan (2026–2029), FAO Medium Term Plan (2026–2029), and implementation of the commitments outlined in the Report of the Thirteenth Replenishment of IFAD's resources.
9. This chapter provides a substantive overview of collaboration activities at the global and corporate levels, as well as a status of selected country and regional level work, during the 2024–2025 reporting period. To visualize the work of the RBAs and demonstrate the nature of collaboration, several in depth examples are presented. These include: recent developments in the CFS, GNAFC, the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report, and other key processes, such as N4G, UNFSS+4, and FfD4; collaboration in support of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, and around SSTC; updates on the food security cluster, SD3C, and joint programmes on gender equality and women's empowerment; as well as the 2024 RBA Award of Excellence and strengthened joint programming under the Joint SDG Fund.

A. Highlights of collaboration activities at the global level

a) *Committee on World Food Security (CFS)*

10. In 2024, FAO, IFAD and WFP advanced their joint work and collaboration within the CFS⁵, contributing to its strategic direction through regular engagement in the Bureau and Advisory Group meetings and thematic workstreams. The RBAs host and support the CFS Secretariat, providing staff, technical expertise, and leveraging their convening power to develop and endorse policy guidance across a wide range of food security and nutrition related thematic areas. In particular, this year the RBAs provided technical support to the

⁵ The CFS is composed of 139 member countries, as well as United Nations agencies, including the RBAs, civil society, research institutions, financial institutions, private sector organizations and philanthropic foundations.

development of policy recommendations on “Strengthening Urban and Peri-Urban Food Systems to Achieve Food Security and Nutrition”.

11. During the reporting period, the RBAs continued to promote and mainstream the CFS policy products within their respective workplans as instruments for accelerating progress on the implementation of the SDGs.
12. Through their collective engagement and collaborative efforts within the CFS, the RBAs have continued to actively support the implementation of the [CFS Multi-Year Programme of Work \(2024-2027\)](#), while providing technical guidance during the negotiations of the policy recommendations on “Reducing Inequalities for Food Security and Nutrition”, which were endorsed at CFS 52 in October 2024.
13. Going forward, with strong RBA support and engagement, the CFS will continue to be an important space where global multi-stakeholder actors strive together for the elimination of hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition for all.

b) *Global Network Against Food Crises (GNAFC)*

14. The GNAFC unites humanitarian and development actors to address food crises; members include the RBAs, the European Union, Ireland, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF and the World Bank. It also hosts the Secretariat of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus Coalition.
15. In 2025, the RBAs supported key publications, including the [GRFC](#), Hunger Hotspots, and Financial Flows and Food Crises, launched at high-level events such as the GRFC release at IFAD headquarters. A major milestone was the launch of the GNAFC [Knowledge Hub](#) in 2024.
16. GNAFC engaged its membership to jointly engage on thematic priorities, including holding collective messages on famine, nutrition, displacement and climate. At the 69th Commission on the Status of Women, it co-hosted a [round table](#) on conflict, hunger and their disproportionate impact on women and girls, calling for gender-responsive, peace-linked solutions across the HDP nexus. GNAFC also [contributed](#) to the UNFSS+4 Stocktake through the engagement of the HDP Nexus Coalition, highlighting country shifts from short-term responses to long-term food systems transformation.
17. The RBAs jointly briefed the United Nations Security Council on food security in Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, through its informal reporting on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 2417, using GNAFC analysis to elevate food insecurity as a peace and security issue and inform multilateral responses. At the country level, they advanced HDP nexus planning in East and West Africa, expanded uptake of IFAD’s Financial Flows to Food Systems (3FS) tool, and strengthened coordination through a growing community of practice.
18. GNAFC deepened strategic partnerships to amplify impact, intensifying engagement with the G7+, G20, and the UNFSS Coordination Hub. These efforts showed how RBAs, through GNAFC, can deliver coherent, anticipatory responses to food crises – bridging humanitarian and development action and supporting more resilient food systems. GNAFC is currently undergoing a member-driven collective process through its membership to further refine and focus its work.

c) *Maximizing efficiencies and complementarities in nutrition (MoU's thematic area #2): N4G Summit and UN-Nutrition*

19. UN-Nutrition played a coordinating and facilitative role in supporting the collective engagement of United Nations agencies in the 2025 N4G Summit in Paris, ensuring coherence across contributions and elevating nutrition's visibility. UN-Nutrition also contributed to the shaping of the N4G Paris Vision and Road Map, Commitment Guide, and principles of engagement.
20. UN-Nutrition fostered collaboration among members⁶ by contributing to thematic working groups, guiding commitment-making, and supporting plenary sessions and side events. For example, WFP and WHO co-led the plenary session on health and social protection; FAO and WFP co-led the data, innovation and artificial intelligence (AI) theme; FAO and IFAD co-chaired the working group on nutrition and transition toward sustainable food systems and climate; WFP and the CFS Secretariat co-led the working group on nutrition in crisis; and the RBAs and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) co-hosted a side event on "Towards rights-based and gender – just food security and nutrition".
21. Over 400 commitments were registered on the [Nutrition Accountability Framework platform](#), including several from United Nations agencies. The RBAs aligned strongly with the Summit's goals: FAO committed to scaling nutrition-sensitive programming and expanding access to dietary data; IFAD pledged to exceed its target of 60 percent nutrition-sensitive investments; and WFP reaffirmed its commitment to reducing malnutrition in humanitarian settings and maximizing the nutrition impact across its programmatic portfolio.
22. The RBAs' successful engagement at N4G highlights their ability to drive innovative, multi-sectoral solutions with partners to advance nutrition through agrifood systems transformation. Under the UN-Nutrition umbrella, they continue to strengthen their collaboration by promoting synergies across climate, food systems, innovation, gender, health and social protection. Through coordinated action, the RBAs are accelerating progress on global nutrition targets.

d) *Innovation and the RBAs*

23. The RBAs are working together to drive innovation that strengthens smallholder farmers' resilience and promotes sustainable food systems. We focus on unlocking investment opportunities and fostering scalable innovations in food technology, market access and product development, especially those rooted in local resources and adapted to the needs of vulnerable populations.
24. As the UN 2.0 Quintet of Change agenda advances, innovation remains central to RBAs' strategies. During the UN 2.0 week in June 2025, the RBAs highlighted key priorities: WFP focused on innovation and AI; IFAD underscored the importance of supporting governments in the development of digital public infrastructures; FAO emphasized the transformative role of digital innovation in shaping future United Nations careers and driving progress toward the SDGs.
25. Four teams were selected as finalists under the Moonshots for Development 2023–2024 Innovation Challenge, jointly organized by IFAD and the WFP Innovation Accelerator in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, CGIAR, and other partners. The finalists received financial and technical support, as well as funded opportunities to participate as speakers at international fora in Asia and Africa. In May 2024, they presented their learnings and progress at a pitch event hosted at IFAD headquarters in Rome. To consolidate these efforts, in December 2024, IFAD's

⁶ [UN-Nutrition – Who we are.](#)

Executive Board approved a two-year grant of USD 2 million to the Moonshots for Development Alliance, aimed at financing and scaling innovations that have demonstrated tangible results.

26. In May 2025, IFAD convened a week-long series of consultations on innovation whereby WFP contributed through a panel on government-led innovation in fragile contexts, while FAO participated in a dedicated session with youth and academia on enhancing operational impact through behavioural insights.
27. As part of the [Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator](#), enabled by the WFP Innovation Accelerator, the innovation portfolio was shared with IFAD colleagues in Lebanon, Egypt and Jordan in June 2025.

e) *Update on the 2nd United Nations Food Systems Summit Stocktake (UNFSS+4) (MoU's thematic area #1)*

28. The UNFSS+4 took place on 27–29 July 2025, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, co-hosted by Ethiopia and Italy. The event focused on three priorities: reflecting on progress, strengthening collaboration, and unlocking finance for food systems transformation. The Management Consultative Group of the United Nations Food Systems Coordination Hub – bringing together the RBAs and other United Nations key partners – ensured intra-United Nations coordination and mobilized national convenors' participation.
29. In the lead-up to the Summit, the RBAs participated in two Member State briefings, five regional preparatory meetings, and a global youth conference, reaffirming their commitment to scale up financing, innovation and inclusive approaches.
30. A key input was the United Nations Secretary-General's report *Accelerating Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Food Systems Transitions for People and Planet*, based on voluntary reporting by 112 countries. The Summit gathered 3,500+ participants, 145+ national delegations, and 700+ non-state actors. The RBAs co-led 11 sessions, including ministerial round tables and high-level panels, and launched their 2025 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report.
31. Notable progress includes 130 countries adopting national pathways, 169 implementing school meal programmes, and [USD 17.8 billion disbursed by international financial institutions](#). Yet, reduction in hunger and malnutrition remains uneven due to conflict, climate impacts and constrained fiscal spaces.
32. The UNFSS+4 concluded with a [call to action](#) outlining six priorities: delivering in complex settings; deepening dialogue, policy, and coordination; expanding finance and investment, particularly for smallholders; integrating environmental, economic and social dimensions of food systems; harnessing science, AI and new technologies responsibly; and strengthening intergenerational collaboration by empowering youth. FAO, IFAD and WFP principals underscored the urgency of accelerating targeted financing for the most vulnerable, strengthening partnerships at global and national levels and advancing inclusive, rights-based approaches with youth at the centre.

f) *RBA collaboration in support of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty*

33. The RBAs are working closely together to support the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, a G20 initiative launched under Brazil's presidency in 2024 to accelerate progress on SDGs 1 and 2. Since its inception, they have helped shape the alliance's strategic direction through active participation in the Board of Champions. IFAD hosted the alliance's first high-level event during its Governing Council in February 2025 as well as the inaugural Board meeting, and FAO hosted the second Board of Champions meeting in October 2025. FAO prepared to host the alliance's support mechanism by establishing a multi-donor trust fund, recruiting staff and assigning office space for the support mechanism, while WFP developed

a digital hub to match government requests with knowledge and financial partners. FAO convened the United Nations agencies and the Brazilian transition team bi-monthly to ensure coordination and information sharing.

34. The RBAs collectively contributed to the structure of the alliance's [policy basket](#) containing 50 policy instruments and they provided inputs to all policy instruments which have an agriculture or food security focus. This ensures that the alliance maintains a clear normative and analytical framework, as all Member State requests for support must be linked to at least one of the policy instruments included in the policy basket. The RBAs continue to work with Member States to support them with developing country examples for the policy instruments to showcase both government successes and challenges in implementation, and to spur peer-to-peer learning and SSTC among governments.
35. The RBAs engaged on the development of the six sprints and are also engaged in the fast-track implementation process. Nine government implementation plans have been validated and three remain under development. The RBAs provided technical and normative support to the development of these nine plans, leveraging our individual and collective expertise. Six of the validated plans have moved to the fourth stage and round table discussions to develop concrete technical and financial agreements to support government implementation, with the RBAs as crucial participants in each one. Additionally, the RBAs jointly support the development of guidance notes circulated by the alliance's support mechanism to Member States: for example, FAO drafted, with IFAD's inputs, a note on integrating hunger and poverty reduction into nationally determined contributions (NDCs). The RBAs contributed to the drafting of the Belém Leaders' Declaration on Hunger, Poverty and Human-Centred Climate Action and FAO and IFAD contributed to the guidance note on strengthening language on eradicating poverty and hunger in the run up to the FfD4. The RBAs also engaged with the proposed Sevilla Platform for Action on better integrated finance and climate-resilient finance partnership for social protection and smallholder agriculture. Their collaboration underscores a shared commitment to policy alignment and leveraging each agency's strengths to deliver lasting impact for vulnerable communities.

g) Joint RBA engagement on the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development

36. The [FfD4](#), held from 30 June to 3 July 2025 in Seville, Spain, was a key moment for the RBAs to jointly elevate the importance of financing for agrifood systems and rural areas in global development discussions.
37. In the lead-up, the RBAs aligned their messaging and provided coordinated technical support during intergovernmental negotiations and the preparatory meetings, drawing on their complementary expertise: IFAD shared insights on the importance of investments in agri-food systems, and the potential of remittances, public development banks, and mobilization of private sector capital; FAO produced the report *Financing Food for a Better Future: Financing agrifood systems transformation to increase resilience, and prevent and mitigate food crises*, with a strong focus on directing resources to the countries and communities most in need; and WFP underscored the importance of resilience and crisis prevention along the HDP nexus. Joint activities included dialogues with Member States in New York, co-organized side events, proposed language for the FfD4 negotiations guidance note, and shared technical support for negotiators.
38. Going forward, sustained collaboration among the RBAs will be vital to advance long-term financing for agrifood systems – across domestic support, international development cooperation, and private sector engagement – through the implementation of the [Sevilla Commitment](#). This will require working within a new development finance architecture that uses public finance catalytically to mobilize additional resources and deliver on country-level priorities.

39. In 2026, the RBAs will contribute to the financing for sustainable development report, which will map commitments in the Sevilla Commitment along with in-depth review on action areas and monitoring of progress.

B) Highlights of collaboration activities at regional and country levels

a) *Update on the Joint Sahel Programme (SD3C) (MoU's thematic areas #4 and #6)*

40. The SD3C, addressing challenges from conflict and climate change, is central to the One Sahel initiative and aligns with thematic areas 4 and 6 of the updated MoU, focusing on resilience, climate adaptation and mitigation.
41. With a budget of USD 181.4 million over six years, SD3C aims to strengthen resilience and economic opportunities for 123,000 rural households across Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger and Senegal. It has received co-financing from the Netherlands (USD 13.2 million), Italy (USD 1.9 million), and Ireland (USD 1 million, plus a USD 0.5 million top-up in 2024). A Multi-Donor Funding Facility (MDFF), launched in March 2024, mobilizes resources for phase two and scaling up results. The MDFF is being updated to ensure agile collaboration amid shifting economic conditions, with stronger RBA decision-making critical to reinforcing ownership and maximizing its potential within the One Sahel framework.
42. Despite political instability complicating delivery, the programme has already reached over 50,000 households – 68 percent of its mid-term target – demonstrating effectiveness in boosting productivity and regional integration. In May 2025, the second phase was launched in Senegal with the signing of a financing agreement with the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the new regional coordination entity replacing the G5 Sahel.
43. Looking ahead, the One Sahel initiative will deepen its impact by mobilizing further funding and promoting decentralized stakeholder engagement through a territorial development approach. The focus will remain on scaling up successful interventions such as land rehabilitation, while strengthening resilience to climate shocks.

b) *Global food security cluster*

44. In 2024, the food security cluster targeted 113 million out of the 207 million people in need and reached 78 percent of the targeted population (88 million) across 30 humanitarian response plans (71 million received food assistance and 32 million livelihood and agriculture support, either in-kind, cash or mixed modalities).
45. Reduced funding called for food security cluster actors to undertake retargeting and prioritization exercises, raising concerns over exclusion of affected communities and the adequacy of assistance provided. The food security cluster fostered a dialogue on these issues and developed a common positioning to voice concerns and clarify scope and boundary settings requirements.
46. In Q2, food security cluster partners received only 11 percent of funding needs out of USD 12.6 billion requirements and reached 61.2 million people (59 percent of the 104 million targeted). A total of 54 million received food assistance and 11 million livelihood and agriculture support. In February 2025, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) undertook a re-prioritization exercise in 27 countries which eventually became the [hyper prioritized Global Humanitarian Overview](#). The food security cluster's re-prioritized target stands at 79.8 million people and USD 9.2 billion, excluding almost one in four people suffering from acute hunger.
47. The Emergency Relief Coordinator's Humanitarian Reset recommendations were endorsed in June 2025. At the global level, the cluster system will be simplified and the number of clusters reduced; the food security cluster remains a prioritized cluster. However, funding levels may impact the food security cluster structure at global and country levels.

48. As part of the reset, the food security cluster accelerated its strategy of localization by strengthening local capacities to lead humanitarian coordination efforts. Field food security clusters invested in strengthening national preparedness systems linking localization, anticipatory action and transition planning to support nationally led, sustainable emergency coordination.
- c) *Working together on gender equality and women's empowerment (MoU's thematic area #3): Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress Towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment; and Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security and Nutrition***
49. The Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress Towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment (JP RWEE) continues advancing RBA collaboration in this second phase (2022–2027) with support from Sweden, Norway, the Gates Foundation, and new partners Switzerland and Ireland, with a total budget of USD 27 million. Operating in Nepal, the Niger, Pacific Islands, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Tunisia, in 2024 the programme directly reached 32,738 people – most of them women – and indirectly over 182,000. Agencies and partners improved diets, reduced food loss and raised farm incomes through climate-smart agriculture. Over 200 informal groups transitioned into formal women producers' organizations. Community-based methodologies such as Dimitra Clubs, Gender Action Learning System (GALS), and Business Action Learning for Innovation (BALI) supported women in leadership and decision-making, while strengthened national policies promote lasting change.
 50. The Joint Programme on Gender Transformative Approaches for Food Security and Nutrition (JP GTA) also demonstrated strong RBA collaboration to institutionalize gender-transformative approaches. Launched in 2018 with European Union funding and extended through 2024, it enabled the RBAs to integrate gender equality into policies, programmes and practices. In 2024, a GTA workshop and closure webinar brought together RBA gender experts and European Union representatives to exchange lessons. Over 4,000 staff and partners were trained, 50 learning events held, and 33 tools and knowledge products disseminated. Outputs included a theory of change and a step-by-step GTA integration guide.
 51. Beyond these programmes, RBA collaboration extended to inter-agency platforms and advocacy, including the RBA Inter-agency Gender Coordination Group, the Forum on the uptake of the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Gender Equality and Women's and Girls' Empowerment in the Context of Food Security and Nutrition at CFS 52, the Commission on the Status of Women, and the 2024 United Nations system-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) peer review. The RBAs also co-led the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) Working Group on Rural Women and Girls. These mechanisms fostered institutional learning, alignment, and visibility, reinforcing the RBAs' collective commitment to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment across food systems.

d) *Update on RBA collaboration around South-South and triangular cooperation*

52. FAO, IFAD, and WFP have strengthened their collaboration on SSTC through joint advocacy, resource mobilization and country-level initiatives. The RBAs contributed to the evaluation and development of the new United Nations system-wide SSTC strategy and are members of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) Advisory Group tasked to guide this process, reinforcing their commitment to coherence and collective impact. As part of global advocacy, the 2024 RBA joint celebration of the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation – co-hosted with the Government of Brazil in Brasília – gathered United Nations and Brazilian government representatives alongside the Embassies of Kenya and Guatemala to reflect on 15 years of Brazil–RBA cooperation and SSTC’s role in advancing national priorities.
53. At the country level, the RBAs implemented a joint SSTC pilot in Kenya to support the scale-up of the national home-grown school feeding programme, integrating climate-smart approaches. Drawing on experiences from Brazil, China and Rwanda, three priority activities were completed by April 2025: FAO developed school garden guidelines, IFAD documented best practices and WFP facilitated a study visit to Brazil.
54. Building on the results and lessons learned from this project, the RBAs, together with Brazil, are finalizing a three-year, USD 3 million SSTC initiative in support of sustainable school feeding linked to family farming. The initiative was announced during Brazil’s G20 presidency and will contribute to the goals of the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty and the School Meals Coalition. Under this collaboration, IFAD will expand smallholders’ access to finance, productive assets and advisory services to strengthen their capacity to supply year-round school-meal programmes. FAO will provide technical support for the development and implementation of school feeding policies and legal frameworks, including planning, monitoring, evaluation, dissemination of data and evidence of lessons learned. WFP will strengthen the capacity of smallholder farmers and other food value chain actors on landscape restoration, improved agronomic practices, post-harvest management, climate risk financing, financial inclusion and market access and facilitate SSTC exchanges.

e) *2024 RBA Award of Excellence for Country-Level Collaboration*

55. At the 48th IFAD Governing Council in February 2025, the RBA Award of Excellence for Country-Level Collaboration was jointly awarded to Peru and the Pacific Islands, recognizing exceptional collaboration among FAO, IFAD and WFP in advancing a unified approach to rural development.
56. In Peru, the three agencies jointly supported a landmark reform of the public procurement system through coordinated policy advocacy, technical assistance and capacity building. The progressive implementation of the new procurement law, backed by the RBAs, is expected to benefit up to 200,000 smallholder farmers by expanding market access and creating more inclusive food systems.
57. In the Pacific Islands – 14 Small Island Developing States, or “Big Ocean States” – the RBAs established a mechanism for collaboration, information sharing and activity alignment, launching initiatives tailored to this unique and challenging context. Through JP RWEE, they enhanced access to resources, markets and services for small-scale farmers and rural communities. The partnership supported 7,080 rural women farmers in Tonga, Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Fiji with tools, equipment and training to improve productivity. In Samoa, the RBAs conducted national food trade and cost of diet analyses, generating actionable insights to foster sustainable local consumption and improve access to nutritious and healthy food to address the growing nutrition and public health crisis driven by non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

58. These achievements exemplify the “One RBA” approach – defined by shared vision, co-led interventions, and pooled resources to maximize impact. The 2025 award demonstrates how RBA collaboration at the country level can deliver coherent, scalable and sustainable solutions for rural transformation.

f) Increased joint programming through the Joint SDG Fund

59. The RBAs are strategically collaborating under the Joint SDG Fund to support integrated policy solutions and innovative financing for the SDGs. In the first funding round of the food systems window, FAO, WFP and IFAD have come together to implement six joint programmes in Bolivia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Samoa and the United Republic of Tanzania, with a combined budget exceeding USD 10 million for 2024–2026. Additionally, joint programmes are being implemented in ten other countries by at least two RBAs, together with other United Nations agencies.
60. In Bolivia, for example, the RBAs and the International Labour Organization (ILO) are jointly implementing the Strengthening Sustainable Food Systems in the Bolivian Amazon to Live Well and in Harmony with Mother Earth (AMAS-1) Programme (2025–2026) across 14 Amazonian municipalities to strengthen traditional agriculture, support climate-resilient food systems, reaching 5,836 beneficiaries. By combining their technical expertise with local engagement, the agencies are collaborating to improve local capacities in sustainable production, and access to markets for women and youth-led enterprises focused on local products, offering a scalable model for Amazonian countries.
61. Building on the successful RBA collaboration of the first funding round of the Joint SDG Fund, in the second round, the agencies will implement joint programming under the food systems window in seven countries across three regions⁷.
62. As development financing becomes increasingly fragmented and food insecurity persists, pooled funding mechanisms such as the Joint SDG Fund are vital, as they strengthen RBA collaboration, scale up joint programming, catalyse policy shifts, and promote investments for food systems transformation.

III. The path forward

63. In the face of overlapping and protracted crises, including climate change and conflicts, it is imperative that the RBAs reinforce their collaboration to respond to rapidly evolving global challenges. The RBAs existing partnership within each national context enables the agencies to complement and build on each other’s mandates, comparative advantages and operational modalities, as well as technical expertise, to address the structural drivers of food insecurity, thereby contributing to lasting solutions to hunger and malnutrition.
64. As part of their continued efforts to strengthen joint action, the RBAs have initiated a revision of their 2015 conceptual framework on [*Strengthening Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition*](#). This update – agreed in mid-2025 – aims to reflect emerging trends, refine programmatic approaches and clarify complementarities to enable more impactful, large-scale collaboration in support of food-insecure populations.
65. In line with the ongoing Secretary-General’s UN80 initiative, the RBAs will continue to increase synergies and prioritize collaboration at the country level, to achieve greater effectiveness and stronger impact on the ground, focusing their efforts on programme implementation. The RBAs also stand ready to jointly contribute to United Nations system efficiencies through cost reductions, simplification of processes, deduplication of efforts, leveraging their distinct role in combating hunger and malnutrition.

⁷ Cameroon, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Kenya, People’s Democratic Republic of Lao, Rwanda.

66. The RBAs will continue pursuing collaboration within the 2023 MoU framework, while promoting joint initiatives and strengthening advocacy in other areas of mutual interest. Increased access to pooled funding mechanisms and innovative partnerships – involving SSTC, as well as other United Nations entities, non-state actors, and international financial institutions – remain crucial to address the root causes of hunger and malnutrition, while accelerating the attainment of common objectives.
67. The RBAs will also seek to build on and replicate successful cases of collaboration, such as those outlined in this paper. Complementing the broader RBA efforts and in support of the MoU objectives, IFAD and WFP will continue strengthening their cooperation in fragile contexts through their Action Plan on Joint Work in Fragile Situations (2024–2027).
68. Global hunger and the unprecedented funding crisis make it even more important that the RBAs continue to work strategically, efficiently and collaboratively in the coming years to deliver integrated, long-term solutions, achieve widespread impact and support countries in the attainment of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, particularly SDG 2, zero hunger, leaving no one behind.

Acronyms

AI	artificial intelligence
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FfD4	Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development
GNAFC	Global Network Against Food Crises
GRFC	Global Report on Food Crises
HDP	humanitarian-development-peace
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
JP RWEE	Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress Towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment
MDFF	Multi-Donor Funding Facility
MoU	memorandum of understanding
N4G	Nutrition for Growth
ODA	official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RBAs	Rome-based agencies
SD3C	Joint Sahel Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SSTC	South-South and triangular cooperation
UNFSS+4	2nd United Nations Food Systems Summit Stocktake
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization