Advancing Innovation in Agrifood systems

Outline
- Challenging situation
- FAO Strategic Framework 22-31
- FAO STRATEGY ON CLIMATE CHANGE 2022–2031
- FAO Science and Innovation Strategy
- FAO Science and Innovation Forum 2023
- Enabling environment
- NENA Innovation platform
- Agrination Startup Cup
Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in NENA – Challenging situation

Hunger in the Arab region has continued to increase since 2014.

54.3 Million undernourished (2021). 55% increase since 2010.

Severe food insecurity affecting an estimated 154.3 million people in 2021, up from 142.7 million in 2020 – an increase of 11.6 million

Trends in hunger and food insecurity suggest that the region is not on track to achieve Zero Hunger (SDG 2) by 2030

Recent food supply chain challenges coupled with increasing food prices may cause the situation to deteriorate further.

COVID induced food prices increase inevitably affects the cost of a healthy diet. Prevalence of anemia in women aged 15 to 49 was estimated at 33.2% (2019).

Water scarcity, climate induced challenges, conflicts and economic crisis
Supporting the Agenda 2030 through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, “leaving no one behind”.

As we navigate our path towards sustainable agriculture and rural transformation, it becomes increasingly evident that innovation is instrumental.
The Strategy on Climate Change action is organized under three Pillars focusing on action at:

- **GLOBAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS:**
  Strengthening global and regional climate policy and governance;

- **COUNTRY LEVEL:**
  Developing countries’ capacities for climate action; and

- **LOCAL LEVEL:**
  Scaling up climate action on the ground.

**Harnessing good practices and innovative solutions**

To respond to climate challenges, good practices and innovative solutions should be harnessed, tailored and piloted in the diverse range of regional, country and community contexts.

**COP27 Egypt Presidency, FAO Launch FAST Initiative**

**Food and Agriculture for Sustainable Transformation Initiative – FAST**

The FAST initiative will be a multi-stakeholder partnership acting as an accelerator to transform agrifood systems to deliver triple wins: for people, for climate and for nature. FAST is designed as a catalyst, building on ongoing global and regional initiatives and coalitions to drive effective actions, and avoiding duplication.
Three pillars: 1) strengthening science- and evidence-based decision-making; 2) supporting innovation and technology at the country level; and 3) reinforcing FAO’s capacities to better serve countries.

Members harness **science and innovation** to realize context-specific and systemic solutions for MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for **better production**, **better nutrition**, **a better environment** and a **better life**, leaving no one behind.
FAO Science and Innovation Forum 2023

Check out the SIF 2023 Programme


Closing: key recommendations and takeaways
20 October 2023 | 11:00 – 12:30 (CEST)

REGISTER
Creating an “INNOVATION” enabling environment and effective ecosystem

With targeted support to countries, entrepreneurs, actors and stakeholders, the adoption of innovative practices in agriculture can pave the way for improved productivity, profitability, and better livelihoods for rural communities.
Go through the NENA AgriFood innovation platform

Become a member

As a member of the NENA Agri-food Innovation Platform, you can benefit from and contribute to ongoing discussions, periodically receive news, updates, and invitations to webinars and engage with fellow members.

SUGGEST

New Topic

Suggest a Topic for the next discussion

Register

Agri-Food Innovation Platform

Suggest a Topic

Name *

Organization

E-mail *

Proposal

[QR Code]

[Link to register]
POLICY SUPPORT

Partnership with ITU to accelerate digital transformation and assist countries to develop **national digital agricultural strategy**.

Organization of a joint [FAO-ITU Digital Agriculture Solutions Forum 2023](#)
Advancing innovation in agrifood systems in the region

**FAO’s WORK ON INNOVATION FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PRODUCTION**

Farmer field schools focused on water productivity improvement, potential of non-conventional water resources, climate-smart agriculture solutions for farming systems

And the **inter-regional technical platform on water scarcity**

**ENHANCE ACCESS TO DIGITAL AGRICULTURE**

Promoting **digital innovations**, including **mobile applications** for irrigation and for control of Fall Armyworm, electronic phytosanitary certificates, **digital technologies** to improve traceability across the food value chains, and blockchain and other technologies for food safety, trade and information.

**BUILDING CAPACITIES**

**AGRINATION**

And raising awareness and capacities on **digital technologies** in the rural areas, including **digital literacy trainings for youth**.

Those initiatives support the implementation of the **Digital Village Initiative (DVI)** activities in countries of the region.
The Agrination Startup Cup - A startup competition launched in 2022 by

The initiative strives to foster innovation, decent employment and youth inclusion in agrifood systems

Focusing on 3 catalytic drivers:

- Innovation
- Entrepreneurship
- Youth & Women

Objectives

- Support idea-stage startups to achieve market entry using an inclusive approach
- Strengthen agrifood innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystems
Regional awareness campaign

Website, social media campaign and info sessions:

+250,000 saw our social media posts
+20,275 directly engaged
+2000 registered on the website
Network of impact makers
Startup support - AGRINATION Start-ups portfolio
LESSONS LEARNED

- Still reaching certain segments of youth more than others
- Effective incubation remains a challenge
- High variability among impact makers

Agrination 2.0 was launched this year with 5 more startups that have joined the program.
And we are planning for the 3rd Cohort of Agrination and we are looking forward to have you onboard as our partners!
Key priorities over the next 3 years

1. Institutional Strengthening for Impact Makers
2. Engagement in Policy Processes
3. Incentivize and Support Agrifood Startups
4. Engage Rural Youth and Women
5. Access to Finance