

2021 Nutrition Year of Action: Briefing for Parliaments

Universal access to nutritious food and healthy diets through a resilient and sustainable food system is key to eliminate all forms of malnutrition *and* to address interrelated national and global challenges, including poverty, (gender) inequality and climate change as set out in the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs).

Because progress has been limited and COVID-19 has caused a major set-back for improving nutrition outcomes, the [Nutrition Year of Action](#) was launched: a year-long effort to re-commit to nutrition punctuated by major global events in 2021. The UN Secretary General is convening a [UN Food Systems Summit \(UNFSS\)](#) in September 2021 to call on all stakeholders to make the changes necessary to food systems to achieve the SDGs by 2030. The [Nutrition for Growth \(N4G\)](#) Summit, in December 2021, connected to the Olympics Games, is a key moment for all stakeholders to commit to action and resources for improved nutrition outcomes. Both will be key opportunities to identify and build momentum within SUN countries to transform food systems for improved nutrition while taking care of our planet.

Country Food Systems Summit Dialogues are being launched as an integral part of the UNFSS. All 193 UN Member States have been invited by the United Nations Deputy Secretary General (DSG) to initiate their own set of dialogues, acknowledging that every country needs to design its own approach towards transforming food systems. **The Food Systems Summit Dialogues are designed to bring together stakeholders across multiple sectors within a country to collectively define pathways towards resilient, nutrition-sensitive, and climate-smart food systems.**

Timeline for the 2021 Nutrition Year of Action

January – June	National and independent Food Systems Dialogues	
July 26-28	Pre-Summit for the FSS (Rome)	
September*	Food Systems Summit (New York, UN General Assembly)	
December*	Nutrition for Growth Summit (Tokyo)	

Why do parliaments need to engage?

Parliaments have a key role to play in changing food systems towards delivering healthy, nutritious, affordable food in a sustainable way. Its legislation power, oversight, and budget rights will be crucial to encourage and control your government. You are essential in translating national needs into commitments by the national government and to ensure that these commitments turn into reality.

Parliamentary actions that can transform the food system and improve nutrition

Legislation	Budget	Oversight
Examine legislation and/or develop new policies, laws, and regulatory mechanisms to realize country ambitions and commitments from N4G and actions from the UNFSS	Adjust or improve the budget as needed to realise country ambitions and commitments from N4G and UNFSS Action	Organize the parliamentary work in a coherent and effective way that the parliament has clear oversight on the progress towards the Food System your country needs.

More examples in the SUN Briefing “[Parliamentary Action for Improved Nutrition](#)”

*Exact dates to be announced check <https://www.un.org/en/food-systems-summit>

Key Opportunities for Parliament's Engagement in the Nutrition Year of Action

Before the Summit parliaments can:

- ➔ Call on your government to engage in the Food Systems Summit and the Member States Food Systems Dialogues. Visit our [Nutrition Year of Action webpage](#) for more information.
- ➔ Participate in the [UN Food Systems Summit Member States Dialogues](#) to find consensus around a national pathway towards food systems transformation. First step: [contact the national convener](#) or ask a SUN Movement partner for support.
- ➔ Call on your government to make [SMART policy and financial commitments for Nutrition for Growth](#), using the outcomes of the Food Systems dialogues in your country and other relevant national processes.

After the Summit Parliaments can:

- ➔ Make sure N4G commitments are translated into policy, legislation and budget allocations by the government and keep oversight to see if they lead to the changes needed on the ground and turn into systemic change and results.
- ➔ Follow up on your country commitments on Food Systems and hold your government accountable to implement them.
- ➔ Call on regional parliaments to make nutrition and food systems part of their agenda and multi-year workplan.

Nutrition issues that need consideration in the food system change

- How to apply a national **multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder approach** to nutrition and food systems
- Ensuring sufficient **national investment in nutrition** through the budget cycle
- The promotion of **exclusive breastfeeding** and the need for **food fortification**
- The role of the **health system** and **social protection programs** and **education** in relation to nutrition and the food system
- Implementing **gender-sensitive legislation** related to nutrition and the food system
- Involving and recognizing **youth** as a stakeholder in nutrition and the food system
- The impact of COVID-19 on nutrition outcomes and the need to move towards **a resilient food system**
- The role of nutrition and food systems in **environmental sustainability**

More information and resources

- [Guidance for SUN stakeholders for the 2021 year of nutrition action](#)
- Food Systems and Nutrition; [Handbook for Parliamentarians](#)
- 2021 nutrition year of action [vision statement](#) - more information on the SUN [Website](#)
- [Pledge](#) by parliamentarians at the SUN Movement Global Gathering 2019
- [Key messages](#) on COVID-19 and Nutrition
- [N4G Commitment guide](#)
- [Voluntary guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition](#) adopted by the CFS in February 2020

Questions about parliamentary engagement in the Food Systems Summit and Nutrition for Growth for better nutrition outcomes? Feel free to contact renee.dejong@scalingupnutrition.org at the SUN Movement Secretariat in Geneva.