

## 2021 ECOSOC Integration Segment

Chaired by

Ambassador Juan Sandoval Mendiola, Vice-President of ECOSOC  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations

### PANEL 3: Human well-being and capabilities: Building back more resilient, healthy, equitable and sustainable societies

Opening Statement by

Dr QU Dongyu, FAO Director-General

2 July 2021

Distinguished Vice-President of ECOSOC,

Excellencies,

Dear Colleagues,

1. I am honoured to join the ECOSOC Integration Segment discussion to address one of the most critical issues currently facing humanity: how to build back more resilient, healthy, equitable and sustainable societies.
2. Today's discussions follow on our initial conversation last month which highlighted three key objectives:
  - First, we need to “build to transform” our agri-food systems.
  - Second, we need to invest in green recovery from COVID-19.
  - Third, we need to promote stronger social policies to address the needs of the poor and the most marginalized.
3. In this respect, let me highlight the importance of strengthening **rural women's economic empowerment**.
4. Rural women are key actors in agri-food systems, but often have limited access to resources and opportunities.

Ladies and Gentlemen

5. There is no single path to the future we strive for.
6. But we do know that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is the roadmap to follow.
7. And FAO is doing exactly that.

## Check against delivery

8. Our Ministerial Conference has just endorsed a **new Strategic Framework** to guide FAO's work over the next decade.
9. The Strategic Framework seeks to support the 2030 Agenda through the transformation to **MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems** for **better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life**, leaving no one behind.
10. To achieve this, I stress two important elements:
  - First, tapping into **science, technology and innovation**, ensuring it is accessible and relevant to all.
  - Second, improving the use of **data**, especially big data, bringing together different sources to inform decision-making, thereby strengthening governance, institutions and human capacity.

Dear colleagues,

11. Let me share some examples of targeted solutions that FAO proposes.
12. The Integration Dialogue in June stressed the importance of geospatial information in sustainable recovery from COVID-19.
13. **FAO's new geospatial platform** is one of the key elements of FAO's flagship **Hand-in-Hand Initiative**, which uses data and modelling to help end poverty and hunger.
14. **FAO's COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme** is expanding to better integrate Green Recovery, which is gaining increasing importance and urgency at country level.
15. FAO hosts numerous global platforms for scientific knowledge in policy-making.
16. For example, the International **Platform for Digital Food and Agriculture**, which provides strategic policy recommendations on the digitalization of food and agriculture.
17. FAO is also helping to create **1 000 digital villages** across the world - introducing key capabilities such as e-commerce to rural areas, to facilitate farmers' access to markets and helping to diversify their incomes.
18. I am confident that today's discussion will bring together many new ideas, and further pave the way for transformed agri-food systems and resilient, healthy, equitable and sustainable societies.
19. Thank you.

**Closing remarks by  
Dr QU Dongyu, FAO Director-General**

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. In closing, I would like to highlight three key messages from today's discussions for the HLPF.
  - **First**, to achieve the SDGs by 2030, we **need** MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life.
  - **Second**, we can no longer continue 'business as usual' - we need to act systematically and holistically to transform our agri-food systems; and
  - **Third**, we must ensure that **no one** is left behind!
2. FAO is committed to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and our new Strategic Framework will guide this effort, working together with Members and all stakeholders toward our collective objective.

Thank you.