



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



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GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON FOOD LOSS AND WASTE



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Food loss refers to the **decrease in quantity or quality of food**.

Food waste is part of food loss and refers to the discarding or alternative (non-food) use of food that is safe and nutritious for human consumption along the entire food supply chain.

Food losses and waste represent a serious depletion of technical, financial and natural resources invested in land preparation, production, harvesting, handling, processing and packaging of food. Measures for reducing food loss and waste must, therefore, be environmentally sustainable while contributing to the efficiency and sustainability of food supply chains and fostering food and nutrition security.

Food loss takes place between production and distribution, while food waste takes place mainly at the consumer level, in the retail and food service sectors. Thus, solutions designed to address food waste differ from those required to address food losses.

FACTS ON FOOD LOSS AND WASTE

Globally, 795 million people – the equivalent of 1 in 8 human beings – suffer from hunger and malnutrition.

By virtue of their high degree of perishability, fruits and vegetables as well as roots and tubers have the highest levels of FLW.

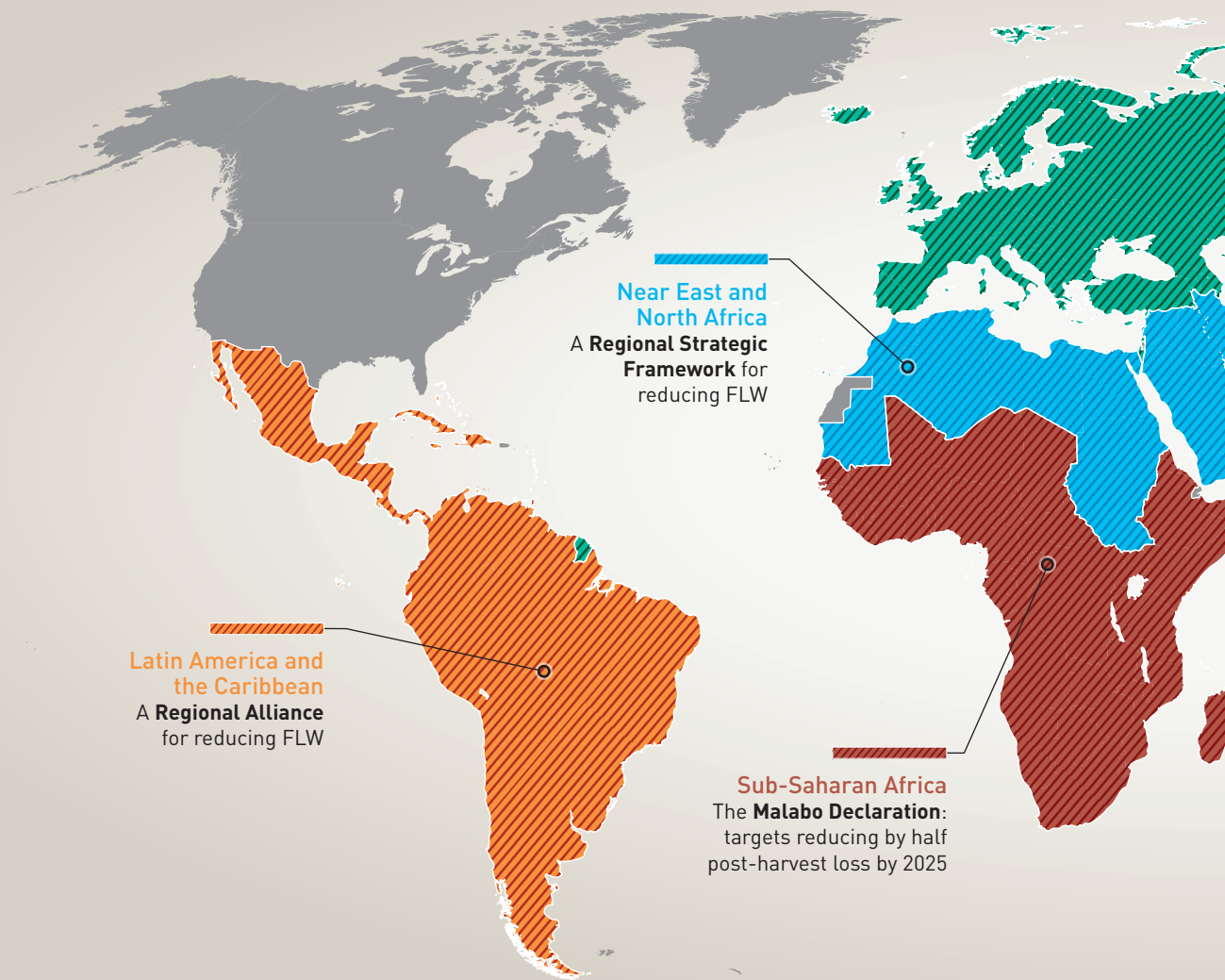
Food is lost or wasted throughout the supply chain, from initial agricultural production down to final household consumption.

Food losses represent a waste of resources used in production such as land, water, energy and inputs, and an increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

In low-income countries, food loss is prevalent at the production and post-harvest stages of the value chain, while in middle- and high-income regions, food waste at the retail and consumer levels tends to be higher.

FLW impacts the economic, social and environmental sustainability of food systems.

FAO'S REGIONAL INITIATIVES THAT ADDRESS FOOD LOSS AND WASTE (FLW)



Source: FAO.

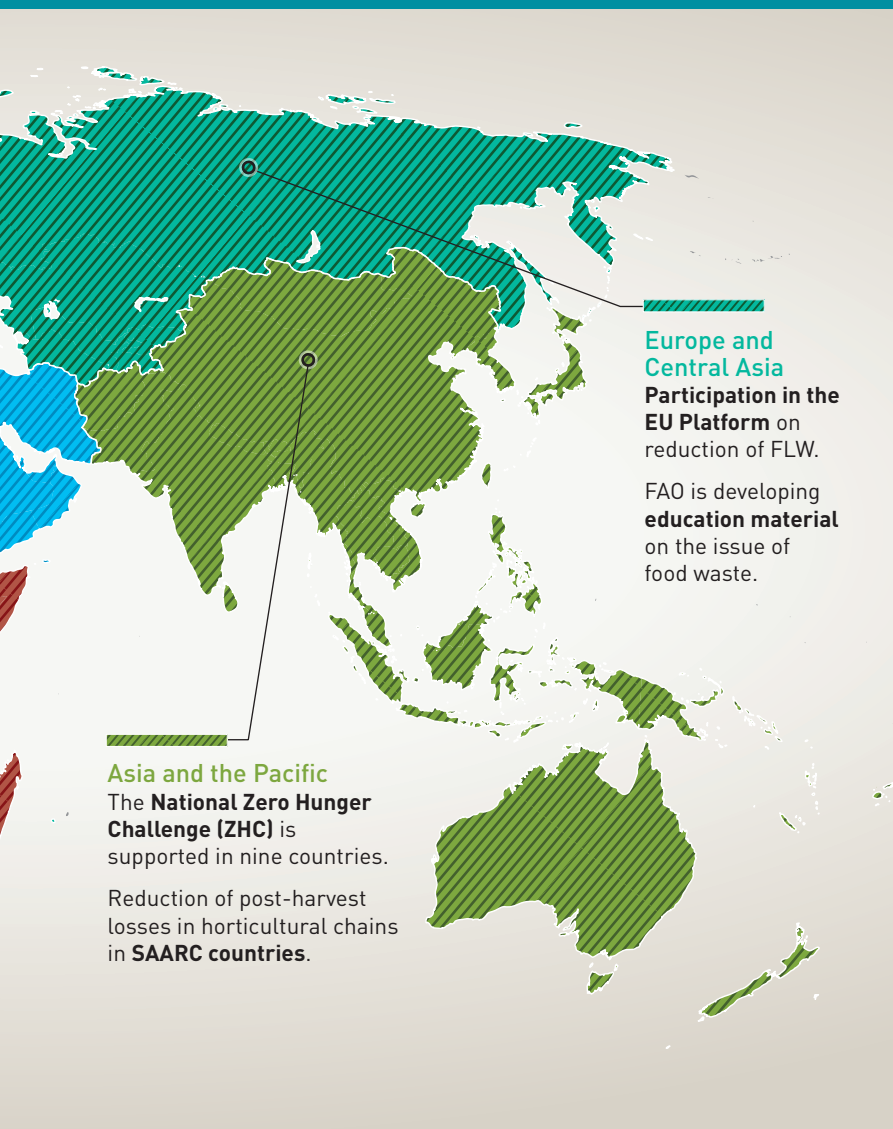
GLOBAL TECHNICAL PLATFORMS

The **Community of Practice on Food Loss and Waste Reduction**, hosted by FAO, provides a platform to facilitate linkages and information-sharing amongst stakeholders and relevant networks, projects and programmes.

See our website: www.fao.org/food-loss-reduction

The **Technical Platform on the Measurement and Reduction of Food loss and Waste** facilitates food loss and waste prevention, reduction and measurement at the local, regional and national levels, and ensures information-sharing.

See our website: www.fao.org/platform-food-loss-waste



Europe and Central Asia
Participation in the **EU Platform** on reduction of FLW.

FAO is developing **education material** on the issue of food waste.

Asia and the Pacific
The **National Zero Hunger Challenge (ZHC)** is supported in nine countries.

Reduction of post-harvest losses in horticultural chains in **SAARC countries**.

FAO's approach to raise awareness in schools to prevent food waste

The goal of this activity is to raise awareness among school children, teachers and staff and their related families and networks on food loss and waste issues and introduce good practices conducive to food waste reduction, with an expected long-term impact.



Global Initiative on Food Loss and Waste Reduction – SAVE FOOD

SAVE FOOD was launched in Dusseldorf, Germany, by FAO and Messe Dusseldorf at the Interpack 2011 Trade Fair for the Packaging and Processing Industry. The Initiative is being implemented in collaboration with a wide gamut of partners, including regional and international organizations, research and academia, as well as food chain actors, ranging from herders, farmers and fishermen, to cooperatives and global companies.

Over the past five years, the Initiative has provided a platform for **promoting awareness and advocacy** about the issues involved. National and regional campaigns have been launched, and updates on progress achieved in addressing food loss and waste are documented in a monthly newsletter disseminated by FAO to more than 900 members of the SAVE FOOD Network of Partners.

Given the complexity of food loss and waste, the dialogue and knowledge exchange on tackling food loss and waste issues with various partners in developed and developing countries has been extensive. FAO continues to play a **coordinating and facilitating role** in promoting networking, collaboration and exchange in the endeavour to create synergies and avoid duplication of effort.

FAO promotes a holistic and multidisciplinary approach to addressing FLW reduction. This approach prioritizes the food use-not-waste-hierarchy, which gives precedence to reduction at source, followed by recovery and redistribution, and uses components such as animal feed and compost or energy recovery in the last stages of disposal. Knowledge products targeted to a broad technical audience on a range of pertinent thematic issues are constantly being produced and widely disseminated. Some examples of thematic issues on which knowledge products have been produced are: food loss and climate change; post-harvest systems management for grains, fruits and vegetables and fish; food safety and quality; the application of renewable energy in food systems; redistribution and recycling of food; gender issues of relevance to FLW; the utilization of FLW as constituents of livestock feed; and education on food loss and waste issues.

Tools and methodologies have been developed for quantifying the magnitude of the food loss problem. They are being applied at the field level through project implementation for the identification of critical loss points at various stages of the food supply chain, and for the identification of the underlying causes of these losses. Results of these studies will provide significant input to discussions on the development of the SDG 12.3 indicator.

Solutions to reduce food losses are being piloted in a number of countries. Results of this work provide an evidence base for policy, programme and strategy development in countries, regions and sub-regions.

Capacity building, advisory and technical support are being provided to more than forty-eight technical projects being implemented across the globe, to ensure systemic improvement of the efficiency and sustainability within food systems for the reduction of food losses and waste.

FAO continues its efforts to partner with private sector entities towards mobilizing resources to further scale up and scale out actions to address food losses and waste.

**ONE-THIRD
OF ALL FOOD
PRODUCED
GLOBALLY FOR
HUMAN CONSUMPTION
IS LOST OR WASTED
EVERY YEAR**

FOOD LOSS AND WASTE IN THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Food loss and waste is addressed in the context of the **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 12.3** **“... by 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along the production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.”**

FAO is the custodian of the SDG 12.3 indicator and is working in collaboration and consultation with partners towards the development of that indicator.

See our website: www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals



“If we can help food producers to reduce losses through better harvesting, processing, storage and marketing methods, and combine this with profound and lasting changes in the way people consume food, we may then have a healthier and hunger-free world.”

José Graziano da Silva,
FAO Director-General

HOW CAN YOU BE INVOLVED?

Help FAO to build a strong network of partners, and become more efficient in the fight against global food losses and waste! Support the Initiative, sign up today!

- ▶ Become a member of the Global SAVE FOOD Network, join the Initiative: www.fao.org/save-food
- ▶ Get involved! Join the Community of Practice on Food Loss Reduction (CoP): www.fao.org/food-loss-reduction

For further information on partnering with FAO to address the problem, please contact:

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