

## 172nd Session of the Council

### Written Correspondence Procedure – inputs from Members - Original version

#### Item 7 – Update on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative

Member Name	Comments
<p>Argentina (Wednesday, 29 March 2023 – 12.39)</p>	<p>En el marco del procedimiento de comentarios escritos, establecido para abordar temas específicos de la agenda del 172º período de sesiones del Consejo de FAO, la Representación de la República Argentina tiene a bien compartir los siguientes elementos:</p> <p>La Argentina agradece y toma nota de la información brindada por la FAO bajo este punto de agenda, en el que se informa sobre la evolución de la Iniciativa Mano de la Mano (HiH) desde su puesta en marcha.</p> <p>La Iniciativa Mano de la Mano fue respaldada por los miembros del LARC36 como un mecanismo para promover la cooperación eficaz entre los países desarrollados y en desarrollo, con el fin de alcanzar los ODS 1, 2 y 10, en particular en aquellos países con alta incidencia de pobreza e inseguridad alimentaria y alto potencial agrícola.</p> <p>Ratificamos las conclusiones alcanzadas en el 135º periodo de sesiones del Comité del Programa del mes de marzo 2023.</p> <p>Nos complace saber que el número de países participantes ha seguido aumentando y que se acerca al objetivo previsto de 64 países. Este incremento es una muestra del fuerte interés mundial en la HiH y la necesidad de una programación más amplia y ambiciosa por parte de los Miembros.</p> <p>Asimismo, valoramos que todos los miembros de la FAO puedan participar de la misma no solamente como beneficiarios indirectos sino también como socios para el desarrollo a través de múltiples canales, como por ejemplo la Cooperación Sur Sur y Triangular. En ese marco, la Argentina una vez más manifiesta su disposición a ofrecer sus experiencias y conocimientos en torno a los sistemas agroalimentarios sostenibles para aquellos países que así lo deseen en el Marco de la presente iniciativa. Ello, siempre recordando la premisa de que no hay nadie tan pobre que no tenga nada que dar, ni hay nadie tan rico que no tenga algo que recibir. Lema, que entendemos condice con el espíritu de HiH y la intención de promocionar y multiplicar las asociaciones entre todas las partes involucradas.</p> <p>Nos alegra saber que siete países prevén organizar su propio foro de la inversión de la HiH a nivel nacional, y que está previsto un foro subregional en América Central y del Sur. Esto demuestra que los países están comprometidos con la Iniciativa y que están trabajando activamente en su implementación.</p> <p>También nos complace saber que las notas de inversión presentadas en el Foro de la inversión de la HiH de 2022 proporcionaron una base sólida para el apoyo en materia de inversiones brindado por la FAO en la segunda Cumbre de Dakar, organizada por la Unión Africana y el Banco Africano de Desarrollo. Creemos que es importante que la FAO siga apoyando iniciativas como estas para lograr la seguridad alimentaria y la resiliencia en África.</p> <p>La Argentina se complace que la HiH utilice herramientas innovadoras y adopte un enfoque basado en la ciencia y</p>

	<p>territorial, entendiendo este último como el reconocimiento de la existencia del múltiples modelos, métodos y prácticas posibles para el logro de sistemas agroalimentarios sostenibles, en función de los contextos, prioridades y capacidades nacionales. En definitiva, la HiH contribuye a la diferenciación de territorios y estrategias como requisito fundamental para encontrar soluciones genuinas para el logro de la sostenibilidad en la agro-bio-industria.</p> <p>Asimismo, la incorporación de Innovación y nuevas tecnologías como ejes centrales en HiH, demuestra una vez más de forma consistente que el sistema científico-tecnológico público y privado ofrece soluciones eficientes (adaptadas localmente) a los desafíos que presenta la sostenibilidad y los escenarios de vulnerabilidad productiva frente al flagelo del cambio climático y otros shocks que amenazan a productores y actores de los sistemas agro-bio-industriales.</p> <p>Por último, expresamos nuestro beneplácito por la organización del Foro de la inversión de la Iniciativa Mano de la mano en paralelo al Foro de la ciencia y la innovación de la FAO. Consideramos que este tipo de eventos son fundamentales para fomentar la cooperación internacional y compartir experiencias y buenas prácticas en materia de inversión en agricultura y seguridad alimentaria.</p> <p>En este sentido, la Argentina manifiesta su interés en que se sigan organizando este tipo de foros y que se promueva la participación activa de los Miembros de la FAO, con el fin de fortalecer la Iniciativa Mano de la mano y lograr los objetivos trazados en materia de desarrollo agrícola y alimentario sostenible.</p> <p>En resumen, como miembros comprometidos con la seguridad alimentaria y el desarrollo sostenible, la Argentina apoya los esfuerzos de la HiH y anima a los países a seguir trabajando juntos para lograr los objetivos de la Iniciativa y garantizar el acceso a alimentos suficientes y nutritivos para todos</p>
<p>Russian Federation (Thursday, 30 March 2023 – 9.31)</p>	<p>The Russian Federation thanks the Secretariat for the information on the progress made on the implementation of the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. At the same time, we note that there is no updated information for Tajikistan. Does it signify that there is no substantial development of the activities since the last update? We would appreciate your comments in this regard.</p>
<p>Australia (Thursday, 30 March 2023 – 18.06)</p>	<p>Australia appreciates this update on the Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Initiative.</p> <p>We note the continued growth in the number of countries participating in the HIH and encourage FAO to continue to identify and maximise potential partnerships and investment opportunities, particularly in the Southwest Pacific region. We take note of the new Regional Technical Co-operation Programme project being developed by the FAO-RAP to cover six countries in the region, with a focus on enabling inclusive and effective blended investment in the context of HIH. The document CL172/INF/6 suggests that the project is expected to commence in the coming months. We would appreciate the provision of additional details on this project as it pertains to our region, including for example on resourcing, duration, participation and arrangements for monitoring, reporting and evaluation.</p> <p>We further note the development of the Monitoring and Evaluation HIH dashboard and the progress shown, but suggest that further efforts are made to provide more easily understood information. For example, six stages of HIH are represented in the dashboard, from Stage 1 – Focus on Poverty and Hunger, through to Stage 6 – Programme Governance. It is unclear what these stages represent, as well as the values attributed to them (for example, 15 000 for stage 1 10 000 for stage 6).</p>

	<p>As part of this communication of information through the dashboard, we also request a break-down of confirmed commitments per country of operation, and further information on the confirmed partners per project/value chain. Further, while we note the dashboard is titled the “Monitoring and Evaluation” dashboard, the evaluation aspects are not immediately accessible (both at a project/investment level and at the Initiative level). Accordingly, as information becomes available, we request clear and easily accessible information on evaluation processes and outcomes to be included in the dashboard to allow users to understand and assess the impact of the initiative.</p> <p>Finally, we take note of the summary of the communication strategy that has been published on the website, and we emphasise the value in regular engagement and coordination with existing development and resource partners, to help maximise synergies and prevent duplication and/or misalignment of objectives across programmes and investments.</p>
<p>United States of America (Friday, 31 March 2023 – 16.53)</p>	<p>United States thanks FAO for the update on the Hand in Hand Initiative (HiHI). We appreciate FAO’s responsiveness to Member State comments on this initiative including increased transparency through regular updates and the HiHI dashboard. The United States supports evidence-based data-driven decision making and supports FAO efforts to bring data to the forefront of FAO and policymakers’ decisions.</p> <p>We support FAO efforts to expand the donor base for the HiHI. We request FAO to clarify whether international financial institutional investment in the Hand in Hand initiative represents new investments in agri-food systems or a re-allocation of existing investment. We are interested in hearing more from donors and beneficiaries about their views of the HiHI and what value they find from it.</p> <p>Concerning the HiHI dashboard, we appreciate the brevity of the tabulated information about country-level investments; however, we note some projects have very high costs per beneficiary. We encourage FAO to strive to keep costs per beneficiary in line with international norms.</p>
<p>European Union (Wednesday, 5 April 2023 – 18.39)</p>	<p>I am honoured to write to you on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 Member States regarding the above-mentioned agenda item for the 172nd Session of the FAO Council.</p> <p>The EU and its Member States take note of the latest progress report on the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. We would recall the continued importance of ensuring alignment of the Initiative with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF), the joint programming of the UN development system and the 2030 Agenda, and would like to see this elaborated in the information provided. To that end, we encourage FAO, in accordance with its mandate, to continue the close coordination of its work on the Initiative with other relevant agencies and developing partners.</p> <p>We note the information on the achievements in the various countries. Mobilizing additional funding and attracting investments for taking the Initiative forward in participating countries should be duly aligned with the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems and other relevant CFS policy recommendations and guidelines. In addition, continued attention is needed in order to provide full transparency on the financing and to ensure that the Initiative will have no further impact on the regular agreed budget. In this regard, we see a need for clarifications regarding the proposal in the Programme of Work and Budget 2024-25 to allocate resources to the FAO Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum.</p>

	<p>To conclude, we thank FAO for the information provided on the Initiative as an additional means of contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within FAO’s mandate and ask that FAO continue to provide regular updates on the progress made in implementing the Initiative and the results achieved.</p>
<p>Japan (Wednesday, 12 April 2023 – 4.39)</p>	<p>Japan recognizes the Hand-in-Hand Initiative (HIHI) as one of the most important FAO’s initiatives to promote the transition to sustainable and resilient food systems in developing countries. We acknowledge the efforts of the FAO Secretariat in the enhancement of related information, such as launching a geospatial platform, and continuous improvement of its accessibility, availability and transparency utilizing FAO website.</p> <p>It is important to promote innovation and facilitate the transfer of agricultural and food-related technologies in the transition to sustainable and resilient food systems. In that process, benefits to recipient countries and its people should be prioritized.</p> <p>Japan expects FAO to continue its efforts to improve the Monitoring and Evaluation Dashboard by bringing all the necessary information of HIHI together. Japan also expects FAO to work together with Members to verify the effectiveness of the HIHI and lead the discussion on future utilization.</p>