**FAO kicks off Food Systems-Based Dietary Guidelines initiative for Tajikistan**

***27 February 2025, Dushanbe*** –– The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), partnering with the Ministry of Health and Social Protection and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Tajikistan, set in motion a new project to develop food-system based dietary guidelines (FSBDGs) - locally relevant recommendations to ensure healthy diets from sustainable food systems - in Tajikistan.

The project got underway with a national inception workshop on "The road towards national food systems-based dietary guidelines for Tajikistan". The workshop raised awareness about the potential for FSBDGs to contribute to Tajikistan’s development goals and national priorities, introduced FAO’s new methodology for FSBDGs, heard international experiences, and outlined the actions needed to move forward with the initiative.

In attendance were representatives from various governmental entities, including ministries, agencies, and institutions responsible for food, nutrition, education, and communication for healthy dietsб and development partners. Experts on agriculture, trade, marketing, statistics, sport and youth, gender, and social protection also took part, along with academia, scientific and civil society organizations.

“Today’s workshop represents a significant milestone for Tajikistan as it moves towards developing a national framework for healthy diets from sustainable food systems,” said Aghasi Harutyunyan, FAO Representative ad interim in Tajikistan. “The project is based on FAO’s methodology for developing dietary guidelines, where we recognize that promotion of good eating habits goes beyond the health sector: All actors in the food system have a responsibility to ensure that consumers are able to have healthy diets that are good for people and good for the planet. Through close collaboration between multiple sectors, we can create policies that not only improve nutrition but also strengthen the entire agrifood system in Tajikistan.”

Despite impressive progress in socioeconomic development over the past two decades, Tajikistan continues to face challenges in achieving its development goals and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and global nutrition targets. Food insecurity remains an issue for several population segments, and malnutrition, both among children and adults, continues to be a concern.

The initiative is part of FAO’s ongoing regional project "Multisectoral policy recommendations for addressing malnutrition from an agrifood system perspective" which aims to accelerate progress in transforming food systems in Central Asia, focusing on capacity development and strengthening collaboration on nutrition. The guidelines will play a key role in engaging stakeholders across sectors such as agriculture, health, trade, and environment, fostering multisectoral action for the improvement of food systems and nutrition in Tajikistan.