



TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS: HARMONIZATION OF NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL POLICIES AND GOVERNANCE



VIRTUAL CONSULTATION



7

APRIL



14:00
16:00 CEST



ZOOM
PLATFORM

CONCEPT NOTE AND AGENDA

Many governments are increasingly committing to accelerate and deepen food systems transformation in alignment with the 2030 Agenda and the UN Food Systems Summit outcomes.

With 70% of food consumption taking place in urban areas, there is an increasing global consensus that making progress on the agenda of food systems transformation requires active engagement of urban actors, as national/sub-national governments and other stakeholders. An extremely important outcome of the Food Systems Summit convened by the UN Secretary General was the clear recognition of the role of urban, national, regional and local governments as a key part of the solution in promoting sustainable and transformative changes in food systems at all levels (local, regional, national and global). This has been a historic development on this topic.

However the role that local and regional governments in promoting urban food systems transformation has not been sufficiently recognized at national and global levels. In most cases, particularly in developing countries. Sub-national governments often lack financial and technical capacity to advance sustainable transformation of food systems at scale.

However, the potential is there: an FAO Survey on Urban Food Systems and COVID-19 has shown that local governments have played an essential role in mitigating the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on the functioning of the food systems in their jurisdictions and protect the health and food security of their citizens, despite the fact that in most of the cases they have no access to additional financial resources to support their actions.

It is therefore fundamental to support meaningful dialogue among stakeholders at all levels to identify modalities for promoting better coordination and coherence, harmonize policies and programmes related to food systems and strengthening the capacities of urban and local actors to promote food systems transformation. National Governments need to include cities and local governments in the process of developing and implementation their Pathways and other relevant actions and agreements regarding food systems.

FAO, UNEP and UN-HABITAT increasingly recognize the crucial role of cities in the overall food systems transformation. We promote the engagement of cities in global arena and support cities in mainstreaming food systems in their policies, planning and actions and strengthen their capacities to implement national and local policies and programmes.



Moreover, starting in 2020, FAO together with GAIN, are acting as a secretariat to the Urban Food Systems Working Group (UFS WG), an informal inter-agency group currently including 26 organizations (including UN-HABITAT, UNEP, and several city networks), to raise the voices of local governments in the global and national food systems transformation, including national, regional and global fora such as the 2021 UNFSS and the Nutrition for Growth Summit.

A number of events were organized and catalyzed by the WG in the context of the UN-FSS pre-summit. For example, the WG: i) facilitated summit independent dialogues in 26 cities and undertook other consultations among cities and various stakeholders to discuss game changing solutions ii) submitted and followed up on the game changing solutions included in Action Track 4, Action Area 3 (Localizing Food Systems) and its clusters; iii) organized a Global Summit Dialogue on 28th June, co-convened with Dr. Agnes Kalibata, iv) organized a session at the Pre-Summit main programme in partnership with the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, as well as a side event of the Food Systems Summit in partnership with the Global Task Force of Local and Regional Government¹.

The Urban Food Systems Coalition² is now formally recognized as one of the emerging coalitions coming out of the UNFSS process.

For a long time, different partners and constituencies have been expressing the need to strengthening coordination of food systems-related policies, governance and actions across levels (national, regional, local) as a way to accelerate urban food systems transformation.

Therefore, the Urban Food Systems Coalition will strive to connect national and sub-national governments to enable integrated food policy and action.

In this context, FAO, UNEP and UN-HABITAT would like to call for a meeting with some representatives from local, regional and national governments to advance the discussion on the following:

1. What are the challenges and opportunities in harmonizing food systems policies and governance between national and sub-national governments and in engaging cities in the implementation of national food systems pathways?
2. How can the Urban Food Systems Coalition support national governments in engaging local and subnational governments in the process of accelerating the food systems transformation at all levels?

The consultation will also be the opportunity to share the outcomes of the Fifth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly in relation to urban food systems.

The discussion will bring together prominent national and local leaders who will share their knowledge and experience on issues of multi-level governance and will provide insights as to the proposed coalition. Therefore, outcomes of the discussion will be very important for defining the form, governance and actions of the Urban Food Systems Coalition so that it can contribute to their efforts towards a sustainable food systems. They will also be of great use for informing other relevant events such as the UCLGA Africities Summit and the UN- HABITAT World Urban Forum.

1 <https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/24573/>

2 <https://foodsystems.community/commitment-registry/coalition-on-sustainable-and-inclusive-urban-food-systems/>



AGENDA

14:00-14:20	Opening remarks Moderator: <i>Gerda Verburg, UN,</i> <i>Jamie Morrison, FAO</i> <i>Martina Otto, UNEP</i> <i>Raf Tuts, UN-HABITAT</i>
14:20 -14.25	Update on the Post-UN Food Systems Summit <i>Stefanos Fotiou, Head of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, FAO</i>
14:25-15:30	Panel Discussion NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS (tbc) <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Indonesia■ Uganda■ Colombia■ North Africa and Near East■ Switzerland CITIES (tbc) <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Milan■ Rio de Janeiro
15:30-15:50	Q&A
15:50-16:00	Closing remarks <i>Gerda Verburg, UN</i>

