

HLPE report on Nutrition and Food Systems

e-consultation on an Issues Note proposed by the HLPE Steering Committee

From 9 December 2015 to 30 January 2016

At its 42nd session in October 2015, the CFS decided that the HLPE will prepare a report on *Nutrition and Food Systems*, expected to be presented at CFS 44 in October 2017.

To prepare this report elaboration process, the HLPE is launching an **e-consultation** to seek feedbacks, views and comments on the following Issues Note on Nutrition and Food Systems proposed by the HLPE Steering Committee.

To participate, please visit the dedicated HLPE e-consultation website:

<http://www.fao.org/fsnforum/cfs-hlpe/nutrition-and-food-systems>

Please note that in parallel to this consultation, **the HLPE is calling for expression of interests of experts for joining the Project Team as a leader and/or as a member.** The call for candidature is open until 30 January 2016; visit the HLPE website www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-hlpe for more details.

HLPE Steering Committee Issues Note on Nutrition and Food Systems

In view of the implementation of the decisions of the International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – particularly Goals 2 and 13, and in consideration of the recognized compelling need to foster a solid scientific and technical background in support of the CFS workstream on nutrition, there is an imperative need to examine the links between nutrition and food systems.

There is a diversity of food systems and growing evidence of the health and nutrition implications of different food systems. The overarching issue in this report shall be to assess the influence of various types of food systems on diets, nutrition and health. It shall consider food chains from farm to fork and all the sustainability challenges of food systems (in the economic, social and environmental dimensions) and how they relate to nutrition. This calls for a report grounded on a multidisciplinary approach, and on a critical synthesis of the existing research and major reports, building upon multiple sources of evidence, not only academic but also experiential knowledge.

Malnutrition is a global issue. The nutrition focus shall include malnutrition in all its forms, including under nutrition, over nutrition and micro nutrient deficiencies. In addition, the report shall examine issues across the human life cycle (including esp. pregnant, lactating women, children, and elderly), including marginalized and vulnerable populations.

This is a complex issue and the report shall examine the multidimensionality of food systems and nutrition and the root causes of malnutrition. By doing so, it shall improve the capacity to follow-up transitions and evolutions through the provision of a conceptual framework that might be used in the future.

There is a need for a multifaceted approach, including a need to understand the internal and external (e.g. socio-demographic, environmental, and global changes such as climate change) drivers of the evolution of food systems as well as the drivers of consumer's choices, given the heterogeneity of consumers. In addition to assessing what is new, the report provides an opportunity to examine what is promising – either as a continuation or revitalization of existing and long-standing food systems.

The HLPE report would address the following issues from global to regional and local levels:

- How and why do diets change?
- What are the links between diets, consumption and consumer habits and food systems?
- How do changes in food systems affect changes of diets, and therefore health and nutritional outcomes?
- What are the determinants of the changes in consumption?
- How do the dynamics of food systems drive consumption patterns?
- How to shape and to address pathways to healthy nutrition?
- What is the role of public policy in promoting healthy, nutritious and culturally appropriate food for all?
- How to build on the diversity of the existing food systems?
- What is in practice the range of actionable solutions from farm to fork that enable better nutritional outcomes of food systems?
- What action should different stakeholders, including governments, civil society and the private sector, take?

The report shall present a concise and focused review of the evidence-base depicting the critical relationships between food systems and nutrition, elaborate on concrete solutions to ensure that food systems deliver better nutritional outcomes, in order to propose concrete actions elicited from all stakeholder groups – farmers, processors, retailers, consumers, governments and other public actors – to reduce the triple burden of malnutrition.
