

Side Event: Addressing Nutrition and Environmental Challenges: the role of cities and local governments for inclusive and sustainable food systems transformation

Summary (requested 500 Words)

By 2050 the urban population is expected to reach 68% of the global population. Up to 70% of the food supply is already consumed in areas defined as urban. This is expected to grow along with urban populations. At the same time, urban food systems are plagued by a high prevalence of different forms of malnutrition including overweight and obesity as part of a broader nutrition transition. Shifts in dietary patterns towards animal protein based diets and high rates of food waste increase urban food systems' environmental footprint. In the process towards the UN Food Systems Summit, an understanding has been built that transformation of urban food systems will go a long way in promoting more sustainable national, regional and global food systems. This side event provided an opportunity to further recognise the role of cities and local governments in the context of the CFS.

The discussion focused on three areas: (i) the importance of engaging multiple stakeholders in **urban and territorial food systems governance** (ii) ensuring coherence between food systems policies and programmes across levels of government (**vertical integration**); (iii) the challenge of promoting the integration of food with other urban systems (**horizontal integration**).

Speakers from the Communities of Portuguese Language Countries- CPLP, the city Network ICLEI Africa, the City of Baltimore, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries of Argentina and from the University of Cape Town shared their perspectives on the key issues and encouraged discussion with the audience.

More than 100 participants attended the event including representatives of national governments, civil society organizations among other constituencies. Dr. Aziza Akhmouch from OECD facilitated the event and Dr. Jamie Morrison from FAO provided the closing remarks.

The following are the key take- away messages:

- **National governments need to create the enabling environment and strengthen the capacities of city and local governments to successfully manage food systems in their cities and territories and contribute to national policy frameworks.**
- **Sharing experiences** among food systems stakeholders at all levels enriches the range of policies and institutional arrangements which could be implemented.
- **Promoting the establishment of national networks of cities and local governments** is a key strategy for creating a common understanding on urban food systems, sharing experiences and promoting vertical integration.
- **Establishing local food governance mechanisms** such as food policy councils or food labs is fundamental for a holistic approach to food systems transformation.

- The **urban food systems coalition**, one of the emerging coalitions of the Food Systems Summit could become a crucial platform for promoting coherence of action among various stakeholders. It aims at promoting a coherent action on urban food systems and fostering linkages between national and sub-national governments.
- **CFS governance need to expand the Advisory Group with city and local government representation so that their contribution and concerns** can be a permanent element in the deliberations of this extremely important platform.

The event was organized by: (i) the Urban Food Systems Working Group, an informal multistakeholder group consisting of 26 member organizations facilitated by FAO and GAIN and; (ii) the Ad hoc working group (AHWG) on Territorial governance which comprises more than 50 participants including international organisations, national governments.