

THE FOOD SYSTEMS SUMMIT

GLOBAL
DIALOGUES



UNITED NATIONS
FOOD SYSTEMS
SUMMIT 2021

8. Empowering Cities and Local Governments to Improve Food Systems Globally

GLOBAL DIALOGUE | 28 JUNE 2021

Convened by: Dr. Agnes Kalibata Special Envoy of the Food Systems Summit, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), and the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments

Total Participants: 238

Dialogue Event Page: <https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/24573/>

[Watch the Opening](#)

CONTEXT

The Dialogue brought together local and national government politicians, urban government practitioners, local food leaders and civil society organizations and local producers. The intent was to reflect on and recognize the role of local government and the importance of integrating food policy with national government and all food system stakeholders. In addition, the Dialogue provided an opportunity to share the results of the city consultations and Independent Dialogues supported by the Urban Food Systems Working Group and to advocate for the integration of the urban food agenda into the UN Food Systems Summit process. Break Out room discussions focused on Food System Governance; Public Procurement and School Food; Food Waste and Circular Economy; Finance for Urban Food Systems; Social Protection and Inclusion and Resilience to Shocks and Stressors.

DIALOGUE HIGHLIGHTS

- **An integrated urban food agenda**
The discussions converged on the need for strategic thought to advocate for an integrated urban food systems agenda which: (i) strengthen the connections between the different components of a sustainable urban food systems and (ii) connect food system transformation with other policy priorities (such as public health and social protection) sustainable development. This integrated urban food systems agenda will require a systems leadership on urban food systems with improved capacities and competencies of urban and local government.
- **Political will and leadership**
Both were mentioned as key levers of change for local and national food systems transformation. Raising awareness on the importance of promoting urban food systems transformation through initiatives across departments/policy domains and the development of a common urban food systems vision were introduced as crucial for accelerating food systems transformation.
- **COVID-19 and inequities in the food system**
Cities have responded to emergency needs in innovative

ways, but they lack the resources and adequate capacity for promoting systemic responses. All levels of government and other food system stakeholders must work together to promote equitable food systems transformation and ensure food is integrated into emergency planning, response, and recovery.

- **Urban food systems data**
The urban food systems analysis at the urban level was promoted as key tool for providing baseline information, promoting systems thinking and for developing integrated food plans and strategies. There is a broad consensus on the lack of both urban food systems data and capacities in addressing systemic and cross-sectoral issues.
- **Urban food governance**
This was recognized at the heart of the transformative food systems change. The promotion of innovative and inclusive mechanisms to engage with communities particularly with the vulnerable ones was identified as key priority. To enable this engagement with the communities, local governments need to bring together actors involved in multiple processes, including civil society organizations, to co-create and co-design with them holistic food strategies and plans while advocating for integration with national policies and strategies to leverage existing resources and maximize impact.

