



Food and Agriculture
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Urban Agrifood Systems Global Workshop

OUTCOME PAPER

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Index

- Key Messages from the Workshop.....3**
- Workshop Outcomes in Detail..... 10**
 - Who was in the room..... 10
 - Workshop expectations and feedback..... 11
 - Challenges we explored and changes envisioned..... 15
 - Roadmap planning: Setting the stage for a collaborative dialogue.....21
 - Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholder groups.....23
 - Open discussion..... 33
 - Mentimeter results..... 40
- Annexes & Resources.....45**
 - Annex A: “Survey: Urban Agrifood Systems Global Workshop” 45
 - Annex B: “Survey Results” 48
 - Annex C: “Agenda: Urban Agrifood Systems Global Workshop” 61
 - Annex D: “Summaries of Challenge Sessions”65

Key Messages from the Workshop

This workshop was organized to bring together key actors in urban agrifood systems to explore collaborative strategies that could amplify collective impact at the local, regional and national level. It offered a setting for open, productive discussions on the broader challenges facing urban agrifood systems, informed by insights from a pre-workshop survey completed by participants (see Annex A: “Survey: Urban Agrifood Systems Global Workshop” and Annex B: “Survey Results” for survey questions and results).

The key messages captured below highlight the main priorities and opportunities identified. They are based on inputs from the pre-workshop survey and the interactive discussions during the first Global Workshop (including contributions via open-mic and Mentimeter).

1) Build on the renewed momentum, energy, and mandate generated by the Workshop to take action collectively

- **Workshop feedback:**

- The right set of expertise and experience in the room to take action effectively.
- There is now renewed energy, momentum and a strong mandate to work together on urban agrifood systems.
- The horizontal, multi-stakeholder, and cross-cutting approach was particularly appreciated and made the workshop stand out from previous engagements. Participants emphasized their desire to continue moving forward with this approach, which they believe holds real potential for action.
- Meeting in-person and creating space for informal discussions was recognised as particularly important and valuable. This allowed participants to create new and strengthen existing connections and learn more about other initiatives across sectors and regions.

- **Actions needed:**

- Prioritize in-person meetings (to be held every 1-2 years) using the same horizontal, participatory process.
- Identify upcoming policy processes, and key projects, programs and platforms to collectively prioritize.
- Establish a rotational system for future convenings to sustain momentum and create collective ownership.

2) Build on what works rather than reinvent the wheel

- **Workshop feedback:**

- We need to assess the collective impact that we have already achieved through our different projects and platforms, and to identify synergies and complementarities between them.
- Building on this assessment, the focus should be on "upgrading" our approach to collaboration, ensuring stronger connections across projects and stakeholders while exploring new pathways for working together.
- Some participants were wondering what makes this new community different from previous initiatives (e.g. Urban Food Systems Coalition).

- **Actions needed:**

- Take stock of our collective impact to date and remaining gaps, but also of our failures and what we can learn from them.
- Map strengths/competencies of organizations and focus areas of projects/initiatives to ensure we complement each other effectively.
- Strengthen our cooperation based on opportunities within existing projects/initiatives and events (e.g. annual convenings hosted back to back with existing meetings/conference).
- Put forward a strong and clear value proposition to clarify how this differs from previous collaboration platforms.

3) Develop and communicate a shared vision and ambition

- **Workshop feedback:**

- We need a common narrative/storytelling which should be simple, clear, and easy to translate in various languages.
- We should define common priorities and expected outcomes by assessing the main trade-offs and co-benefits, and finding the right balance between different perspectives.

- **Actions needed:**

- Agree on the common objectives we want to achieve as a community.
- Translate the vision into a storytelling which is clear, easy to understand and resonates with funders.
- Show how local action translates into global goals.

4) Create more structured and coherent coordination

- **Workshop feedback:**

- Our collective task is urgent and complex, with many challenges intertwined and multiple actors involved. Fragmented action across sectors and stakeholders leads to a lack of adequate responses.
- We need to establish a governance structure that can push for an international agenda, secure national government support, support global advocacy and inform local implementation, and explore innovative ways to unite stakeholders across sectors at national, regional, and global levels.
- Light administration/coordination is needed to ensure continuity and engage all stakeholders in the process. (Coordinating does not mean leading - the decision-making power should not sit with one organization, but be shared between a group of stakeholders).
- A monitoring of progress about how people are working together, and the quality of relationships among different stakeholder groups is missing.

- **Actions needed:**

- Establish governance structure that unites stakeholders at different levels in new ways to push the agenda, secure support and facilitate local implementation.
- Draw inspiration from other coalitions and other successful initiatives (eg. School Meals Coalition) to understand how they are structured, funded and politically supported.
- Clarify our respective expertise/interests to define roles and responsibilities, to identify synergies and complementarities, and to share knowledge and experiences more effectively.
- FAO, leveraging its unique convening power, to take on this coordination role, while ensuring decision-making power is shared among a group of stakeholders.
- At the local level, use a systems approach to break silos across sectors, stakeholder groups and governance levels and unite fragmented projects while acknowledging and adapting to regional specificities.
- Develop forums or spaces within different stakeholder groups to come together to coordinate and collaborate.

5) Improve data sharing, monitoring and learning

- **Workshop feedback:**
 - We should better collate resources, tools, and experiences. An integrated system/collaborative space accessible to all stakeholder groups - beyond a simple repository - would be useful to organize and facilitate learning from shared resources.
 - There is a need for evidence-based information and data that can be easily understood and used at the city level. However, accessing and interpreting academic research on urban agrifood systems can be challenging.
 - Not enough space is given to the academic community to present their research outcomes to urban practitioners.
- **Actions needed:**
 - Create an integrated system/collaborative space accessible to all stakeholder groups - beyond a simple repository (e.g. an Observatory) - to organize and facilitate learning from shared resources.
 - Develop a live tracking tool to track efforts by different stakeholder groups and update each other on a regular basis.
 - Create targets and indicators set to monitor progress in urban agrifood systems with clear indicators of “success”.
 - Monitor progress of how stakeholders are working together and the quality of the relationships and the difference it makes (collective impact).
 - Identify connectors (e.g. city networks) who can help with the knowledge translation and interpretation, and enable them to translate academic insights into actionable recommendations.
 - Facilitate regular, organized engagement with academia and research to discuss practical implications of their research findings and support cities to apply these insights effectively.

6) Ensure inclusive and equal representation and decision-making

- **Workshop feedback:**
 - In this effort to enhance multi-stakeholder collaboration, ensuring effective participatory processes at all stages - from assessment, planning to decision-making - was considered crucial.
 - Several responses emphasized the need for more voices from the Global South, as well as from some stakeholder groups such as civil society and youth.
 - Representation from the private sector, donors and development banks is missing.

- **Actions needed:**

- Design participatory processes at all steps for all levels that acknowledge power dynamics.
- Include more stakeholder groups (e.g. private sector, donors and development banks) and represent different regions in participation and decision-making processes.
- Have open calls for participation, translate data and knowledge products in more languages and ensure collective agenda shaping.
- Promote cooperation with and between countries in the Global South to ensure more balanced representation.

7) Place cities at the forefront

- **Workshop feedback:**

- City representatives did not have the same level of understanding of previous collaboration efforts and the journey that led to this workshop, especially those newer to the global food systems space. More background information could have been shared for increased clarity on expected roles in the workshop.
- Due to a lack of coordination, cities tend to be over-solicited and receive similar requests from various organizations and city networks.
- While local governments have concrete and clear goals and targets on other issues (e.g. climate), setting concrete targets for food is very difficult. Elected officials often ask “What are we aiming to achieve?” Cities lack concrete indicators and terms like “better” are frequently used without clarifying what they refer to.

- **Actions needed:**

- Actively involve local governments in our future work to ensure we are grounded in their realities and needs, making our efforts relevant and impactful at the city-level (thus clarifying the value add for them to engage).
- Support cities in following key global trends, policies and processes to inform their work and to clarify how they fit into the “bigger picture”.
- Better coordinate across city networks to avoid duplicating/overlapping requests to cities.
- Help cities assess and select the most appropriate tools to use, depending on their needs.
- Strengthen political recognition of urban agrifood systems at the local level through targeted advocacy and increased public awareness raising.
- Support a paradigm shift where urban food system projects are working in synergy, and are scaled and embedded into long-term planning and financing.

8) Strengthen political support, including from national governments

- **Workshop feedback:**

- Concerns were raised around the lack of political will and support for this agenda, both at local and national level.
- We need to focus on getting 1-2 national governments (e.g. Brazil could be one of them) to lead this effort.

- **Actions needed:**

- Prioritize getting a national government to champion this agenda.
- Embed our work - building on previous and ongoing efforts - in global policy processes, using UN agencies as intermediaries to ensure longevity and institutional support.
- Explore the revamping of existing platforms/partnerships for stakeholders to collaborate for collective impact.

9) Mobilize resources for amplified impact

- **Workshop feedback:**

- If we want to operate as a community, we need funding. At the same time, competition at various levels is a challenge that we need to overcome.
- We need to better communicate the importance of urban agrifood systems to secure funding.

- **Actions needed:**

- Develop a coordinated mechanism for joint fundraising and donor engagement, with clear mandates and rules, to demonstrate the concrete added value of collaboration to our stakeholders and support internal advocacy by development agencies.
- Define ways to help funders support us by fostering a more symbiotic, synergistic community and building trust to ensure we are all moving in the same direction.
- Strengthen our community's role in global advocacy and appeal to funders interested in supporting a unified community.

10) Develop an Action Plan with clear responsibilities

- **Workshop feedback:**

- We need to focus on achievable goals and to kick-off this collaborative effort by focusing on 2-3 priority actions. This would allow the process to start with a focus on action-oriented collaboration.
- While all participants want to actively engage, some of them have limited institutional capacity and would prefer focusing on their priority topics and regions to the extent possible.

- **Actions needed:**

- Agree on 2-3 priority actions in the coming months.
- Establish different working groups led by different organizations (depending on their expertise and regional focus), outlining specific activities, timelines and resource requirements, and give autonomy to each WG to manage their work plan and timeline.
- Develop a clear plan of what we want to achieve in the coming years and how we want to engage various stakeholders, including local governments.

Workshop Outcomes in Detail

Who was in the room



The workshop brought together around 100 individuals from over 50 organizations from across the urban agrifood system and other sectors such as health and forestry. City networks, NGOs, local, regional and national government made up the bulk of participants. Academia and research, independent practitioners, development agencies and the private sector, albeit to a smaller extent, were also represented.

While the workshop aimed to bring together a diverse set of representatives across geographies, invitees from Asia were ultimately unable to attend, due to last minute visa complications and political restrictions. It was also unfortunate that invited delegates from the cities of Belo Horizonte, Bangkok, Cape Town, Antananarivo, Ghent, Quezon, Kochi, Greater Amman Municipality, and Lusaka, as well as from the governments of France, Germany, Bangladesh, and Indonesia were unable to join the workshop. Finally, the representative from the World Bank also was not able to join.

The agenda of the workshop (See Annex C: “Agenda: Urban Agrifood Systems Global Workshop”), including which challenges to discuss, was shaped by collective insights gathered through consultations with key stakeholders and a pre-workshop survey (See Annex A and B for more details) shared with all participants.



Corinna Hawkes, Director of Agrifood Systems and Food Safety Division, FAO.

Image: ©FAO/Riccardo De Luca

Workshop expectations and feedback

The workshop was opened by Corinna Hawkes, Director, Agrifood Systems and Food Safety Division. In her remarks, Corinna emphasized the immense potential for collaboration that remains untapped saying “The potential is so great, and yet, there is an opportunity that we are not taking – of working better together. For example, if you're one of those many people who lacks capacity and resources to do what you know you need to do, you would know where you could go to find support?. We could learn so much more from each other. There is so much to gain by working together. We would understand for ourselves in our own institutions about what we would need to do, we would understand the role that we could play to deliver to this collective goal.” Building on this, Peter Defranceschi, Head of ICLEI Brussels Office stressed the critical role of mayors and local governments in creating resilient and sustainable food systems, and that this task requires the collective effort of everyone present at the workshop.

The discussion transitioned to an open floor, where participants shared brief reflections on their expectations from the workshop as well as what they are mostly excited about. Most participants expressed a sense of excitement about finally meeting in person and

connecting with colleagues they had either never met before or had only interacted with online. The workshop was also deemed useful to connect different government levels who did not necessarily have the opportunity to interact in the past. Cities in particular appreciated having the opportunity to better understand global processes.

Feedback from diverse stakeholder groups is outlined below:

*“We’ve got a context of more than 3 quarters of the world’s food, insecure people living in urban and peri urban areas and that’s got to provoke a policy shift and a finance shift. And I think the people in the room are the people to drive that. We’re also looking at food systems that are unjust, fragile and unsustainable. For me, the big challenge is, **how do we harness this energy when we know we need to have multi-level governance?** How do we bring national governments to the table? And **how do we really address a kind of inclusionary process that is multi-actor that takes serious consideration of the power dynamics** in our urban areas. We don’t yet have the support of national governments and we have to admit it. We need to address this problem.” ~ **Research/academia representative***

*“Most of the challenges are almost the same, but the depth of the challenges vary according to different areas, on the organization and on the region. In my region (Southeast Asia) for example, the biggest challenges revolve around 5F(s) food, feed, fuel, fertilizer, and finance. So I’m so excited here to see a group of people who are actually connecting the dots in the room to really go with a more systematic approach. And I think that is where we have **the biggest challenge to really change our thinking from silos to the design-thinking** and going a bit wider in terms of thinking about the food system as such. So I think that is the biggest challenge we have in how we work together.” ~ **FAO representative***

*“I am excited about building resilience. Not only about how we get national support, but also how to work with other sectors.” ~ **NGO representative***

*“We have been discussing these issues for decades. And yet, this is the first time we are meeting all together to address these challenges collectively, to create this community. We have an ambitious programme, but what **we first need to do is to define the vision we want to achieve. Who are we?** We need to make an effort to understand what we want to achieve as a community.” ~ **FAO representative***

*“I am **excited about the inclusiveness of the workshop.** We could also get inspired from the inclusive process of the UN Food Systems Summit. This reminds me of how CFS was designed, and I am very happy with some of the approaches that are put forward. It is about people, it is about impact, it is about transformative change.” ~ **UN Agency representative***

“I am excited about meeting people in person. In 10 years, MUFPP has expanded into areas with initially little participation. C40 is also making significant strides. In response to the fact that yes, we are seeing the same slides in every meeting, there is a different

background and a different context. And we can really work with this to make a progressive and radical roadmap for the future.” ~ **Urban Food systems consultant**

“I am excited about creating linkages between the local/grassroots and the global level. This reminds me of the **importance of local actions having global impacts**. The Sustainable Development Goals unite us as a global family, and this is a powerful reminder on how an individual action has global impact across continents.” ~ **City representative**

“I am excited about talking to peers and learning about others’ experiences on **how to close the gap between policy making and the actual execution of programmes**. We have good policies but how do we implement them? We have a lot of projects dying before they even start. That is partly due to the fact that projects related to the food system are often fragmented (focused on a part of the chain) and that **we are not thinking about projects that tackle the whole chain**.” ~ **City representative**

“I think my expectation of this meeting, which we have all the UN Family, all the networks, pioneer cities... We should discuss **how to work together in a new way**. Although we are competing for funds, there is room for global projects that bring us all together. We should have a geographical overview of areas where more efforts are needed. And we should start thinking and sharing ideas on other approaches in order to have a big upgrade in how we work together. You, as UN bodies, have a lot of relation with national bodies, national countries, national governments, ministers, and so on and so forth. So maybe that part can be the next frontier to work on urban food policy.” ~ **City Network representative**

“I am excited about understanding, learning, and sharing. I want to create more connections between the Urban Food Agenda and Green Cities Initiative and how these different initiatives are implemented on the ground. Need to help countries implement these different initiatives. [...] There are challenges related to coordination between national and local governments. **Need to clarify mandates**. I am excited about learning from other countries and their experience.” ~ **FAO representative**

“When we implement our initiatives at city level, the access to basic commodities, healthy food is one of the biggest issues pointed to by the communities we work with. I want to discuss **how we can speak the same language across sectors and regions**. Secondly, I want to hear from the teams what is happening on the ground to see how they frame the issue that we identify on the ground. So do we speak the same language? **Are we approaching the same issue?**” ~ **UN Agency representative**

“WFP published its first ever Urban Strategy last year. It's the 1st urban strategy at the corporate level, and it puts the work on food systems and urban linkages as a key shift that we need to implement for our programs, but not only for our programs, also our partnerships. The humanitarian work and the work on resilience is becoming more and more complex. It requires us to work together with many actors. I am excited about this workshop as an entry point to bring together all these actors. **We can't**

continue just talking about a meeting and publishing research, etc. We really need some concrete actions.” ~ UN Agency representative

“I am **interested in getting a background understanding of the work that has been done** over the past decade. As a city practitioner, I have not been connected to the work done at the global level. In the US, we have support at the federal level but do not interact much with the global level.” ~ **City representative**

“**There is dissonance between global level and municipal level where it is all about execution.** Things have to be done every day. It takes a moment to go beyond our daily work on the ground and discuss the broader vision and goals we want to achieve. It takes a moment to get out of what has to be done right now in the moment, and into thinking about how to leverage the experiences that we have into a vision to capture both the best of what's happening and the worst of what's happening right now, so that we can prepare globally for the foreseeable future. Distance between “in the moment” and “planning for the greater good in the future.” ~ **City representative**

“I would like just to stress the **importance of the participatory aspect of this transformation towards new urban food systems**, because in our experience bringing together all these actors was very important, and I mean multi-level governance is essential, but the territorial effort is really at the core of this transformation, so I hope to exchange on this topic.” ~ **City representative**



Participants engaged in facilitated discussions to tackle key challenges for transforming urban agrifood systems, identified through a pre-workshop survey.

Image: ©FAO/Riccardo De Luca

Challenges we explored and changes envisioned

The challenges session, which was informed by participants responses to the pre-workshop survey, centered on discussing challenges facing the urban agrifood systems. The “deep dives” included group discussions on mobilizing finance for initiatives focused on urban agrifood systems; fostering common direction and policy coordination between local, regional and national governments; securing political awareness, commitment and support on the importance of urban agrifood systems; ensuring just and inclusive governance for urban agrifood systems; engaging the private sector for effective action on urban agrifood systems; building capacity in local governments for effective urban agrifood policy and planning; achieving cross-sector engagement for systemic change; sustaining urban agrifood systems innovations beyond project timeframes, and ensuring the scaling up of pilot initiatives. Participants discussed the changes they would like to see in the next five years, identified immediate next steps for the upcoming year, potential contributions from each stakeholder, and discussed what actions should be taken differently from past approaches to achieve the desired changes.

This following section summarizes the key insights discussed:

1) Mobilizing Finance for Initiatives Focused on Urban Agrifood Systems

Change envisioned in the next 5 years:

- Stable, long-term financing mechanisms are established, enabling implementation of successful and scalable urban agrifood system initiatives.

Discussion highlights and key insights:

- To mobilize finance effectively, there must be clear portfolios and budget allocations at national and local levels. For this, continuous advocacy work toward national governments and international funding agencies on the relevance of the urban food systems is crucial.
- Development banks need mechanisms to fund cities directly. Longer-term financing solutions are required, as well as better collaboration and support for building bankable projects, especially for cities in the Global South.
- There is a need to engage international donors and promote South-South collaboration to balance global representation and funding imbalances.

2) Fostering Common Direction and Policy Coordination Between Local, Regional, and National Governments (Multi-Level Governance)

Change envisioned in the next 5 years:

- A common direction and clear governance frameworks that enable policy coordination, implementation and monitoring are established across local, regional, and national levels, ensuring urban agrifood systems are a priority at all levels of government.
- Fragmentation is being addressed through inclusive stakeholder engagement, fostering connections and co-creation of a system approach.
- Feedback loops that connect local initiatives to the national level decision-making are established.

Discussion highlights and key insights:

- There is a need to facilitate discussions between different government levels to clarify roles and responsibilities. Legislative advocacy is needed to clarify mandates for local governments, create spaces to act, and support local governments.
- It is important to work with national governments to institutionalize urban agrifood systems within local governance frameworks.
- There is a need to enhance data-sharing and build common knowledge sharing mechanisms within and between government levels.
- The governance required to do this needs to be recognized and strengthened.

3) Securing Political Awareness, Commitment, and Support on the Importance of Urban Agrifood Systems

Change envisioned in the next 5 years:

- Urban agrifood systems are receiving significantly greater political recognition and visibility by mayors and municipal authorities, national governments, and international organizations, ensuring they are being viewed as essential components of sustainable urban development, with strong commitment from local leaders.
- Mandates between different levels of government are clarified, and deeper connections between national and local leaders are established.
- City governments (and non-governmental stakeholders) preserve the institutional memory of urban agrifood systems work, so that awareness, commitment and support is maintained across changes in government.
- Food-related policies are actively implemented and monitored rather than merely developed.

Discussion highlights and key insights:

- There is a pressing need for stronger political will to actively support and advance the urban food systems agenda.
- It is necessary to raise awareness among local and national leadership on the importance of urban agrifood systems and their role in addressing key challenges.
- We need to strengthen collaboration between research and policy-making.
- One approach is to enhance local systems governance by establishing a permanent food directorate or creating a transferable governance structure with a trusted organization or multi-stakeholder platform, ensuring the protection of institutional knowledge and continuity in policy and project implementation.

4) Ensuring Just and Inclusive Governance for Urban Agrifood Systems

Change envisioned in the next 5 years:

- Governance structures that encourage win-win strategies and break down silos between sectors and regions are established.
- There are mechanisms for Inclusive stakeholder engagement and bottom-up approaches at the urban level, with vulnerable groups, including women, youth, and rural communities successfully included in decision-making processes.

Discussion highlights and key insights:

- It is important to define “equity” and “inclusivity”, and identify the various levels they encompass.

- Equity is fundamentally about who holds power, so it is crucial to begin by mapping power dynamics within the agrifood systems. This process should not only focus on formal structures, but also give careful attention to informal aspects that shape access, opportunities and decision-making.
- The urban agrifood system is not yet clear or organized enough to support just and inclusive governance, and therefore several preparatory steps must be taken to establish a more cohesive and equitable framework.
- We need to strengthen multilevel governance and cross-sectoral collaboration ensuring alignment and inclusivity.

5) Engaging the Private Sector for Effective Action on Urban Agrifood Systems While Managing the Challenges Associated with Corporate Power

Change envisioned in the next 5 years?

- Engagement with relevant private sector actors is guided by appropriate safeguards to manage corporate influence and ensure alignment with sustainability and equity objectives.

Discussion highlights & key insights:

- It is important to develop toolkits for private sector engagement in urban food systems, keeping in mind the whole spectrum of informal and small enterprises to large corporations.
- We need to engage in participatory budgeting processes that allow citizens to directly influence how public funds are allocated (including private sector and SMEs).
- We need clear criteria that evaluates private sector investment proposals and incentivises private sector companies to meet social, nutritional, and environmental goals.
- The development of platforms for public-private dialogue on urban food systems could be an approach to increase engagement.
- The term “private sector engagement” is very broad. The private sector can encompass anything from a one-person business with a mobile street food stand to big corporations. Additionally, different cities have diverse private sectors with some more (in)formal than others. We need to define who we are engaging and what we want to achieve.

6) Building Capacity in Local Governments for Effective Urban Agrifood Policy and Planning

Change envisioned in the next 5 years:

- Effective cross-department collaboration on food systems and a comprehensive approach to building long-term capacity is achieved.
- Collaboration with other partners (e.g. research/academia, national city networks) is strong and ensures institutional knowledge is not lost over time.
- Concrete targets with clear indicators of ‘success’ have been set for urban agrifood systems.
- Mechanisms to monitor, evaluate and learn from the implementation of actions and the impact of closer collaboration and strong relationships are in place.

Discussion highlights & key insight:

- Networking between cities fosters capacity building in a more horizontal rather than a top-down vertical approach. Activities in those networks support capacity building, peer-to-peer learnings, and mentorship between cities.
- When scaling up programs, it is important for local and national governments leaders to understand the agenda from the start to ensure longevity.
- Capacity building should include knowing from where to get resources in order to build long-term, solid capacity.
- City officials lack a sense of “what we are aiming to achieve” when it comes to food system actions; food is difficult in this regard, unlike climate. It is important to monitor actions and processes that are taking place and learning from them and look at indicators of progress, rather than outcome targets. A “thermometer” could be developed to track progress over time.

7) Achieving Cross-Sector Engagement (e.g. with Climate, Nature, and Health; Across Government) for Systemic Change

Change envisioned in the next 5 years?

- A collaborative evidence-based systems narrative that clearly articulates a shared vision of our goals and the strategies to achieve them has been co-created and endorsed.
- Efforts and diverse expertise are aligned, and sustainable, impactful outcomes, grounded in shared evidence and a common purpose, are achieved.
- A meaningful and inclusive engagement embedded in the urban agrifood system governance and policy has been achieved at both national and local levels.
- Increased visibility around the transformation of urban food systems at a global level has been achieved.

Discussion highlights & key insights:

- We need to understand the cross-sectoral work and how food is related to different sectors, such as water, energy, logistics, and transportation.
- We need to get national coordination structures and strategies in place, taking into consideration country priorities.
- We need to start with local tangible actions and apply a cross-sectoral resilience approach.

8) Sustaining Urban Agrifood Systems Innovations Beyond Project Timeframes, and Moving from Pilots to Scale

Change envisioned in the next 5 years?

- A paradigm shift in urban agrifood systems projects has taken place with the focus on designing projects as scalable prototypes rather than pilots.
- Successful urban agrifood system innovations are scalable and embedded into long-term policy and planning, and sustained through multi-year financing is implemented.

Discussion highlights and key insights:

- We need to encourage the integration of urban agrifood systems into annual and five-year plans. All interventions should include policy aspects and practical interventions.
- There is a need to collaborate with funders and private investors to ensure multi-year financing for urban food systems and, where this is not possible, seek early next-stage financing and build wider ambitions for the transformation of agrifood systems.
- Collaboration with research institutions to monitor agrifood systems data and trends can yield valuable insights, particularly for impacts that extend beyond a project's immediate scope.
- We need to embed a long-term vision and robust business models from the outset of a project, ensuring they are not only experimental but also positioned for seamless scaling and sustainable impact. By focusing on scalable prototypes, agrifood projects can transition smoothly from initial stages to large-scale implementation, accelerating their impact and fostering resilience across the food system.

For more details about what was discussed for each challenge, please refer to Annex D: "Summaries of Challenge Sessions."



Participants engaged in interactive sessions to identify gaps and opportunities in current urban agrifood systems, establish common goals, and agree on immediate priorities for action.

Image: ©FAO/Riccardo De Luca

Roadmap planning: Setting the stage for a collaborative dialogue

On the final day of the workshop, the floor was opened for participants to set the basis for productive discussions within stakeholder groups. Representatives from both city and national governments shared perspectives on support needed from other stakeholders in the room to achieve change. Below is a summary of the insights that were given:

*“There is a **need for stakeholders to occupy their own role**. We see in projects that some stakeholders want to be something else (e.g. NGOs want to be researchers). Most of the stakeholders can give information, data, metrics, and indicators that are very important for governments or for founders to assess the need and the importance of that proposal, but there is sometimes a fragmentation between stakeholders, and it is not easy to find common ground across stakeholders in a proposal.” ~ **Development Agency Representative***

“Other stakeholders can help us develop more concrete implementation partnerships that can bring continuity and a more execution-based structure to the processes. In

general, **information is key and we need support in the monitoring of these actions.**" ~ **City representative**

"The national government has a strategy to support cities in improving access to healthy food. Other stakeholders can **help in connecting actions**, giving visibility to what is already done in the cities, providing space to exchange experiences, funding, and supporting the evaluation of policies and programmes." ~ **National government representative**

"We have seen a lot of food policy fragmentation. **We need to approach food policy in a more integrated way.**" ~ **City Network representative**

"We often get criticized for the lack of exchange/collaboration across departments. We would like other stakeholders to clarify the added value of their meetings/work compared to others. Cities can be lost in the myriad of initiatives and networks and what they cover/offer. **We want to clarify the return of investment as a city of engaging with each stakeholder.**" ~ **City representative**

"**Need for a food systems approach:** the global community should not choose/select specific topics only (e.g. food waste, food security). We should keep a food systems approach that allows us to bring different political parties together.

Need for political commitment: when going to talk to Mayors, urban food systems are not a focus for them. It is important to create more political will around this agenda. We need to convince them to back this agenda politically." ~ **NGO representative**

"On climate, we have concrete and very clear goals and targets. On food, it is very difficult to set concrete targets. Elected officials often ask "What are we going for?". We want to fight food insecurity but **we don't have concrete indicators**. The term "better" is used a lot, but what does that mean?" ~ **City representative**

"Municipal administrations are bound by time, but also political implications. Selling a policy that comes from a more developed city is a very hard sell. So, the question of replicability: **important to know what type of action is replicable, taking into account different contexts** (e.g. some actions/initiatives may be implementable in pioneer cities but not in others)." ~ **City representative**



The workshop laid the groundwork for the co-creation of a five-year Roadmap with concrete modalities, roles, and actions across different groups and regions.

Image: ©FAO/Riccardo De Luca

Roles and responsibilities of key stakeholder groups

Following the open floor discussion participants were grouped by stakeholder category, namely local and national governments, city networks, NGOs, development agencies, UN agencies & OECD, and FAO, to identify the unique contributions their organizations and stakeholder groups could make toward achieving the shared vision. The groups were asked to discuss the necessary mechanisms for effective collaboration both across stakeholder groups and as a community, aiming to define a framework and modalities to serve as the foundation for the five-year roadmap.

Four key questions were used to guide discussions :

1. How do we see our own role and responsibility in delivering these actions?
2. How should we work together collectively to take these actions?
3. What mechanisms are needed to enable us to work together effectively?
4. How should we monitor progress and ensure we are learning by doing?

Insights from the discussions varied, and key outcomes by each stakeholder are summarized below.

Development agencies

Development agencies often have a complicated role (depending on their structure, set up, and national government) and therefore are tied to the politics of certain ministries and politicians. As a result, their responsibilities and potential actions are not solely based on their own decision-making. Similar to potential other stakeholders, they face the difficulty of wanting to deliver actions while having to walk a thin line of following the mandate and agenda of their ministry. Different political agendas in different countries also mean that there is no unified agenda for all development agencies when it comes to topics such as Urban Agrifood Systems.

1. How do we see our own role and responsibility in delivering these actions?

- At the most, it seems that development agencies can do internal advocacy within the ministry. Because this is a complex task, development agencies need help in “selling” urban food systems to their ministries and convincing them to fund initiatives on the topic.
- There is a need to convince ministries of the importance of these issues. The role of development agencies involves designing and implementing actions as directed by the government and ministry, encompassing not only urban agrifood systems but also activities in rural areas.

2. How should we work together collectively to take these actions?

- It would be great to have a forum or space where development agencies from different countries can come together, to coordinate and collaborate effectively. This could for example take place on an annual basis, which would be a great first step.
- A particular challenge is the difficulties in collecting data among small cities and rural areas, where such information is often scarce.
- The role of development banks should not be underestimated, we need to have them present in these discussions as well. At this workshop, the World Bank, regional institutions and development banks are missing.

3. What mechanisms are needed to enable us to work together effectively?

- Having more regional institutions present in these discussions could be helpful.
- Inputs need to come from field officers in order to create certain key messages that development agencies can then spread and work towards.
- A full time secretariat that focuses only on Urban agrifood Systems needs not to be overemphasized.

Workshop participants from the UN agencies were mostly from the respective headquarters and participants recognized the added value of UN agencies. UN agencies have a strong presence in countries and are recognized and listened to as organizations that can bring valuable technical capacities. In general, urban agrifood themes resonate with the agencies, however, global actions must be aligned with local demand and the global agenda needs to be aligned with what happens on the ground. Aligning these will make the work of agencies more effective.

1. How do we see our own role and responsibility in delivering these actions?

- Support Cities: Focus on helping cities address urban food system challenges.
- UN-Habitat: Working through three key conventions (Biodiversity, Climate, and others) as food systems intersect with all of them.
- UNEP: Measure and evaluate agrifood systems around the world.
- UN agencies: Technical capacities, which are not only needed to do the actual work, but are also attractive to local organizations.

2. How should we work together collectively to take these actions?

- UN agencies hold convening power at both global and national levels, can encourage greater political will among member states, and have the capacity to mobilize resources and attract donor interest in urban food systems.
- There is strong interest in collaborating as all agencies work differently. Workshop participants representing the UN agencies & OECD agreed to share successful stories of cross UN collaboration at country-level that could serve as inspiration.
- Combining practical approaches to local engagement, such as the recovery after the earthquake in Turkey.
- Using the urban-rural connections to strengthen food systems.
- Need to consider agrifood systems as part of a larger environmental system.
- More access to more data on equity, and unified approach across sectors when it comes to framing problems.

3. What mechanisms are needed to enable us to work together effectively?

- Each UN agency has its own mandate and focal points within countries, with national and local government structures often influencing the effectiveness of their collaboration. Need to improve how UN agencies operate in different countries and cities to enable an effective collaboration.
- Multilevel and multisectoral governance approaches and improvements, such as the Zimbabwe example, which managed to bring local governments and the coalition governments together.

- More funding and transparency in large financial allocations needs participatory planning, including local governments, as they are often not invited to such discussions.
- Effective local government outreach, which often needs to be learned initially, and collaboration.

FAO

The differentiated roles of the headquarters, regional, and country offices of FAO and their key function in sensitizing urban agrifood systems were highlighted in the discussion. While the headquarters are equipped with experts specialized in urban agrifood systems, most of the country offices do not have enough capacity dedicated to the topic. Regional offices are in the middle and do not have all the capacity to confront challenges and are prone to becoming a bottleneck. High turnover from consultants and staff is a challenge, resulting in the established systems and processes being built again, and lacking sustainability.

1. How do we see our own role and responsibility in delivering these actions?

- FAO as an organization can bridge the challenging data gaps by providing the necessary data, especially to countries that are lacking information and resources.
- The FAO regional and country offices can support in developing the global tools by feeding on the experience on the ground and convening the actors in the territory to link them to public policies.
- When supporting national governments in designing policies and strategies e.g. African Union agriculture agenda, FAO regional and country offices can advocate for inclusion of the urban food agenda. For this, building capacity on urban food systems within FAO and the partner government bodies working on the ground will be essential.

2. How should we work together collectively to take these actions?

- Strengthening the role of the headquarters as a coordinator to bring regional and country offices together and share experiences, Headquarters can help increase coordination around the strategy that we have worked hard to develop and implement.
- It is essential to adopt a bottom-up approach, prioritizing listening to the needs and insights of regional and country offices rather than imposing top-down strategies.
- We need to establish a mechanism for field officers to meet HQ to discuss regularly the challenges that they are experiencing and secure more support.
- To develop capacities of country and regional officers and create cross-sectoral collaboration between countries and HQ, we need different expertise and talk between each discipline (system transformation, FLW, markets, etc.) – creating a “directory of experts” (groups of expertise), and increase support between technical divisions.

- We need better mechanisms to share good practices with other regions, and have more face-to-face contact and interaction for some of the regional offices. Meeting in person more regularly to make sure the common agenda is progressing.

3. What mechanisms are needed to enable us to work together effectively?

- Financial resources to fund capacities: there is a lack of financial resources (also at Country Offices), time for offices to meet, and mentorship through one-to-one meetings.
- FAO often faces challenges when engaging directly with local governments. While FAO traditionally collaborates with ministries such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the governance of local government operations typically falls under other ministries. Some colleagues have voiced the need for a streamlined process to secure local government endorsements when partnering with FAO. At the same time, a question was raised regarding the alignment of FAO's national government-focused mandate with direct engagement at the city level.
- A modern knowledge management tool is needed to efficiently locate and share relevant initiatives worldwide. An urban food action platform readily exists but it remains underutilized. Improving this platform's accessibility and developing a localized platform at the national level can facilitate knowledge exchange and provide greater visibility to urban food systems initiatives.
- To better assess progress, there is a need for effective mechanisms to track and monitor activities and outcomes across cities and within various initiatives.
- We need a dedicated team leading the organization with clear roles to be able to respond to the needs and communicate better – in-house team in charge of the coordination – management. Urban food systems topics should have a “directory of experts”.
- Acknowledging that country offices are overburdened, and that urban agrifood systems are not a priority. Important to create a mandate at the country level to get the needed support from local stakeholders.

4. How should we monitor progress and ensure we are learning by doing?

- FAO should support city networks by providing technical assistance and tailored tools for tracking urban food systems initiatives. Role of FAO in collecting city data vs city networks role on this should be clarified so we can determine how to work strategically together.
- FAO should encourage and assist governments in collecting disaggregated data, providing guidance on methodologies to capture detailed statistics.

1. How do we see our own role and responsibility in delivering these actions?

- Recognizing failures in other regions is crucial, particularly around food systems. There is much to learn from what has not worked in different cities. Even though you can't just adopt solutions from one place to another due to different contexts, there are elements worth learning and potentially replicating. The key is to understand where these lessons fit in our own local frameworks.
- Effective food policy requires collaboration across sectors such as environment, transport, and water management. Food system transformation involves multiple stakeholders; government, private sector, and civil society. Kenya, for example, faces challenges with over 20 departments involved, yet still experiences limited coordination and budget.
- Ensuring policy continuity - political alliances are essential to sustain food systems' work over time. Creating strong internal advocates within government sectors can help ensure ongoing commitment. There are different models: whether it is a well coordinated agency within the government that is controlling and coordinating, or rather ensure there are different champions within other departments. We need to be open about sharing these different models. E.g. In Milan, the food policy is now centralized and robust enough to resist change, even with staffing transitions.
- With permanent staff and long-term contracts, food-related initiatives are intertwined with city operations, making the system resilient and capable of long-term impact. In New York, on the other hand, they focus on building internal champions within various city agencies to support food-related goals even if budgets or dedicated staff are reduced. Unlike Milan's formal department structure, this approach relies on embedding food priorities within existing frameworks across health, climate, and other departments.
- Cities should work on designing incentive schemes to collect data from the private sector, which is crucial, especially for tracking food sources. This is because food is mostly grown by the private sector and globally there are limited ways to receive the necessary data. Collecting this data will then support policy and infrastructure departments.
- Local governments in Brazil are working toward having a public system covering food nutrition and security, establishing frameworks to facilitate cooperation among departments in over 500 municipalities, and collaborating with civil society, aiming for alignment at both national and local levels.
- Piloting short supply chains has shown success, such as serving locally-produced rice in schools and educating teachers on nutrition. Field visits to farms for children build community connections to local food sources and support nutrition education.

2. How should we work together collectively to take these actions?

- It is difficult to participate in multiple networks simultaneously, and we can't simply clone the staff to ensure everyone outside has all the necessary information. The community of cities is valuable for sharing knowledge among themselves, but are we just recreating the same machine with a different design, struggling with the same issues?

3. What mechanisms are needed to enable us to work together effectively?

- The importance of convenings like this workshop should be highlighted as it reminds cities that they are part of this global agenda.

City networks

There was a consensus among the city networks to acknowledge the elephant in the room: that the networks are competing for funding. Despite the challenges, they identified core areas for meaningful collaboration including: 1) Fostering and advancing food policies at local level; 2) Coordinated and complementary network strategy, especially because each of these groups has their own sort of comparative advantage; 3) Promoting urban agrifood systems at COP.

1. How do we see our own role and responsibility in delivering these actions?

- A lot of good work is already happening but each city network is not necessarily aware of what other city networks are doing, and which cities they are working with. This creates a risk of duplication and/or overlap.
- More coordination and alignment is needed among city networks - starting with a stocktaking of who is doing what, which cities we are working with, and which events we are focusing on. Simple tools like google sheets or regular meetings, can facilitate this.
- Each city network has its own strengths - which means we can complement each other effectively. For example:
 - Comida do Amanha focuses on advancing food policies at city level.
 - ICLEI engages with cities of all sizes, and goes beyond policy by looking at urban infrastructure.
 - MUFPP is strong in convening cities in global gatherings.
 - C40 is more focused on the interlinkages between food and climate.
 - UCLG is strong on engaging with the UN system.
- City networks are also best placed to assess where cities are standing on their food policy journey. The concept of a “thermometer” to gauge each city's progress in food policy was suggested, allowing for tracking changes over time.

2. How should we work together collectively to take these actions?

- Important to start with natural touchpoints and avoid adding work on top of what we are doing
 - During the workshop people signed up to get together, to start an email, to have meetings every other month to begin coordinating organically, and talk about who each network's members are, the priority topics, events that they are either planning or going to; the core competencies of the network and some concrete projects that would benefit from collective goals.
- Stocktaking and mapping: identify and map the cities we work with, our respective strengths and core competencies, our projects and priorities, and the main events we are planning to engage in. This will help enhance information sharing (and avoid potential frustrations from cities approached by multiple networks), but also allow to explore new collaboration opportunities.
- Regularly update each other via dedicated meetings (more details in the following question).
- Creating a City Observatory on Food Policies: create an "observatory" to highlight and share what cities are doing in the food policy space, and which narratives and trends are emerging.
- Joining forces on advocacy at global level: to have a stronger voice, we could work together and discuss common advocacy messages and opportunities at global level (e.g. for COP30). Instead of creating new platforms, we should build on existing collaborations such as the LGMA constituency (at UNFCCC COPs) and the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments (which UCLG and ICLEI are part of).
- Explore larger funding opportunities: working together would allow us to go for bigger funders and projects.

3. What mechanisms are needed to enable us to work together effectively?

- Starting informally: during a "testing phase" (of 6 months to one year), we would work together informally to see what form our collaboration would organically take. This collaboration should not be seen as an additional burden, but rather as a way to facilitate our work and streamline efforts.
- Creating an Excel tracking sheet to map the cities we work with, our respective strengths and core competencies, our projects and priorities, and the main events we are planning to engage in.
- Setting up regular meetings:
 - Establish online meetings every two to three months to update each other on the latest project developments and advocacy opportunities. The meeting chair would rotate every time. foster communication and collaboration.
 - Organize in-person meetings back-to-back around relevant global events.

- Discussing the idea of a “City Network Roadmap” within the broader community roadmap.

4. How should we monitor progress and ensure we are learning by doing?

- Checking in at the end of the “testing phase” (of 6 months to one year) to see if the Excel tracking sheet and regular meetings have been implemented and useful for all city networks.
- Getting inspired from the Food Systems Dashboard to gather joint data on cities. How do we create something like that? When people get called to do a panel at the last minute, they could get great examples to pull from the right sources.

NGOs

Identifying roles and activities is essential, as NGOs bring diverse perspectives, focus areas, and modes of engagement. This clarity helps bridge differences and fosters more cohesive collaboration.

1. How do we see our own role and responsibility in delivering these actions?

- Taking inspiration from how the tobacco control community works together, i.e. there is a common goal, agenda and a common voice that comes through, we were thinking about having a sort of convening body in which the different NGOs are able to come together regularly. Have some kind of internal coordination to sort out outputs and resources.
- It is also important to maintain individual integrity of each NGO, while developing some kind of common pathway and common strategy. FAO could take a similar role, providing funding and long-term commitment to execute plans.
- Centralized funding and pooling resources: often there is concern with the NGO sector that there are duplications. We need to make sure we are not creating another platform where resources are dumped and there is no engagement, therefore we need clear outcomes and reporting on progress.

2. How should we work together collectively to take these actions & what mechanisms are needed to enable us to work together effectively?

- Need to develop a clear communication strategy that raises the need for political will from below. Weak point which was recognized is the need to strengthen the communication with the civil society.
- Simply bringing people together is not enough; there needs to be a structured framework for ongoing engagement. This framework should function as a “lab” for continuous analysis, tracking who is doing what, how they are doing it, and understanding what works.

- Proper documentation is crucial to assess what is working. There should be a focus on deeper understanding, rather than always seeking innovation, to avoid "reinventing the wheel."
- Like-minded organizations often connect naturally. There is a need to recognize each other's contributions and jointly co-brand efforts. Tools should be pooled together, and their effectiveness rigorously assessed.
- The need for transparency and trust was stressed to avoid competition. Co-branding and mutual recognition are key to collaborative success.
- Establishing a coordinating body to map out resources, identify key actors, and determine who needs support.
- Engaging academia and ensuring inclusive governance is vital. Governance structures should be transparent to facilitate cooperation rather than competition.
- There is a need for dedicated funds and time to disseminate shared messages effectively. NGOs often carry the burden of spreading key advocacy messages, but this requires more systematic funding.
- Cities need digestible tools to implement recommendations. Translating research into actionable tools for city practitioners is critical, as messages risk getting lost otherwise.
- NGOs play a crucial role in policy advocacy. A coherent vision that unites all actors is essential, but it might be necessary to engage other advocates beyond NGOs for specific issues.

3. How should we monitor progress and ensure we are learning by doing?

- A proposal was made for an annual digest to summarize what is happening, operationalizing science-based targets to drive impact.
- Using a live mapping tool to track efforts across sectors, including UN bodies. This would encourage collaboration by making it clear who is doing what and where.
- Making resources and information available at the end of projects to avoid redundancy and inefficiency. There is a need for transparency about UN agency agendas.
- The lack of media attention is also a challenge - we need a call for a unified media strategy to build public awareness. Press releases and advocacy should be coordinated across stakeholders.
- Together with a convening space, there is the need of having a yearly report back from the NGOs about what are the big outcomes, actions and progresses.



The workshop featured in-depth, frank, open discussions where participants brought their successes, failures, and hard-won insights to the table.

Image: ©FAO/Riccardo De Luca

Open discussion

At the end of the workshop, a session was dedicated to getting inputs from participants on the overall purpose and principles of this community, but also on how it can be operationalized in the near future. The floor was open to give all participants the possibility to share their feedback on the following questions:

1. How do we work across stakeholder groups for collective impact on these actions?
2. What would we need to enable us to work across stakeholder groups more effectively?
3. How do we monitor progress across stakeholder groups and ensure we are learning by doing?

The responses are outlined below:

*“One thing that struck me from the previous round was that the NGOs, the City Networks and FAO all mentioned the need for **a new way of collating resources, tools, experiences**. Not just a repository, but some sort of systematizing, doing something*

with them, learning from them, digesting them. The city networks called it an observatory, NGOs called it a lab... It could be used as a mechanism for sharing across the different stakeholder groups. **It doesn't make sense to have separate processes and separate spaces.**~ **NGO representative**

"Every year **there's a lot of research that comes out with some findings related to urban food systems**. And for us as NGOs, we often struggle to digest all of this. **We don't always have access and also the language that's used is not really accessible to practitioners**. So, from the NGO perspective, it'd be really useful to have a **more organized interaction on a regular basis, with more the academic community** sharing what they know, what are the implications of their research findings for us as practitioners, so that we can also support some of the cities we work with in translating this into practice. Sometimes it's still at a very high level and quite difficult for us to do something with." ~ **NGO representative**

"We need to be careful about not assuming that we have a common understanding of every concept and approach that we are speaking about. There is more in common than what we think, but to pursue this journey, it is important **that we keep updating each other on a regular basis**. We need to build that trust required to work together." - **UN agency representative**

"The food system is changing very quickly at an unprecedented rate. It's very difficult for somebody working within a municipal government to keep track of those changes and the potential implications of the changes in the food system. Example: I get a call once a week from somebody wanting to build a controlled environment agricultural project in the city. It's my opinion that it's a really bad idea, not financially viable. But one day it will be financially viable and it's possible that one day all of our food will come from inside a warehouse. But I don't have the data. I don't have the information to evaluate those opportunities. So, in terms of connecting and providing that value across city organizations globally, we're all facing that same question of how we should think about technological changes. **How should we incorporate the global climatic changes into the decision making at the local level?** Having this kind of support would be incredibly important." - **City representative**

"To answer your second question, it might be **useful to identify low-hanging fruits and upcoming policy processes, projects, programs and platforms where we can immediately start collaborating**. One of them that I have in mind is the CFS upcoming process where we're going to discuss policy recommendations on strengthening urban and peri-urban food systems. It is a great opportunity for NGOs, for the scientific community, for the businesses, for us as government to work on this theme together. If we all put some energy into that, we could really be able to shift some content and ideas. There are probably platforms where we can continue the conversation, the UN Food System Summit and its related coalitions. The quicker we have ideas of where we can continue the conversations, rather than try to create new things, the faster it will be to start working together, in a more pragmatic way. So **help us map these international level examples. But also subnational or national or**

regional opportunities that we are not aware of. Maybe there are conversations at the African Union, there are in other places where we should be present as a community, and maybe you can help us identify the opportunities we can immediately put our energy on.” – **Development Agency representative**

“I don't think we need another toolkit. Not another thing that local governments have to spend a lot of time reading. **We need people to help with the knowledge translation, but also the knowledge interpretation**, because that is a piece that I think we often miss. Example: UN Habitat has a statement that they want 30% of cities to be streets and 20% of cities to be public spaces, and how governments are interpreting this is: let's tear up neighborhoods and put in big roads. A road isn't a street, but that's how they're interpreting that recommendation. So, without people to help with the interpretation, we end up losing a lot. So I would advocate that we don't need more online tools, we need more people to help with that knowledge, translation, and interpretation.” ~ **NGO representative**

“We are very different organizations, even in UN space, both globally and locally. It does help to have some sort of **light mapping about who, where and what we do. This would help also in terms of managing our expectations.** What is that local FAO or regional FAO office focused on, who is a focal point that we can leverage within our group. Need for a light mapping to manage expectations, coordination needs and to leverage opportunities of platforms. “ ~ **NGO representative**

“If we're scaling up and the people that we're trying to engage don't have a background in food systems, whether it's the local councilor that we're trying to engage, or the new minister who is somehow interested in an aspect of the food system.... **We can offer our expertise condensed so they're not having to go through what we went through over 10 years.** As a community, we need to think about how we prepare for this next generation of the capacity that we're building up. There are straightforward examples of building capacity, but how do we really prepare if we scale up programs in countries? How do we prepare all the new heads of local government and politicians to really understand this agenda from the moment that we start it. So that might require toolkits. **Maybe we might not need toolkits, but others might.** That's the point.” ~ **Urban Food systems consultant**

“I want to bring up another point which I think is a bit of an elephant in the room: the issue of funding. **If we want to operate as a community, we all need funding, but at the same time,** we are not able to join the efforts in doing this, **we are competing too much** and at different levels. This implies that if we compete we don't share information, if we compete, we often go beyond our mandates. Since most of the funding now is merely channeled at local level and at national level, **we should try to create a mechanism to work together, where we do fundraising together, where we approach donors together, clarify the mandates, and clarify the rules.** If we don't do that, we will still continue talking about the importance of working together, but we will not completely do that.” ~ **FAO representative**

“Yes, we do need help to sell it because it does require a bit of selling across departments and ministries and constituencies. So your help is greatly appreciated [in co-creating a case to the high powers to show that urban food system transformation should be funded].” ~ **Development Agency representative**

“We **need to develop a common language for all stakeholders and deliver this message to the donors and the fundraising people**. In this way we can set up the linkages with FAO on the food system perspective, and also linkages with other UN agencies, as well as some other stakeholders. We need a similar language, a similar message that can be delivered clearly and consistently. ~ **FAO representative**

“That is a crucial point, because sometimes when we talk to national governments and to funders, the question comes and is not answered clearly: **Why should we care about urban food systems or urban agri-food systems?** And although we explain it from different angles, this sometimes is indeed **not clearly communicated or messaged in terms of narrative shape**. This group is maybe the best place to collectively shift this into something very clear.

And the other thing that inspired me is that **sometimes it's not so much about initiatives, but by being inspired by something totally outside**. In our group it was brought up the tobacco control example. How did that work? How did that succeed? What were the strategies in place? Sometimes we need to think differently. “ ~ **City Network representative**

“We are receiving requests from UN resident coordinators and at the country level to **have a common narrative on food systems**. To explain where we're going and how the different UN agencies at country level work. So it seems to me, this is a key opportunity to embed and make sense of the urban environment and urban food system within that narrative.” ~ **FAO representative**

“I want to address the last question in terms of monitoring progress. I think **it's crucial to acknowledge the importance of setting the right targets that are based on the best available evidence that are relevant and local**. We have global targets that are meant to be achieved to protect the health of the planet and the health of the people, but are not necessarily translated to what they mean for each city. So, translating these into city-level, set up science-based targets that we all work together to achieve is quite crucial.

The second point I wanted to make, maybe some of you have heard about the food system countdown report that's been led by John Hopkins, as well as our colleagues from GAIN that try to map out the progress into transforming food systems, achieving health and sustainable food systems. If we can have something similar applied to the urban level and perhaps pairing it with a stakeholder mapping exercise, it would be quite **beneficial to understand the collective impact that we're achieving by our different projects** and perhaps build on it into future initiatives and future projects at city level. Useful to understand where the gaps are and what we need to focus on,

identify those sweet spots that we can work on collectively as different stakeholders.” ~
NGO representative

“What I've gathered over these 3 days is a sense of needing to work together more, and would **suggest monitoring progress about how people are working together, and the quality of relationships among different stakeholder groups**. That is a perception. It's not really measurable other than your feeling of how things are working or not working well together. We need to do more together. Well, how do you know if you're doing that, you have to feel it: you have to engage, you have to show up in meetings with your camera on... So, less about outputs that programs might evolve into because you can't create programs unless you're able to work effectively with your partners. I would challenge the group to think more about how you can support this working better amongst and with each other across thinking about communication differences, and cultural differences in order to set the conditions for collective impact.”
~ **City representative**

“Within the Milan Pact we are working with the cities: we have a big monthly meeting with the steering committee of the Milan Pact, with the cities that are part of the governing body and that are reporting to the steering committee. We already see this kind of cooperation. And so maybe **we need more cooperation among the UN bodies, among the broader stakeholders, among the networks, but if that is the case: it costs a lot**. If all of us need to coordinate, to spend time covering the cost of a cooperation is a lot. It is impossible to cooperate in a way we have resources allocated for their cooperation. **Otherwise, we need to use moments within a project consortium or similar where we talk to each other**. There are a lot of projects in which all of us are cooperating with many partners, stakeholders, city managers and so forth. Some, of course, here in this room. So I think that **we need to figure out what we consider the purpose of cooperation**. Next year we will have the MUFPP Global Forum, so it can be an occasion to meet each other, to share the progress, to share good projects and opportunities. This is already working, but **there are some regions in which this is not working**, and here is evident that some regions in which there are no cities here. Maybe we need to reshape this part of how we cooperate.

The cooperation, I think, also needs to be updated to the level of a mission of the cities. What we see in the last years within the Evaluation Committee of the Milan Pact Awards, we see that, thanks to the force to evaluate the practices, some different partners start new initiatives on urban food system programs. The European Commission launched a lot of calls because some of us are pushing the interest of finance and investing in urban food policies. So maybe we can figure out this elephant in the room and figure out how we can answer that question, but don't be frustrated, because **some of these topics are already existing and already implemented**. And so maybe next year in the Forum, all of us can be there with all the cities, and to present our results of the wonderful project that we are implementing.” ~ **City Network representative**

“What will be the output of this meeting? And how could we work together after leaving this building today? Will we be divided into working groups or communities of practice, as someone mentioned yesterday, or exactly how? In our group of city networks we were talking about this. **Okay, let's cooperate. But how can we lower the cost of this cooperation? And another concern is: who is missing in this in this meeting?** There is a lot of diversity here, but there are people missing or places that are not underrepresented. So how can we be working together as a global community putting these missing people or missing places in this community as well?” ~ **NGO representative**

“Not only stakeholders, but also sectors, how do we bring them together? FAO could do this in a meaningful way, but not alone. The issue is how we more systematically and inclusively look at a country driven approach? And this is where the whole challenge comes in. **We need to translate the vision, because what is a global vision is not necessarily what the regional vision is, and even the country vision.** I think this is a big problem we have. So even when we have a joint vision, how do we really make sure people buy into it? That is where the whole programmatic kind of approach comes in. We shouldn't necessarily have a program in itself, but at least converge different elements together. We are trying this approach out in the region now. It's a huge task. If we don't work together, we cannot make it happen. Similar to what is happening here.

And coming to the 3rd question, we need to **think of some innovative ways of bringing people together and try to bring all the stakeholders together and sectors together at the national level, at the regional level, at the global level.** This is where the challenge is. But having said that it is definitely possible “ ~ **FAO representative**

“We need to have a common objective and understanding of the topic more from the systematic approach. It will be a platform or a way that we can access these different resources. It's really **hard to understand what are the right resources to access.** So just understanding the available resources globally will be really useful for implementation purposes.

And also we need to have an understanding about how the urban agrifood system is looking both at the worldwide level, but also regional. And for that we need to be in agreement with what indicators will be used. **There are several frameworks that are out. We need to be clear: what indicators are we going to follow?** But also understanding what we need to do per region. A way to understand these more systematically will be quite useful as city networks, NGOs and other stakeholders” ~ **City Network representative**

“I want to speak on your 3rd point: how do we monitor progress across stakeholders? We must appreciate that we have many efforts within countries and what really cannot get measured will never be done. So, I want to propose that **we look at it collectively, looking at indicators to measure performance, so that when we are reporting, we actually report from a baseline and also have a unified reporting format, so that**

we can measure the progress. Measuring progress is one of the most difficult jobs to do.” ~ **National Government representative**

“One of the key challenges was how to communicate to the powers what is a food systems approach. We were pressured to put it down in very accessible formats. We need to challenge ourselves, not just on the data collection and the formal metrics, but **we need to get better at telling our stories**, and I don't mean stories in a simple way, I mean **stories that embed the research, that embed community experience, that embed the analysis and that all decision makers can understand more effectively.** We would have so much more impact instead of sharing those formal dry reports that nobody would read. We'd put out some visuals that were accompanied by stories and suddenly different departments across the city would see themselves in a food systems approach whether they explicitly engage with food or not. This would enable us to leverage huge resources right across the city. But let's do some storytelling that is resonant for everyone: for stakeholders across the board. And I think **we have to move towards having the courage to talk about what doesn't work, what our failures are**, because we all, you know, position, really positive initiatives. There is so much pressure to only pitch what works, but we truly learn so much more from each other when we have the courage and the trust across stakeholder groups to really grapple in a safe way with what doesn't work” ~ **Urban Food systems consultant**



Through a Mentimeter, an interactive real-time Q&A tool, participants shared their insights on operationalizing the agrifood system community. The session was moderated by Peter Defranceschi, Head of Brussels Office & Global CityFood Program Coordinator, ICLEI.

Image: ©FAO/Riccardo De Luca

Mentimeter results

The discussion then moved to Mentimeter, where specific questions were posed to gather input on how to operationalize the community. The questions and responses are compiled below.

Purpose and overarching principles

What would be the main purpose of this collaborative journey (e.g. coordination of activities, fundraising, sharing learnings, advocacy)? Wordcloud, 64 respondents

- **Our collaboration efforts should first and foremost aim at fostering greater coordination and efficiency, exploring synergies as well as facilitating information sharing:** There is a strong demand (more than 30) to coordinate the collaboration around a common vision, and enhance our complementarity, efficiency and impact on the ground. What was also mentioned is the need for more information sharing

among us (more than 30). Fundraising and advocacy were stressed by about 15 people.

How would this collaboration benefit your organization (added value)? Open ended, 60 respondents

- Participants see the main benefit in creating new connections and developing synergies (33) as well as increasing the impact of our work (25) and exchanging knowledge (24).
- We need to **clarify the added value** compared to previous initiatives.

“Outcomes need to be clear + someone needs to drive this collaboration effort. Risk of wasting time.”

“Identify the support area and policies needed for cities to better engage with Urban Agenda.”

“Visibility of good practices from the Global south & influence the global narrative, that is usually very euro-centric.”

Do you see any disadvantages to more collaborative working? Open ended, 59 respondents

- **The collaboration should be effective and efficient, referring in particular to the use of time, coordination and degree of complexity:** The main shortcomings of this collaborative journey are the difficulty in finding agreements (27) potential loss of time (20) the costs (15) and the risk of duplication (12).
- We need to be **careful about not getting a structure that is too complex and administratively burdening** with fruitless meetings.
- Some answers have highlighted the need for **stronger commitment and better recognition from international actors**.

“Time consuming, low capacity, competing priorities. Risk of not showing results quickly and losing support/ buy-in internally in the organization.”

“Competing agendas and lack of commitment at the highest levels.”

“Without a common message it could cause further confusion.”

“Inefficient coordination or collaboration can distract us from implementation.”

How would we ensure an equitable and inclusive mechanism ? Open ended, 52 respondents

- **The community should be more inclusive across regions (10) and stakeholder groups (17)** - particularly in the composition (e.g. through open calls for participation), decision making and agenda shaping (9), but also language coverage (9).
- Transparency was also mentioned (8).

“Give ownership of sessions and meetings to different stakeholders, make it rotating.”

“Focus on tangible actions at local level which through their nature bring together diversity of relevant actors in ways that grapple with local complexity.”

“Institutions should go visit cities and see cities and peoples' realities for themselves.”

Operationalization

What would you recommend as the most effective form of collaborative working (e.g. annual meet; formal coalition; working groups; regional networks)? Wordcloud, 63 respondents

- The most recurring answer was having in person **annual meetings** (more than 30 preferences and on the dedicated question 33 preference + 40 preferences for biannual online meetings). The need to focus on regional networks and meetings is evident (about 30), plus there is a **clear demand for working groups** (20).
- About 15 people mentioned the need for a coalition and some explicitly asked for an informal one. Once again the need to have a tool to share info was mentioned (9).

Is there any stakeholder group currently missing from this community? Wordcloud, 57 respondents

- Participants predominantly felt that the **private sector (17) and donors/development banks (12)** were missing from this community, followed by the CSOs (10), youth (7) and Global South (7) representatives.

How could this collaborative working be resourced? Open ended, 48 respondents

- **The two preferred options to resource the initiative are to fundraise** (14), hence work on resource mobilization and organize roundtables with donors **or ask contributions from participants** (10) (both in kind (5) and financial, depending on capacity). Some people indicated who we should reach out to by mentioning donors (9), UN agencies (5) and national governments (5).

“Closed doors with donors and funders to propose our work and why they should care.”

“Help philanthropies see we are a united community.”

“Mobilizing in kind, human and financial resources from all levels and all partners towards shared vision and narrative and for collective outcomes or results.”

What would be concrete indicators of success? Open ended, 57 respondents

- **What most people want to see is concrete results** (15) in terms of having broader impact (5), more cities (16) and national government (8) engaged.
- The second indicator would be to actually start working together and **create an actual sense of community** (14), engage in resource mobilization (10) and advocacy (9).
- Some interesting answers highlighted, as indicators, the scaling up of pilot initiative, building on existing resources, overcoming the fragmented UN initiatives/coalitions on urban food and managing to get non-expert people to understand what urban agrifood systems are.

“Increase accessibility of food for urban dwellers.”

“Scaling up pilot initiatives at the country, regional level.”

“Urban food systems becoming a program of joint UN agencies.”

“Increase and measure the role of cities in increasing their role for food security for all.”

Who do you think should coordinate/lead this process of collaborative working? Word cloud, 59 respondents

- **There is a clear mandate for FAO to coordinate the collaboration around a common vision:** The majority suggested FAO to coordinate (11) or together with other actors (25) (total suggesting FAO 36). The other chosen option is having multi stakeholder coordination (10).
- **Regarding the steering committee** the first two options are having FAO together with all stakeholders except other UN agencies (13) or having 1 representative per stakeholder group with UN agencies (13) or without UN agencies (12).

What do you think are the most important immediate next steps following this Workshop? Open ended, 60 respondents

- The most important next step is to **define the roadmap with clear and concrete next steps** (44), including defining the next meeting (8) and setting up an online platform for exchange (8).

- Participants **want to have access to the workshop outcomes** (15) and have the opportunity to provide feedback especially for those missing in the room (9).
- We also need to **set up the coordination and steering group** (17) the working groups (6) and start mapping initiatives, expertise, resources (9).

“Generate clear objectives and targets on what we are to achieve.”

“UN agencies joint statement of commitment.”

“Doing the ToR of the platform.”

“Define the next global opportunity & meet to work towards, to give us a goal and scope.”

“Establish working group structure beyond FAO and ICLEI.”

“Can’t this be a new, better, revamped urban coalition? Members are already engaged in the UNFSS process. Many of the actors here are part of the coalition.”



The workshop established a strong basis for a more integrated and holistic approach to tackling the complex challenges of urban agrifood systems.

Image: ©FAO/Riccardo De Luca

Annexes & Resources

Annex A: “Survey: Urban Agrifood Systems Global Workshop”

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this 10 minute survey!

In order to prepare better for the **Global Workshop** and the resulting **5-year roadmap on urban agrifood systems** we would like to ask you 10 questions. The results will be summarized and shared anonymously during the Global Workshop and will facilitate an interactive format.

Defining "urban agrifood systems":

An agrifood system is a set of infrastructures, activities, people, institutions, resources, policies, and norms that interact with each other and with inter-related systems to produce food and agricultural products for human consumption and use. The agrifood system also has a number of other functions, including support of livelihoods and provision of ecosystem goods and services. The urban agrifood system is a subsystem of the larger agrifood system with focus and impact within and beyond urban areas.

To start the survey, please click on "Next".

YOUR ORGANIZATION

1. **Stakeholder type** (dropdown menu):
 - a. Local/regional government
 - b. National government
 - c. Local/regional government network
 - d. UN agency
 - e. NGO/non profit
 - f. Other international/ regional organization
 - g. Research/academia
 - h. Development agency
 - i. Foundation
 - j. Private sector
 - k. Other
2. What do you see as the **main strengths** of your organization? Please select up to 3 answers.
 - a. Advocacy
 - b. Leadership
 - c. Policy making
 - d. Capacity building/training
 - e. Research
 - f. Stakeholder engagement/ network coordination
 - g. Fundraising
 - h. Funding & financing
 - i. Other:
3. What **topical expertise** does your organization have? Please select up to 3 answers.

- | | |
|---|---|
| a. Urban food policy and governance | f. Climate change mitigation and adaptation |
| b. Food security | g. Nature/biodiversity |
| c. Food loss and waste | h. Health and nutrition |
| d. Food procurement | i. Urban and peri-urban agriculture |
| e. Food environments (incl. schools, markets, retail) | j. Other: |

YOUR VISION

4. If you had to summarize it in one sentence, what would be your **vision** for **urban agrifood systems transformation**?
5. The vision of the workshop and 5-year roadmap is: “**working together for collective impact**” - to emphasize collaboration and collective ownership as key to achieve transformation. Would you agree with this statement?
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
6. Do you have a better vision slogan than the one proposed in the previous question?

CHALLENGES - Part 1

7. According to you, what are the **top two challenges** in **transforming and impacting urban agrifood systems**?

CHALLENGES - Part 2

8. Below is a list of **challenges faced by international city networks** in their work to **transform and impact urban agrifood systems**. Please choose the **three most relevant** in your opinion and **rank them from 1 to 3**.
 - Getting political support on the importance of urban agrifood systems
 - Ensuring multi-level governance between local, regional and national governments
 - Ensuring multi-stakeholder governance, inclusive of vulnerable groups
 - Achieving cross-policy engagement (e.g. with climate, nature, health)
 - Strengthening collaboration on global advocacy
 - Mobilizing finance for initiatives on urban agrifood systems
 - Fostering regionally adapted collaboration, initiatives and focus
 - Ensuring sufficient Global South perspectives

9. What prevents the community of stakeholders working on urban agrifood systems from **better collaborating** for a collective impact? Please rate each of the below barriers from 1 (not relevant) to 5 (very relevant).
- Limited funding
 - Limited staff resources/capacity
 - Lack of vision/leadership
 - Diverging priorities/interests
 - Lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities
10. Are there any **other barriers** you would like to mention?

YOUR EXPECTATIONS

11. What are your **expectations** from the **Global Workshop**? Please select up to 3 answers.
- To explore new collaboration and partnerships
 - To discuss barriers vs enablers for an effective transformation of urban agrifood systems
 - To clarify roles and responsibilities of different organizations/stakeholders
 - To share and exchange available resources and tools
 - To explore resource mobilization and fundraising opportunities
 - To kick-off a longer term community of practice meeting regularly
 - To hear updates on ongoing projects/initiatives from other organizations/stakeholders
 - I do not have specific expectations
 - Other:
12. In your opinion, what would help the international community of urban agrifood stakeholders and cities work together **more effectively** for collective impact? Please include only suggestions which would be **realistic** to change within the next five years.
13. What would be the **top two priorities** to **work together for collective impact** within the **next five years**? (e.g. urban food insecurity; developing shared learning networks...)

YOUR LOCAL & COLLECTIVE INSPIRATIONS

14. During the workshop, we will have a session to showcase inspiring multi-stakeholder initiatives around urban food systems. Would you like to **present your local, national or global initiative** and **share a picture**? If yes, please summarize the initiative in max. two sentences and upload a picture below.
- You can **upload** the picture here.

Annex B: “Survey Results”



 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

 **ICLEI**
Local Governments for Sustainability

Urban Agrifood Systems Global Workshop

Mobilizing stakeholders towards a shared vision and collective impact

Credit: Marco Chllese



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Credit: Marco Chlese

Workshop purpose and vision ahead:



***“Working together for
collective impact”***



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Local Governments
for Sustainability



Urban Agrifood Systems Global Workshop: Your expectations



This Global Workshop is unique in its potential to address [the struggle to collaborate effectively]. Strengthening existing networks and enhancing communication are essential to facilitate regular collaboration [and] promoting policy alignment across all governmental levels (...)"



A shared understanding about who should do what; plus shared, unified resource mobilization aligned with this understanding."



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Local Governments
for Sustainability

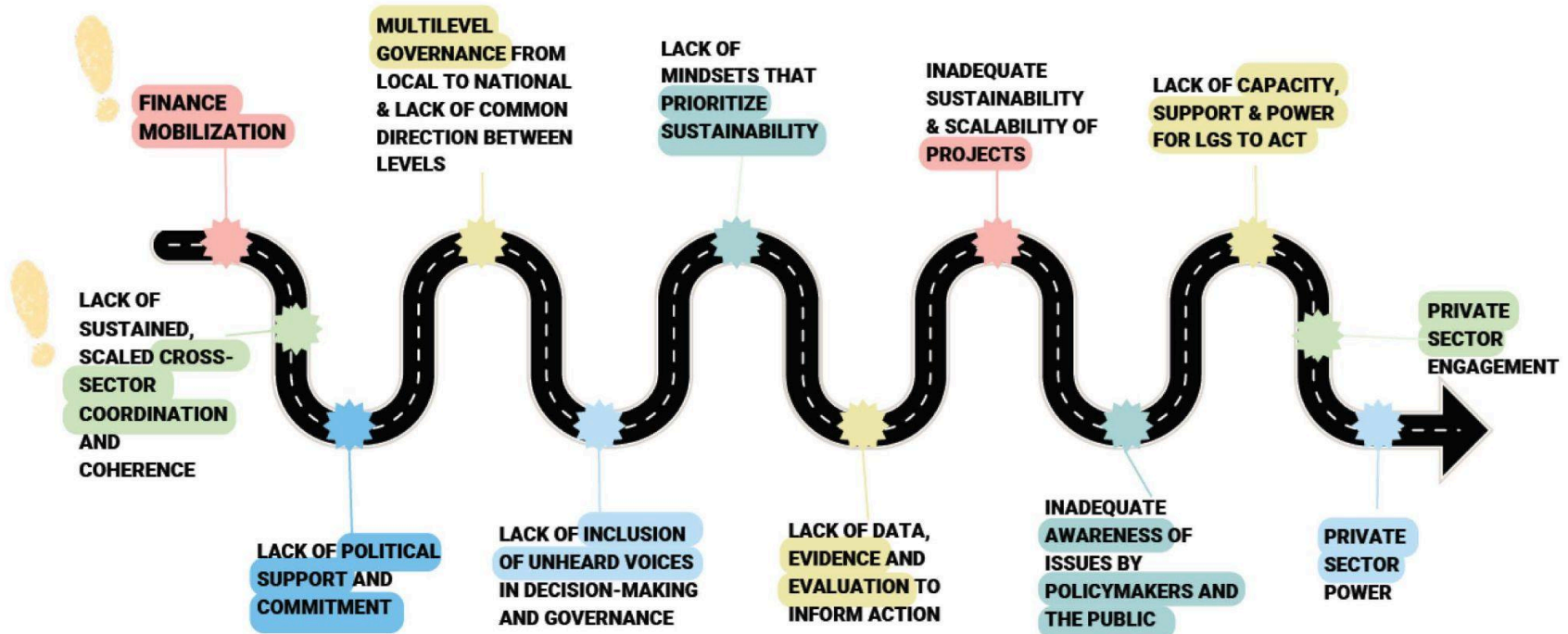


Our Collective Vision: What We Care About

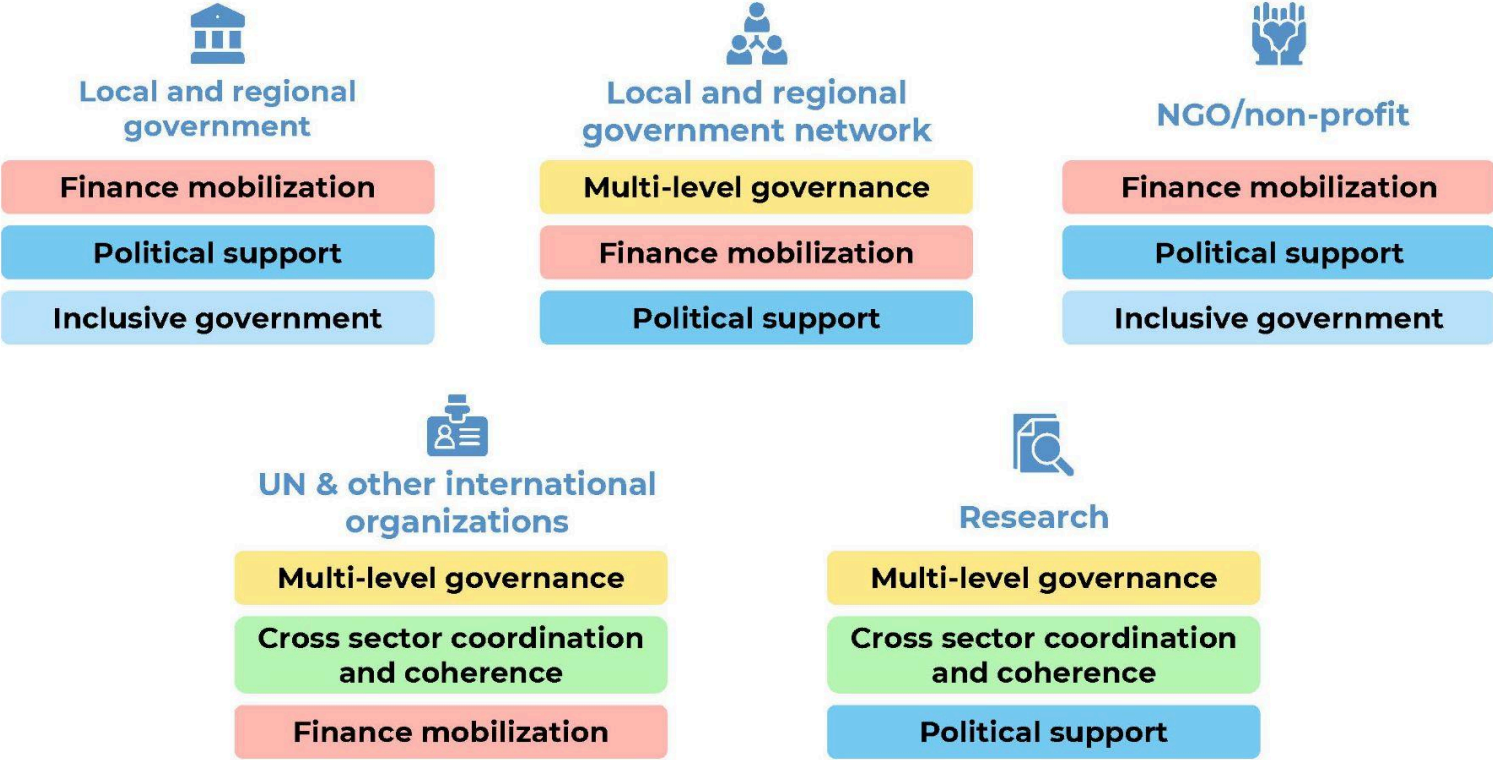
A coordinated, multi-sector approach to building sustainable, equitable, and resilient urban agrifood systems that ensure healthy food for all while tackling social, economic, and environmental challenges



But we face challenges in achieving this vision



But we face challenges in achieving this vision





Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

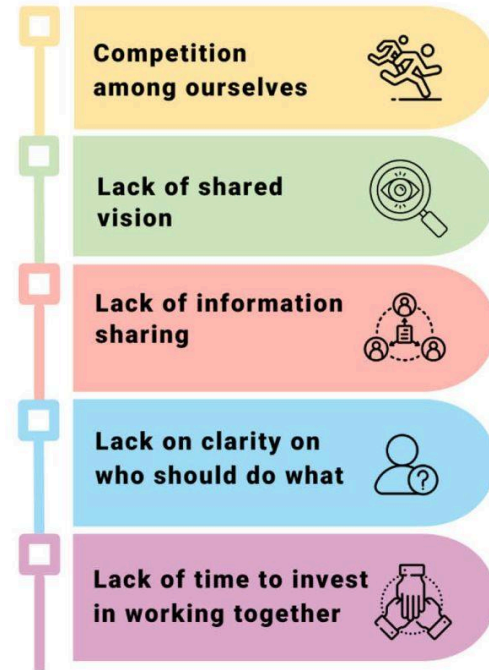


Local Governments
for Sustainability



Credit: Marco Chleese

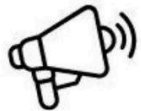
There are barriers preventing us from working better together to address those challenges



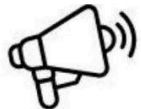
We have clear ideas on how we can collectively achieve more impact



A platform for shared learning and dialogue, like peer-to-peer, city exchanges, repository of learnings, similar cities share learnings, success stories, training



Better engagement with funding agencies to support long-term initiatives, alongside coordinated/collective fundraising efforts for shared benefits, with a clear understanding of who has what strengths



Resources for better communication, convening and facilitation between us

We have clear ideas on how we can collectively achieve more impact

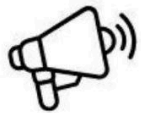


More structured coordination mechanisms like platforms, technical working groups, or trade associations. These should have a clear shared purpose and transparency, focusing on coordinating efforts, sharing knowledge, and advocacy to speak with one voice



Development of a shared vision, agenda, and roadmap/action plan with clear mandates and roles

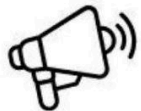
We have clear ideas on how we can collectively achieve more impact



Develop regional platforms, national networks, and platforms with greater south/north balance and language



Greater facility to translate evidence to support effective action and identify evidence-based interventions



Clarification of each other's roles, strengths, approaches, and added value to work in synergy rather than duplicate

We have clear ideas on how we can collectively achieve more impact



More support for local capacity, planning, and funding for pilot implementation at the local level



Better functioning, nimble action-oriented partnerships to address specific issues



Common use of indicator frameworks and shared metrics



Make better connections with city networks that do not work on food

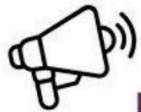
We have clear ideas on how we can collectively achieve more impact



Shared advocacy for visibility and support for national and local advocacy



Identify the concrete initiatives and challenges where we most need to work together, building on existing experiences



Better utilization of opportunities to engage online with digital tools



More regular in-person meetings



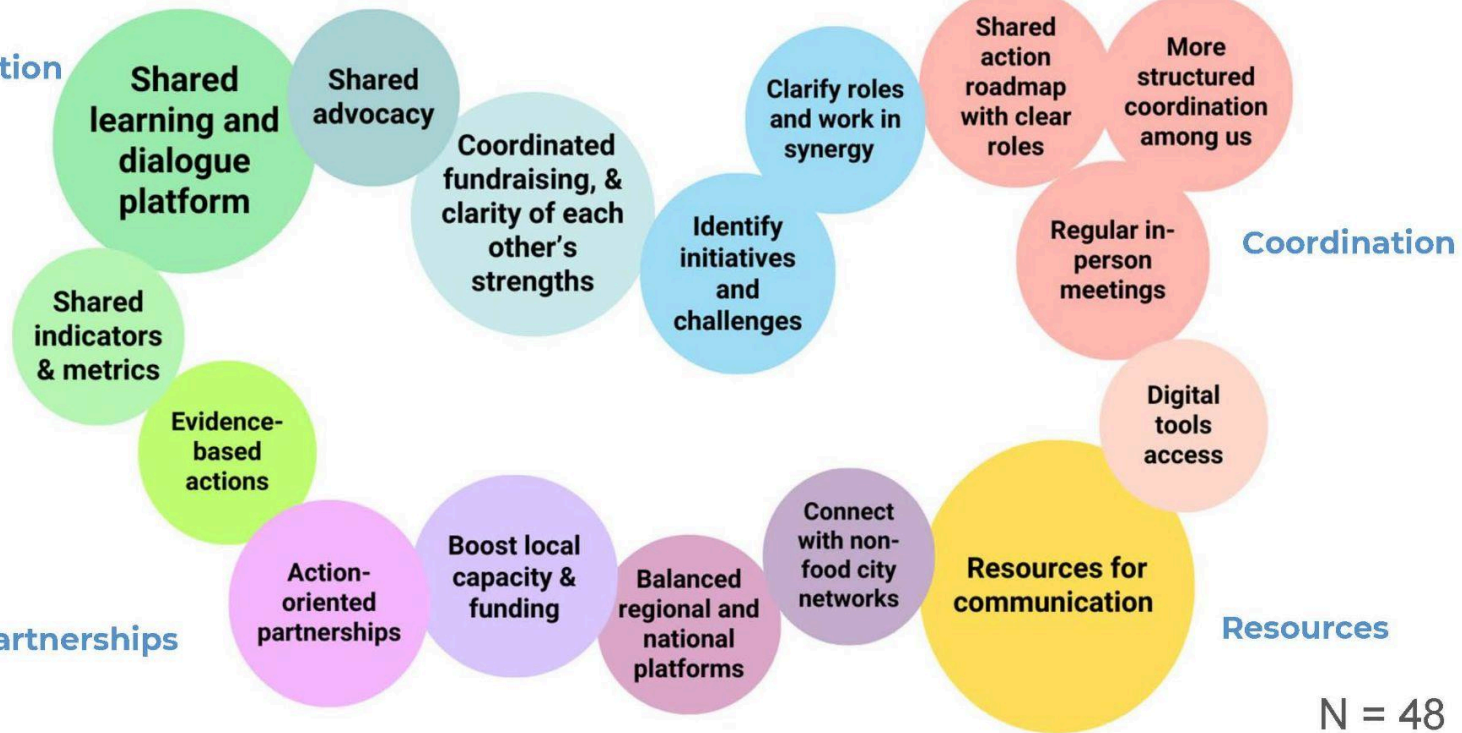
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How can we work together?

Collaboration



N = 48

Annex C: “Agenda: Urban Agrifood Systems Global Workshop”

Mobilizing stakeholders towards a shared vision and collective impact

9-11 September 2024 **FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy**

Monday, 9th September 2024

Time	Agenda item
13.30	Registration & Welcome coffee
14.30	<p>Welcome remarks: Corinna Hawkes, FAO & Peter Defranceschi, ICLEI</p> <p>Opening statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laura Aghilarre, Deputy Director General, Principal Director for general affairs and development cooperation policy orientation, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation • Sabrina Alfonsi, Councilor for Agriculture, Environment and Waste Cycle, City of Rome, Italy
15.10	Warming up: <i>Icebreaker</i>
15.20	Presentation of the vision & survey results: <i>Presentation of the vision and survey results, followed by a feedback session</i>
16.40	Get to know each other: <i>Icebreaker</i>
17.00	Wrap-up
17.30	Explore Rome’s ancient food system
19.30	Welcome Aperitivo at Food Market Campagna Amica at Circo Massimo

Tuesday, 10th September 2024

Time	Agenda item
8.15	Registration & Welcome coffee
9.15	Starting the journey: Impressions from the previous day, participants are split into smaller groups for interactive exercises.
9.45	<p>GROUP CHALLENGE 1: Each group will receive one “challenge” and will be asked to discuss concrete solutions, respective roles, and timeframes. Challenges have been jointly identified thanks to the input from the Survey.</p> <p>The challenges for this group work are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilizing finance for initiatives focused on urban agrifood systems. • Fostering common direction and policy coordination between local, regional, and national governments (multi-level governance). • Securing political awareness, commitment and support on the importance of urban agrifood systems. • Ensuring just and inclusive governance for urban agrifood systems.
11.00	Coffee break
11.30	<p>GROUP CHALLENGE 2: Each group will receive one “challenge” and will be asked to discuss concrete solutions, respective roles, and timeframes. Challenges have been jointly identified thanks to the inputs from the Survey.</p> <p>The challenges for this group work are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging the private sector for effective action on urban agrifood systems while managing the challenges associated with corporate power. • Building capacity in local governments for effective urban agrifood policy and planning. • Achieving cross sector engagement (e.g. with climate, nature and health; across government) for systemic change. • Sustaining urban agrifood systems innovations beyond project timeframes, and moving from pilots to scale.
12.45	Lunch break
14.15	Food marketplace: inspirations of collective action: Presentations of successful collective impact / multi-stakeholder initiatives, followed by two rounds of group conversations between participants and facilitators.
15.45	Coffee break

16.15	Feedback session: Presentation of the key points from the morning “Challenge” sessions
17:30	Reception on FAO rooftop terrasse & group photo

Wednesday, 11th September 2024

Time	Agenda item
8.00	Registration & Welcome coffee
9.00	<p>Roadmap planning I (stakeholder groups perspective): Reflections on the previous days discussions, with a focus on the importance of collaboration. We will emphasize why we need to collaborate, the priority challenges (what we want to achieve together), and we will clarify the purpose, and expected outcomes for the day.</p> <p>Considering the actions identified on the previous day, stakeholder groups define their roles and responsibilities, identify resource needs and concrete mechanisms for mobilization, and reach a consensus on immediate priority actions to achieve collective impact in the next 5 years.</p> <p>Questions* to be addressed are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you see our own role and responsibility in delivering these priority actions? • How should we work together collectively to take these actions? • What do you think is needed to enable us to work together effectively? • How should we monitor progress and ensure we are learning by doing? <p><i>*Questions might change depending on the conversations of the previous days.</i></p>
10.30	Coffee break
11.00	<p>Roadmap planning II (whole group perspective): Considering the actions identified on the previous day and the previous stakeholder group discussions, the whole group (community) discusses stakeholder interactions and roles for collective impact.</p> <p>Questions* to be addressed are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we work across stakeholder groups for collective impact on these priority actions? • What would we need to enable us to work across stakeholder groups more effectively? • How do we monitor progress across stakeholder groups and ensure we are learning by doing?

	*Questions might change depending on the conversations of the previous days.
12.00	Framework for collective impact: Discussing modalities and next steps to create a framework for collective impact.
12.30	Final remarks: <i>wrap up and next steps</i>
12.45	Lunch <i>(optional)</i>

Annex D: “Summaries of Challenge Sessions”

1. Mobilizing Finance for Initiatives Focused on Urban Agrifood Systems

Context and background of challenge discussed

Internationally, there is a lack of clear and sustainable financing mechanisms for urban food systems. In international forums such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the focus on climate often overshadows critical issues like healthy diets. National governments currently have little focus on urban agrifood systems. Where funding programmes exist, they support rural development, but urban food systems are often left out of funding discussions. New sources of environmental funding, for instance, rarely take into account the needs of urban food systems. Furthermore, the timeframes for existing funding are often too short, and mechanisms for direct funding to local governments are inadequate.

At the same time, cities face significant demands from their communities to improve the urban food systems but often lack the legislative authority and resources to address them. In Toronto, for instance, most funding comes from property taxes rather than income taxes, which limits the ability to drive substantial change. National and provincial governments need to recognize the importance of food security in urban settings and address the structural instability of funding for agrifood systems at the city level.

What change do we need in the next 5 years?

Stable, long-term financing mechanisms are established, enabling implementation of successful and scalable urban agrifood system initiatives.

Priority actions to achieve this change:

- **Developing financing models:** Work with development banks and national governments to establish direct funding mechanisms for cities in food systems. Longer-term financing solutions are required, particularly for African cities, alongside better collaboration and support for creating bankable projects.
- **Engaging private sector:** Providing not only funding but also technical support to scale up.
- **Advocacy:** Advocate towards national governments on the key role of cities in sustainable food systems.
- **Strengthening the ability of cities to demand and manage financial resources** relating to urban food systems (e.g. include finance experts in food-related work, build on the funding already existing, setting goals, making it measurable, and setting clear actions and budgets on this).
- There is a need to **engage international donors** and **promote South-South collaboration** to balance global representation and funding imbalances.

What can each stakeholder contribute?

- **Development Banks:** Provide direct funding to cities and local governments.
- **National Governments:** Allocate a portion of national budgets specifically for urban food systems.
- **Private Sector:** Engage in public-private partnerships and impact investment.

How does this differ from previous efforts?

- Past efforts have relied on short-term funding from development agencies, without sustainable financial models or direct city-level funding mechanisms.

2. Fostering Common Direction and Policy Coordination Between Local, Regional, and National Governments (Multi-Level Governance)

Context and background of challenge discussed

There is often a disconnect between local and national governments in financing and coordinating policies for urban food systems, resulting in fragmented efforts. National governments frequently fail to recognize the crucial role of local governments in achieving shared goals. Multi-level governance (MLG) approaches can help bridge this gap by developing integrated policy platforms, facilitating dialogue among cities, mayors, and national governments, and acknowledging the contributions of local governments to broader food system objectives. Establishing clear legislative frameworks and mandates is essential to foster inclusive governance and support collaborative, multi-level efforts in urban food policy.

What change do we need in the next 5 years?

- Common direction and clear governance frameworks that enable policy coordination, implementation and monitoring are established across local, regional, and national levels, ensuring urban agrifood systems are a priority at all levels of government.
- Long-term perspectives and planning are needed.
- Inclusive governance: citizen engagement for co-creating change through local governments, feeding back to the national level.
- The systemic approach needs to be strengthened, involving all sectors and parts of the systems.

Priority actions to achieve this change:

- **Facilitate discussions between different government levels to clarify roles and responsibilities** by hosting policy alignment workshops. Legislative advocacy is needed to **clarify mandates** for local governments, create spaces to act, and empower local governments.
- Work with national governments to **institutionalize food systems within local governance frameworks.**

- **Develop sharing mechanisms** within and between government levels to enhance data-sharing and build common knowledge.
- **Establish a coalition** to help cities connect to relevant stakeholders and solution providers to leverage existing efforts.
- Need to **map existing policies** to see what works, what needs to be improved and to inspire.

What can each stakeholder contribute?

- **Local governments:** Lead implementation of food system policies based on community needs and challenge higher level governments in relevant policies e.g. EU guidance on public procurement.
- **National governments:** Provide legislative support and resources for local food systems; take into account the diversity of needs of different cities and understand the local context; utilize data to make evidence-based policy decisions and empower actions at the local level that feed back to achieving their goals on a larger scale; Utilize coalitions to collaborate with relevant stakeholders, leveraging existing synergies and improving government-practitioner connections.
- **UN organizations including FAO:** Facilitate MLG dialogues as a neutral broker to guide policies and translate them into actions, leveraging existing platforms (e.g. of entry points: short supply chains linked to public procurement), connect global indicators to national stats dept and data reporting cycles. Listen to cities' needs, connect them to relevant data and facilitate exchanges with different government levels.
- **NGOs:** Actively contribute to shaping the coalition and ensure inclusive participation for co-creating change; engage and collaborate with different stakeholders; disseminate and facilitate greater voice as those most vulnerable in institutional spaces with multiple actors, supporting technical and capacity building support.
- **Researchers:** Facilitate data generation; create compelling evidence base to convince stakeholders to support local action.

How does this differ from previous efforts?

- Listening to cities' needs before designing actions or making decisions, taking into account specific local contexts.
- Leveraging existing platforms and efforts instead of creating new initiatives or actions.

3. Securing Political Awareness, Commitment, and Support on the Importance of Urban Agrifood Systems

Context and background of challenge discussed

Urban agrifood systems lack political recognition from both local and national leaders, making it challenging to secure commitment and resources.

What change do we need in the next 5 years?

- Urban agrifood systems are receiving significantly greater political recognition and visibility by mayors and municipal authorities, national governments, and international organizations, ensuring they are being viewed as essential components of sustainable urban development, with strong commitment from local leaders.
- Understanding of the food systems approach to be embedded across local governments
- Increased recognition by national leaders of the importance of the urban level in tackling food systems challenges, greater clarity on mandates between different levels of government, and deeper connections between national and local leaders.
- Politicians have access to data on food systems to inform decision-making (and advocates making the case to politicians).
- City governments (and non-governmental stakeholders) preserve the institutional memory of food systems work, so that awareness, commitment and support can be maintained across changes in government.
- Food-related policies are being actively implemented and monitored, not just developed.

What can each stakeholder contribute?

- **Awareness raising among leadership teams (local and national)** on the importance of urban agrifood systems, and how they contribute to addressing priority challenges.
- **Engage City Networks:** Use networks like ICLEI and C40 to promote urban agrifood systems among city leaders, including national dialogues between cities.
- **Strengthen relationships between research and policy-making:** by partnering with research actors, local governments would fill potential data gaps, ground their decisions in relevant and concrete targets and indicators, and better understand their food systems priorities in the short and medium term. Such evidence would also further convince local leaders of the importance of food systems for the broader sustainable urban development agenda.
- **Strengthened systems governance at the local level,** e.g. establishing a permanent directorate for food, or setting up a system of transferability of governance with a trusted organization or multi-stakeholder platform, to safeguard the institutional knowledge and ensure continuity in policy and project implementation.

What Can Each Stakeholder Contribute?

- **Mayors/City Leaders:** Advocate for urban agrifood systems as a critical policy area.
- **City officials:** Approach universities about the data or information they need to inform food systems work.
- **Universities:** Approach local governments about their research needs.
- **International and local funders:** Fund research to fill information and data gaps on local urban food systems.
- **National Governments:** Support urban agrifood systems through national policies and funding.
- **Civil Society:** Engage in advocacy and awareness-raising efforts; approach local governments to establish trusted partnerships.
- **City networks:** raise awareness among local leaders on the importance of food systems; map existing mandates/competencies across levels of government; facilitate multi-level dialogue between national and local leaders; organize city-to-city exchanges within and across countries so local leaders can inspire each other.

How does this differ from previous efforts?

- While urban agrifood systems have been discussed, they have not been widely prioritized in recent political agendas or supported with adequate resources.
- Food systems work in some cities has been disjointed and project dependent, with no on-going engagement by city leaders or multi-stakeholder platforms in between time-limited external funding. This means that information on what has already happened – as well as understanding of the food systems approach – tends to get lost.
- Food systems partnership between city governments and civil society is often dependent on a small number of individual champions, rather than long-lasting relationships of trust.

4. Ensuring Just and Inclusive Governance for Urban Agrifood Systems

Context and background of challenge discussed

Vulnerable and marginalized communities are often excluded from policy-making processes, leading to unequal outcomes. Defining 'equity' and 'inclusivity,' along with identifying their various levels, is essential. Equity is about who is in power, so mapping power structures within the food system - not excluding informal aspects - should be a starting point. The food system is not yet organized or transparent enough to support just and inclusive governance, requiring several preparatory steps first.

It is crucial to actively engage vulnerable communities in policy making and decision processes, from project inception to execution. This includes creating spaces for everyone

affected by food policies. Scaling up food councils in less prominent cities and strengthening urban-rural links will help ensure just and inclusive governance.

It is also important to establish links between local and national governments, mobilize financial institutions to provide sustained funding, and involve stakeholders in defining inclusivity at all governance levels. Governance structures have typically excluded vulnerable communities, leading to unequal policy outcomes and not addressing everyone's needs. Active engagement and participation of vulnerable communities in policy and decision-making processes, from the inception to the execution of the project, needs to be promoted.

What change do we need in the next 5 years?

Developing governance structures that encourage win-win strategies, breaking down silos between sectors and regions, and fostering inclusive collaboration, and adopting bottom-up approaches that include vulnerable groups, women, children, and rural communities in decision-making processes.

Priority actions to achieve this change:

- **Establish inclusive food policy frameworks:** Create food policy councils that include diverse stakeholders, including marginalized groups.
- **Strengthen multilevel governance and cross-sectoral collaboration:** Develop mechanisms for cities, rural areas, governments, and international bodies to share power and collaborate effectively and create platforms that enable stakeholders to input into project proposals, ensuring alignment and inclusivity.

What can each stakeholder contribute?

- **FAO** - Bridge different levels of governments & provide technical capacities.
- **C40** - Support cities opening up conversation with the private sector.
- **Everyone, especially local academia** - Share information, data, experiences.
- **WHO** - Shifting to a well being economy.
- **City networks & private sector** - Run pilots on the ground, try with a few.
- **Academia** - Invest in capacity building and education especially for young people.

How does this differ from previous efforts?

- Governance structures have typically excluded vulnerable communities, leading to unequal policy outcomes and not addressing everyone's needs.

5. Engaging the Private Sector for Effective Action on Urban Agrifood Systems While Managing the Challenges Associated with Corporate Power

Context and background of challenge discussed

Engaging the private sector effectively can be a tricky undertaking, especially considering different cities' needs and all the different types of private sector. Developing mechanisms to engage the private sector, from informal and small enterprises to large corporations needs to happen, as "private sector" means anything from a one-person business with a mobile street food stand to big corporations. This includes creating tools for cities to engage businesses, establishing public-private partnerships, and incentivizing sustainable practices, finding entry points for the private sector. There is a strong need to encourage private sector investment in urban agrifood systems through impact investments and promote accountability. Platforms for multi-stakeholder dialogue, including informal sector actors like street vendors, are necessary to align public and private sector goals.

What change do we need in the next 5 years?

- Engagement with relevant private sector actors guided by appropriate safeguards to manage corporate influence and ensure alignment with sustainability and equity objectives.

Priority actions to achieve this change:

- **Develop engagement toolkits:** Create toolkits for cities to engage with the private sector, keeping in mind the whole spectrum of informal and small enterprises to large corporations.
- **Establish Multi-Stakeholder Platforms:** Develop platforms for public-private dialogue on urban food systems.
- **Participatory budgeting processes** that allow citizens to directly influence how public funds are allocated (including private sector and SMEs).
- Develop **clear criteria** that evaluates private sector investment proposals and incentivize private sector companies to meet social, nutritional, and environmental goals.

What can each stakeholder contribute?

- **Private Sector:** Especially larger corporations should invest in sustainable urban agrifood systems and collaborate through public-private partnerships.
- **City Networks:** Facilitate multi-stakeholder engagement, including the informal private sector in cities.
- **National Governments:** Provide incentives for sustainable private sector involvement.

How does this differ from previous efforts?

- Previous private sector involvement has been ad hoc, without clear frameworks for accountability or inclusive engagement.

Immediate Next Steps:

1. Develop toolkits for private sector engagement in urban food systems, keeping in mind the whole spectrum of informal and small enterprises to large corporations.
2. Develop clear criteria that evaluates private sector investment proposals and incentivise private sector companies to meet social, nutritional, and environmental goals.

6. Building Capacity in Local Governments for Effective Urban Agrifood Policy and Planning

Context and background of challenge discussed

Local governments often lack the capacity, resources, and technical expertise needed for effective urban agrifood policy and planning. In order to strengthen this capacity, a mix of technical training, peer-to-peer learnings, better understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of different departments and how to work together effectively will be needed. Especially the importance of long-term capacity needs to be addressed if the changes are meant to be long-term.

What change do we need in the next 5 years?

- **Cross-department collaboration** on food systems, building on:
 - An internal mapping of city departments and how they intersect (to help identify complementarities, collaboration opportunities, and potential training needs).
 - Training on systems thinking for city staff.
 - An institutionalized mechanism (e.g. appointment of a food advocate/focal point in each relevant city department).
- **Upskilling of city staff** (both hard skills and soft skills) through technical training and peer-to-peer learning.
- **Clear indicators of success** to quantify food policy work and outcomes.
- Creation of **“infrastructure of support”** collaborating with other partners (e.g. research/academia, national city networks) to ensure institutional knowledge is not lost over time.

Priority actions to achieve this change:

- **Globally:** Stocktaking of previous needs assessments/consultations of local governments, assessing remaining gaps and learning needs.
- **Regionally/Nationally:** The creation of an academy for city officials to enhance their understanding of food systems. Capacity building should include knowing where to get resources from in order to build capacity.
- **Locally:** identify relevant stakeholders and platforms to set up an infrastructure of support for each local government, in charge of keeping institutional knowledge on food systems.
- **Locally:** An internal mapping of city departments and how they intersect to foster cross-department collaboration and integrated plannings.

What can each stakeholder contribute?

- **City governments:** Implement training programs and encourage collaboration across departments.
- **International organizations:** Provide technical support and expertise for local governments.
- **Civil society/academia:** Offer research and training resources.
- **City networks:** City networks amongst different cities can help building capacity (a more horizontal rather than vertical aspect). Activities in those networks support capacity building, peer-to-peer, and mentorship between cities.

How does this differ from previous efforts?

- Past efforts have been limited to isolated training sessions, without a comprehensive approach to building long-term capacity.

7. Achieving Cross-Sector Engagement (e.g. with Climate, Nature, and Health; Across Government) for Systemic Change

Context and background of challenge discussed

Urban food systems are interconnected with climate, health, and biodiversity, yet cross-sector engagement is limited, leading to siloed efforts. The lack of sustained cross-sector collaboration is actually one of the most significant challenges in the Urban Agrifood Systems space.

What change do we need in the next 5 years?

- Common understanding of what we are trying to achieve through cross-sectoral collaboration; developing a shared narrative.

- Opening up space for meaningful and inclusive engagement (not only across departments but also involving different stakeholders) and input from civil society on food system governance and policy, both at the national and local levels.

Priority actions to achieve this change:

- **Raising a sense of urgency and visibility** on the agenda at a global level.
- Getting **national coordination structures and strategies in place** (depending on country priority).
- Achieving cross-sectoral engagement starts with **local tangible actions** and applying a **cross-sectoral resilience approach**.
- Using **data** to create a shared, evidence-based systems narrative.

What can each stakeholder contribute?

- **National Governments:** Establish strong multi-sectoral and multi stakeholder mechanisms.
- **City Governments, city networks:** Improve the narrative around food system transformation; clear list of concrete piloting activities developed in a diverse set of global cities.
- **International Organizations:** Ensure urban food systems are part of the global agenda on climate and sustainability goals. Map countries/cities that are doing excellent cross-sectoral work; generate evidence on systems approaches and develop systems narrative.
- **FAO:** mainstreaming urban work.
- **NGOs/Academia:** Provide research on cross-sector synergies and co-benefits. Technical assistance, empowerment and inclusion around systems thinking.
- **All:** define a clear common messaging (5-10 advocacy points); Build internal/institutional trans-interdisciplinary capacity to better engage with multiple disciplines.

How does this differ from previous efforts?

- Previous initiatives have often worked in silos, without sufficient cross-sector collaboration to address interconnected challenges.

8. Sustaining Urban Agrifood Systems Innovations Beyond Project Timeframes, and Moving from Pilots to Scale

Context and background of challenge discussed

Many urban agrifood initiatives remain limited to pilot phases, often struggling to achieve long-term sustainability or broader impact. Significant food system changes require at least two cycles of 4-5-year projects. One-off initiatives rarely generate the necessary conditions for scalability. A paradigm shift is essential: by designing projects as scalable prototypes rather than pilots, cities can embed social innovation from the outset, focusing on adaptable, structural solutions that extend beyond individual short-term projects.

What change do we need in the next 5 years?

Successful urban agrifood system innovations are scaled up, embedded into long-term policy and planning, and sustained through multi-year financing.

Priority actions to achieve this change:

- Select **successful pilot projects for scaling and replication** in multiple cities.
- **Embedded long-term vision**, and business models since the beginning of the project, moving from pilots to prototypes.
- All interventions to have a **policy aspect** (not just practical interventions), **and embed actions** in annual or 5-year development plans.
- Collaborate with funders and private investors to **ensure multi-year financing** for urban food systems (including maintaining a multi stakeholder platform); in the case of seed or time-limited funding, start to think about next phase funding straight away.
- **Leverage the cross-cutting nature of food systems** to drive cross-departmental collaboration, enabling a more integrated and holistic implementation of initiatives (“assess the plans of other departments and openly talk to them on how the food strategies/initiatives could support achieving their goals”).
- Collaborating with research institutions to **monitor food data and trends** can yield valuable insights, particularly for impacts that extend beyond a projects' immediate scope. Establishing regular meetings every few years for stakeholders to exchange outcomes and share experiences can inspire innovation and enhance project effectiveness in the broader context of urban agrifood systems.
- Improved working with support organisations to analyse, take stock of, and **build on previous efforts**, and be aware of and inspired by long-term innovations elsewhere.
- **Mapping tools and technologies** - such as GIS - are used to show areas where scale-up is needed and to monitor change over time.
- Encourage the **integration of urban food system work into annual and five-year plans**. All interventions should have a policy aspect (not just practical interventions).

What can each stakeholder contribute?

- **Local governments:** Integrate urban food systems into municipal planning; engage in conversations with funders to help shape their strategies and time frames.
- **Development agencies and banks:** Provide long-term financing to scale successful projects. Become partners instead of evaluators to look at the successes and failures of the project. To look at different project lengths and longer-term strategies to ensure that the projects are integrated into existing structures. Provide technical support to scale up to NGOs, city networks, and local governments.
- **NGOs and city networks:** Facilitate knowledge exchange, such as city-to-city dialogues over lessons learned and best practices from both pilot projects and long-term initiatives; annual mapping between support organisations.

How does this differ from previous efforts?

- Most efforts have been focused on short-term, pilot-scale projects without adequate strategies for scaling or sustaining innovations, or policy change.

Urban Agrifood Systems Global Workshop

OUTCOME PAPER

