Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

GLOBAL FORUM ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

17th Annual Session of the Global Forum on Human Settlements

FAO High-Level Dialogue

Sustainable Urban Food Systems for SDGs Acceleration

15 Dec 2022 | 8.50–10.20 (GMT)

AGENDA

8.50	**Introduction** Kostas Stamoulis, Senior Advisor, FAO
8.55	**Setting the scene** • Máximo Torero, Chief Economist, FAO
09.10	**Panel discussion** • Roberta Sonnino, Professor of Sustainable Food Systems, University of Surrey • Andrea Magarini, Food Policy Director, City of Milan • Shulang Fei , Research Scientist, Institute of Urban Agriculture, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences • James Njoroge Muchiri, Deputy Governor of Nairobi
09.50	**Q&A with the audience**
10.05	**Reflections for the future** • Jane Battersby, Professor, University of Cape Town & African Centre for Cities
10.15	**Closing remarks by moderator**

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

Urbanization trends and urban food systems challenges

Today around 55 percent of the world's population already lives in urban areas. By 2050, the world's urban population is expected to nearly double, and all together 68 percent of the world's population is estimated to be urban.

At present, 70 percent of all food produced globally is already destined for consumption in urban areas, even in countries with large rural populations. As urban food consumption increases so does the weight of post-harvest "farm to fork" activities along longer value chains thus increasing food systems' footprint (*the foodprint*) on climate change.

Urban areas are characterized by **unhealthy diets** with high content of salt, sugar and fats, which contribute to high levels of overweight, and obesity with implications for health and wellbeing. In low and lower middle-income countries undernourishment is high in urban areas creating a double burden of obesity and food insecurity which policy makers are called upon to resolve.

Cities are among the main contributors to greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and food consumption has been found to be one of the main drivers of emissions, contributing to 13 percent of total emissions produced in the largest cities in 2017. Over-consumption of animal sourced foods is more common in urban compared with rural areas increasing the environmental footprint of urban food consumption patterns. **Food wasted** in urban areas contributes substantially to environmental damages by adding to GHG emissions. Estimates suggest that 8-10 percent of GHG emissions are associated with food that is not consumed and that in 2019, around 931 million tons of food waste was generated, the majority of it occurred in cities.

Towards sustainable food systems: Urban food systems as key entry points

Given their sheer size, transformation of urban food systems towards sustainability has the potential to generate numerous inter-connected socio-economic and environmental benefits. Therefore, they will be indispensable for accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Besides, as spatial integration between urban areas and their surrounding peri-urban and rural areas increases, urban food consumption patterns and food systems transformation will increasingly shape what is produced, how it is produced, processed, distributed and disposed of. Which in turn, points to a food governance system which goes beyond administrative limits to include territories including cities and their surrounding "catchment" areas. The result is increasing complexity in managing urban and territorial food systems especially as the trade-offs between sustainability targets multiply.

Objectives and expected outcomes of the High-level Dialogue

By hosting the High-level Dialogue, FAO will bring attention to and increase awareness about the importance of urban food systems in achieving the SDGs through their links to socioeconomic development and to environmental and climate change related objectives. It will facilitate the sharing of successful practices and experiences on how urban and local food governance can contribute to achieving sustainable food systems transformation.

In particular, it will:

- Highlight the most pressing challenges urban food systems are facing in broadening access to healthy diets and reducing environmental and climate change foodprint, pointing out trade-offs in achieving different targets and how those trade-offs can be addressed.
- Showcase concrete examples of successful innovative practices, approaches and policy solutions aiming at reducing urban food systems' contribution to climate impact through efficient governance and by changing urban food consumption patterns.
- Present forward-looking reflections, identify knowledge-gaps and share policy recommendations on transitioning to sustainable urban food systems.