

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF FOOD SYSTEMS FOR THE YOUTH WITH THE YOUTH

Our future depends on it!



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Changing the food system with the youth, for the youth

3 June 2021, 16.00 - 17.30, [recording](#), [Slide deck and mentimeter outcomes](#)

Youth are facing a future shaped by our successful, or failed, collective action to tackle hunger, improve access to nutritious food, combat climate change and prevent biodiversity loss. The work of the CFS is critical to address these global challenges, but young people struggle to have meaningful access to decision-making platforms, from local to global levels. The aim of this side-event was to facilitate a discussion between CFS stakeholders and young people about how youth can support the work of the CFS and how the CFS can better address the concerns of young people.

During the event, six young people [shared examples](#) of how they are already taking the initiative and working within the food system. This included perspectives from research, the private sector and civil society, showing that youth are essential stakeholders for change.

Kervelle Baird, Research officer at We Help You(th) Farm in Trinidad and Tobago: “Young people will feed our future but we must enable them to do that today.”

During an interactive discussion with the audience on the engagement with youth in the CFS, a set of recommendations were shaped. All recognized that youth engagement in the CFS is critical. By involving young people early on in the process, it will make it more likely for them to support the uptake of any outcomes of the CFS. In summary the following suggestions can be followed up by Youth, CFS and other stakeholders:

Recommendations for Youth

- Active participation: sign up for [CFS open-ended working groups](#) and participate in consultations, organise side-events and sessions or actively participate in organised sessions. Actively engage in the stakeholder groups to negotiate policy.
- Educate yourself: learn about the food system, nutrition, agro-ecology, gender equality and human rights and the work of the CFS.
- Leverage social media: Spread information to help other young people engage.
- Advocacy: Develop concrete asks, focused on policies, to create opportunities for youth in the food system. Engage in peer-to-peer advocacy. Hold political leaders accountable and set the right example by adopting a sustainable and healthy diet.
- Build coalitions and be inclusive: Liaise with youth initiatives on cross-cutting themes and social media to build inclusive networks to engage collectively. Ensure to include underrepresented groups when building new coalitions.

Recommendations for CFS members and stakeholders

- Flag opportunities to engage: Actively reach out to youth groups and coalitions to raise awareness about ongoing processes, be transparent and invite youth to engage. Liaise with young people from the planning to implementation phase. Be a champion for more youth engagement and make sure to include underrepresented groups.
- Involve Youth in Decision making: Allow for youth in decision making places such as boards.
- Create space for youth: including main and side events and organise dialogues to allow youth to share inputs and ideas.
- Capacity building and education: Support learning of youth on food systems and nutrition and human rights and provide training on the job. It is also essential to build capacity for young people in the policy space and for policy development. Include the role of the CFS in education by building partnerships with universities and schools. Consider providing mentorship and training to support youth-led start-ups.
- Provide financial resources: Including for youth-led nutrition advocacy and fund engagement for example through data costs. Create paid positions for young people to learn on the job.

Lastly, all participants were invited to either support or take part in the [pledge to change the food system](#) by the #ACT4CHANGE, #ACT4FOOD campaign.