

## **Integrate Urban and Territorial Food Governance**

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### **1. Idea for potential solution (required)**

Integrate urban and territorial food governance into the overall food systems transformation recognizing the crucial role of governments and stakeholders at different levels and their inter-relationships (nexus).

### **2. Who are the main actors that would put this action into place?**

- Policymakers (governments at all levels)
- Private sector (businesses, etc.)
- Civil Society (NGOs, etc.)
- Policy makers and stakeholders
- Local and regional governments
- National governments
- Food Consumers and Consumer Associations
- Private sector stakeholders (ie producers, distributors, retailers, processors)
- Civil society, community food leaders, food policy councils, local food networks

### **3. Where are the main areas in which this would make changes (based on the HLPE framework, illustrated in the figure below)?**

(To learn more about food systems and these terms, visit: <https://foodsystemsdashboard.org/about-food-system>)

- Food supply chains - inputs, production, storage & distribution, processing & packaging, retail & marketing
- Food environments - availability, affordability, product properties (including safety), vendor properties, food messaging
- Individual consumer factors - economic, cognitive, aspirational, situations
- Consumer behaviour
- Other: All of the above. Urban Food Systems Governance and Territorial Planning cuts across all components and stakeholders in the food system.

### **4. Within which category does this intervention most easily fall?**

Cross-cutting - Integrating urban and territorial food governance into overall food systems transformation, The intervention recognizes the interdependence of the various components of the food systems and the crucial role of different levels of governments and governance stakeholders working in a coherent and coordinated way.

It involves all the components and related stakeholders in the food system: producers, consumers, distributors, retailers etc. and therefore has potential to promote integrated and inclusive food system transformation.

**5. What would this change about food, in the eyes of consumers?**

- Availability
- Affordability
- Accessibility
- Convenience
- Desirability
- Safety
- Quality (other than Safety)

An effective food systems transformation needs to recognize the importance of urban and territorial governance in a multi-level governance approach which and, as such, it supports availability, affordability, access, safety, convenience and desirability (quality and cultural appropriateness) at all levels. It includes all components and stakeholders in the food system.

**6. Is this primarily about reducing hunger, making nutritious foods more available and affordable, or improving safety? (These are the three main areas of Action Track 1's work)**

- Reducing hunger
- Availability/affordability of nutritious foods
- Improving safety

Urban and territorial food governance facilitates poverty reduction in urban but also in rural areas through urban-rural interactions, reduces food insecurity, promotes access to nutritious foods, promotes prevention and efficient food waste management and improves food safety. Cities consume the majority of food currently and in perspective and transformation of urban food systems and consumer demand will reverberate throughout the majority of food consumed in cities.

**7. Is this idea applicable to a particular geography or type of setting (e.g., semi-arid areas, higher- or lower-income countries)? If so, please specify.**

All urban and peri-urban areas in small, intermediary and metropolitan cities .

**8. Where is this idea coming from? (Please include a citation to a document, if applicable, or the name of a person or organisation)**

The collective knowledge and richness of experiences of participants in the Urban Food Systems Working Group comprising city networks (C40 Delice Network , Global Resilient Cities Network, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, MUFPP. UCLG), Academic Institutions and other organizations (Cardiff University, Consumers International, EAT Foundation, Food Foundation, GAIN, IPES Food, Nourish Scotland, Rikolto, RUAF, The Prince's Foundation) and UN-Agencies (FAO, UN Habitat, UNCDF, UNEP, UNICEF, UNSCN, WHO)

FAO, 2021. Urban Food systems governance: current context and future opportunity  
<http://www.fao.org/3/cb1821en/cb1821en.pdf>

**9. Any other comments, including evidence or arguments in support or against.**

Food policies are usually characterized by sectoral approaches or national policies which fail to include sub-national governments. Urban and regional governments have a major role to play in food systems transformation in the face of growing importance of urban areas in the overall food consumption. Many city governments have committed themselves to prioritizing urban food systems in their policies. There are numerous examples of important actions towards sustainable urban food systems, most recently evidenced in the COVID-19 response. Therefore, to be effective national food policy frameworks affecting urban food systems should include the principles of subsidiarity and must be drafted and implemented with local and regional government engagement.

At the same time, a territorial (place-based) approach to food and food systems has been shown to bring about substantial benefits in terms of rural and urban poverty reduction and promotion of improved health and nutrition. This involves defining a functional territory from a food systems point of view and establishing the necessary formal and informal mechanisms for better coordination of policies, planning and interventions affecting the incentives and capacities of food systems actors. The territory is comprised of a number of cities and towns and their rural/agricultural catchment areas and it is a place where production, processing, transport and consumption meet. Actions within a territory have spill-over effects and facilitate an integrated, more efficient approach to policy and planning.

However exploiting the benefits of a territorial approach often runs against existing governance systems which are bounded by administrative barriers and delimitation of jurisdictions. Opportunities or “win-win” solutions and the resolution of trade-offs between costs and benefits across sectors/stakeholders are therefore lost. Employing a territorial approach to food policy and planning would address this. Thus the need for a cross-sectoral, cross-spatial and multi-stakeholder governance approach across a territory.

Mechanisms such as food policy councils (or similar multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms) can act as a consultative forum and provide advice to urban and local governments, support policy design and implementation, promote stakeholder engagement (including vulnerable populations) and facilitate monitoring and evaluation of progress in policy implementation, effectiveness, efficiency and impact. Food Policy Councils (or other similar multi-stakeholder mechanisms at the city, territorial and regional level) are effective for developing and implementing inclusive multi-sectoral urban food policy and planning strategies and in breaking down policy silos. Such approaches proved to be invaluable during the COVID-19.

Food Policy Councils, often supported and administered through local/regional government, include representatives of consumer and producer associations, civil society and community organizations, academic institutions and private sector stakeholders. These food councils could be anchored to a municipal department or could be a collaborative coalition among various municipal departments. They can also serve as an integrated governance system among a number of municipalities that are part of the same functional territory. They can also be used as a leverage to link food system transformation at local and national levels.

What is important to highlight is that these mechanisms are increasingly emerging as crucial instruments to address gaps in local policies and planning related to food but they need to be scaled up and their capacities strengthened.

Therefore these urban and territorial food governance mechanisms should be promoted at the national and global level as innovative and inclusive platforms for achieving food systems transformation.