

Promote Fresh Food Markets in Urban Areas

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1. What is the potential action that could be taken? (In one simple, clear phrase) *

Promote fresh food markets and efficient food retail environments to improve access to nutritious food in urban areas, provide markets for local producers and strengthen urban-rural linkages.

2. Additional details on potential solution (Optional but preferred)

- Efficient and accessible urban food retail distribution, including both formal and informal sectors, has an impact on both smallholder farmers and consumers and it is crucial for promoting short supply chains, facilitating access to nutritious food and promoting healthy diets for all. Together this promotes resilient urban food systems.
- Mapping the food retail environment and developing specific protocols identifying the areas with limited access to nutritious food (e.g. slum areas) could be crucial for promoting food security, identifying food desert areas and identifying areas for priority intervention.
- Mechanisms to improve fresh food markets and food retail environments could include incentives, zoning regulations, ordinances, regulatory recommendations for supermarkets, special tax regimes, mobile food vendors to reach underserved areas (e.g. slums), or promote nutritious food access around schools, food sharing facilities, transformation of vacant urban space in multi-functional food hubs etc.
- Improved digitalization and logistics support efficient short food supply chains between consumers and (small) producers (market access) and make supply chains more resilient in case of suspended operation.
- Additional needs: regional distribution networks; regular investments in markets; using available city levers to establish markets and local procurement policies, support diverse types of vendors to start and grow their businesses, and recognizing markets as inclusive public spaces.

For cities, public markets become a social venue where people can interact with farmers, connect with (the origin of) food and where public education about food can take place. Most have food waste reduction policies in place with unsold food often provided to local community organizations to provide to low income people.

3. Who are the main actors that would put this action into place?

- Policymakers (government)
- Private (businesses, etc.)
- Civil (NGOs, etc.)

4. Where are main areas in which this would make changes? (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

5. Within which category does this intervention most easily fall?

- Nutrition-sensitive agriculture
- Business incentives
- Food research, processing, technology
- Supply Chain Infrastructure
- Subsidies, transfers and taxes
- Public sector food
- Regulations and laws on nutrient content (e.g. for salt, sugar, fat)
- Food marketing (regulations, laws, practices)
- Food safety regulations, guidance, and surveillance
- International trade
- Consumer education, training, and awareness
- Cross-cutting
- Other food safety

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

- Availability
- Affordability
- Accessibility
- Convenience
- Desirability
- Safety
- Quality (other than Safety)
- Not applicable

7. Is this primarily about reducing hunger, making nutritious foods more available and affordable, or improving safety?

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

8. 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.

Fresh food markets/hubs and efficient food retail environments are applicable everywhere

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

Urban Food System Working Group (FAO, GAIN, ICLEI, C40, MUFPP, RUAF a.o.)