

INDEPENDENT FOOD SYSTEMS DIALOGUE

THEME: RE-IMAGINING
AFRICA'S FOOD SYSTEMS
TRANSFORMATION THROUGH
DATA, ADVOCACY, AND
LEADERSHIP

ONLINE
Wednesday, May 26, 2021
12:00 - 15:00 GMT

PROGRAMME
BROCHURE

WELCOME MESSAGE

Professor Amos Laar, Principal Investigator, MEALS4NCDs Project

Thank you Dr. Namukolo Covic, and Professor Anna Lartey, Curators of this regional Dialogue. Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening wherever you may be joining us from. It is an honor to welcome all of you to this Dialogue. I do this on behalf of the Convener and Co-Conveners of this Dialogue.

We have gathered here not to have fun, but to discuss very urgent and important matters. The world is on fire, and therefore Africa. Facing an unprecedented challenge of four intersecting pandemics - climate change, undernutrition, obesity/DR-NCDs, and COVID-19, urgent and decisive actions are needed.

The co-occurrence of these pandemics and their collective impact on the earth systems – particularly, our food systems, has motivated the current **“transform our food systems movement”** – globally. Home to more than half of the world’s acutely food insecure people, and with the rate of increase of overweight, obesity and other diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) alarmingly high, Africa has a unique challenge, and must not wait on the sidelines.

To address these challenges, governments are often called upon to discharge their constitutional duties – fix problems. However, to be successful, governments require inputs – including data, evidence, nudging, and support from other actors. The Dialogue Conveners pay heed.

Dialogue Conveners

- Measurement Evaluation, Accountability and Leadership Support for NCDs prevention Project (MEALS4NCDs Project) / African Food Environment Research Network (FERN)
- African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC)
- Réseau de Recherche sur les Politiques et les Systèmes Alimentaires en Afrique de l'Ouest (REPSAO)
- African Nutrition Society (ANS)
- Federation of African Nutrition Societies (FANUS)
- Coalition of Actors for Public Health Advocacy (CAPHA)
- IFPRI-led CGIAR- Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health ((A4NH)
- Rockefeller Foundation’s-led Food Systems Transformative Integrated Policy (FS-TIP)
- Drivers of Food Choice Program (DFC)
- Agriculture, Nutrition and Health Academy (ANH Academy)
- Chronic Diseases Initiative for Africa (CDIA)
- African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)

The Conveners of this Dialogue would like us to exchange ideas, reflect on the challenges and opportunities for transforming African food systems. Specially, deliberate on the role of data, advocacy, accountability, governance, and leadership in reimagining the African food systems. Why should we? Why shouldn’t we?

- The food system affects us all & is affected by us all - farmer or doctor, citizen or refugee, politician or hawker, rich or poor.
- The second reason why we should, lies in this African wise saying: *“...we ought to recognize that the unborn generation is not inheriting the future from us, we have just borrowed the present from them...”*

And so, we should see this exercise of contributing to reimagining Africa’s food systems as an exercise to re-imagine Africa’s food future, and ultimately, Africa’s future. Thus, today’s efforts will contribute to the Africa we want by 2030! 2063! & beyond. On this note, please receive my wishes for a stimulating, and a productive Dialogue

Funding Acknowledgment

The MEALS4NCDs Project (lead Convener of this Dialogue) is funded by Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Food, Environment, and Health Program—IDRC, Canada.

BACKGROUND

The world is facing an unprecedented challenge of four intersecting pandemics - climate change, undernutrition, obesity, and COVID-19 with incalculable devastating consequences for human and the planetary health, if urgent and decisive action is not taken. Regarding COVID-19, A joint statement by the International Labor Organisation (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Health Organisation (WHO) underscores its devastating impact on people's livelihoods, their health and their food systems (ILO, FAO, IFAD and WHO , 2020). The cooccurrence of these four pandemics and their collective impact on the food system has laid bare its frailty, and hence a renewed urgency to improve the food system. Of these four pandemics, malnutrition is the longest raging, and Africa is particularly hard hit. Home to more than half of the world's acutely food insecure people, and with the rate of increase of overweight and obesity and other diet-related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) alarmingly high, Africa has a unique challenge. To illustrate, between 1980 and 2015, adult overweight and obesity in Burkina Faso increased by 1400%, and by over 500% in Ghana, Togo, Ethiopia, and Benin. The existing evidence further indicates that eight of the 20 nations in the world with the fastest-rising rates of adult obesity are in Africa (GBD Collaboration, 2017). Low levels of overweight and obesity reported for countries like Ethiopia are misleading if the rates of increase are not also considered.

While the causes of the current malnutrition pandemic are complex, unhealthy diets remain one of the key contributors. In 2014, the FAO and the WHO and other United Nations (UN) agencies made it clear that the increased prevalence of malnutrition is the result of many factors including failing global food systems (FOA, 2014). Additionally, increasing dependence on unhealthy diets is linked to food system failures to supply healthy and safe food options that are affordable, accessible, and feasible for all (Freudenberg 2014). Participants of the FAO Future of Food Symposium in June 2019 agreed that *"ending hunger and malnutrition will not be accomplished without transforming the global food system ..."*. Governments are often called upon to ensure that such transformations happen. The role of governments in protecting, promoting, and assuring the health of their citizenry (including freedom from malnutrition) is grounded, primarily, in national legislations, but also local policies, and international conventions. To be successful, however, governments require inputs – including data, evidence, nudging, and support from other actors. In response to this call for partnership and a collaboratively delivered response, the UN Secretary-General has called for a Food Systems Summit in September 2021. The Summit will articulate and adopt an actionable, integrated plan for food systems transformation.

To contribute to transforming Africa's food systems, the Measurement Evaluation, Accountability and Leadership Support for NCDs prevention Project (MEALS4NCDs Project), the African Food Environment Research Network (FERN) and other African Regional Actors - including the African Population and Health Research Center, Réseau de Recherche sur les Politiques et les Systèmes Alimentaires en Afrique de l'Ouest", African Nutrition Society, Federation of African Nutrition Societies, Coalition of Actors for Public Health Advocacy, International Food Policy Research Institute's Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health, Rockefeller Foundation's Food Systems Transformative Integrated Policy, Drivers of Food Choice Program, Agriculture, Nutrition and Health Academy, the Chronic Diseases Initiative for Africa, and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) are co-convening this Regional Independent Food Systems Dialogue. The event will offer a platform for diverse food systems actors to *exchange ideas and reflect on the challenges and opportunities for transforming African food systems*. Specially, participants will deliberate on the role of data, advocacy, accountability, governance, and leadership in reimagining the African food systems.

DIALOGUE PURPOSE

- To discuss the role of data, advocacy, accountability, governance, and leadership in reimagining the African food systems.
- To identify and prioritize policy and practice asks for transforming African Food Systems by 2030

DISCUSSION STARTER PAPERS FOR DIALOGUE FACILITATORS

Track 1: Data: The Role of measurements (data) in Africa's Food Systems Transformation

Data is often regarded as *“the lifeblood of decision-making and the raw material for accountability”* (UN, 2015). Data – whether research, monitoring and evaluation evidence, development data, big data, close or open data are essential for setting development targets, and monitoring their progress. Data has thus been identified as a prerequisite for delivering the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDSN, 2015), and therefore food systems transformation. This Track of the Dialogue focuses on data because, the availability, timeliness, quality, and overall usability of data are crucial for food systems transformation. Yet several data-related impediments to food systems transformation currently exist. These need to be addressed. Referred to as missing pieces of food systems transformation (Kennedy et al 2021), most of these challenges are data-related. For example, lack of data to establish true cost accounting of food, or true cost of diets is a huge challenge. An accurate accounting of costs and savings is necessary to evaluate the utility of various policy options in agriculture, food, and nutrition. For example, what do we know about the costs and benefits of regenerative agricultural practices to sequester GHGs and reduce use of water, topsoil, and pesticides if widely implemented in Africa? What are the incentives in business innovations to create healthier processed and packaged foods that reduce NCDs when implemented in Africa? The Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems in its 2015 report identified related challenges making it difficult in measuring and improving the healthiness of the food systems. They include: Few countries currently collect agricultural and food system data; lack of statistical systems available to collect or analyze data; and no countries are currently using empirical data to measure the nutritional impact of national agricultural and food policies accurately (Global Panel, 2015).

Currently many African countries struggle to respond to the increasing demand for data required to monitor progress towards the SDGs. Responding to this global nutrition data challenges, the Global Nutrition Report identified the need for a ‘data revolution’ and introduced the nutrition data value chain as a framework for identifying actions and investments to improve data availability and use (see Fig 1). Following this, several ongoing global and country-specific efforts to strengthen the nutrition data value chain have been highlighted (Piwoz et al 2019) and include:

- in-country mechanisms for priority-setting and data coordination
- operational guidance for strengthening nutrition data systems
- capacity development at multiple levels
- dissemination of knowledge and experience
- fostering a culture of data use and sharing

Others have indicated that Open Data can help address the challenge of data poverty. Yet others talk about the potential of Big Data and Big Data Analytics to improve our understanding of our progress towards food systems transformation. For example, the private sector is deploying Big Data analytics in consumer profiling, personalized services, and predictive analysis in marketing, advertising and management. New sources of data - such as satellite data, new technologies, and new analytical approaches, if applied responsibly, can enable more agile, efficient, and evidence-based decision-making and can better measure progress toward food systems transformation. For instance, it has been suggested that to track progress toward achieving SDG2 (Zero Hunger), crowdsourcing or tracking of food prices listed online can help monitor food security in near real-time; while online search patterns or e-commerce transactions can reveal the pace of transition to energy efficient products (SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production). How is Africa positioning itself to exploit the value of data in transforming and monitoring its food systems? A recent Tweet from the UN Food Systems Secretariate nicely characterizes the value of data in this discourse. *“To think about systems transformation without data is like planning a voyage without destination or roadmap”*. Africa should not embark on this food systems transformation voyaged without a roadmap.

Fig. 1. The Nutrition Data Value Chain.



A global nutrition data ecosystem characterized by strong leadership, consensus on data priorities and capacity to generate, analyze and use data, analytics, and evidence is needed to tackle malnutrition in all its forms and and monitor progress towards SDGs and global nutrition goals.

Source: DataDENT, 2019.

Track 2 - The role of Advocacy and Accountability Science in Africa's Food Systems Transformation

Introduction

Food systems have been described as complex – comprising the activities related to the production, storage, processing, trade and marketing, preparation, consumption of food and the outcome of these activities (HLPE, 2017). Activities within food systems are driven by a range of actors from both government and private sector, including farmers, food manufacturers, retailers, traders, consumers, and non-governmental organizations. Today, like in many regions of the world, food systems in Africa fail to deliver sustainable healthy diets - presenting significant risks to both human and planetary health. There is now wide recognition that transforming food systems requires integrated and practical approaches that consider all the activities, the context in which activities occur and the actions of actors within a food system (HLPE, 2017; UNEP, 2019). This paper highlights *the role of advocacy and accountability science in achieving more healthy, sustainable, and equitable food systems for Africa*.

Importance of advocacy and accountability science in improving food systems

Advocacy – Advocacy has been defined as *“a process by which individuals or groups aim to influence the behaviour, relationships, actions, activities, agendas, policies and/or practices of target actors for a particular cause or goal, within political, economic and social systems”* (de Toma, 2018). In the context of food systems transformation, advocacy could potentially influence all food system activities and actions of all actors. For example, advocacy can help reframe food system policies, including food and nutrition policies, market-driven policies, recommend regulatory changes for practices with negative externalities and support the creation of private sector/industry standards to protect public health and promote environmental sustainability (Lobstein et al., 2013; Brinsden & Lang, 2015). Other advocacy approaches that could catalyse transforming food systems include building stakeholder coalitions and alliances to challenge political barriers and undesirable commercial and economic interests of different food system actors (Brinsden & Lang, 2015; Cullerton et al., 2018). Stakeholders at the centre of advocating for food systems transformation can include civil society, non-governmental organizations, academia, media, community groups, distribution networks and trade associations.

Lessons from advocacy efforts which resulted in the successful restriction of the marketing of breastmilk substitutes in some countries can serve as valuable models to drive food systems transformation. Agricultural diversification in Zambia represents another best practice example where effective advocacy resulted in policy change to support sustainable and equitable diets and tackle malnutrition. An advocacy partnership between Zambian civil society organizations and Hivos, an international NGO, led to eliminating government subsidies only for maize and cover other diverse crops. Agricultural diversification is now a key pillar of Zambia's 7th National Development Plan (2017–2021), with groups such as smallholder farmers providing feedback to the government on its implementation (Hivos & IIED, 2020).

Accountability Science – Kraak and colleagues (Kraak et al., 2014) describe accountability as a process that *“entails individuals or stakeholders answering to others empowered with authority to assess how well they achieve specific goals and enforce policies, standards or laws to improve actions and outcomes”*. In order to drive transformation, all food systems actors ought to be held accountable for the impact of their actions, as well as their commitment to achieving food system goals. Governments could hold the private sector to account, and civil society could hold both government and private sector actors to account, including identifying, preventing and addressing conflicts of interests between government and private sector actors (Swinburn et al., 2015; Gillespie & Nisbett, 2019). Stakeholders involved in holding food system actors to account could use a recently proposed four-step accountability framework that includes taking the account (assessment), sharing the account (communication), holding to account (enforcement), and responding to the account (improvements) (Kraak et al., 2014). Accountability requires metrics to measure and track the impacts of actors’ activities, monitor progress, and use the information to meet food system goals (Nugent et al., 2015; Swinburn et al., 2015). Different tools such as the Access to Nutrition Index that tracks food company practices and a monitoring framework developed by the International Network for Food and Obesity/NCDs Research, Monitoring and Action Support (INFORMAS) can facilitate accountability among food system actors—particularly governments and food corporations (Swinburn et al., 2015).

Advocacy and accountability are relevant approaches that offer many opportunities to support transforming current food systems in Africa. In his eloquent essay titled *“Accountability for Science and the Science of Accountability”* Feuer (2016) contributes to the question of why social science, and for that matter, science should matter in ensuring accountability. He discusses rationales for accountability systems for social science and problems of implementing them, especially through the use of (sometimes dubious) metrics in a highly politicized climate for science funding. Improved accountability for science requires, according to Feuer, a scientific approach to the study of accountability – accountability science. *“As democracy rests on holding politicians accountable for their errors of judgment or corrupt practices; commercial enterprises are accountable to clients/consumers, trade unions to their members, and professors to their students and peers, so should science”*. The call for transparent monitoring of food systems actions could not be louder.

Track 3 - The Role of Governance & Leadership in Africa’s Food Systems Transformation

Introduction

Governance in the context of food systems refers to “processes and, actor constellations and institutions that shape decision making and activities related to the production, distribution and consumption of food” (van Bers et al 2016). Governance of food systems is multi-dimensional, and ranges from governance of natural resources to commodities, products, and socio-economic aspects. It extends beyond the formal functions of government, to include markets, networks, communities, and non-state actors such as industries and civil society organisations; highlighting the multi-stakeholder power relations which are key to any transformative change in food systems (van Bers et al 2019). To meet the complex challenge of transforming Africa’s food systems, governance plays a critical role in facilitating and supporting transformative practices and sustenance of collective actions.

In most policy fora, the lens of leadership is directed towards high-level political leadership (governance), but research has also now highlighted the importance of the role of individuals working at ground and executive levels, who collectively contribute to the functioning of food systems leadership (Nisbett et al 2015). These individuals may be categorized as decision makers (e.g. heads of ministries, nutrition champions), influencers (e.g. policy entrepreneurs) and clients (supporters) (Heaver, 2005). In line with the African Nutrition Leadership Programme's (ANLP) mantra of leading from where you stand, ultimately, we all have a leadership role to play via participation, demanding as well as exhibiting accountability in our individual and collective endeavors to transform food systems.

Importance of Governance & Leadership transforming food systems

In Africa, strides have been made in leveraging the role of leadership in food systems via initiatives such as the UN's REACH and the SUN Movement, the ANLP, the African Development Bank's African Leaders for Nutrition (ALN), and Action Against Hunger's support for Nutrition Champions in West Africa, which seek to recruit and build the capacity of leaders to promote healthy, equitable and sustainable nutrition on the continent. More evidence is seen in countries such as Ethiopia and Zambia, where strong leadership (government, coordination bodies, civil society, nutrition professionals) has raised awareness of multi-sectorality of food systems and improved coordination and implementation (Gillespie, et al 2017).

Elsewhere, it has been documented e.g. in Stories of Change in Nutrition that, leadership by governments, civil society and private sectors through advocacy, policy formulation, coordination and implementation impact nutrition (Nisbett et al 2016). For instance, strong leadership by the Brazilian government led to the success of the *zero hunger project* which has been touted as one of the model programs to eradicate poverty and hunger globally (da Silva, 2019) decisive leadership by the Finnish government through the *North Karelia Project* where dairy farmers also became berry farmers led to 80 percent reduction in cardiac death and great improvement in overall health of the population (Puska 2002).

In Chile, the leadership of Senator Guido Girardi, author of the Chilean Nutritional Labelling and Advertising Law, Republic of Chile has led to the improvement of the food environment in the country. The law obliges all schools to include nutrition education in their curricula. It also prohibits the Government from procuring products with black labels (so labelled because of their unhealthy nutritional content). Today, all institutions are required to implement the recommendation of serving of five fruits and vegetables a day as well as to support productive value chains taking into consideration local production, procurement and small farmers while avoiding the production and utilization of ready to eat food. Recent evaluations found that implementation of the Chilean Nutritional Labelling and Advertising Law has resulted in 68 percent of people changing their eating habits and 20 percent of the industry modifying their products. A similar law has been created in Peru and Uruguay, and Mexico, Colombia and Brazil are making progress in developing similar laws.

However, challenges exist and must be addressed. The power relations and vested interests emanating from the sheer number of diverse stakeholders in food systems, requires a systems approach that disentangle competing interests and identify strategic leverage points for supporting sustainable food systems innovations at policy and practice level (Arslan et al 2020). The 2021 IFAD Framework for Food Systems Transformation lists the following as key properties of transformative food systems governance and leadership.

- Adaptive capacity for responding to changes and shocks
- Interfaces between formal and informal food systems
- Transparent spaces for deliberation to support co-innovation between food system stakeholders.

References

- Arslan, A. et al. IFAD RDR 2021 - Framework for the Analysis and Assessment of Food Systems Transformations.
- Brinsden, H., & Lang, T. (2015). An introduction to public health advocacy: reflections on theory and practice. The Food Research Collaboration policy brief.
- Cullerton, K., Donnet, T., Lee, A., & Gallegos, D. (2018). Effective advocacy strategies for influencing government nutrition policy: a conceptual model. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 15(1), 83. doi:10.1186/s12966-018-0716-y
- da Silva JG. From Fome Zero to Zero Hunger. 2019. Puska P. Nutrition and global prevention on non-communicable diseases. *Asia Pacific journal of clinical nutrition* 2002; 11: S755-S8.
- de Toma, C. (2018). Advocacy Toolkit: People centered advocacy for a more sustainable food system. FAO. ICN2 International Conference on Nutrition: better nutrition, better lives. 19–21 November 2014, Rome. Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization; 2014. <http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/icn2/en/>
- Freudenberg, N., 2014. *Lethal but legal: corporations, consumption, and protecting public health*. Oxford University Press.
- GBD Obesity Collaborators. Health effects of overweight and obesity in 195 countries over 25 years. *New England Journal of Medicine* 2017; 377(1): 13-27.
- Gillespie, S., & Nisbett, N. (2019). Governance and leadership in agri-food systems and nutrition. In *Agriculture for improved nutrition: Seizing the momentum*. Chapter 12.
- Fan, Shenggen; Yosef, Sivan; Pandya-Lorch, Rajul (Eds.). Wallingford, UK: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and CABI. <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738coll2/id/133094>.
- Gillespie, S. & van den Bold, M. Stories of Change in nutrition: An overview. *Global Food Security* vol. 13 1–11 (2017).
- Global Panel (2015) Improved metrics and data are needed for effective food system policies in the post-2015 era. London.
- Heaver, R. Strengthening Country Commitment to Human Development: Lessons from Nutrition. (2005).
- Hivos and International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). https://hivos.org/assets/2018/06/advocacy_toolkit.pdf.
- Hivos, & IIED. (2020). A food systems assessment of the Sustainable Diets for All program in Uganda and Zambia. Hivos and International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

- HLPE. (2017). Nutrition and food systems. A report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security, Rome.
- Joint statement by ILO, FAO, IFAD and WHO on the impact of COVID-19 on people's livelihoods, their health and our food systems 13 October 2020
<https://www.who.int/news/item/13-10-2020-impact-of-covid-19-on-people's-livelihoods-their-health-and-our-food-systems>
- Kennedy, E., Webb, P., Block, S., Griffin, T., Mozaffarian, D. and Kyte, R., 2021. Transforming Food Systems: The Missing Pieces Needed to Make Them Work. *Current Developments in Nutrition*, 5(1), p.nzaa177.
- Kraak, V. I., Swinburn, B., Lawrence, M., & Harrison, P. (2014). An accountability framework to promote healthy food environments. *Public Health Nutrition*, 17(11), 2467-2483. doi:10.1017/S1368980014000093
- Lobstein, T., Brinsden, H., Landon, J., Kraak, V., Musicus, A., & Macmullan, J. (2013). I NFORMAS and advocacy for public health nutrition and obesity prevention. *Obes Rev*, 14 Suppl 1, 150-156. doi:10.1111/obr.12083
- Nisbett, N., Wach, E., Haddad, L. & El Arifeen, S. What drives and constrains effective leadership in tackling child undernutrition? Findings from Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India and Kenya. *Food Policy* 53, 33–45 (2015).
- Nisbett N, Wach E, Haddad L, El-Arifeen S, Reddin S. Championing nutrition: effective leadership for action. *Nourishing Millions: Stories of Change in Nutrition* International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Washington, DC 2016.
- Nugent, R., Levin, C., Grafton, D., Fanzo, J., Remans, R., & Anderson, C. L. (2015). Indicators for nutrition-friendly and sustainable food systems. In *Global Nutrition Report 2015: Actions and accountability to advance nutrition and sustainable development*. Chapter 7. Pp. 85-96. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). <http://ebrary.ifpri.org/cdm/ref/collection/p15738coll2/id/129442>.
- Piwoz, E., Rawat, R., Fracassi, P., Secretariat, S.M. and Kim, D., 2019 Strengthening the Nutrition Data Value Chain for Accountability and Action.
https://sightandlife.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/SightandLifeMagazine_2019_Data_in_Nutrition_StrengtheningtheDataValueChain-AccountabilityandAction.pdf
- SDSN (2015), "Data for development: A needs assessment for SDG monitoring and statistical capacity development", <http://unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Data-for-Development-Full-Report.pdf>
- Swinburn, B., Kraak, V., Rutter, H., Vandevijvere, S., Lobstei, T., Sacks, G., Gomes, F., Marsh, T., & Magnusson, R. (2015). Strengthening of accountability systems to create healthy food environments and reduce global obesity. *The Lancet*, 385(9986), 2534-2545. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(14)61747-5
- UN 2015 Big Data for Sustainable Development. <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/big-data-for-sustainable-development>
- UNEP. (2019). Collaborative Framework for Food Systems Transformation. A multi-stakeholder pathway for sustainable food systems. United Nations Environment Programme.
- van Bers, C. et al. Advancing the research agenda on food systems governance and transformation. *Curr. Opin. Environ. Sustain.* 39, 94–102 (2019).1–16 (2020).
- van Bers, C. et al. Transformation in governance towards resilient food systems. CCAFS Working Paper www.ccafs.cgiar.org (2016).

PROGRAMME

Time	Session	Who?	Purpose
	Opening Plenary		
12.00	Call to order	Dr. Namukolo Covic	Share purpose and format of the overall Dialogue
12.05	Welcome and Introductions	Prof. Amos Laar	Welcome participants to Dialogue; Introduce Dialogue Co-Conveners
12.10	The UN Food Systems Summit: Essence and expectations (Focus on Africa)	Ms. Bibi Giyose	Share how Africa is positioning herself for UN Food Systems Summit and Food Systems Transformation in the continent
12.15	Food Systems – Framing and Context	Prof. Anna Larrey	Provide African context and facilitate shared understanding of Food Systems
12.45	Role of data, advocacy, accountability, governance, and leadership in FS transformation	Dr. Samuel Oti	Share critical role of MEALS in FS transformation
	Breakout Room Transitioning and Logistics		
13.00	ROOM 1[A &B] Data (measurements & evaluations) & food systems transformation	Facilitators & Participants	In this breakout rooms, participants will discuss the role data, advocacy, accountability, governance, and leadership can play in transforming the African food systems
	ROOM 2 [A & B] Advocacy, Governance, Accountability Science & food systems transformation	Facilitators & Participants	
	ROOM 3[A &B] Leadership & food systems transformation	Facilitators & Participants	
	Feedback Plenary		
14.30	Feedback from breakout sessions	Moderated by Dr. Namukolo	Identify top policy and practice asks needed for food systems transformation
14.50	Recommended key actions	Dr. Namukolo Covic	Highlight key policy and practice asks from breakout sessions
15.00	Closing and next steps	Prof. Francis Zotor	Outline next steps and actions required post Dialogue

CURATORS



Professor Anna Larrey
Professor of Nutrition,
University of Ghana
Immediate past Director
of Nutrition, FAO, Rome

Dr. Namukolo Covic
President of the African
Nutrition Society.
International Food Policy
Research Institute (IFPRI)
Ethiopia



FACILITATORS



Prof. Linley Chiwona-Karlton
Associate Professor in Rural Development, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. President Association of African Agricultural Professionals in the Diaspora - Europe (AAAPD-E)



Dr. Robert Ackatia-Armah
Head of Nutrition at WFP, Uganda



Dr. Habiba Hassan-Wassef
Formerly Senior Staff of WHO. International Expert in Health and Nutrition Policy in Sustainable Development. Trustee, African Nutrition Society. Vice-President, Africa Society of Mycotoxicology



Mr. Peiman Milani
Consultant Rockefeller Foundation & Member, Food System Transformative Integrated Policy (FS-TIP)



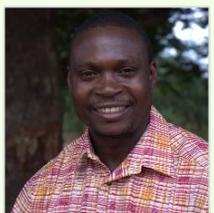
Dr. Maysoun Mustafa
Scientific Programme Manager, Science for Society Directorate, Science Foundation Ireland



Prof. Ngozi Nnam
Professor of Community and Public Health Nutrition, University of Nigeria. President, Federation of African Nutrition Societies (FANUS)



Prof. Saa Dittoh
Agricultural and Food Systems Economist, West African Centre for Water, Irrigation and Sustainable Agriculture (WACWISA), University for Development Studies, Ghana.



Dr. Robert Fungo
Lecturer at the Department of Food Technology and Human Nutrition, Makerere University School of Food Technology



Prof. Francis Zotor
Professor of Public Health Nutrition University of Health and Allied Sciences, Ghana



Prof. Michelle Holdsworth
National Research Institute for Sustainable Development (IRD)



Prof. Amos Laar
Associate Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, University of Ghana



Ms. Boitshepo Bibi Giyose Senior Advisor, Food and Nutrition Security, African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)



Dr. Samuel Oji Oti, MD PhD
Senior Program Specialist at Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC)



Prof. Daniel Sellen
Professor, Department of Anthropology and Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto

LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE



Ms. Akua Tandoh
Project Associate
Doctoral Student
LOC - Member



Ms. Krystal Rampalli, MPH
Ph.D. Candidate
University of South Carolina
Arnold School of Public Health
LOC - Member



Mr. Gideon Senyo Amevinya, MPH
Monitoring and Evaluation
Specialist
LOC - Member



Mr. Silver W. H. Nanema
Research Assistant
LOC - Member



Dr. Phyllis Addo
Postdoctoral Fellow
LOC - Member



Mr. Emmanuel Hammond
Information Specialist
Infoconsult, Accra
LOC - Member



Ms. Akosua Pokua Adjei
Master of Public Health
University of Ghana
LOC - Member



Mr. Kasim Abdulai, RD
Assistant Lecturer
University of Cape Coast, Ghana
LOC - Member



Dr. Phyllis Ohene-Agyei
Public Health Doctor
LOC - Member



Ms. Pearl Aovare, MPH
University of Ghana
LOC - Member



Mr. Awal Mohammed
Doctoral Student
School of Public Health
University of Ghana
LOC - Member



Prof. Amos Laar
Associate Professor
School of Public Health
University of Ghana
LOC - Chair

CONVENERS

The Dialogue is convened by the Measurement, Evaluation, Accountability, and Leadership Support for NCDs (MEALS4NCDs) Prevention Project /African Food Environment Research Network (FERN) - in partnership with the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), Réseau de Recherche sur les Politiques et les Systèmes Alimentaires en Afrique de l'Ouest (REPSAO), African Nutrition Society (ANS), Federation of African Nutrition Societies (FANUS), Coalition of Actors for Public Health Advocacy (CAPHA), IFPRI-led CGIAR- Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health ((A4NH), Rockefeller Foundation's-led Food Systems Transformative Integrated Policy (FS-TIP), Drivers of Food Choice Program (DFC) Agriculture, Nutrition and Health Academy (ANH Academy), Chronic Diseases Initiative for Africa (CDIA), & the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)

MEALS4NCDs

The Measurement, Evaluation, Accountability, and Leadership Support for NCDs Prevention Project (MEALS4NCDs) is a collaboration funded by The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Food, Environment, and Health Program—IDRC, Canada. This project is focused on measuring and supporting public sector actions that create healthy food marketing and food provisioning environments for children and adolescents in Ghana so as to prevent obesity nutrition-related NCDs. The project currently convenes the Africa Food Environment Research Network (FERN). Central to Africa FERN initiative is the threefold purpose of 1) building research capacity for innovative food environment research in Africa; 2) improving South-South and North-South partnerships for robust implementation of food environment research and practice in Africa and 3) sustaining dialogue around current and future needs for food environment research in Africa.

The African Population and Health Research Center

The African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) is a leading Africa-based, African-led, international research institution headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, with a regional office in Dakar, Senegal. Our researchers are contributing to the body of evidence about critical issues in population health and wellbeing, impeding Africa's development to provide strong direction and recommendations to policy- and decision-makers at all levels. APHRC also aims to enhance the use of the evidence generated by decision-makers for policy and programming at the local, national and regional level.

The RECAP project by APHRC aims to identify context-relevant priority actions that promote a healthy food environment as a strategy to enhance healthy dietary patterns/practices and prevent nutrition-related non-communicable diseases (NR-NCDs) in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The project has four objectives: i. To assess gaps, barriers and facilitators to developing and implementing public food policies and government actions, ii. To assess the frequency and nature of unhealthy food and beverage marketing to children, the power of promotions on television, in stores, and in and around schools, iii. To estimate the cost of inaction for selected NR-NCD policies, and iv. To assess the legal and administrative feasibility of adopting and implementing context-specific NR-NCD interventions.

REPSAO

REPSAO "Réseau de Recherche sur les Politiques et les Systèmes Alimentaires en Afrique de l'Ouest" has been implemented in 2019. REPSAO is a platform of stakeholders including researchers, public policy makers and community actors that aims to develop research-action on healthy food environments policy and food system and to stimulate a regional dynamic around this topic in West Africa. The network has defined an agenda of priority research topics and actions that will guide policy-making decision and development of strategic plans in nutrition, health and environmental sustainability.

African Nutrition Society

Established in 2008, the African Nutrition Society (ANS) is a leading continental professional society of scientists working in the fields of nutrition, food science, agriculture, health, and related disciplines. Amongst others, the society has the goal to strengthen human capacity needed for nutrition policy, programming, and implementation in our continent.

The Federation of African Nutrition Societies

The Federation of African Nutrition Societies (FANUS) is a conglomeration of African Nutrition Societies with the aim of promoting, sustaining and improving nutrition security in Africa. The vision of FANUS is to enhance the visibility, relevance and functionality of the National Nutrition Societies in Africa so that they can advance nutrition science and positively change the nutrition landscape of Africa. FANUS is a non-profit organization with member countries from all over Africa. FANUS promotes networking and interaction amongst her member societies through conferences, workshops, seminars, training programmes and educational courses.

Coalition of Actors for Public Health Advocacy

The "Coalition of Actors for Public Health Advocacy (CAPHA)" is a public interest coalition that brings together both state and non-state actors to advocate for public health. CAPHA is planning a launch of an advocacy campaign to create a favorable environment for policy action and buy-in for food environment policies in Ghana. The current focus is advocacy support for the regulation of predatory commercial practices targeting children (specifically regulating food marketing and provisioning environments of children).

ANH Academy

The Agriculture, Nutrition and Health (ANH) Academy brings together researchers, practitioners and policymakers working for better nutrition and health through improved agriculture and food systems. With over 5000 members from 140 countries, the ANH Academy is a global network and platform for sharing research and evidence, capacity strengthening and collaboration across diverse disciplines and sectors. Membership is free. Visit www.ANH-Academy.org

A4NH/IFPRH

The IFPRI-Led CGIAR Research Program on Agriculture for Nutrition and Health (A4NH) begins with consumption – of healthy, affordable, and safe foods – rather than supply, offering an innovative perspective on the relationship between agriculture, nutrition, and health through research that strengthens the knowledge base and new partnerships that lead to real outcomes. A4NH places strong emphasis on integrating gender and equity, as well as evaluation and impact assessment into its research, offering specific methods to support research and development by others. As CGIAR's only research program on nutrition and health, A4NH operates as a lens, with a particular focus on the system-level outcome of improving food and nutrition security for health. Recognizing the magnitude of the task, A4NH is led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and managed by a group of four other CGIAR Research Centers and two academic institutions.

Food System Transformative Integrated Policy

The Food System Transformative Integrated Policy (FS-TIP) initiative supports governments in Africa that demonstrate robust integrative leadership and capacity, political will, and commitment, in the development and implementation of an ambitious food system policy agenda aimed at achieving sustainable healthy diets for all their citizens. FS-TIP has a long-term, inter-generational perspective which leverages the momentum of the Food Systems Summit, but with its focus beyond, building a long-term platform for transformation, policy development, capacity building, innovation, and investment in support of the SDGs. The first phase of the initiative, under way in Ghana, Rwanda, and Malawi and supported by the Rockefeller Foundation, IDRC, Tony Blair Institute, APHRC, Akademiya2063, BCG, IFPRI, AGRA, and WFP, focuses on conducting a landscaping and diagnostic analysis of the current state of local food systems and their key challenges and opportunities, key stakeholders, and policy gaps and opportunities. Subsequent phases will focus on integrated policy development and implementation.

The Chronic Diseases Initiative for Africa

The Chronic Diseases Initiative for Africa (CDIA) was established in 2009 as a network of researchers and policymakers, from the University of Cape Town, University of the Western Cape, Stellenbosch University, South Africa Medical Research Council, and other African institutions. CDIA aims to reduce the impact of NCDs and their risk factors across Africa; to prevent NCDs; improve the quality of care for people living with NCDs; and build NCD research capacity. The research focuses on innovative community- and facility-based approaches to the management and care of NCDs using a socio-ecological framework approach, implementation science and integrated knowledge translation supported by high-level advocacy to increase evidence uptake. The food environment research portfolio extends from understanding drivers of unhealthy food patterns in urban and rural areas over mapping of obesogenic environments to conducting the INFORMAS modules Food-EPI and BIA-Obesity (planned).

Drivers of Food Choice

The purpose of the Drivers of Food Choice (DFC) program is to facilitate, synthesize and disseminate research to provide a deep understanding of the drivers of food choice in low-and middle-income countries, strengthen country-level leadership in food choice research, and foster a global community of food-choice researchers.

AUDA-NEPAD Mandate and Focus

Provide knowledge-based advisory services and technical assistance to African Union Member States and regional economic communities to strengthen their capacity. Coordinate and execute priority regional and continental projects enshrined in Agenda with the aim of accelerating regional integration so as to achieve the Africa We Want - Agenda 2063. Act as the continent's technical interface on policy development recommendation and implementation with partners and stakeholders and undertakes the full range of resource mobilization. AUDA-NEPAD focuses implementation on high impact multisectoral programmes across health, nutrition, agriculture, water and sanitation, education, trade and infrastructure, gender, climate change, etc. through an application of evidence based policy and policy. The AUDA-NEPAD Nutrition and Food Systems Implementation strategy (2019-2025) with its seven flagships aligns with the Malabo targets.



FUNDING AKNOWLEDGEMENT

The MEALS4NCDs Project (Convener of this Independent Food Systems Dialogue) is funded by The International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Food, Environment, and Health Program - IDRC, Canada.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Independent Food Systems Dialogue (Africa Region)
MEALS4NCDs/FERN Secretariat
Telephone: +233 20 078 4676
Email: dialogues@meals4ncds.org
Website: www.meals4ncds.org