

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

CURATORS



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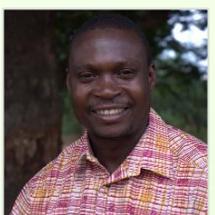
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CONVENERS

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.



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

LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE



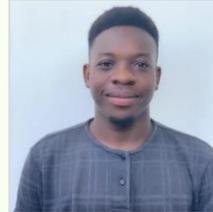
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