

FOOD SYSTEMS DIALOGUES (FSDs)

STOCKHOLM, 11 JUNE 2019

SUMMARY REPORT*

Executive Summary	2
Proposals	3
Proposal 1: Improve the attractiveness of the farming profession through financial support, education and technology	3
Proposal 2: Connect farmers more effectively to demand for sustainable and nutritious food products	3
Proposal 3: Introduce Government policies that drive companies to change	4
Proposal 4: Introduce taxes and subsidies which take account of specific contexts	4
Proposal 5: Leverage public procurement to a greater extent	4
Proposal 6: Encourage healthier diets through education	5
Proposal 7: Develop incentive mechanisms for different parts of the food system	5
Proposal 8: Build a multi-stakeholder platform and a compact on safety nets	5
Proposal 9: Build consumer awareness about the value of food in order to catalyze system change	6
Proposal 10: Food Systems Summit - Engage truly diverse groups of people in dialogue and focus on political economy for change	6

*The format of FSDs Summary Reports is under development. This report may be subject to change

Executive Summary

On 11 June 2019 a Food Systems Dialogues (FSDs) event took place in Stockholm, Sweden. This FSDs event was held in the context of the EAT Stockholm Food Forum 2019.

Approximately 80 participants attended, reflecting a range of actors working in Food Systems, from representatives of the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), UNICEF, media and moderating agencies, and food and beverage and fertilizer companies, among others.

Tables were asked to present one or more proposals to address a specific area of food systems, with a global focus. Ideally, the proposals were to be achievable within 3 years. The discussion topics for this event addressed the following areas: resilience, decent employment, safety nets, incentives, nutrition and healthcare, public procurement, economic policies, the true value of food, how to catalyze action, and the 2021 Food Systems Summit.

The following is a summary of the tables' proposals for food systems transformation as well as the discussions that led them to their conclusions.

As is the norm at FSDs events, all Proposals outlined in this Summary Report are not attributed to any particular individual or organization. Each proposal did not necessarily receive universal support from all participants at the event; rather, the aim of this report is to capture recommendations made at the event, in order to allow continuity and consensus - a 'red thread' - to emerge across all FSDs events.

Proposals

Proposal 1: Improve the attractiveness of the farming profession through financial support, education and technology

It is important to make farms, and rural areas in general, more attractive places to live.

The first thing that needs to be addressed in order to make farming more appealing is the low incomes of many farmers. Across the world, in both developing and developed markets, farmers are struggling financially.

Secondly, there needs to be support for farmers to increase their access to education for their children in the rural areas where they live. If farmers cannot send their children to school, we have not succeeded in supporting the farming industry as a whole.

Thirdly, we could support farmer livelihoods through access to technology and skills. This would increase the opportunity for farmers to be more entrepreneurial, so they can have the capabilities as well as the skills to adapt and experiment with new techniques.

This approach will have succeeded when farmers are respected and valued, and earn enough money to live a comfortable life.

Proposal 2: Connect farmers more effectively to demand for sustainable and nutritious food products

One of the biggest problems facing smallholder farmers is that they are disconnected from the growing global demand for nutritious foods. For example, Beyond Meat's use of pea protein is already outstripping supply; however, smallholder farmers in Africa still focus on maize and millet, rather than adjusting to meet this growing demand for pea protein.

Therefore there is a need to reconnect farmers to demand. Often this will involve helping the farmers to change and adapt, with initiatives such as providing new technology or equipment.

Proposal 3: Introduce Government policies that drive companies to change

Government policy is the key to driving companies towards making more sustainable decisions. Unfortunately, government policy tends to lag behind consumer opinions, and consumer and company actions.

Jurisdictions that have enacted progressive policies should be more vocal about their success in order to facilitate the process for less progressive governments and policy makers to follow.

Proposal 4: Introduce taxes and subsidies which take account of specific contexts

The use of taxes and subsidies should be expanded; to be effective, they should take account of the specific contexts in which they will be operating.

Taxes are not one-size-fits-all. We have seen some taxes fail, for example in some cases they have been less effective in emerging economies. Ideas that worked in some contexts have been shown to not always be directly transferable to others.

If you clearly assess what you are trying to achieve, and work with relevant stakeholders, you can make taxes more effective. A first step could be to conduct a pilot analysis of various countries to explore what a different tax and subsidies system could look like in different locations.

Proposal 5: Leverage public procurement to a greater extent

Public procurement should be leveraged on a greater scale to promote access to healthy diets from sustainably produced foods. We should draw on best practices and give technical support to those trying to implement public procurement initiatives.

In keeping with the idea of increased support, there should be feedback available about what has not been effective in public procurement, along with accountability mechanisms.

At the nutrition summit in 2020, we should work to get a commitment on changing public procurement. It would also be effective to focus on the city level for public procurement efforts, and aim to have cities commit to changes at the next C40 conference.

Proposal 6: Encourage healthier diets through education

The costs associated with our current food system and unhealthy diets are financial, economic and social. There is a need to educate future generations about the health imperatives of good diets, as well as how to make healthy food. This could involve a return to traditional foods.

Relatedly, doctors should play a role in better educating consumers. Areas of education could address the benefits of healthy diets, and should prescribe healthy food and not just medicine. As an example, in Holland, there are instances of having organizations in the medical sector involved in a transition towards healthier dietary habits in the population. Notably, Holland involves insurance companies in this kind of food systems conversations.

Proposal 7: Develop incentive mechanisms for different parts of the food system

Incentive mechanisms should be introduced to encourage consumer education and behaviour change. As a prior step, finance and policy tools are needed, in order to drive these incentives. Tools need to look at cross-sector trade-offs. It is not sufficient merely to pay farmers to change practices; it is important to look at a cost-benefit analysis at a systems level, and then find areas where change can happen.

Additionally, there needs to be incentive modalities for different parts of the system. Companies, government, farmers and consumers will all respond to different incentives, but there needs to be alignment across these incentives modalities.

We should think beyond simple levers (such as a sugar tax) and develop a sophisticated set of tools that would drive change. For example, a system of bonds could financially support incentive mechanisms.

Proposal 8: Build a multi-stakeholder platform and a compact on safety nets

We need a multi-stakeholder platform, as well as a compact involving governments, the private sector, and civil society organizations, to address the issue of safety nets.

There should be more acknowledgement that the benefits of safety nets far exceed the costs. There is a lot of evidence available to show the benefits include improved health, more employment, and stronger economies.

It is also crucial to help people understand the food system so they know where their food comes from and what constitutes a nutritious meal.

This approach will succeed when countries, the private sector, and municipalities have signed up to these compacts at the global and local level. There is already a lot to build upon and there could be quick wins in identifying the priority interventions and operationalizing them.

Proposal 9: Build consumer awareness about the value of food in order to catalyze system change

The greatest potential for change lies with the consumer. If consumers are made more aware about the social and personal impact of a broken food system, their actions could become a catalyst for a more sustainable and equitable future.

There are three building blocks to achieve greater consumer awareness:

- Improved public procurement, to shape demand and change food behaviour from an early age
- Food campaigns, including online activities
- Focus on innovation, pioneers, roadshows (behavior change activities)

The measure of success for this approach is food-related behavior change. A baseline mapping that includes power structures, regulation, and participation in food systems could provide a starting point for measuring impact and success.

Proposal 10: Food Systems Summit - Engage truly diverse groups of people in dialogue and focus on political economy for change

There are many areas that need attention at the 2021 Food Systems Summit. These include agricultural subsidies, smallholder farmers, food loss and waste, and marketing of food to children.

In particular, a topic that would crystallize real success is the economics of the food system transformation that needs to happen. It would be valuable to grapple with how to make change happen through political economy, rather than merely doing a cost-benefit analysis. This is the topic the Summit should focus on.

To ensure success, in the lead up to the Summit, we need FSDs that truly engage all the relevant stakeholders in a much more vigorous way than what usually happens with Summits - including farmers, and youth.