

FOOD SYSTEMS SOLUTION DIALOGUES

Capitalizing on Private Sector Accountability for Food Systems Transformation

Wednesday 26 June 2024

Session I – 8:00 - 9:30 AM CEST | Session II – 16:00 - 17:30 CEST

Background

The UN Secretary-General's Call to Action for Accelerated Food Systems Transformation, announced at the 2023 UN Food Systems Summit Stocktaking Moment (UNFSS+2), charts a clear and comprehensive roadmap for shaping sustainable, equitable, and resilient food systems integral to achieving Agenda 2030. One of the priority areas of the Call to Action include "promoting increased engagement of businesses, including through public- private partnerships, to shape the sustainability of food systems and establish and strengthen accountability mechanisms, recognizing their centrality for food systems." While partnerships with private sector actors provide opportunities to unlock investment and innovation in support of food systems transformation, there is also a need for mechanisms to promote the alignment of business strategies and actions with the Agenda 2030.

The private sector has been an important player in the global food systems agenda since the UN Food Systems Summit in 2021. With small farmers supplying eighty percent of the world's food and between thirty to forty percent of the value added, it is not surprising that the private sector is the largest employer in many developing countries. These companies bring local knowledge, and "real-life" experiences to collaborative initiatives, making them an important stakeholder with potential to influence change across the food system. Companies are highly heterogenic, ranging from farmers to processors, traders and retailers, as well as service providers and financing institutions. They also differ in terms of size; from informal micro enterprises to large domestic companies, or multinational food enterprises that operate across multiple jurisdictions.

In the lead-up to the second Stocktaking moment (UNFSS +4) the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub (the Hub) is ramping up its efforts to engage with different actors, with the aim of raising their ambition and contributing to the successful delivery of food systems transformation processes and catalysing measurable improvements for people, planet, and prosperity. In 2024, the Hub has convened a group of stakeholders to propose a mechanism for feasible private sector engagement and corporate accountability framework, to be used for the UNFSS+4 in 2025 and beyond. The outcome of this process is a roadmap (already finalized) to be followed by a theory of change that will inform the co-design of a corporate accountability framework for food systems transformation.

Purpose of the Dialogue

Engaging the private sector, at all levels of the food system, in multistakeholder initiatives is essential to catalyse responsible, sustainable, and inclusive economic growth and food systems transformation. The aim of this Dialogue is to explore how to strengthen the private sector's role, and accountability in supporting the implementation of food systems transformation pathways. The Dialogue seeks to provide insights and facilitate discussions on the private sector's environmental, nutrition, and social equity impacts on food systems. The dialogue will further build on the Hub's ongoing work on corporate accountability.

Agenda

Duration	Item
5 min	Opening remarks: Stefanos Fotiou , Director UN Food Systems Coordination Hub
20 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lynette Neufeld, Director, Food and Nutrition Division, FAO • Victoria Crawford, Director, Agriculture and Food, WBCSD • Rayan Kassem, Engagement Manager, World Benchmarking Alliance
50 min	<p>Dialogue with Convenors: Moderator: Khaled Eltaweel, Senior Coordinator, FAO- UN Food Systems Coordination Hub (AM), Mia Madsen, Policy Officer, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub (PM)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What support do you expect as a national convenor from the private sector on implementing the national food systems transformation pathway? • What elements of corporate accountability are crucial for supporting food systems transformation at country level?
10 min	Reflections from the Dialogue: ---
5 min	Wrap-up and next steps: Stefanos Fotiou , Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub