

FOOD SYSTEMS SOLUTIONS DIALOGUES 2026

*Data and technology to inform policy development and monitoring
across national food systems priorities*

17 June 2026

Summary Report

Introduction

The Food Systems Solutions Dialogues (FSSD) are purposeful, organized events that unite National Convenors and other food systems actors to share their experiences and insights on food systems hosted by the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub (the Hub). A new series launches annually. Morning and afternoon sessions are held for each Dialogue to accommodate different time zones. As part of the 2026 FSSD series, the Dialogue “Data and technology to inform policy development and monitoring across national food systems priorities” took place on 17 June 2026. The Dialogue explored how countries can harness data and technology to inform the design, implementation, monitoring, and adaptation of food systems policies, drawing on practical experiences with integrated data platforms, digital tools, monitoring frameworks, and data governance arrangements. This Summary Report reflects the combined discussions from both the morning and afternoon sessions.

June’s dialogue focused on practical experiences in using data and technology to support food systems decision-making. Drawing on country examples and initiatives such as the [Food Systems Countdown Initiative \(FSCI\)](#) and the [UNDP Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning \(MEL\) Systems Initiative](#), participants shared approaches for tracking progress, generating policy-relevant insights, and strengthening implementation across national food systems priorities. Discussions also underscored the importance of effective data governance, coordination, and partnerships in enabling the use of data for informed action.

Setting the Scene

Ms Lara Blanco Rothe, Deputy Director of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, opened the Dialogue by introducing herself in her new role and welcoming participants. She stressed the growing importance of data, technology, and science in advancing food systems transformation, highlighting their role in supporting evidence-based decision-making, implementation, monitoring, and accountability. Referring to the priorities identified through the UN Food Systems Summit +4 Stocktake and the Secretary-General’s Call to Action, she noted the need for reliable, timely, and actionable data as countries move from commitments to implementation. She also highlighted the opportunities and challenges presented by rapid

technological developments, including artificial intelligence, and encouraged participants to exchange practical experiences on how data-driven approaches, including the Food Systems Countdown Initiative (FSCI) and Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) systems, can support national food systems pathways and adaptive policymaking.

The morning and afternoon sessions featured a distinguished panel of experts from global initiatives and national institutions who shared experiences and insights on the use of data and technology to support food systems policymaking, monitoring, and accountability. The panel included:

- Ms Bianca Carducci, Nutrition Scientist, Food Systems Countdown Initiative (FSCI)
- H.E. Sok Silo, Secretary-General, Council for Agricultural and Rural Development and National Convenor, Cambodia
- Mr Xoan Fernandez, Global Innovation Advisor, UNDP
- Ms Adriana Herrera-Moreno, Secretary, Committee on World Food Security (CFS)
- Ms Paulina S. Addy, Director, Women in Agricultural Development Directorate, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Ghana
- Ms Andrea Estrella, Systems Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) and Capacity Building Advisor, UNDP Food Systems Team
- Prof. Anas A. Al-Nabulsi, Chairperson, Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

The morning session was moderated by Ms Mia Madsen, Policy Officer, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, while the afternoon session was moderated by Mr Thembani Malapela, Knowledge Management Officer, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub.

Key Insights from Panellists

Ms Bianca Carducci, Nutrition Scientist, Food Systems Countdown Initiative (FSCI), presented the Initiative's global monitoring framework and its adaptation at national level, highlighting its role in supporting evidence-based food systems transformation. She explained that the FSCI, established following the first UN Food Systems Summit, brings together 50 indicators across five thematic areas, diets, nutrition and health; environment and production; livelihoods, poverty and equity; governance; and resilience, to provide a comprehensive picture of food systems performance and inform policymaking, investment, and accountability. Drawing on findings from the Initiative's global analysis, she highlighted that governance and resilience indicators, including the right to food, government effectiveness, social capital, and food price volatility, act as key leverage points due to their strong connections with outcomes across multiple food systems domains. She also showcased new tools, including performance benchmarks, country profiles, and the Food Systems Dashboard, designed to help countries assess progress and identify areas requiring action. Reflecting on the adaptation of the framework in 15 countries, including Ethiopia, Cambodia, Ghana, and the Philippines, Ms Carducci highlighted common national priorities such as employment and livelihoods, access

to finance, food safety, climate adaptation, food loss, and extension services. She noted that many countries continue to face challenges related to weak monitoring and accountability systems, limited subnational data, fragmented sectoral datasets, and the absence of integrated monitoring frameworks, underscoring the need to strengthen national data ecosystems and monitoring capacities to support implementation and track progress across national food systems pathways.

H.E. Sok Silo, Secretary-General of the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development and National Convenor of Cambodia, highlighted Cambodia's experience in leveraging data and technology as key enablers of stronger governance, evidence-based decision-making, and food systems transformation. Drawing on Cambodia's engagement with the Food Systems Countdown Initiative (FSCI), he highlighted that the main challenge is often not the absence of data, but fragmentation across institutions and data systems. He described Cambodia's efforts to identify priority indicators through multi-stakeholder consultations while increasingly focusing on how indicators can support decision-making, implementation monitoring, accountability, and subnational planning. H.E. Sok Silo stressed the importance of integrating global initiatives into existing national priorities, statistical systems, and governance mechanisms, and underscored the role of institutional coordination and national statistical authorities in ensuring effective data use. While acknowledging challenges related to fragmented data systems, limited subnational data, and gaps in food environment and climate-related information, he highlighted opportunities offered by digital technologies, integrated dashboards, and improved interoperability. He concluded by noting that the real value of data lies in its integration into planning, reporting, and accountability systems that support long-term food systems transformation.

Mr Xoan Fernandez, Global Innovation Advisor at UNDP, presented the UNDP Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) 360 Initiative, emphasizing that the main challenge facing countries is often not a lack of data, but rather fragmented data systems, weak coordination across institutions, and the gap between data collection and decision-making. He highlighted that food systems are inherently multi-sectoral, requiring collaboration across ministries, sectors, and stakeholders, and argued that data alone does not lead to better decisions. Instead, he stressed the importance of building learning infrastructure that enables stakeholders to collectively interpret data, generate insights, and adapt policies and actions accordingly. Drawing on the MEL 360 approach, he emphasized the need to move beyond traditional monitoring focused solely on indicators and targets towards systems-based approaches that also capture signals of change, such as shifts in relationships, behaviours, institutions, and collaboration patterns. He further highlighted resources developed through the initiative, including the Systems Guide and the MEL Sandbox community, which bring together practitioners to share tools and experiences on systems monitoring, evaluation, and learning. Concluding, he underscored the importance of shared sensemaking, adaptive learning, and cross-sector coordination in transforming data into meaningful action and supporting more effective food systems transformation.

Ms Adriana Herrera-Moreno, Secretary of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), highlighted the importance of strengthening science-policy interfaces to ensure that data, evidence, and innovation effectively inform food systems decision-making. She emphasized the role of the CFS as an inclusive platform that brings together governments, civil society, the private sector, and the scientific community to translate independent scientific evidence into voluntary policy guidance that countries can adapt to their national contexts. Drawing on the *CFS Policy Recommendations on Data Collection and Analysis Tools for Food Security and Nutrition*, she underscored the need for stronger data systems, improved data disaggregation, effective early warning systems, and governance frameworks that ensure data is trusted, timely, and useful for policymakers. Ms Herrera-Moreno also highlighted ongoing work on a new CFS policy framework on resilient food systems, which includes recommendations on data governance, digital technologies, and artificial intelligence, with particular attention to addressing inequalities, reducing the digital divide, and promoting inclusive access to emerging technologies. She concluded by stressing that science and policy can only drive meaningful transformation when they are effectively connected through strong data ecosystems and governance arrangements.

Ms Paulina S. Addy, Director of the Women in Agriculture Development Directorate at the Ministry of Food and Agriculture and National Convenor for Ghana, shared Ghana's experience in leveraging data and technology to support evidence-based food systems policymaking and implementation. She highlighted the importance of integrated data systems, digital farmer registries, geospatial mapping, satellite monitoring, and real-time data collection in informing targeted interventions, improving accountability, and strengthening nutrition-sensitive agriculture. Drawing on Ghana's ongoing initiatives, she described how digital farmer identification systems are being used to support the delivery of agricultural inputs and credit, while coordinated monitoring of food prices and consumption patterns helps align agricultural production with nutrition objectives. Ms Addy also emphasized efforts to promote inclusion through programmes such as Feed Ghana, including targeted measures for women and vulnerable populations. She underscored that data and technology should be viewed as policy enablers rather than add-ons, enabling more coherent, evidence-driven governance, stronger coordination across sectors, and more responsive decision-making. Looking ahead, she highlighted the growing potential of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, digital platforms, and mobile technologies, to strengthen food systems governance and improve outcomes across nutrition, climate resilience, gender equity, market access, and food safety.

Ms Andrea Estrella, Systems Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) and Capacity Building Advisor at the UNDP Food Systems Team, built on the earlier presentation of the UNDP MEL 360 Initiative by further exploring how systems-based monitoring, evaluation, and learning can support food systems transformation. Reinforcing the view that the challenge facing many countries is often not a lack of data but fragmented systems, limited coordination, and the gap between data collection and decision-making, she emphasized the importance of creating learning infrastructure that enables stakeholders to collectively interpret information and

adapt actions. Presenting the MEL 360 guidance and the MEL Sandbox community of practice, she described how the initiative supports countries in strengthening systems-based monitoring, evaluation, and learning through collaborative approaches and shared sensemaking. Ms Estrella introduced the concept of “signals of change” as an important complement to traditional indicators, explaining that shifts in relationships, behaviours, institutions, resource flows, power dynamics, and mindsets often provide early evidence of systems transformation before changes appear in formal outcomes. She further advocated for moving from attribution to contribution when assessing change in complex systems and stressed the importance of participatory approaches that enable stakeholders to generate and interpret their own evidence. Concluding, she highlighted the growing role of data, digital tools, and artificial intelligence in supporting pattern recognition and analysis, while underscoring that meaningful transformation ultimately depends on collective learning, adaptive management, and stronger coordination across actors and institutions.

Prof. Anas Al-Nabulsi, Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), reinforced the importance of strengthening science–policy interfaces to ensure that data, technology, science, and innovation are translated into practical policy decisions and national food systems pathways. Building on the role of the CFS and its policy recommendations highlighted earlier in the Dialogue, he emphasized the need for evidence to effectively reach decision-makers and support implementation. He highlighted the contribution of the CFS Policy Recommendations on Data Collection and Analysis Tools for Food Security and Nutrition to strengthening data systems, improving data disaggregation, and promoting governance frameworks that make data trusted, timely, and useful for policymakers. Looking ahead, he drew attention to ongoing and emerging CFS work on artificial intelligence, digitalization, data governance, and collaborative approaches to addressing data gaps for food security and nutrition. He concluded by reaffirming the CFS’s commitment to supporting countries in strengthening national food systems data ecosystems and governance frameworks.

Dialogue with National Convenors

Following the panel, National Convenors engaged in a dialogue to share country experiences and reflections on the use of data and technology for food systems transformation. The discussion focused on practical approaches to strengthening data-informed decision-making, monitoring progress, and improving coordination across food systems stakeholders.

To guide the conversation, participants were provided with a few guiding questions:

1. How is your country using data and technology to inform food systems policymaking, prioritization, and monitoring across national pathways?
2. What practical approaches have helped strengthen coordination and data-sharing across ministries, institutions, and stakeholders involved in food systems transformation?

3. What are some of the main challenges you face in improving the collection, coordination, sharing, and use of food systems data for policymaking and monitoring?

During the dialogue, National Convenors and country representatives shared experiences and reflections on strengthening data systems, monitoring frameworks, and evidence-based decision-making to support food systems transformation. Several countries highlighted efforts to better integrate data into policymaking, implementation, and monitoring processes. Lebanon described how indicators developed under its National Food Systems Transformation Pathway have informed monitoring, policy development, and pathway updates. Similarly, the Dominican Republic emphasized the importance of integrating food systems monitoring frameworks and Countdown indicators into existing public management and policy planning systems, underscoring the value of technical support in aligning national development processes with food systems objectives. Participants also highlighted the growing role of integrated data platforms and digital tools in supporting decision-making. Qatar shared its experience in developing a centralized platform that brings together information from public and private sector actors across the food supply chain and supports more proactive policymaking through early warning and alert systems. Finland, meanwhile, reflected on ongoing efforts to identify the most relevant indicators and measurement approaches to support implementation of its Food Systems Strategy.

Participants also reflected on persistent challenges related to data governance, institutional coordination, and the translation of evidence into policy action. In this regard, Somalia described the extensive range of food security, nutrition, climate, and agricultural monitoring systems informing its national pathway review, while highlighting challenges related to data fragmentation, ownership, standardization, and integrated analysis across sectors. Similarly, Mali emphasized the need to strengthen local-level data systems and digital monitoring mechanisms to better capture the diversity and complexity of food systems across regions and communities. The representative of the State of Palestine highlighted ongoing efforts to coordinate food security monitoring and reporting across ministries and called for continued international support to strengthen food security, rebuild food systems, and support long-term recovery. Collectively, these reflections underscored that while significant volumes of data are increasingly available, greater efforts are needed to improve coordination, strengthen analytical capacities, enhance data integration across institutions, and ensure that evidence is effectively translated into policymaking, implementation, and accountability for food systems transformation.

The Way Forward

The Dialogue underscored the need to further strengthen national data ecosystems and governance arrangements so that data and technology can more effectively support food systems transformation. Moving forward, increased attention could be given to improving coordination and data-sharing across institutions, enhancing interoperability between data systems, and strengthening capacities for data analysis and interpretation. Participants

emphasized that the availability of data alone is not sufficient; rather, meaningful transformation depends on the ability of stakeholders to collectively interpret evidence, generate insights, and translate them into informed decisions and adaptive action. In this regard, monitoring and evaluation systems should not only track progress but also support learning, adaptive management, early warning, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making at both national and sub-national levels. Tools and approaches such as the Food Systems Countdown Initiative (FSCI) and the UNDP MEL 360 framework were highlighted as useful resources to help countries strengthen monitoring systems, identify priority indicators, foster shared learning, and better translate evidence into action.

Participants further noted the importance of building stronger connections between data producers, policymakers, researchers, and other food systems stakeholders to ensure that evidence informs policy and implementation processes. Expanding opportunities for peer learning, technical exchange, and collaboration across countries was identified as a valuable means of addressing common challenges related to data fragmentation, governance, and monitoring. At the same time, continued investment in digital technologies, integrated monitoring platforms, and emerging innovations, including artificial intelligence, could help countries improve data use, strengthen policy design and implementation, and accelerate progress towards more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable food systems.

In her closing remarks, Ms Lara Blanco Rothe, Deputy Director of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, also highlighted three key takeaways: the importance of continued dialogue and collective sense-making to build a shared vision for food systems transformation; the need to strengthen coordination, localize data and monitoring approaches, improve data quality, and use disaggregated data to inform context-specific action while considering broader geopolitical and economic dynamics; and the growing role of artificial intelligence, real-time data, and technological innovation in strengthening monitoring, early warning, adaptive policymaking, and accountability. She concluded by reaffirming the Hub's commitment to supporting countries through collaborative, data-driven approaches to food systems transformation.