

Wednesday 29 June 2022- Summary Note

ENGAGING for food systems transformations – Coalitions of Action

This session led by the **UN Food Systems Coordination Hub** focused on connecting Coalition leads and National Dialogue Convenors, exploring what Coalitions offer and how Convenors can make the best of their country's engagement in Coalitions.

Country engagement in Coalitions

Since the 2021 Food Systems Summit, National Convenors and their teams have been engaging with Coalitions. Convenors expressed that they have benefited from a wealth of information shared by Coalitions and affirmed their interest in further engaging in Coalitions' work; likewise Coalitions are keen to work with Convenors. Throughout the two sessions, there was a call for more information on Coalitions. Convenors would like to know the level and type of engagement and participation required from countries to join Coalitions: is there a formal application process? Who to reach out to? What level of participation from Governments and other national stakeholders is expected? Convenors from some African countries requested that information on how to join Coalitions be shared more formally via the usual diplomatic channels: this will help ensure the appropriate anchoring of Coalitions' work in national institutions. Convenors reported their membership in Coalitions needs to be formalised for the government to engage.

Details of what Coalitions can offer to countries were also requested. This information is crucial for Convenors to swiftly identify which Coalitions can best serve the needs of their countries. Coalitions also need to make information easily accessible, ideally in all UN languages. Certain Convenors who have joined Coalitions sought more clarification on how to be fully involved in the work undertaken. Others mentioned that the Coalitions they are engaging with are very professional with a limited burden on countries. Some Convenors are experiencing difficulties connecting with Coalition focal points. National Convenors were curious to learn how Coalitions are working together and will be represented at global events such as 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP27). They would also like to know what the Coalitions offer at the country level. How are local governments and administrations represented in Coalitions? What will Coalitions do to help developing countries facing the repercussions of the current global crisis and its impact on food availability and pricing? Coalitions are expected to be aligned with countries' needs, appoint national focal points for coalitions within UN agencies, and promote action in countries. Convenors would like to know how coalitions can support the implementation of the National Pathways for Food System Transformation, the promotion of best practices, thought leadership and the mobilisation of resources.

National Convenors listed topics and issues that they would like to see addressed through Coalitions. These include climate change and its impact on nutrition, the right to food, water scarcity, protection for local producers, infrastructure as a key driver in the food value chains, true cost accounting, postharvest loss, and food waste, food safety, food access, and food prices.

Remarks from Coalition Representatives

Coalition representatives welcomed the opportunity to connect with Convenors and presented their work either in plenary or in the breakout sessions. Coalitions are at different stages of development. Some Coalitions are still organizing themselves, discussing governance structures and defining their contributions to countries. They are bringing together experts to ensure countries get the political and

technical support they require, identifying donors and developing their communication strategies. Several Coalitions have developed platforms, websites, and other communication tools to share knowledge with their members. The Coalitions are preparing to offer support to countries in a wide range of areas, including advocacy, data, and analytics, thought leadership, finance, capacity building, and the development of indicators. Coalitions stressed the need for them to exchange with each other on cross-cutting issues and work closely together to ensure a systems perspective and coordinated support to National Pathways while avoiding duplication of work. They welcomed opportunities for joint research and knowledge exchanges.

Coalitions are very interested in engaging more with National Convenors. Several Coalitions reported that they are reviewing National Pathways through the FAO Dashboard, [the March 2022 Synthesis of National Dialogues and Pathways](#), and additional updates posted by Member States on the [Gateway](#). This will help them to engage with countries in a more coherent manner, according to their needs. Linking national Pathways with global actions and public and private resources was identified as key. Coalitions are also eager to work in close collaboration with national governments to ensure the participation of sub-national levels of government and local authorities. Coalitions are keen to engage in country-level Dialogues and are looking to define which information is useful to countries and how technical and operational information should be structured. Several Coalitions are preparing for further engagement in country-level transformation efforts, sometimes through pilot countries.

Expectations on the Hub

Throughout the session, participants outlined their expectations regarding the role of the Hub. Participants agreed that communication needs to be increased. National Convenors would like the Hub to make the updated list of existing Coalitions, their focal points, and websites accessible to countries to help them make quicker and better-informed decisions on which Coalitions to join. Participants would like the Hub to coordinate Coalitions work, encouraging action in synergy and minimising overlaps and isolated Coalition support to the countries. The Hub is expected to act as a connector between Coalitions and National Convenors. A suggestion was also made for the Hub to organise a session to connect the Permanent Representatives in Rome to the Coalitions.

National Convenor Needs

Beyond the discussion on Coalitions, National Convenors also highlighted their urgent needs from the Hub. Convenors are still looking for ad hoc support to elaborate action plans for the implementation of their Pathways in line with national policies and strategies. They are looking for training and for the sharing of expertise. They are also eager to access support to maintain Food System Transformation high on political agendas at both the country and global levels, such as upcoming UNFCCC COPs. National Convenors need an integrated support system for countries to advance in their processes rapidly and surely. The Hub needs to further mobilise the broader ecosystem of support towards this aim.

Closing Remarks

The Director of the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub announced that the Hub will respond to Convenor requests for connection with the Coalitions and will continue to work to better register Convenor requests. The Director encouraged each Coalition to reflect on what solutions they could develop that could be translated at national and sub-national levels. These solutions will be brought together in a Food System Solutions Library that will be made available to Convenors. The Hub is already working with Coalitions to establish a platform enabling regular exchanges. This session was the first of a series of dialogues focused on facilitating the engagement of countries in Coalitions.

The next Food System Solutions Dialogue will be held on **Wednesday 27 July**, focusing on LEARNING for food systems transformation – Governance, policies, and institutions. Please register through the links below if you would like to attend.

- 08:00-9:30 CEST <https://bit.ly/27julyAM> English with interpretation in Chinese, Russian and Arabic
- 16:00-17:30 CEST <https://bit.ly/27JulyPM> English with interpretation in French, Spanish

Convenors are invited to request additional ad-hoc sessions convened by the Hub.

If any individual or team has questions, they may contact the Hub via email at FSS-Hub@fao.org or pose any other queries during the upcoming Food Systems Solution Dialogues.