

**Brainstorming session with Coalitions: how can we create synergies to effectively serve countries transforming their food systems?**

Led by the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, this session convened Coalition focal points and representatives of their lead agencies and organizations. It focused on identifying the added value that joint work between the Hub and the Coalitions could provide to the countries on transforming their food systems.

The session was opened by the Hub's Director, Stefanos Fotiou. He encouraged UN Agencies, Programmes and Funds (UNAPFs) to reflect on and define their role working directly with countries and through the Coalitions. Fotiou further advised Coalitions to clearly define their added value for countries in support of food system transformation pathways and to design how to measure progress.

Coalition representatives were invited to react to the following five discussion points in breakout rooms:

**1. Capacity Development:**

Participants identified knowledge sharing and awareness raising as the first steps of capacity building. The Summit was considered successful in shifting the narrative towards Food Systems and encouraging governments to embrace transformative action. Coalitions have identified National Dialogue Convenors as entry points for engagement. Coalitions are also encouraging a systems approach at the country level, despite the complexity of this task. Government Institutions are not built to easily implement this; it requires institutional reforms, which take time to be realized. Coalitions have coupled systems approaches with more digestible workshops and policy dialogues to make their areas of focus more accessible to countries. They highlighted the role of Food System Dialogues in the promotion of a food systems approach, noting, however, there is a need for more practical ways to overcome the institutional and political challenges when implementing a systems approach. The Hub was invited to develop a common product, such as a brief presenting, what it means to take a food systems approach. The Hub was also encouraged to provide regular updates on what it does and support for Coalitions to be able to connect with each other. Stefanos Fotiou suggested the creation of a two-week capacity development training programme for country actors.

**2. Leveraging Finance**

Coalitions do not intend to become financing vehicles but would like to build capacity for Member States and their partners to raise funds and become trusted entities for donors. Coalitions would appreciate a mapping of available funding resources and invited the Hub to connect Coalitions with potential donors in a structured way. Participants highlighted the importance of involving producers in the discussions around finance. The Good Food Finance Network was mentioned as a potential support to leverage funds. Colleagues involved in the Good Food Finance Network encouraged each Coalition to bring forward one concrete 'first ask' to the Network. Coalitions approach donors to raise funds for their individual secretariats and capacity. They highlighted the importance of a coordinated approach to donors. Coalitions also stressed the necessity of a coordinated approach to leverage funds. Coalitions stressed that the Hub could add value with a joint strategy for resource mobilisation and common funding proposals for the donors. Stefanos Fotiou stressed the importance of managing expectations and encouraged Coalitions to be clear with Member States that the Hub and the Coalitions will leverage funds but not provide direct funding.

**3. Thought Leadership**

Coalition representatives agreed that thought leadership must come from National Convenors and National Food System Transformation Pathways, as they drive actions at the country level. A global framework (or script) highlighting how food systems transformation is key to address climate change, biodiversity, pollution, health crisis and other shocks would be helpful to provide direction to Coalitions and Convenors. The strength of the Coalitions could also lie in their capacity to bring together national convenors with COP decision makers and other global processes.

Stefanos Fotiou announced that the Hub will develop a script for thought leadership, with Coalitions as the peer-review mechanism.

#### **4. Communication**

Participants identified the need for a strong communication campaign to demonstrate the impact of the food systems agenda in accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda especially in times of crises. By promoting a food systems transformation narrative and providing a clear direction to Coalitions, Member States, and the wider community could solve several global challenges. Internal communication across the Coalitions was highlighted as key to foster opportunities for collaboration and support a holistic and interdisciplinary approach. External communication to increase visibility of the Food Systems Summit commitments, the Hub and the Coalitions could be undertaken, creation of a calendar of events as well as a Hub website, centralizing and sharing food systems transformation tools and knowledge and providing links to each Coalition's website were suggested. Caution was raised against overly concentrating information, a process consuming energy and resources which could be used for on the ground operationalization. A question was raised on how to serve language groups other than English.

#### **5. 2023 Stock-taking moment**

Coalition representatives agreed on the need for the Hub to identify and communicate a set of indicators ahead of the 2023 Stocktake. A suggestion was made to consider the Food Systems Countdown Initiative, a mechanism monitoring all aspects of global food systems across countries. Progress metrics were identified as important. The SDGs, measured at the country level, were acknowledged as the ultimate impact indicators. Questions were raised on whether Coalitions or the Hub are expected to track progress. Measuring the performance of the Coalitions themselves was also encouraged. A suggestion was made for the Hub to prepare a questionnaire to ask what countries need for the stocktake and how Coalitions can contribute to supporting them. Emphasis was made on the need to measure how countries and Coalitions are responding to the current crises. Stefanos Fotiou announced that a common framework for monitoring and evaluation of performance will be established by the Hub, with Coalitions acting as a peer-review mechanism.

#### **Moving Forward: Coalitions Needs and Expectations for the Hub**

Participants stressed the need to prioritize enhanced coordination between Coalitions. The Hub is expected to ensure regular connections and consistent and coherent messaging. All Coalitions are based on volunteer work and would benefit from added capacity and support. Several participants noted there are too many Coalitions: there is a need to map commonalities, avoid the duplication of efforts and ensure that each Coalition does not contact Governments separately. Questions were also raised regarding coordination at country level as most Convenors and National Food Systems Pathways engage in several Coalitions and funding streams simultaneously. Participants repeated it is critical that Coalitions take into consideration the ongoing interconnected crises.

#### **Closing remarks**

David Nabarro, 4SD Strategic Director, suggested reducing the number of Coalitions by clustering them together, focusing on food systems as a whole and means of implementing food systems transformation. Coalitions were also encouraged to be better responsive to National Convenor realities in countries by engaging with all stakeholders and interacting in all six UN languages. Stefanos Fotiou closed the meeting by announcing that a second survey will be sent out to Coalitions regarding their specific offer to countries. The responses will be brought together in a library of food systems solutions. In addition the Hub will develop specific proposals for potential collaboration between the Hub and the Coalitions on developing joint outputs. He also mentioned that the Hub will work with all coalitions and that his understanding is that the "market will clear" the Coalitions; the ones that will offer value to the national pathways will have the best chances to grow and thrive. To connect the Coalitions to National Convenors, the Hub will be hosting a Food System Solution Dialogue on 29 June.