

UN Food Systems Summit+2 Stocktaking Moment

SESSION REPORT

All session recordings will be available after the conclusion of the session. Please send the report of your session to Ms. Yota Nicolarea (Panayota.Nicolarea@fao.org) and Mr. Thembani Malapela (Thembani.Malapela@fao.org) by Tuesday 1st August COB

Type (click one): HLS/PLENARY – LEADERSHIP DIALOGUE – SPECIAL EVENT

Empowering National Convenors Towards 2025 - Systems Leaders for Transformative Action

26 July 2023 : 1100 – 1230 CEST

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List of speakers, in all segments, and key messages

NAME AND TITLE OF SPEAKER	SEGMENT (opening, panel, closing, etc.)	KEY MESSAGES OR/AND RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
1. Sylvia Ekra, Deputy Director, UN Food Systems Coordination Hub	Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Half-way to the SDGs, leaving no one behind - Challenging context: poverty and hunger on the rise, interlinked crisis - Applauded the work of the National Convenors: 155 Convenors, 126 pathways, 107 VPRs (Countries without Convenors or pathways have also submitted a VPR) - Looking forward to 2025: encouragement to be systems leaders for systems change, to be involved in the preparation for the SDG Summit, COP28, and other milestones.
2. Andrez Suarez, National Convenor, Ecuador	Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presented its pathway in February, inviting local governments, academia, and 150 producer associations into the process. - Rural women have played a significant role, the government will continue to work on making them more visible.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Important to strengthen activities, and support small agriculture structures to compete and associate with each other. Are working to enhance public policies with a clear rural focus. - Ageing of the rural population is a point of concern: young people are increasingly moving to cities, and the countryside is losing farmers. - El Niño
3. Mary Mpereh, National Convenor, Ghana	Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have been building on work done and networks established with SUN, emphasized the national pathway must be a living document. - Challenges: Cost of living crisis, financing, partners are not comfortable funding coordination. Ghana is in debt distress. - Have undertaken a diagnostic study but did not have data to track everything. - Need to avoid the accumulation of 1-year pilot.
4. Ramesh Chand, National Convenor, India	Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highlighted the importance of speaking about food systems through the SDGs to market the idea of food systems transformation in the country. SDG 11 is directly linked to the agrifood sector. - Outlined that challenges and goals for food systems transformation are similar in countries, but every context is different. - Need to prepare a master plan specific to the country, a pathway/roadmap. - Have organised stakeholder consultations and prepared a document, a reference book for food systems transformation. It discusses the role of institutions, governance and technology, which are all critical for food systems transformation. - Promoting food systems in a country needs champions: people with convictions who can influence policy and decision making. - Are writing in the media, communicating on TV on the need for a systems approach. - Production is growing, but hunger and malnutrition are also rising, there is a need for better understanding. - Ministries often follow their own agenda: there is a need for coordination mechanisms.

<p>5. Reem Al Fulaij, National Convenor, Kuwait</p>	<p>Panel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Convened national institutions, civil society, students, businesses through dialogues. - Are adopting recommendations, including on food import dependency and food security. - There is a need to strengthen food systems in Kuwait to lessen dependence on imports. - A Supreme Committee bringing together the Ministries of Health and Education and the private sector was established to focus on school children from a young age, reduce obesity, and inspect school meals and canteens. They have faced difficulties but are proud of their achievements. Are monitoring the diets of school children. - Coordination is very important between government institutions. - Have established a national permanent committee with several ministries, the private sector, civil society.
<p>6. Alvin Kopse, National Convenor, Switzerland</p>	<p>Panel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Being a National Convenor has been a fascinating journey. - Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation for the UNFSS, call of the UN to organise dialogues came at a time of disagreement in Switzerland on the direction of agriculture policy. The pre-Summit was an opportunity to bring together farmers, civil society, and science to build a common understanding around food systems transformation. - Dialogues brought the conversation away from agricultural production and towards food systems transformation. Dialogues were organised with cities and fed into the national pathway which is now reflected in the future orientation agriculture strategy of the federal government. The federal parliament welcomed the strategy this year. - Dialogues have continued post-Summit. - A temporary citizens assembly came presented recommendations for policy makers.
<p>7. David Nabarro, 4SD Foundation</p>	<p>Moderator</p>	

Interventions from the floor

SPEAKER	QUESTION OR KEY POINT OF INTERVENTION
1. Seychelles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertook around 12 different stakeholder sessions involving producers and the tourism industry among others. This resulted in a good plan presented to parliament last year. - Targeting transformation actions within sectors, including changes in crop and livestock production. - The process resonated well in the country, entities associated with the UNFSS, the process can pick up speed. - Intention to integrate more local production in industries such as tourism. <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of imports on the competitiveness of local produce. • Access to finance. • Issue of infrastructure and value chain enhancement. • Climate readiness of production systems. • Knowledge base of people practicing and transforming agro-produce in countries.
2. Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Issue of food security and malnutrition are key priorities. - Have developed a strategic plan, linked to the 2030 Agenda. - Government of Nepal is including food systems transformation into their annual planning and project guidelines, and food systems are also integrated in annual planning at the provincial level. - Thanked the Hub for the start-up fund and pilot programme. - Have prepared Monitoring and Evaluation system. - Are working on localising food systems action at all levels of governments with programmes linked to food systems transformation.
3. Madagascar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inclusive and participative dialogues have been important. - Have been working on ensuring the alignment of the national pathway to the state's General Policy, the UN system and the government. - Have engaged the public sector, civil society organisations, UN system. - Are working on making the most of each actor's potential for the pathway's implementation. - There is a need for national-level ownership due to the multiplicity of actors, but also important to decentralise the pathway's implementation to ensure an ownership at sub-national level.
4. Palau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Palau imports 80% of its food. - The UNFSS dialogue process was timely with the pandemic experience. - Palau undertook dialogues followed by an analytic assessment of fisheries and agriculture to develop two key priority documents to achieve food security: the Blue Prosperity Plan and the Green Growth Plan.

5. Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pathway is being used to declare an emergency on food, nutrition, and water. - A national committee has been set up, but the coordination of the implementation has been decentralized. - Implementation is being tracked through a subnational dashboard. - Encouraging the private sector to drive the implementation. - Implementation is also being undertaken through school gardens, and students' orientation on farming. - Currently concluding the implementation strategy for priority actions to move forward with national implementation.
6. Algeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grateful for the support and resources received. - Important to grant the National Convenor an official status, and to ensure the Convenor has a role in the long term. - Need for the reinforcement of technical and managerial capacities for Convenors. - Have formed a working group with the Convenor, the UNRCO, and the Hub. - There is a strong commitment to strengthen action for food systems transformation.
7. Lao PDR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grateful for the support for the UN agencies. - Are working on 4 tracks involving different sectors. - Have held many dialogues. - Highlighted the importance of building the capacity of the national secretary. - Are working to keep the ministry on board to support the work of the National Convenor to integrate the food systems agenda within national development planning and coordination process. - Communication tools are developed based on the national context to best highlight the importance of food systems to stakeholders.
8. Senegal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Looking towards the operationalization of the pathway. Need continued technical and financial support. - Programmes outlined in the pathway have started to be implemented. - The challenge lies in their continuation despite political changes. - Suggestion to organise business meetings with funders by region, where countries could present their pathway. This could ensure progress for the next 2 years.
9. Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentioned the difficulty of bringing people who care about the SDGs into internal planning. - Coordination must be undertaken at the highest level. Ministries should be integrated in this process. - The UNFSS provided an opportunity to start national dialogues, bring stakeholders together. - Germany now has a higher percentage of organic farming. Livestock farming, the promotion of plant-based diets, biodiversity are issues being discussed. - Emphasised the importance of a whole of government approach.

10. Liberia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Began the implementation of the pathway right after the UNFSS. - Incorporated the Convenor’s office within the office of the Ministry of Agriculture and aligned food systems transformation with ongoing programmes. - Priority issues include women’s empowerment, the nexus between women, food security, and climate. - The UN has 3 flagship projects under development to support the pathway. - In Liberia, financial resources are available, but there is a lack of technical assistance to navigate new and innovative thinking in food systems transformation. - Traditional partners in the UN, bilateral and multilateral partners are still referring to old ways of working. - Challenges are related to the difficulty to finance innovation and innovative thinking for programmes.
11. Lebanon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have prepared an outline for the pathway. - Mapping the legislative framework through the SDG2 lens. - Are working on how to articulate problems, including sustainable access to nutritious food in an equitable way. - Highlighted the importance of adopting a systems thinking approach, bringing all sectors and the whole of society together. Finance is needed for this. - Food security is one of the outcomes of food systems thinking.
12. Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thanked the network of Convenors. - Called for assistance: countries need support to deal with policies and resolve conflicts of interest. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obesity. Ultra-processed food. • Working to eliminate trans fats, regulate breastmilk substitutes. The industry is blocking the progress, discussions have been taken to the supreme court. • It is important to provide images to the private sector to show the impact on the health of the population and on food and production systems. Public policy is needed to regulate the food industry.
13. Rep. of the Marshall Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Critical lack of resources are needed for the pathway implementation. - Pathway is yet to be endorsed by Cabinet. - Establishing a steering committee on food systems. - Priorities include capacity building, youth and women.
14. Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Opportunities to enhance the implementation. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incorporate the strategic plan in the national plans and policies of agrifood system. 2. Engagement of women, agriculture cooperatives, youth in the process 3. Start the implementation from the local limited resources. 4. A separate account has been opened for food security in the Central bank. 5. Joining 8 coalitions. - Challenges: Finance and Conflict.

Overall summary, conclusions and recommended actions (max 250 words)

1. Convenors highlighted the importance of keeping a systems approach, broadening the conversation away from agricultural production and towards food systems transformation. Many Convenors continue to hold dialogues and consultations at national and subnational level, and advocate for an inclusive multistakeholder approach and the need to sustain whole of government engagement.
2. In many countries, Convenors report that national pathways have been validated at the highest level, and many are moving towards operationalization of pathways through their mainstreaming into national policies or translation into projects included in the annual budget and planning.
3. Recurring themes include boosting local production to reduce the dependency on food imports, improve resilience and livelihoods, shortening value chains, promoting healthy diets, school meals, supporting women and youth in agriculture as well as family farming, organic farming, the conversion of livestock farming, and improving access to finance. The nexus between climate and agriculture is also a priority.
4. Convenors mentioned challenges including the difficulties to keep ministries engaged, obtaining funding for coordination efforts, and gathering technical support. Issues of access to finance and debt distress were repeatedly mentioned, with many governments also needing more capacity.
5. Looking forward, Convenors stressed need for better mechanisms for institutional coordination, finance, and monitoring. Evidence, data, resources, and investment are mentioned. They highlight the need to undertake work at subnational level. Convenors also stressed the need for the role of the National Convenor to be formalised in order to ensure the longevity of the process.