



NENA Regional Network on Nutrition-sensitive Food System

**From Asia to Near East and North Africa:
Multistakeholder engagement for transformation of food system to
deliver healthy diet and improve nutrition**

9 November 2020, 11:00-12:30 (Cairo time)

Concept note and agenda

Background

The importance of food systems and healthy diets in human development has been emphasized by the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 2; End hunger, achieve food security, improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; and Goal 12 sustainable production and consumption. This was also highlighted by the Framework for Action adopted by the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), held in Rome in November 2014, which is built on the premise that sustainable food systems are key to promoting healthy diets. Another milestone is the UN General Assembly reinforced the call for action by declaring 2016-2025 the Decade of Action on Nutrition.

Current food systems are increasingly challenged to provide adequate, safe, diversified and nutritious foods that are affordable, accessible and available and contribute to healthy diets for all. This requires transforming current food systems, which necessitates strong engagement and collaboration from all stakeholders. There has been an explicit recognition of the imperative need for better involvement of non-state actors such as the private sector, farmers organizations, academia and research institutions. Many governments now recognize the benefits of robust, multi-stakeholder and multisectoral discussion and, in some cases, collective decision-making in order to achieve sound policies and investment programmes. Governments cannot succeed alone and must rely on combining efforts with the respective contributions of the private sector and other non-state actors by tapping the strengths to reduce poverty, ensure food security and improve nutrition through resilient, inclusive and sustainable transformation of food system.

In the framework of its Regional Network on Nutrition-sensitive Food System, FAO Regional Office for Near East and North Africa is organizing a regional dialogue on effective multistakeholder coordination on nutrition-related matters, learning from Asia experience on multistakeholder mechanism with the aim to explore similar arrangements for Near East and North Africa. The event will provide an opportunity to exchange of good practices, discuss challenges and issues for engaging various stakeholders, including different roles of stakeholders in transforming food systems to deliver healthy diets and improve nutrition. A panel is arranged comprising of high-level speakers representing farmers organization, representatives of regional and global multistakeholder platform, academe and research institutions.

Expected outcomes of the meeting

- Experiences, best practices and lessons learned for effectively engaging different stakeholders on nutrition-related matters through inclusive and participatory process involving different stakeholder (including farmers organizations, private business entities and academic and research institutions and governments) is shared.
- Creating regional multistakeholder platform in NENA region is explored, including its linkages with global CFS platform is discussed.
- Opportunities for strengthening intra-regional collaboration on technologies innovations, knowledge and experience sharing between Asia and Near East region discussed.

Tentative agenda

- Welcoming remarks – *delivered by Mr Serge Nakouzi, Deputy Regional Representative and Officer in Charge, FAORNE*
- Short remark on “Inclusive and sustainable food systems to deliver healthy diet and improve nutrition” – *presented by Ms Anna Lartey, Director, Food and Nutrition Division, FAO*



- Short introduction on “Importance of multistakeholder coordination at regional and global levels for transforming food system to promote healthy diet and improve nutrition” – *delivered by H.E. Thanawan Tiensin, Chair of CFS*
- Moderated Panel Discussion – *moderated by Mr Kayan Jaff, Senior Partnership Officer, FAORNE*
 - **Dr Shenggen Fan, Chair Professor, China Agricultural University, and Former Director-General of IFPRI:** How can agriculture science and research outcomes be effectively used to influence diets and improve nutrition and how can multistakeholder platforms be useful for delivering these research and science based solutions?
 - **Dr Grahame Dixie, Executive Director, Grow Asia (Asia Multistakeholder Platform):** Engaging the private sectors and other stakeholders for ensuring affordable, accessible, safe and nutritious foods for all. How multistakeholder mechanism can effectively engage with different stakeholders? What are the benefits of such dialogues (if possible some examples of results and impacts of such dialogues)?
 - **Ms Esther Penunia, Secretary-General, Asian Farmer’s Association for Sustainable Rural development** (Ambassador for International Year of Family Farming and Member of 2021 Food Systems Summit Advisory Committee): Conditions for effective involvement of small holder farmers in multistakeholder dialogues: what does it take to ensure that smallholder farmers produce safe, diversified, and better varieties of nutritious foods?
- Open discussion: how can we accelerate multistakeholder engagement to enhance nutrition in the Near East and North Africa region – what can we learn from the Asian experience? – *facilitated by Ms Nomindelger Bayasgalanbat, Nutrition and Food System Officer, FAORNE*
- Conclusion and closing remarks – *delivered by Mr Jean-Marc Faurès, Regional Programme Leader, FAORNE*

Structure of the event

A panel format will be used to facilitate discussions. The Moderator will open panel discussions, invite the panellists to make their presentations and will summarise the major points and recommendations coming from the discussions. All presentations must be in English. The Panel Presenters will prepare a maximum of five power-point slides for an 8 minute presentation, addressing points described above and responding to key questions. It should clearly demonstrate the issues, present successful strategies, highlight effectiveness of multi-stakeholder dialogues, summarize the lessons learned and outcomes from engagement of different stakeholders. All presentations should address nutrition and healthy diets as ultimate goal and present the multistakeholder perspective from their point of view.

At the end of panel discussions an open floor dialogue will follow where participants will ask questions and share their views on initiatives presented. Interventions therefore should be brief, to the point and should focus on contributing to recommendations based on knowledge, best practices and lessons learnt. The panellists will be given the opportunity for a 2-minute final statement.