

From Global Issues to Local Priorities: The role of Cities in the Global Agenda, including Cities for Sustainable Development, Food Security, Nutrition and Climate Change

Organizers: President of the General Assembly and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

19 February 2019, 3-6pm, UN Headquarters, New York

Background

At present, 55 percent of the world's population lives in urban areas and this proportion is expected to rise to 70 percent by 2050. This rise coincides with a period during which many countries are implementing policy decentralization processes that are resulting in increased and wider responsibilities for sub-national governments. In this context, cities are being called upon to take a more active role in contributing to national governments' initiatives in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Most of the challenges faced by cities at the local level, including climate change and food security, are global in nature and call for multilateral solutions. Thus, we need to reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism, with the United Nations at its heart, and strengthen international cooperation to address common challenges. The solutions however, need to be adapted to the local context and priorities.

Furthermore, the New Urban Agenda reaffirms global commitment to sustainable urban development as a critical step for realizing sustainable development in an integrated and coordinated manner at the global, regional, national, subnational and local levels, with the participation of all relevant actors. Its implementation will contribute to the localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in an integrated manner, and to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets.

Addressing food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition (SDG2), promoting wellbeing for all (SDG 3), ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG 12) and tackling the impacts of climate change (SDG13) are among the key global challenges that require holistic local solutions. These can

be spearheaded by visionary leadership from cities that strive to become inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG 11).

Working with partners, FAO is supporting the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and has developed a Framework for the Urban Food Agenda, which aims at leveraging sub-national and local government action to ensure sustainable food systems and improved nutrition.

The event will privilege multilateral solutions to tackle challenges that are global in nature. In fact, it aims to discuss how to adjust international outcomes and solutions to the local context and priorities.

The event will give voice to cities and sub-national governments with successful experiences in addressing food and healthy diets, wellbeing, sustainability of consumption and production patterns and climate challenges from a local perspective and through innovative actions.

Format

The event will take place on 19 February 2019 from 3pm-6pm at the Trusteeship Council Chamber United Nations HQ in New York. It will be co-hosted by Her Excellency María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the 73rd Session of the General Assembly and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Mr José Graziano da Silva.

Mayors and former mayors will share experiences of effective local practices, innovative strategies and lessons learned in addressing global challenges including climate change, food insecurity and malnutrition, food supply and consumption sustainability, and people's wellbeing from a sustainable and resilient food system perspective.