



DESA



Global Policy Dialogue Series

Version 14 December 2020

Advancing equitable livelihoods in food systems: A UN DESA Global Policy Dialogue Wednesday, 16 December 2020, 8:30-10:00 a.m. EST

Background

Eradicating hunger and achieving food security remain major challenges to humanity and to sustainability. At the global level, hunger and food insecurity were on the rise in 2019. An estimated 25.9 per cent of the global population – 2 billion people – were affected by moderate or severe food insecurity in 2019, an increase from 22.4 per cent in 2014,¹ *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020* report from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that there are nearly 690 million people in the world who are hungry, or 8.9 per cent of the world population – up 10 million people in one year and nearly 60 million in five years. and the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the problem. At the same time, food systems in their current form contribute considerably to green-house gas emissions, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss. Today, food production accounts for about a quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions.² Half of the world’s habitable land is used for agriculture and about a quarter of the world’s productive lands are degraded.

These challenges to securing adequate nutrition to all of the world’s people, generating equitable livelihoods and adapting to, as well as mitigating climate change stand to become even more daunting.³ Building sustainable food systems and healthy nutrition patterns have been identified by the *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019*⁴, as one of six entry points to achieve transformational change toward sustainable development in ways that capitalize on synergies while minimizing trade-offs. On the global stage, 2021 will be a year with food security at its core. In early 2021, the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Population and Development will take on the theme of “Population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development.” In July, the annual High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development will review Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 aiming to zero hunger, along with other closely associated SDGs such

¹ Sustainable Development Goals Report 2020, United Nations, 2020.

² <https://ourworldindata.org/environmental-impacts-of-food>

³ The Report of the Secretary-General on population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development – , prepared for the fifty-third session of the Commission on Population and Development, – provides important insights on the implications of population shift, including migration and urbanization, to realizing a sustainable path to ensure food security and agricultural development supported by the rural communities.

⁴ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/globalsdreport/2019>

as those targeting poverty eradication and climate action. Finally, the Secretary-General will convene the [2021 UN Food Systems Summit](#) in September.

To support the UN system's efforts towards eliminating hunger, and to underscore the interlinkages between SDG 2 and the rest of the goals, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) is holding a global policy dialogue in December 2020 with partners on food security in the context of demographic change and rural development. Internationally renowned experts and professionals on food systems, population trends and rural development will be invited to join as panelists to discuss this urgent and multidimensional issue. The event also will serve as a Food Systems Summit Dialogue aligned with [Action Track 4](#)—Advance Equitable Livelihoods and Value Distribution, giving participants an opportunity to contribute to designing the food systems of the future by informing the Summit process.

To enhance engagement, participants will be invited to submit questions online at the time of registration and in the Facebook chat during the event. Several interactive polls will also be conducted throughout the event, through the Zoom platform or a third-party service such as Mentimeter, to gauge the audience's thoughts on the ideas and solutions highlighted by the speakers.

In addition to supporting the Food Systems Summit, the results of the discussion will be shared with UN leadership and will inform future UN DESA policy briefs on the economic and social impacts of the pandemic and strategies for better recovery, as well as the Department's support to the Decade of Action.

Date and time

The dialogue will take place on Wednesday, 16 December 2020, from 8:30-10:00 a.m. EST

Location

The event will be held on Zoom and streamed to UN DESA's [Facebook channel](#).

Moderator

Ms. Daphne Ewing-Chow, Senior Contributor, Forbes

Event format

- I. Welcome:
(2 minutes)
Moderator**

II. Introductory remarks

(10 minutes)

- **Ms. Michelle Nunn**, President and CEO of CARE USA, chairperson of the UN Food Systems Summit Action Track 4, Advance Equitable Livelihoods and Value Distribution
- **Ms. Marie Haga**, Associate Vice President, IFAD

III. Discussion 1: The impact of COVID-19 and population movement on food system livelihoods

(35 minutes: 25 minute discussion + 10 minute Q&A)

In the first session, panelists will examine recent trends and challenges for ensuring sustainable food system livelihoods from a macro-perspective, in particular the impact of population movement and the COVID-19 pandemic. Panelists are also invited to discuss ways in which the international community, including the UN, can address this complex issue in an integrated manner.

Guiding questions:

- How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted livelihoods based on food systems, particularly in developing countries?
- What are the systemic implications of population movement –and disruptions to population movement-- (including migration and urbanization) on food system livelihoods, both in terms of potential opportunities and risks?
- What are some of the interrelated socioeconomic challenges (e.g. climate change, ensuring water and sanitation, health care, employment and social protections) that need to be addressed together in order to ensure sustainable food systems?
- How can the United Nations support an inclusive and integrated approach to this complex challenge?

Speakers:

- **Ms. Izabella Teixeira (Brazil)**, Former Minister of Environment, Brazil, member of the UN High-level Advisory Board for Economic and Social Affairs
- **Ms. Endah Murniningtyas (Indonesia)**, former Deputy Minister for National Resources and Environment at the Ministry of National Development Planning/National Development Planning Agency (BAPPENAS) of Republic of Indonesia; co-chair of the Independent Group of Scientists that prepared the 2019 Global Sustainable Development Report
- **Mr. John Wilmoth**, Director of the UN DESA Population Division

IV. Discussion 2: Sustainable rural development to ensure better food livelihoods
(35 minutes)

The second discussion will focus on sustainable rural development as a pathway to ensuring better food system livelihoods. Panelists will highlight specific factors to ensure this endeavor and showcase practical examples and solutions from country experiences.

Guiding questions:

- What are the underlying factors crucial to improving rural agricultural systems to be more sustainable and ensure equitable food livelihoods?
- What are examples of agricultural and non-agricultural technologies or tools that can be utilized in a rural setting to ensure sustainable productivity and better access to nutrition?
- How can rural women and youth in particular be empowered and engaged to support sustainable rural development?
- What are some of the successful country cases of sustainable rural development?

Speakers:

- **Mr. Ibrahima Hathie (Senegal)**, Research Director for the Initiative Prospective Agricole et Rurale (IPAR Senegal) and member of the Independent Group of Scientists preparing the 2023 Global Sustainable Development Report
- **Ms. Hellen Akinyi Onyango (Kenya)**, Crop Aggregator, Farm to Market Alliance
- **Mr. Loay Radwan (Egypt)**, Young Leader for Sustainable Development Goals Class 2020 and co-founder of G-Beetle
- **Ms. Antonella Cordone**, Senior Technical Specialist on Nutrition and Social Inclusion, IFAD

V. Conclusion
(2 minutes)

- **Moderator**

Follow-up event: Friday, 17 December 2020, 9:30-9:45 a.m. EST

'DESA Dialogue Debrief': Facebook Live Q&A with youth speaker

In order to increase engagement with the Facebook audience, which includes more young people and people who don't typically follow UN proceedings, UN DESA will host a 15-minute Facebook Live chat with a youth speaker soon after the Policy Dialogue to follow up on the main topics that arose during the event.

The Facebook Live will be a conversation with a UN DESA staff member and the youth speaker from the Policy Dialogue, Ms. Hellen Akinyi Onyango (Kenya), Crop Aggregator, Farm to Market Alliance. It will be held one-on-one over Zoom to allow for two remote speakers to be on-screen at the same time and streamed live to the UN DESA Facebook page. The moderator will draw questions from the live Facebook audience, as well as the list of questions asked by registrants of the Policy Dialogue.

By hosting this follow-up event specifically for Facebook, UN DESA can show that it is committed to engaging with new audiences and young people, while continuing to promote the key messages from the Dialogue and video replays of the Dialogue. The Facebook audience will appreciate something tailored for them, as they cannot participate as directly in the live Policy Dialogue on Zoom.