

In action



Joining forces to shape a resilient,
sustainable, safe & healthy food system!

February 2022



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In a foreword

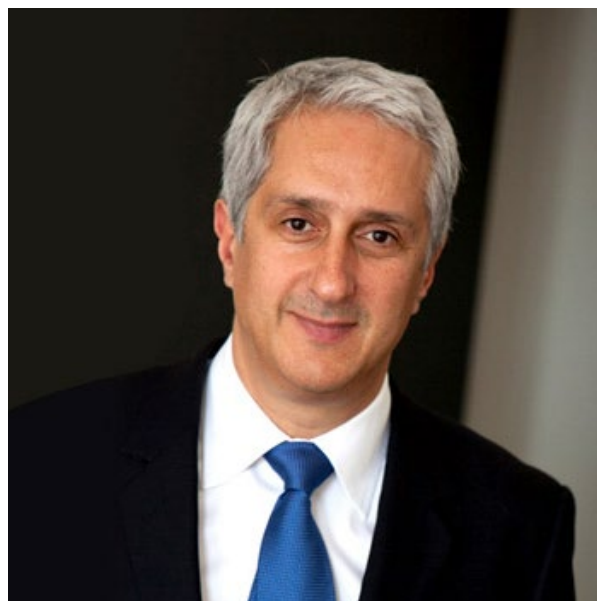
Dear readers,

I want to start by wishing you all a happy, healthy, and sustainable New Year! Entering our third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is sometimes easy to forget that we are facing many other health concerns, some of which do not require masks or vaccines.

Nearly one in three people in the world (2.37 billion) did not have access to adequate food in 2020. Malnutrition includes undernutrition (wasting, stunting, underweight), inadequate vitamins or minerals but also overweight, obesity, both can result in diet-related noncommunicable diseases. In 2021, 1.9 billion adults are overweight or obese, while 462 million are underweight. Beyond hunger, nearly one in three people did not have access to adequate food last year.

Ensuring healthy nutrition requires shifting eating patterns to embrace more diverse, nutritious and sustainable diets, in some countries. Research shows that we are at a crossroads and the forthcoming years will be critical in shifting away from unhealthy eating patterns that have caused a large percentage of diseases in developed countries. In low and middle income countries it requires price accessibility and availability. Wholesale markets have been very effective promoters of accessibility to healthy diets, with almost 50% of all fresh fruit and vegetables currently distributed through wholesale markets globally. Today, our mission at WUWM is to foster collaborations that enhance sustainable, healthier food environments, to act hand in hand with all relevant players to achieve SDGs, to ensure the reduction of all forms of malnutrition, and help citizens around the world enjoy healthier diets.

We believe that to succeed with the transition to sustainability and tackle malnutrition, we have to act differently: we need to join forces with those who have the ability to significantly influence these goals.



Availability and accessibility are certainly two important factors, in terms of distance, price, quality, and freshness, but many other factors, such as education, require wholesale markets to develop partnerships with different organizations including local and national governments, companies and NGOs.

That's why after the Nutrition for Grow Summit we decided this month to focus this edition of our newsletter in concrete ways of improving and transforming eating patterns, encouraging healthy diets around the world and fostering the transition of our food systems.

Hence, we are glad to introduce, in this edition of In Action, WUWM's new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), insightful interviews with experts as well as articles highlighting innovations that could have a game-changing role in improving nutrition, as well as some of our wholesale market initiatives to do so.

We hope you are as enthusiastic about the possibilities ahead in 2022 as we are, and committed to all the work that still needs to be done. I am looking forward to engaging with all of our partners and members in the coming year.

Thank you all for your support, enthusiasm, and participation as always.

Yours sincerely,

Stephane Layani,
WUWM Acting Chairman

In Focus:

WUWM signed an MOU with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) to foster availability of healthier diets for those who need them the most.

WUWM is pleased to announce that our organization and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The MoU aims to strengthen the collaboration between both of the organizations in order to advocate for more availability of healthier diets in the most needy places around the world.

Fresh food markets are at the core of the food systems transition. Several studies (FAO, UNHABITAT, EAT) reveal that they have an important and positive impact on the availability of fruits and vegetables, at more affordable prices, to vulnerable communities.

The mission of GAIN is to tackle human suffering caused by hunger and malnutrition. GAIN achieves its global objective by improving the consumption of nutritious and safe food, especially for the most vulnerable. GAIN's work targets all food consumers, predominately in low-and middle-income countries, including: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Tanzania.

GAIN seeks to effectively and qualitatively impact the daily lives of those most vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition and to co-facilitate swifter transformation towards greater resilience, sustainability and inclusivity in food systems that advance access to safe, healthy diets for all. GAIN works with governments at national, regional and city levels.

With this MOU, GAIN and WUWM have joined forces to advocate, at global and regional levels, for public policies and fresh food modern infrastructure development for the benefit of vulnerable communities, like those with low incomes.

Together WUWM and GAIN will further develop concrete territorial projects that promote and facilitate technical assistance, knowledge transfer and capacity building, to countries and cities, in the areas of fresh food market development and modernization, aiming to enhance better, sustainable and resilient fresh food supply chains and healthier food environments.

“GAIN and WUWM join forces to advocate together, at global and regional level, for public policies and infrastructure development that will boost dietary transformation nodes for the benefit of vulnerable communities.”

WUWM will mobilize its members and resources to facilitate the provision of technical assistance to fresh food markets around the world with the aim of supporting food systems resilience. We believe that improving in low-income countries market infrastructure design and construction, operations management, internal and public sector related governance, innovation and further business capacitation of vendors as well as knowledge and skills transfer will help to achieve SDG2 and facilitate access to affordable, safe and nutritious foods.

We are sure that the WUWM and GAIN partnership will produce concrete positive outcomes for vulnerable communities and we are eager to start this collaboration to improve food environments worldwide!





In the loop

4 WUWM signs the AIAM5 declaration to call for action of key players to ensure availability and consumption of fruits and vegetables worldwide

The Global Alliance to Promote Fruit and Vegetable Consumption 5 a day (AIAM5) released a Declaration during its 10th General Assembly to emphasize important actions that must be taken to encourage fruit and vegetable consumption. WUWM signs, alongside 27 other main organizations of the sector, the Declaration.

The Declaration recognizes the need to combine efforts and create a cohesive vision with the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables (IYFV), focusing on the importance of fruits and vegetables in promoting healthier diets, pursuing a world without hunger, and addressing the global climate crisis. Undeterred by the COVID-19 pandemic, the AIAM5 insists on the pressing need for greater and immediate action. The formal Declaration consists of five points:

1. Action must be taken by those with the ability to significantly influence the sustainable development of available, accessible, and affordable food systems - and it must be done now. There are roles for the fruit and vegetable sector, academia, government, and civil society to play in the process of creating healthier food systems.
2. Momentum is necessary; the efforts taken in 2021 must be added to and not go to waste. This is especially in light of the ground laid by the IYFV and activities that have taken place.
3. We call upon governments to adopt World Fruits and Vegetables Day as outlined by the Alliance. This would encourage commitments from various governments to reduce food waste and to promote the consumption of fruits and vegetables.
4. We need dietary guidelines that contain a clear messaging on fruits and vegetables, emphasizing the different varieties, proper management and storage, and sustainable consumption of produce. Such guidelines may also offer an opportunity for promoting the cultural and gastronomic heritage of fruits and vegetables, particularly of indigenous varieties.
5. Governments have an essential role in protecting the fruit and vegetable sector from the risks involved in production through public policy. We call upon a more proactive approach through the provision of general code of conduct. This must be done in combination with promoting healthy, sustainable food systems that will lead to adequate consumption.

“Action must be taken by those with the ability to significantly influence the sustainable development of available, accessible, and affordable food systems.”

The Declaration builds upon highlights from the FAO/WHO International Workshop on Fruits and Vegetables 2020 report written in preparation for the IYFV 2021. Laying a foundation for AIAM5's call to action, the report details the unique challenges faced by the fresh fruit and vegetable sector, such as perishability, susceptibility to waste, and the disproportional amount of labor required compared to other food sectors. Reminding us that training and encouragement are not enough to increase fresh fruit and vegetable consumption, the Declaration describes the need for definitive strategies. These include the early promotion of fruit and vegetable consumption by young children and having specific regulations put into place to reallocate food that is currently being wasted to those who need it.

AIAM5's Scientific Committee conducted an exploratory consultation with 24 participant countries, finding only 2 countries comply with the WHO recommendation of 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day. The findings also point to the lack of public policy to reduce waste and promote consumption, expanding on the elements of the Declaration.

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WUWM aligns with the core values and proposal of the AIAM5 Declaration that highlights much of the work that is being done by our wholesale markets: encouraging the consumption of fresh fruit through availability and affordable prices, reducing food waste, and redistributing food to the most needed. Through the efforts of our members and allies in the field, WUWM is committed to supporting the Declaration reallocating and contributing to more accessible, healthier diets across the globe.



In facts

- 1 in 3 people worldwide are malnourished
- Malnutrition/ includes undernutrition (wasting, stunting, underweight), inadequate vitamins or minerals, overweight, obesity, and resulting diet-related noncommunicable diseases.
- 1.9 billion adults are overweight or obese, while 462 million are underweight.
- In 2020, between 720 and 811 million people faced hunger: The number of people in the world affected by hunger increased in 2020 under the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic and is expected to increase in 2021.
- Eating at least 400g, or five portions, of fruit and vegetables per day reduces the risk of noncommunicable diseases and helps to ensure an adequate daily intake of dietary fiber.
- Healthy diets are out of reach for 3 billion people.
- Unhealthy diets and lack of physical exercise are 2 of the leading health risks across the globe. They are responsible for many diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer.



"1 in 3 people worldwide are malnourished."



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Interview with Claudia Roden

**best-seller cookbooks
writer specialized in cultural
eating patterns and winner
of WUWMs award 2021.**

We had the pleasure of interviewing Claudia Roden, winner of the WUWM Food Studies and Research Award. This award aims to recognize the work of leading figures of the sector whose role is key to disseminate better eating patterns and cooking heritage. Ms Roden is the author of many award-winning books and has been credited as a major figure to bring Middle Eastern cuisine techniques to the mainstream.

You have recently received the WUWM "Studies and Research in Food" award for your last book "Med: a cookbook". Could you explain a bit more about what 'Med: A Cookbook' entails? What is the message you want to give people, both as a chef and as a cookbook author?

The Mediterranean has been the focus of my work ever since, thirty five years ago, my three children left home and I decided to leave too and travel around the sea to research the food. I went alone, à l'aventure, and the adventure never ended.

When I was eighty I realised that what made me happiest was cooking and having friends and family around my kitchen table. I started to have regular little dinners to try recipes for a book. I tried hundreds - all inspired by memories of people and places and magic moments. The aim was to find those dishes that gave us the most pleasure.

My message is that the charm of a home-cooked meal is its casual simplicity. My hope is to inspire readers to adopt Mediterranean traditions of hospitality, sociability and conviviality and to make meals as much about the pleasures of the spirit as of the senses.

What does it mean to you to receive the WUWM Gourmands Awards Prize for this book?

I am thrilled to receive it. It is a huge honour.

The Mediterranean diet is often portrayed as among the healthiest in the world. How did Mediterranean people develop their diet throughout history?

Their diet, rich in fruit and vegetables, grain, pulses and nuts, with plenty of fish and little meat and oil as the main cooking medium, has long been seen as one of the healthiest. Their dishes are sensual, full of rich flavours and aromas. Every country has its own cuisine, every port city, town and sometimes village has its own specialities, but they also have a lot in common. You find similar dishes from one end of the sea to the other because the countries have the same climate, can grow the same things and also share a history. The Catalan writer Josep Pla wrote that cooking is the landscape in a saucepan. What you see growing in the fields and orchards, the animals that graze or run wild, the birds and the fish brought in from the sea end up at the market and in saucepans. But the ghosts of the past also hover in there and on the plates. They tell you what happened once in a place. Who was there and what life was like.

The countries were part of the same empires that swept across the region, they had the same occupiers and settlers. The Romans planted wheat, grapes and olive trees and spread the classical Mediterranean triad of

bread wine and olive oil. The Arabs introduced new crops such as rice, aubergines, artichokes, spinach irrigation techniques and styles of cooking. The Ottomans spread foods their wide empire. The discovery of the New World brought new foods including tomatoes, peppers, potatoes pumpkins first to Spain. The countries traded with each other and there was constant sea traffic between the port cities. And there were movements of populations.

You are world recognized for your anthropological perspective on food and eating habits. What can food tell us about society? And more specifically, what does cooking tell us about our history?

There are peasant dishes and fishermen's soups and grand dishes that were developed in court kitchens. What we eat, our comfort foods, reveal who we are - our nationality of origin, ethnicity and religion, our class and place in society, our ideology and aspirations as well as our attachment to fashions, local or global.

Today we speak a lot about food security in the forthcoming decades and how can we foster the food systems transition through better eating patterns?

It is different if we are talking about the Western and developed world or developing and poor countries. Markets have a role to play in making good quality fresh products widely available, in promoting a big diversity of fresh fruits and vegetables and in reducing food waste. They could join up with farmers, market gardeners, fishermen and butchers in educational campaigns. Food writers and chefs have a role to play in making cooking with fresh ingredients appealing and desirable, and to extoll the importance of fresh quality ingredients and artisanal produce.

“Food writers and chefs have a role to play in making cooking with fresh ingredients appealing and desirable, and to extoll the importance of fresh quality ingredients and artisanal produce.”

What role have fresh food markets played in your life as a chef and traveller? Do you consider markets as an important factor in a modern city or urban area?

Markets are my paradise. In the Levant and North Africa I love to hang around the vibrant and colourful souks and bazaars. In France the weekly farmers' markets are an important part of the culture and way of life of towns and villages. It is where you meet and socialise and where, visually, the landscape delivers to the table. For me they are magical!

When I was young (I had been at art school) I used to sketch in the old wholesale markets – at les Halles in Paris and Covent Garden in London. When I received my WUWM Goumand Award in Paris and went to visit Rungis international wholesale market I was enthralled!

In your last book Med you particularly focus in recipes that contain lots of vegetables. Was this intentional? What do you think are the best actions that people can do to eat and to cook more healthily? How can fresh and healthy food become more accessible for a larger number of people?

When I was trying recipes for the book I had people of all ages over to eat with me – some were as old as I am, some were my children and grand children's age (in their teens, twenties and thirties). Many were eating less meat or had stopped eating it. Some were vegetarian, a granddaughter's friend was vegan. I did dairy free and gluten free meals for some. Everyone wanted vegetables. That is why I trawled through my food memories of the Mediterranean for the best vegetable dishes. Putting pressure on supermarkets to stock good healthy ingredients and eliminate junk food as much as possible would be one way of getting people who can afford less to change their diet.





Insightful

Learn why public food procurement can be a Game Changer for Food System Transformation and to enhance better eating patterns!

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) just published the books: «Public food procurement (PFT) for sustainable food systems and healthy diets». WUWM had the honor of interviewing two of its editors, Florence Tartanac, FAO Senior Officer and group leader of the “Market Linkages and Value Chain Group”, and Luana F.J. Swensson, FAO Policy and legal specialist for sustainable public procurement. In the interview, they discussed the publication insights, potential, challenges, and role of PFT as a game changer for the transformation of the food system

The FAO had recently published a study called “Public food procurement for sustainable food systems and healthy diets”. Could you please tell us a little bit more about this publication?

Public Food procurement (PFP) initiatives have been receiving increased attention over the past decades as an important policy instrument with the potential to deliver multiple benefits for multiple beneficiaries, including food consumers, food producers and local communities. These initiatives include school feeding programmes, as well as the purchase of food for public universities, hospitals, prisons and social programmes. Nevertheless there was still a lack of a comprehensive publication that would analyze the linkages between PFP and the broader sustainable development agenda.

This book is the result of the collaboration between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) and the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS). In order to provide a real multidisciplinary approach, more than 100 authors including academics, United Nations staff and practitioners, with different areas of expertise and backgrounds have contributed to the development of its 36 chapter. Ultimately, this book aims to be a useful tool for policy makers and practitioners in the support of the design and implementation of PFP policies and initiatives. It aims also to be a useful tool for researchers to provide and/or to foster the development of better evidences on the topic and, ultimately to contribute to the better understanding, dissemination and use of PFP as a development tool.

Can you share with us the main findings of the study?

Considering the length of this publication, many were its findings. A few that we can highlight here include:

PFP should be recognized as an important part of Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) debate that may contribute to achieving SDG target 12.7 [promote public procurement practices that are sustainable in accordance with national policies and priorities]. Although this do not always happen in the practice the recognition of PFP initiatives as an important part of SPP is key to reinforce both agendas at local, national and international levels, promote a systems-based approach and support the development of proper regulatory and policy instruments for effective implementation. To achieve these goals, the promotion of multisectorial coordination, the creation of knowledge exchange platforms at multiple levels and the development of multidisciplinary studies are crucial.



Another important finding of the study regards the role of different actors for the successful implementation of PFP. The analysis of PFP experiences in this book illustrates the important role of different actors (including both public and private ones) in PFP implementation and also highlights the importance of the balance between the role of the state and that of markets. It shows that, where this balance is achieved, the benefits of PFP for society are greater – a highly relevant finding in a period in which pro-market narratives still tend to deny the necessary, proactive role played by the public sector.

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Do you think that public food procurement can be a game changer development tool and as an entry point for food systems transformation and to foster healthier diets?

Yes, we strongly believe that PFP is one key instrument that can be used as an entry point to promote a transformative change of food systems towards sustainability. By its very nature PFP affects all different components of the food system (i.e. food production and supply chains, food environments and food consumption). Considering the extent of the demand for food from the public sector, PFP initiatives have the potential to profoundly influence both food consumption and food production patterns and to deliver multiple social, economic and environmental benefits to the food system that can contribute to more sustainable healthy diets.

How these effects play out depends on how public procurement choices are made: i.e. what food will be purchased (such as local, diverse, nutritious, healthy and culturally adequate); (ii) from whom (e.g. from local and/or family farming producers, small and medium food enterprises, women, youth and/or other vulnerable groups); and (iii) from which type of production (e.g. from agricultural production that ensure environmental sustainability as well as biodiversity). In particular, by creating a

demand for certain types of food products (such as biodiverse, from local and smallholder farming, and from agroecological production), governments have the power to set positive trends. They can send strong signals about government ambitions on the future directions of the food system. Such signals have the power to incentivize supply chain actors, including public purchasers, to align practices with values and thus foster a transition towards sustainable food production and consumption. How public food procurement can promote food system transformation is discussed in various chapters of the book.

“We strongly believe that PFP is one key instrument that can be used as an entry point to promote a transformative change of food systems towards sustainability.”

Could you please share one or two good practices/successful stories of how public food procurement can positively influence both food consumption and food production patterns?

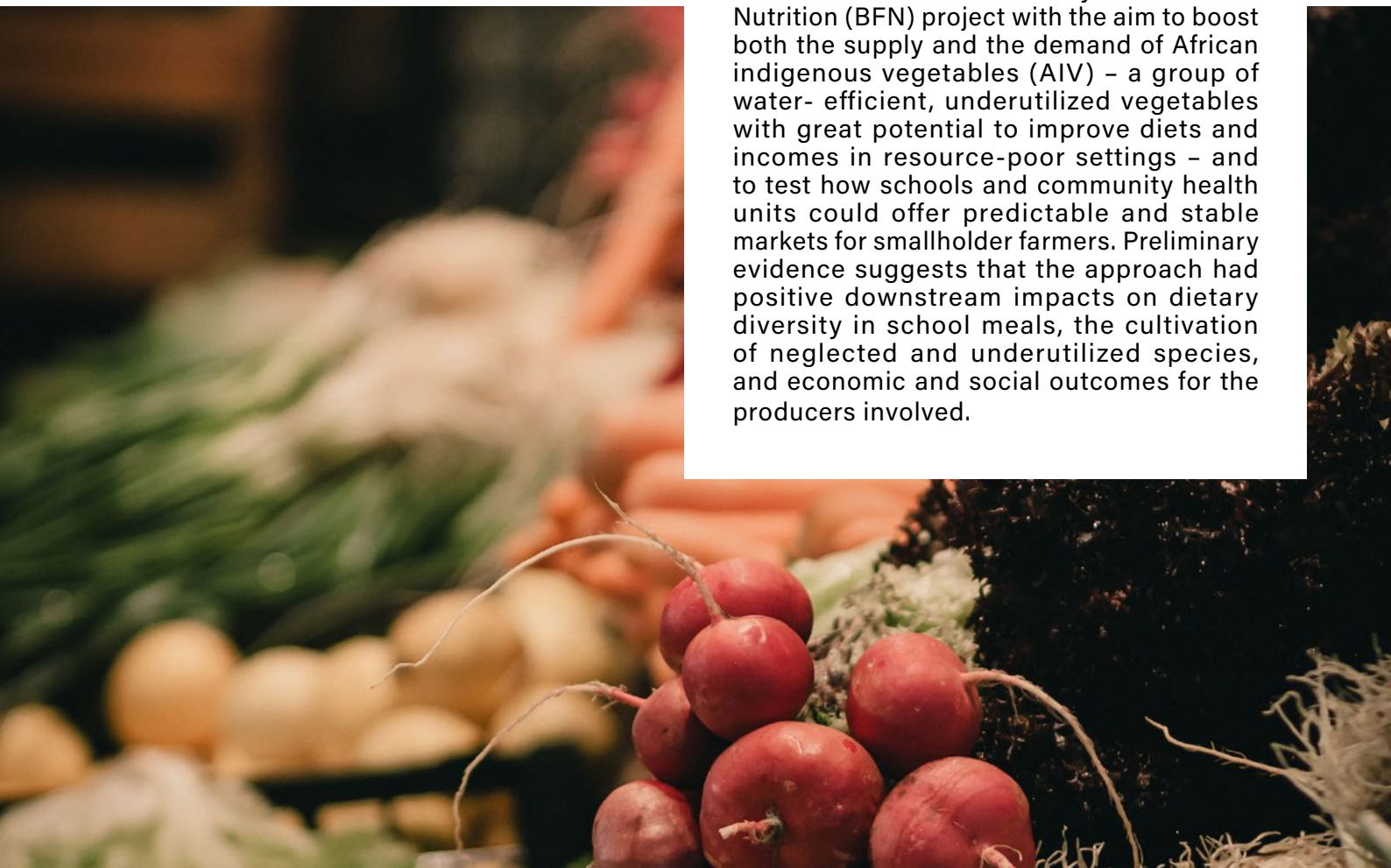
This book presents various good practices and successful stories, one good example is the case of Brazil's school feeding programme. The reformulation of the Brazilian National School Feeding Programme (PNAE) back in 2009 broadened the programme's traditional objective of responding to student's nutritional needs during their time in the classroom. The programme requires that at least 30% of the federal budget allocated for the purchase of food for school feeding must be reserved for contracts with local family farming producers, giving priority and a price premium (of up to 30%) to, among others, organic and/or agroecological products.

“By creating a demand for certain types of food products (such as biodiverse, from local and smallholder farming, and from agroecological production), governments have the power to set positive trends.”

By targeting, procuring and serving healthy and diversified food in accordance with the local culture, tradition and healthy eating habits, the programme has a direct impact on school children food consumption patterns. Indeed, the success of PNAE in reducing child malnutrition, increasing access to healthy foods, improving eating habits and reducing school absenteeism has inspired many countries in Latin America and Africa to replicate and adapt its strategies. An important characteristic of the Brazilian programme, it that it has been successful in impacting not only food consumption, but also food production patterns.

The demand for diversified products and the price premium for certified organic and agroecological products has been assessed to have an important role in promoting production diversification among smallholder farmers and the transition to organic production practices. As highlighted in the study, it was found that farmers' participation in PNAE played a direct role in farmers' decisions to shift their household's primary economic focus from low agrobiodiversity, input-intensive farming systems (e.g. corn or soy monocultures) to more diversified, low external input systems (e.g. horticulture). Once PNAE emerged as an easily accessible and stable market for a variety of food crops, many farmers expanded the area of their horticulture plots from small home gardens for household consumption to market-oriented plots. Farmers explained that this shift was incentivized by guaranteed purchases leading to a reliable monthly income distributed over the school year, and by the stability and accessibility of the market generated by PNAE. For the farmers who were already market-oriented horticultural producers, the price premium offered by PNAE for certified agroecological products supported a transition to organic production practices.

Another example that we can highlight is the case of Busia County in Kenya. A pilot project was implemented there under the framework of the Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition (BFN) project with the aim to boost both the supply and the demand of African indigenous vegetables (AIV) – a group of water- efficient, underutilized vegetables with great potential to improve diets and incomes in resource-poor settings – and to test how schools and community health units could offer predictable and stable markets for smallholder farmers. Preliminary evidence suggests that the approach had positive downstream impacts on dietary diversity in school meals, the cultivation of neglected and underutilized species, and economic and social outcomes for the producers involved.





In which ways could public procurement help local and smallholder farmers and promote the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity to improve the nutrition and health of children and communities? What could be the role of wholesale fresh food markets in this sense? Do you have any example to share of a collaboration between local authorities/ wholesale markets to foster PFP of fresh produce?

Considering the extent of public sector demand and how these choices are made, PFP can achieve various development objectives:

- Depending on the choice of 'from who' food should be purchased (i.e. from local and smallholder farmers), PFP can become an instrument to support local and smallholder agricultural production and stimulate community economic development.

- A PFP programme can also target food that is produced in a specific way and therefore use its purchasing power to support and promote forms of agricultural production that ensure both environmental sustainability and biodiversity. This include, the purchase of food based on low-impact production methods with reduced carbon inputs and greenhouse gas emissions, organic production and biodiversity attuned practice.

- PFP has the potential to impact not only the production, but also consumption patterns and to improve the nutrition and health of children and communities. Properly designed school food procurement initiatives can lead to an increase in the variety and quantity of healthy foods served in schools and to improvements in the dietary diversity of school children.

- When linked to the local agriculture production, the increase in the variety and quality of the PFP demand, has the potential also to foster the production of more diversified, biodiverse and healthier products to respond for such demand. An increase in production diversification can lead also to an increase in the availability of such products in local markets, and to the access of a broader population to these products, contributing to the promotion of healthier diets among the community.

Although many of the benefits of PFP are based on the linkages between the demand and the local agriculture and smallholder agriculture production, the implementation of such linkage is not always easy to implement. For instance, smallholder farmers, alone, may not always be able to comply with all the requirements of public institutions demands (such as in terms of logistics, quantity etc.). On the other hand, public institutions may not always have the capacity and/or find difficult to deals with several individual contracts with producers. It is key the involvement of various stakeholders, from the public and private sector. Wholesale markets can be, according to the context, an useful intermediary to support this linkages and increase the benefits of PFP initiatives. What is important is that the benefits of PFP markets are transmitted along the value chains.

“PFP has the potential to impact not only the production, but also consumption patterns and to improve the nutrition and health of children and communities.”

For instance, organic procurement in Copenhagen encompasses a wide network of wholesalers, producers and NGOs, and all these actors play a key role in finding solutions together to restructure the supply chain to support the implementation of sustainable public food procurement with a focus on organic products. The chapter highlights as one of the factors of success of the experience of Copenhagen in purchasing 88% of the ingredients used in the city's public food system organic, the extensive market dialogue with both producers and wholesalers before and during the tender period. The city is planning future tenders directly at Wholesalers as an strategy to help to fulfil the targets imposed by the new climate food action plan approved by the city council in 2019, aimed at shift consumption further towards a plant-based diet and drastically reduce emissions from public food consumption.

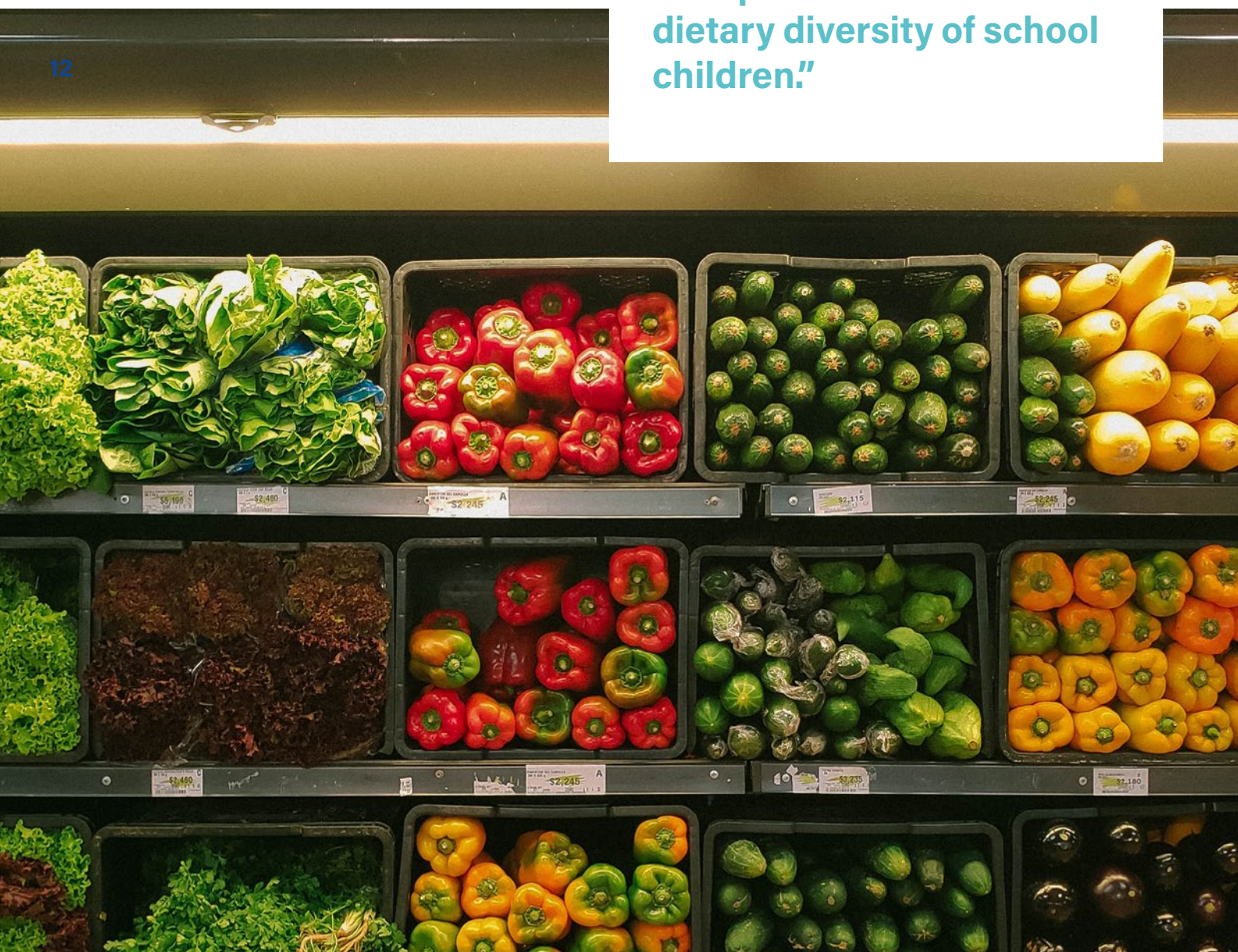
What are today the main challenges to enable better PFP?

The implementation of PFP initiatives is not a simple or straightforward task. The successful implementation of PFP initiatives requires coordinated interventions on both the demand and the supply side. It also requires enabling policy, institutional and regulatory environments.

The analysis presented in this publication demonstrates that the resolution of many of the challenges related to the implementation of PFP initiatives depends on actions by the state, and especially the development of appropriate regulatory frameworks and policy instruments. Indeed, the analysis confirms that appropriate regulatory frameworks are key to the successful development and implementation of PFP initiatives. However, the analysis in this book also confirms that regulatory frameworks are not sufficient. Other actions by the state are necessary and may involve the use of a complementary mix of policy instruments.

The analysis in this book also confirms that instruments used by the state alone are not sufficient to ensure the successful formulation and implementation of PFP initiatives. Many other actors, including the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders, have a crucial role to play, too. The book shows therefore the key role of different actors (including private ones) in PFP implementation and the importance of the balance between the role of the state and that of markets for achieving greater benefits of PFP for society.

“Properly designed school food procurement initiatives can lead to an increase in the variety and quantity of healthy foods served in schools and to improvements in the dietary diversity of school children.”





In Good Practices

Snapshot of some of our wholesale markets actions to promote healthier diets and better eating patterns!

We are delighted to share some of our wholesale markets the initiatives and programs to promote healthier eating patterns. Alongside of being the biggest worldwide distributors of fresh food- and particularly fruits and vegetables- and the only ones ensuring accessibility to a large variety of fresh produce, wholesale markets develop specific projects and partnership to improve healthier diets. Find here some thrilling examples!

Interview:

Mercamadrid launches an innovative project to teach school children better eating habits!

13 **Madrid wholesale market is developing a new bolt project "School of fruits" («Escuela de la Fruta») to promote healthy diets amid children, could you please explain in more detail this project?**

In 2021, Mercamadrid, Madrid wholesale market, endorsed its commitment to children's health through the development of a new initiative: The Fruit School project. A unique space in Spain, located inside the Central Fruit and Vegetable Market, in which kids can learn while playing. The main objective of this project is to collaborate with families and schools so that children can acquire knowledge and skills to have a healthy lifestyle and diet. This project was included in Mercamadrid's Strategic Plan 2020-22, approved by the Board of Directors and financed by the wholesale market administration. Last year we were able to open the program in October, as before the COVID-19 mitigation government measures didn't allow it. In just 3 months over 300 school children have visited us in 2021!

This project is the evolution of an older program that was born at the end of 2016, «I learn to eat healthy in Mercamadrid». A program of visits aimed at students from 9 to 12 years old, in which the importance and impact of each of the links in the food chain are made known, in order to have a wide variety of healthy and safe food, from the field and the sea to our plate.

The new projects promotes healthy eating habits, highlighting the importance of fresh and seasonal food, at a time when childhood obesity has become a concern for many specialists and nutritionists.

From the beginning, it has had the commitment and active involvement of the business representation entities in Mercamadrid, as well as the group of companies and professionals that carry out their activity in Mercamadrid.

This initiative was added to other Mercamadrid activities that seek to promote healthy eating patterns and a healthy life, such as the «Get to know Mercamadrid» program of citizen visits, the gastronomic visits of seasonal products (aimed at adults) or the Mercamadrid 10km race.

What is the articulation with other organizations or with the local government for the organization of these days?

The project has the important support of Mercamadrid's shareholders, the Madrid City Council and Mercasa. To request visits, schools can do so through the catalog of extracurricular activities of the Madrid City Council, in which the activity is included, or on Mercamadrid's web page.

What do you think are the biggest challenges for healthy eating in (region/city), and how do you think wholesale markets play a role in promoting healthy eating patterns?

The Fruit School was born with the vocation to address the results of the latest study by the Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition, which reflects that 40% of Spanish children and adolescents are obese or overweight.

The involvement of the Association for the Promotion of Fruit and Vegetable Consumption «5 a day» and the Association of Fruit Wholesalers of Mercamadrid together with Mercamadrid in the project "I learn to eat healthy" and its evolution with the Fruit School from day one, represents the commitment of this great fresh food market with children's health, promoting the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables, emphasizing seasonality, proximity, sustainability, etc.

"A latest study by the Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition reflects that 40% of Spanish children and adolescents are obese or overweight."

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Interview:

Alicante wholesale market teaches parents better eating patterns for their kids.

We know that Mercalicante (Spain) is developing two projects, «School for parents» and «the fridge» to promote healthy diets. Could you please explain in more detail these projects and what your market does to promote healthy eating?

From Mercalicante we develop several initiatives to promote healthy habits, especially related to food and sports. In addition to the school visits with sensory workshops we have recently developed, together with the Alicante City Council, the educational projects 'Parents School' and 'The Fridge' to train both young people and parents in healthy habits. In the case of the "The fridge" ('La Nevera') program, which is part of the 'Disfruta del movimiento' initiative (Enjoy the movement), we go to the secondary schools of Alicante where various workshops are held to promote movement in young people through dances or various sports. There we distribute fruit among young people and give workshops focused on healthy eating habits.

In the case of the 'Parents' School', which was set up in collaboration with the School parents Associations, we created a specific project to accompany parents in the process of introducing healthy habits in their children through food, sports and something as important as the necessary hours of sleep. Bearing in mind that needs vary according to age, we have training material aimed at children and other specific material for primary school students. In addition to these two projects, we carry out, in collaboration with the Alicante City Council, another project in schools, called 'Healthy Habits Days', which is aimed at primary school children.

In 2021, more than 3,800 young people and children benefited from our educational programs!



“The main challenge is to start eating healthy from an early age so that it becomes part of the regular routine of young children and their families.”

What is the articulation with other organizations or with the local government for the organization of these days?

Our communication with the Alicante City Council, and its departments, is constant and fluid to know exactly what needs and quantities of fresh fruit they need us to provide for each activity, depending on the number of participants. Through MoUs with various neighboring councils, we collaborate in the promotion and development of these projects.



Could you explain the birth of these projects, how they are financed and how many people benefited from them?

The projects were born from Mercalicante's commitment to promote a healthy and balanced diet, and we are aware of the high rate of obesity that occurs at an early age. As a public company we wanted to make our contribution to improve the future health of our children and young people. Some of the projects are financed entirely by Mercalicante as part of its corporate social responsibility and with some collaboration from the wholesalers installed on the premises. Other projects are co-financed by the Alicante City Council. Beyond the actions mentioned above, we also collaborate annually in dozens of sporting events, where we promote the consumption of fresh fruit by distributing this product among athletes, reaching 12500 athletes in 2021.

What do you think are the biggest challenges for healthy eating in (region/city), and how do you think wholesale markets play a role in promoting healthy eating patterns?

The main challenge is to get healthy eating from an early age to become part of the regular routine of young children and their families. If we are able to inculcate this type of habits from an early age, today's children will be tomorrow's adults with healthy habits who practice sports and take care of their diet with fresh and quality products. Undoubtedly, wholesale markets play a strategic role in the dissemination of healthy eating. They are logistic centers for the commercialization of fresh and healthy products, and also represent the key piece that moves and sustains the whole gear of the food supply chain in our country!

Interview:

Paris wholesale market, Rungis, builds partnerships with major actors of the sector and launches an Academy to train the next generation of fresh food professionals.

We know that Rungis is developing a new bold project to train the next generation of fresh food professionals. Could you please explain these projects in more detail and what your market does to promote healthy eating?

Rungis Academy is located in the heart of the Rungis International Wholesale Market. Among its core values, the academy wants to play a central role in promoting healthy and sustainable eating habits among learners. One of the aims of Rungis Academy is to raise awareness among young people, apprentices and students about healthy, balanced food, but also about the ecological transition and responsible, anti-waste consumption. We plan to organize themes and events on these subjects!

The first event will take place at the end of March in the form of a fun educational tour: «From the earth to the plate through the market» to highlight an eco-responsible food circuit to our plates and provide answers to the question: How to produce, consume and cook more responsibly? and therefore eat more healthily.

“Rungis Academy can train professionals to have knowledge of the entire food industry.”

By bringing together training organizations in the fields of agriculture, logistics and the food industry, Rungis Academy can train professionals to have knowledge of the entire food industry. For instance, to give a concrete example, we will teach our catering trainees to use local products from short circuits.



Can you explain how these projects came about, how they are financed and how many people have benefited from them?

Rungis Academy was created by the wholesale market administration who wanted a school to help young people and adults find employment and food industry employers find trained professionals. In its statutory role, the association has also set itself the task of responding to the food issues of tomorrow. The members of the association are training centers for the food industry, agriculture, catering..., we wish to lead reflection on these themes. This year we are targeting a hundred young people for our first event related to “healthy eating patterns” that will take place in March.

How are these events organized in conjunction with other organizations/local government?

Rungis Academy is supported by the Regional government. In addition, in order to have a good visibility of our actions and especially this event, we responded to the public national call for projects «Year of Gastronomy» for which we were awarded a label. This labeling gives rise to a referencing within the heading «Year of gastronomy» of the site of the government. The event can thus benefit from public visibility.





In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges in terms of healthy eating in (region/city) and how do you think wholesale markets play a role in promoting healthy eating habits?

The biggest challenges related to Rungis Academy's goals are:

- lifelong education in food with proximity to the field
- nutritional and environmental information

Rungis Académie is in line with these challenges and will address these subjects in the training courses it provides. Wholesale markets provide access to quality food (fresh produce, organic produce, development of short circuits, etc.) and are a key actor at local level to ensure healthy diets.

“The «Smart basket» project has developed a mass dissemination strategy aimed especially at consumers, who are the ones who drive the chain and give signals to other links.”

As part of the campaign, the concept was developed that fruits and vegetables have a seasonal behavior and it is best to consume them when they are more abundant, because they are surely of better quality and are sold at a more convenient price. To achieve this, the communication tool created was the “Canasta inteligente” («Smart Basket»).

The Smart Basket is a list of products that are selected based on their quality and abundance in supply, good nutritional contribution and affordable prices. This list is updated every 15 days to take into account changes in the seasonality of the products.

The «Smart Basket» is a conceptual product. It is not a basket containing selected seasonal fruits and vegetables at lower prices, but a recommended list of products that can be found at affordable prices in most fruit and vegetable stores in the country.

A central feature of the «Canasta Inteligente» is that it has developed a mass dissemination strategy aimed especially at consumers, who are the ones who drive the chain and give signals to other links. Retailers - retailers, supermarkets, warehouses and self-service stores - and the associations that group them together have joined in the dissemination process, playing an important role in the process of adoption of the suggestions by end consumers.

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Interview :

Uruguay's wholesale market creates a “smart prices basket” to amid consumers and retailers to facilitate accessibility to local seasonal healthy food

We know that your market is developing an innovative project to promote healthy diets, could you please explain in more detail these projects and what your market is doing to promote healthy eating?

First of all, I want to share that the Unidad Agroalimentaria Metropolitana (UAM) Uruguay's main wholesale market distributes 60% of the national commercialization of fruits and vegetables destined for fresh consumption in the country. In 2017, the Mercado Modelo/UAM launched, with the Ministry of Livestock Agriculture and Fisheries and social organizations of the sector, the program, «Mejor de estación» (“Best in Season”).

Could you explain the origin of these projects, how they are financed and how many people benefited from them? And what is the articulation with other organizations/local government for the organization of these actions?

The «Better in Season» campaign arose as a joint venture between the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries and the Model Market Administrative Commission (now UAM). The contribution made by each of these institutions for its financing consists of the contribution of specialized technicians, who support the information that feeds the campaign and the financing of the communicational elements themselves (advertising agency and advertising guidelines in social networks, radio, TV and public roads).

The campaign was designed with a strong focus on decision-makers in Uruguayan households. Five years after the start of the campaign, it is estimated that it has a very good penetration in urban Uruguay (60% of the population) and with opportunities for improvement in the most socioeconomically disadvantaged population.

What do you think are the biggest challenges for healthy eating in (region/city)?

Fruit and vegetable consumption in Uruguay is around 290 grams per person/day, which is significantly below the 400 grams established by the World Health Organization (WHO) to reach the minimum recommended intake for a healthy diet. The challenge for Uruguay is to reach the minimum recommended amount.

Based on consumer studies, messages were designed to change some of the population's misperceptions about fruit and vegetable consumption and supply:

- that they already consume enough
- that they are always expensive
- that they are always available, all year round
- that they are difficult to prepare
- that they take a long time to prepare.

To this end, the campaign promoted a communication aimed at informing the population about the average daily intake level of fruits and vegetables and the gap with the WHO recommendation.

How do you think wholesale markets play a role in promoting healthy eating patterns?

Wholesale markets are undoubtedly called upon to play a strategic role in promoting institutional actions aimed at guiding the growing healthy consumption of fruits and vegetables by the population. This role has gained relevance, especially in the global pandemic context of recent years, in which wholesale markets have remained interrupted in distributing food to their population. These and other associated promotion actions have no precedent in our country, nor in the region, and there are not many examples in the world. The challenge is great, because it is not easy to undertake the battle to change the eating habits of a society. We can advance by modifying the erroneous conceptions that are held, but much more complex and difficult to modify are the affective elements that motivate the decision to buy and consume, processes in which rational aspects play only a very secondary role.





Innovation:

FAO develops a bold new indicator and mapping methodology to analyse the impact of fresh food markets in improving healthier eating patterns.

We are more than glad to introduce you this new tool that the FAO Food and Nutrition Division has developed in order to measure the contribution of fresh food retail markets to ensuring healthy and diversified diets at the local level. This new instrument could be core for effective public food policy to succeed in ensuring healthier diets for all.

Can you briefly introduce the work of your division at the FAO?

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Within the FAO Food and Nutrition division, there is a team working of food retailing environments. The food retailing environment, that comprises all the food outlets through which consumers purchase food, nudge consumers' food choices in particular directions and contribute to dietary habits and preferences that can have long-term impacts, especially in children.

Within these working areas, the team has several initiatives and project, including on fresh food markets that play a crucial role in supplying food at the territorial level. i.e. the territorial markets. Starting in 2017, an initiative to map territorial markets was launched in order to collect data and information that allow to better understanding how these markets work. So far, the team (together with other partners) has: (i) developed a methodology for the mapping of territorial markets; (ii) mapped territorial markets in different countries (Tanzania, Paraguay, Malawi, Ecuador, Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Rwanda and Kenya); and (iii) identified entry points to address the existing gaps and capacity development needs at the market level.

In which ways you think that fresh food retail markets are linked with better nutrition?

Territorial/street fresh food markets are at the core of territorial food systems and are therefore crucial to shift toward sustainable food systems for healthy diets. By the quality and quantity of food they sell and at which price, territorial markets have the potential to produce beneficial effects in terms of consumption by improving the availability, accessibility, and desirability of locally produced, healthy, and nutritious food for the consumers of the territories in which they are embedded. Territorial markets are key food supply centers for all local consumers of all economic statuses. Especially in resource-poor settings where the ability of consumers to preserve food at home is limited, for example by the lack of adequate facilities such as refrigerators, etc., markets constitute an important resource for sourcing fresh and seasonal food such as vegetables, fruit, meat, and fish on a daily basis.

Furthermore, territorial markets are important supply centers for food diversity. A diversified diet helps ensure adequate intake of essential nutrients that can promote good physical health and mental development. Moreover, dietary diversity is positively associated with the pillars of food security, i.e., availability, accessibility, and utilization. Therefore, by leveraging the wealth and diversity of locally grown and available food offered in these markets several opportunities arise to promote and enrich diets.

“Territorial/street fresh food markets are at the core of territorial food systems and are crucial to shift toward sustainable food systems for healthy diets.”

“Despite their importance, territorial markets are very often neglected in nutrition-sensitive interventions and programmes.”

We have learned that you have created an indicator to measure the contribution of retail markets to ensure at the local level healthy and diversified diets. Could you explain us a little bit more the project? Why did you create it? What is it measuring?

Despite their importance, territorial markets are very often neglected in nutrition-sensitive interventions and programmes, most probably due to information gaps, or to a lack of understanding of their potential. To respond to the need of reliable, timely and relevant data to assess the contribution of territorial markets both to consumer dietary patterns and to the sustainable development of localities and regions, FAO has developed a methodology for the mapping of territorial markets. This methodology has been used for the mapping and analysis of markets in a great number of countries, leading to the identification of entry points for delivering nutritional outcomes and boosting healthy diets.

Among others, we developed a new indicator the “Minimum contribution to healthy and diversified diets indicator”.

This indicator, built from data collected with consumers making their food purchase in territorial markets, provides a value between 0 and 1 (the closer to 1 the higher the contribution) which gives an estimation of the market contribution in ensuring access to healthy and diversified diets to consumers. It is based on two dimensions:

(i) The first dimension assesses the minimum contribution of markets to daily food consumption by estimating how much of what is consumed comes from the markets. It is calculated as the average share (%) of consumers reporting to have consumed food products the day before, reporting to buy the food products every time or most of the time they visit the market and reporting to visit the market every day or many days per week, over the total of consumers consuming the product.

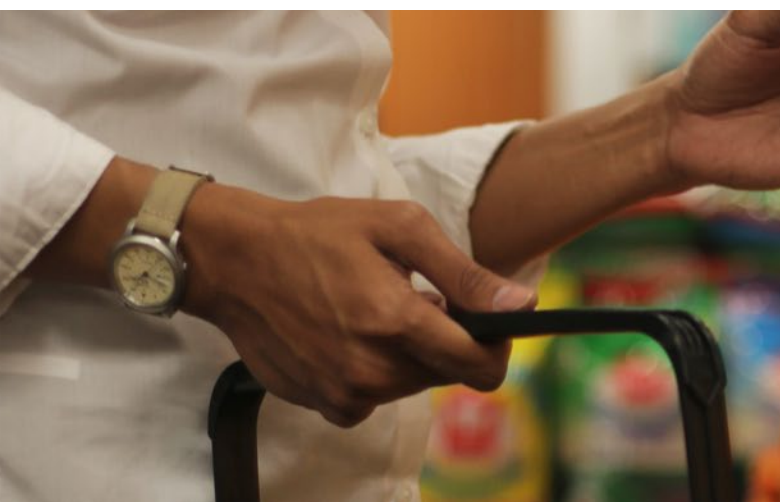
(ii) The second dimension looks at the minimum contribution of markets to consumers’ purchase of healthy diets. This is an estimation of the number of consumers who purchase the entire healthy food basket in a specific territorial market. It is calculated as the share (%) of consumers reporting to have consumed at least 5 different food groups (three of these have to be a source of carbohydrates, a source of protein and a source of vitamins and fibers) and to have purchased all these food groups at the territorial markets over the total of consumers.

“The minimum contribution to healthy and diversified diets indicator tries to estimate the importance of fresh food retail markets for local consumers’ dietary patterns.”

Could you share with us some of the initial findings of this work and some concrete examples?

The mapping of territorial markets occurred in several countries among which there was Malawi and Tanzania. Different and interesting findings emerged on the contribution to healthy and diversified diets.

In Malawi, the minimum contribution to healthy and diversified diets indicator tells us that the at least 25% of all consumers visiting the mapped markets rely entirely on these markets to access and purchase a healthy food basket.





In one market, this number even exceeded 40% of the consumers. When considering specific food groups, the contribution of markets to the daily consumption is even higher, with a maximum of 80% of consumers consuming fish only purchasing this product in the mapped markets.

In Tanzania, the minimum contribution to a healthy and diversified diets indicator shows that mapped markets ensure access to healthy food baskets to at least 10% of all consumers. Also in this case, when considering specific food groups the contribution of markets is even higher, with more than 40% of consumers entirely relying on the mapped markets for their daily consumption of staple crops, fruits and vegetables.

21 What is in your view the potential of this indicator? Do you think that this indicator could help cities to have more concrete data to accelerate urban policies to foster food system transition into more sustainable, resilient and healthy food environments?

The minimum contribution to healthy and diversified diets indicator tries to estimate the importance of fresh food retail markets for local consumers' dietary patterns. This information is crucial to develop informed recommendations for policymakers and plan effective strategies to improve availability and accessibility for healthy and diversified diets at territorial level, including cities.

This indicator is meant to be a proof of how essential these markets are for food security and healthy and diversified diets in territories in which markets are embedded. We hope it will serve to draw attention to this issue and unveil the potential of territorial markets in tackling forms of malnutrition and promoting healthy diets. Since markets are key centers of food supply for local populations and therefore essential for ensuring their food security they must be considered as entry points for action.

“This information is crucial to develop informed recommendations for policymakers and plan effective strategies to improve availability and accessibility for healthy and diversified diets.”

Furthermore, well-functioning markets can also contribute to promote the transition to more sustainable and resilient food systems, if producers and retailers selling sustainably produced products manage to fully value their products.

Given territorial markets are at the core of territorial food systems, adopting a market approach allow to intervene on multiple dimensions, thus catalyzing the systemic changes that are needed to transition toward sustainable food systems, including in urban contexts.

Do you think that FAO and WUWM join forces to help local governments to accelerate food system transformation? If yes, in which ways?

The collaboration between FAO and WUWM on fresh food markets should be further strengthen to support local governments in fully understand how food markets work and how can be improved. In this sense, FAO and WUWM can have a complementary role: FAO can continue to support countries and local governments in the mapping of territorial markets and the identification of entry points to make these markets more healthy and inclusive; WUWM can capitalizing on the existing experiences of its members to share good practices and concrete examples on how markets have been made more healthy and inclusive, thus inspiring other cities and governments.

In Events:

WUWM participated in the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 side event Reducing food loss and waste in fruits and vegetables for improving access to healthy diets organized by FAO

The side-event reducing food loss and waste in fruits and vegetables for improving access to healthy diets - side event to the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 took place on January 20th, 2021 in an online format. In the event, numerous stakeholders and experts of the food supply chain highlighted that healthy diets are today out of reach for 3 billion people. Today 1.9 billion adults are overweight or obese, while 462 million are underweight. The high cost of healthy diets coupled with persistent high levels of income inequality put healthy diets out of reach.

In the meantime, around 1.3 billion tons of food produced for human consumption is wasted every year. Therefore, speakers highlighted the importance of reducing food loss and waste in the fruit and vegetable supply chain in order to increase the availability of fresh produce thus fostering better nutrition.

“The presentation highlighted the role of wholesale markets in improving nutrition and their link with reducing food loss and waste.”

“In the long-term modern wholesale markets can support the modernization and optimization of the whole fresh food supply chain, thus helping to drastically reduce food loss.”

The panel discussed opportunities and approaches to reduce food losses and waste, and to maximize the use of those fruits and vegetables produced for consumption.



The participation of WUWM was led by Secretary-General Eugenia Carrara, who presented «The contribution of wholesale markets to reducing food loss and waste and improving access to healthy diets.» The presentation highlighted the role of wholesale markets in improving nutrition and their link with reducing food loss and waste. Some key remarks: Wholesale markets distribute in average about 40% of the total amount of fruits and vegetables consumed worldwide annually. Nevertheless, the amount of waste wholesale markets produce varies significantly between them (0,3% to 30%). This highlights the key role of modernizing infrastructures to reduce food loss and waste. Wholesale markets can have a direct impact in reducing the waste of the food that came into the market but also in a general way a ripple effect in the whole chain.



In the long-term modern wholesale markets can support the modernization and optimization of the whole fresh food supply chain, thus helping to drastically reduce food loss by improving food safety control, quality of food packaging and containers, fostering efficient logistics, and ensuring access to cold-chain equipment among others. During her presentation, Ms Carrara presented different example for the reduction of food losses and waste in low-income countries and high-income countries. As for the first, she presented the case of Nigeria and Chile. In Nigeria, solar-powered cold rooms increased fruits and vegetables shelf life from two days to more than 20 days for a small investment. And in Chile, where partnerships with private companies and food banks lowered helped the market to reduce their food waste while redistributing the unsold produce to poor households. For high-income countries, the presentation featured the case of Italy and France. In Rome wholesale market a partnership with the Italian government enabled them to create a "food lab" infrastructure onsite where the unsold fruits are processed, preserved in purees and healthy-jams and then sold at really low prices.

In France, the market succeeded in reducing to 0.3% the food loss and waste by partnering with a social-impact enterprise located on site in charge of collecting and redistributing the unsold produce, and by doing biogas with the leftovers.

The presentation concluded by saying that if today we have clear game changing solutions that could drastically reduce food loss in markets it is essential now to increase access to public or private investment to markets that cannot develop partnerships with local governments or companies to develop such type of initiatives. Finally, it is necessary to promote legislation that facilitates donations and penalizes food waste.



In WUWM's World

14 December — EU Code of conduct signatories first meeting

17 December — 6th UNFSS CEO Consultation

11 January — Meeting with the global food banking to develop annual action plan

13 January — Glasgow declaration signatories meeting

14 January — WUWM meets with Urban food policy department of FAO

19 January — WUWM Bureau meets with MIT to kick-off collaboration

20 January — Participation in the Nutrition for Grow FAO side-roundtable

25 January — Meetings with GAIN to sign the MOU

“WUWM Bureau meets with MIT to kick-off collaboration.”



About WUWM:

We aim to facilitate access to healthy diets for everyone in the world by delivering more sustainable, inclusive, and high-quality fresh food supply systems. We exchange ideas, share best practices and cooperate with our partners in international organizations, governments, businesses, and the public.

