

In action

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

April 2022



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In a foreword

Dear readers,

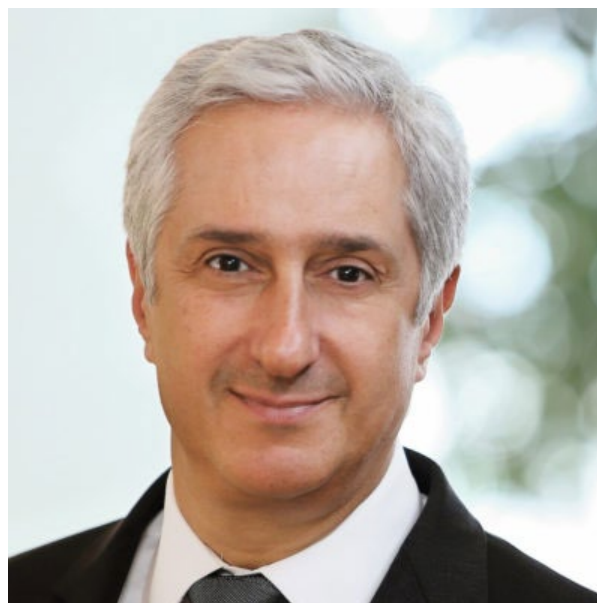
Covid-19 gave the premise of a new era characterized by unpredictability. In this new world shaped by crisis and unpredictability we have no other option than to be extremely resilient and capable of adapting to major disruptions, developing long-term strategies and solutions to these new complex challenges.

The increased vulnerability of supply chains due to climate change, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and recent conflicts like the Ukrainian war, calls for the development of robust and territorial food systems, that can be resilient in the face of all this risk factors. Since the beginning of the year food prices have skyrocketed globally because of disruptions in the global supply chain, with adverse weather and rising energy prices. FAO just published a study showing that food prices are at their highest levels since 2011! These increases are imposing a heavy burden on poorer people around the world and threatening to stoke social unrest.

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The importance of wholesale markets during the COVID-19 pandemic was critical in minimizing disruptions of the food supply chain and reducing price volatility. Several UN studies showed that countries that counted with wholesale markets suffered less fresh food disruptions, bottlenecks and food crisis during the Covid-19 outbreak. During this period, countries around the world realized the core role that wholesale markets had in ensuring food security and resilient distribution of fresh produce. At a time where governments are worried about the risk of major food shortage and a future food crisis, strong and localized fresh food supply chains will be essential to mitigate disruptions. Wholesale markets are key actors to commercialize large quantities of fresh produce nationally and regionally. As our infrastructures aggregate larger numbers of traders having multiple suppliers, our supply chains are more robust than others in case of disruption. WUWM has never stopped working to find innovative actions to foster cooperation and underpin solutions to facilitate fast decision making and improve food security worldwide.

At the end of last month, WUWM's Board Members met in Paris for the first board meeting of the year, where we adopted the annual 2022 plan for our organization and its strategic regional plans. During this meeting, board members also ratified WUWM's commitment



to make the organization a backbone to foster sustainability in the fresh food supply. The challenges we want to address require that all the actors of the agri-food chain work together with a systemic approach. That's why over the forthcoming years, we are committed to strengthening collaborations and build coalitions aiming to ensure the transition to sustainable food systems, foster the consumption of healthy diets, and achieve a carbon-neutral food sector.

This edition of "In Action" will be dedicated to share our regional action plans for 2022 with you more in detail. With global goals in mind, each region – Europe, Asia, Africa and Americas – is following strategic local plans that are tailor-made for their geographical, social and economic situation. WUWM is proud to introduce these regional plans through the words of their regional directors. In addition, this edition of the newsletter also presents the highlights of the forthcoming WUWM annual campaign "Love your local market" that will focus in "Eat fresh, eat local" this year. You will also find articles about our participation in different events, such as the UN-Habitat African Regional workshop, and the Qatar's Agri-food Fair.

WUWM is excited to start this renewed commitment and thankful for all the members and collaborators that have been working with us, hoping to strengthen these links in the years to come. I do believe that the transition to sustainable food systems should be among the top priorities of our sector for the coming years, with wholesale markets playing a key role in its success.

I hope you are as enthusiastic as we are, and thank you for your continuous support and participation.

Yours sincerely,

Stephane Layani,
WUWM Chairman

Involved:



WUWM participated in the “Leaving No Place Behind: Strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages in Africa” regional workshop led by UN-Habitat in Guinea Conakry

Africa is the fastest urbanizing region in the world, but the urban-rural divide is also increasing alongside it. In this sense, it is critical to reduce this gap and the inequalities it entails.

WUWM Chairman, Stéphane Layani, and WUWM Regional Director for Africa, Eva Marone, participated in the 4th workshop of the program “Leaving No Place behind: Strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages in Africa” held in Guinea Conakry from March 14 to 18. The workshop, which was led by UN-Habitat, and other organizations such as FAO, UNCRD, IFAD and UNECA, makes part of a global project to develop urban-rural linkages in four African countries: Cameroon, Guinea Conakry, Nigeria and Tanzania.

So far, significant achievements have been reached, such as the definition of target countries, the setting of URL priorities, followed by the collection and analysis of data, the establishment of policy recommendations, and the actual organization of capacity building activities and initiatives in some contexts. More precisely, the project has featured a series of activities that include the development and implementation of tools, methodologies and other useful knowledge instruments that are meant to be shared among the participants of different project countries. The regional workshop represented the final activity of the project, bringing policy makers of the four countries, neighboring countries, and project partners together to share their experiences since 2018 and to discuss an effective strategy for URL at regional level. The workshops in fact featured a specific sharing-session where the government of Guinea, UN-Habitat and other partners showcased their initiatives and projects.

WUWM took part in the workshop through the active participation of Chairman Stéphane Layani and Director and African Regional Group Leader Eva Marone, who both gave speeches during the occasion. Mr Layani pointed out the importance to structure and modernize the food supply chain in Africa to ensure food security in the forthcoming decades. He emphasized the importance of the URL program in the African region, a region that is particularly struggling with food loss. Mr Layani pointed out that “In some countries of Africa food loss rises

“Africa is the fastest urbanizing region in the world, but the urban-rural divide is increasing together with it. In this sense it is critical to reduce this gap and the inequalities it entails.”





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to almost 40% of the total production! This is unacceptable, especially when we acknowledge the amount of people starving in the region, the economic difficulties experienced by farmers and the width of highly degraded land. Modern wholesale markets are critical infrastructures to ensure sustainable food environments. They aggregate food produced by farmers of all scales, especially facilitating the access to the market to small and medium size farmers in comparison to other actors. They can also help drastically reducing food loss to strengthen the rural-urban ties and foster short-chains leading to more stabilized prices. This would lead to a better quality of life for both farmers and the urban population. For instance, cold storage facilities can extend the life span of some produce from 2 to 20 days”.

Ms. Eva Marone stressed the need for a solid cooperation between private sector and governmental policies to invest in an efficient, modern and structured fresh food sector, the only possible solution to achieve food security and ensure that the growing urban populations will have access to affordable, safe and diversified healthy diets. Public investment is needed to develop all the pivotal infrastructures for sustainable territorial food environments: “African countries needs a reliable logistic system, transparent places where everyone can trade, good storage facilities, and the development of cold chain facilities”.

Wholesale markets can play a role in this, being the infrastructures that strengthen the link between rural areas and cities: “wholesale markets are platforms of exchange between rural producers and urban consumers. By allowing small and medium size farmers to access markets and sell their goods, wholesale markets maximize their opportunities and ensure inclusiveness for rural communities”, pointed out Ms Marone.

WUWM is looking forward to cooperating with the African region and share its expertise on the wholesale sector. WUWM is currently present in a few African Countries, such as South Africa and Ivory Coast, where we are working to increase its reach on the continent and to develop a fruitful community in the fresh food supply sector through the actions of our Regional Group. Besides partnerships and cooperation with international organizations such as UN-Habitat, Eva Marone and Stéphane Layani concluded their interventions by inviting all interested actors to the first WUWM African regional conference, planned for June 2022.

“In some African countries, food loss rises to almost 40% of the total production! This is unacceptable, especially when we acknowledge the amount of people starving in the region, the economic difficulties experienced by farmers and the width of highly degraded land.”

Interview

with Grace Githiri

Urban and Territorial Planner at UN-Habitat about the “Leaving No Place Behind: Strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages in Africa” regional workshop

This workshop was the fourth part of a broader project called “Leaving No Place behind” that aims to foster URL in the African region, a program that started back in 2018. Could you briefly introduce the project?

The project “Leaving No Place behind: Strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages in Africa” aim was to support four African countries, Cameroon, Guinea Conakry, Nigeria (Niger State) and Tanzania (Zanzibar). The support entailed strengthening their urban-rural linkages and overcome the urban-rural divide by enhancing capacities of policy makers and change agents at all levels to collect and use evidence for fostering cross-sectoral, multi-level frameworks, strategies, and action plans for integrated and inclusive territorial development. The project has been implemented led by UN-Habitat with coordinated contributions from FAO, UNCRD, IFAD, UNECA among others in the four countries.

Urban-Rural Linkages touch on a broad variety of thematic areas from regional and territorial planning to strengthen small and intermediate towns, from enabling spatial flows of people, products, services and information to fostering food security systems just to mention a few. Due to this complexity, strategies for strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages should be developed in a cross-sectoral approach, at different government levels – national, regional and local – and including many different stakeholders

such as different UN-Agencies, international and local development partners, civil society, private sector firms and academia. Integrating urban-rural linkages aspects in national and regional frameworks such as National Urban Policies would foster a dialogue between national governments, regional and/or local authorities and relevant stakeholders, and among the participating countries.

Could you share with us what are the achievements and the progresses made so far?

Some of the key achievements:

- Four regional workshops
- Over 15 country level workshops and stakeholder meetings
- Over 20 knowledge materials/reports completed
- Over 1500 stakeholders involved in the project activities and capacities on URL improved
- Two compendium of case studies on urban-rural linkages developed and published
- A toolkit on urban-rural linkages used in the project developed to be published soon
- URL E-Learning course part 1 developed from piloting successes in the project to be available publicly soon

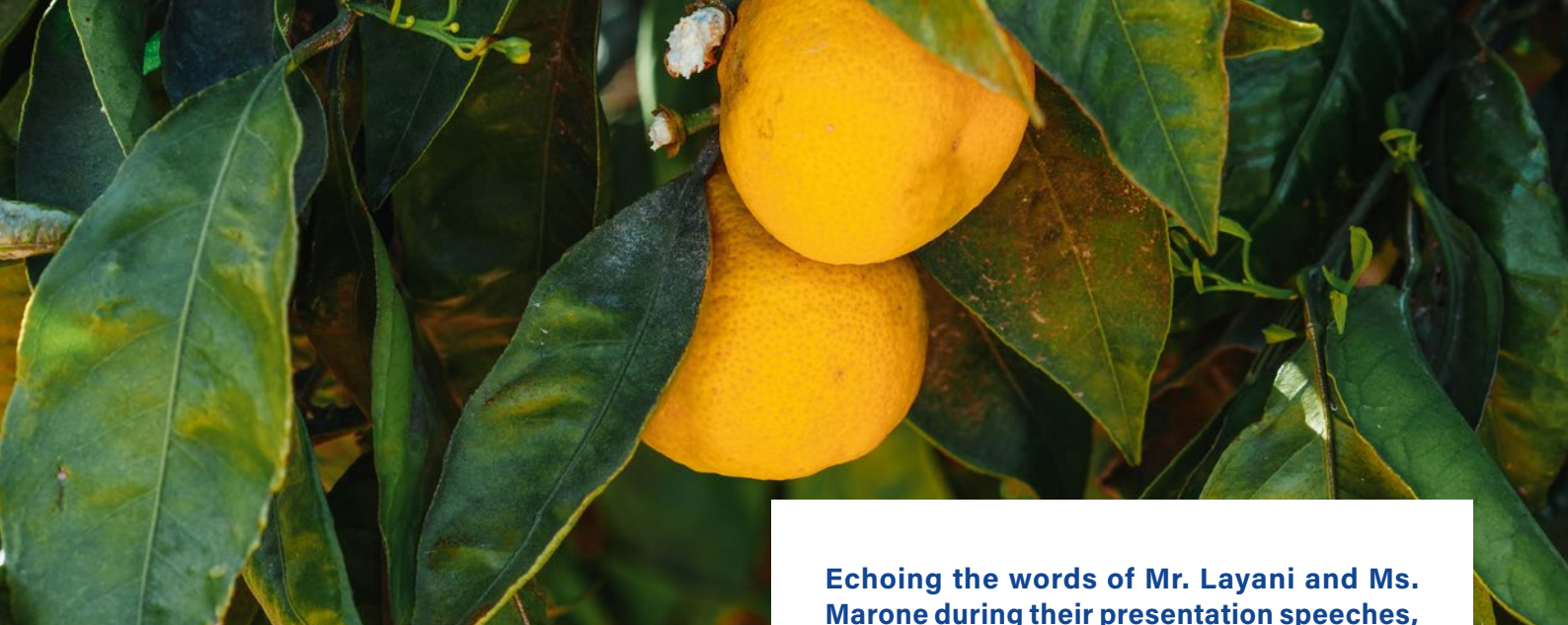
Could you share with us the main obstacles faced by the participating countries and some of the lessons learned throughout these years of work?

Covid-19 was a key obstacle faced by all the project countries which interferred with the implementation of the activities especially meetings and data collection activities which involved physical interaction. This also led to a shift in priorities of the stakeholders towards the health crises and actual interventions to resolve the challenges thereof.

Inadequate disaggregated data was also a major obstacle as most countries and funds limitation couldn't allow for overall data collection and updates for the respective countries. Recommendations have been made to the statistical offices involved in future censuses and data collection to disaggregate data by urban and rural areas among other parameters.

Government restructuring for example in Guinea which took place in September 2021, the impact was for a short time where project activities were delayed.





What are the most critical points to insist on if we want to achieve “Leaving No Place behind” in the food systems according to the programme ?

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One critical point that came out from the project and the workshop discussions is the need to connect food producers with the (urban) consumers. The activities that take place between these two extreme food actors are key and integral to ensuring that both urban and rural spaces and communities benefit. The activities are facilitated by infrastructure as roads, markets and technology which facilitates the linkages between food producers and consumers.

Could you share with us the main outcomes of this 4th workshop?

The key outcomes from this was the meaningful consensus by the participating project countries on the need for urgent steps towards integration of urban-rural linkages in planning and policy. They also jointly made a recommendation to local and national authorities in investing in enhancing the movement of food especially through relevant infrastructure connecting urban and rural areas.

“Efforts towards reducing the urban-rural in Africa would require joint efforts by agencies and stakeholders at all levels and from different sectors.”

Echoing the words of Mr. Layani and Ms. Marone during their presentation speeches, Africa is the fastest urbanizing region in the world with the fastest growing population, with numbers expected to grow in the following 15 years. The development gap between rural and urban areas is however also expected to increase. How are you planning to prevent this from happening?

The urban rural divide is a reality that governments in Africa will face. Rapid urbanization, due to rural- urban migration is putting enormous pressure on (primary) cities. Already large cities and metropolitan areas are growing in unplanned ways and expanding their boarder to peri-urban, surrounding rural areas, and hinterlands. When expanding in such unplanned manner, cities consume valuable (close by) agricultural land (in some cases). Fragile ecosystems are being transformed into urban areas, impacting ecological resources such as water ways, fisheries and forests. Efforts towards reducing the urban-rural divide is not something that one agency or institution could address in a day. This is a reality that Africa would require joint efforts by agencies and stakeholders at all levels and from different sectors working in the urban-rural continuum. These efforts range from effective policy, legislative, planning and governance frameworks along with deliberate financial allocation and implementation of the strategies.

What do you think that could be the role of Wholesale markets to foster URL?

Food Wholesale markets are the first place where the food from the producers and distributors lands in most contexts before reaching the consumer. They are thus integral in linking the rural producers to the urban consumers.

Interview

with Boubacar Sidighi Diallo

Representing Guinea Conakry

Could you briefly present why your country decided to join this project and what are the main outcomes for your country from the overall project?

The objective of this project is to help African countries strengthen the capacities of public and private actors involved in the conduct of policies, strategies and plans. The main objective is to better understand the urban-rural relationship and to find ways to better integrate this relationship in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of planning documents.

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Guinea joined this project out of necessity because, like many other countries, especially developing countries, it is faced with rampant urbanization with known consequences (urban sprawl, appearance of precarious neighborhoods, loss of agricultural land, etc.) and the implementation of socio-economic policies that are far from inclusive and sustainable (rural exodus, destruction of natural ecosystems, isolation of rural areas, etc.).

Guinea has undoubtedly also seized an opportunity with the revival of urban planning thanks to support from UN-Habitat, of which this project is actually one of the components.

In terms of results achieved we can note:

- The review of frameworks, policies, strategies and plans focusing on urban-rural relations;
- The organization of several workshops to raise awareness and strengthen the capacities of public and private actors (executives and agents of the administration, members of civil society, researchers, technical and financial partners, etc.) on the importance of urban-rural relations, but also, and above all, on the collection and interpretation of data.
- The shared definition of national priorities (infrastructure and transport, basic social services, economic activities, environment) on urban-rural relations as well as recommendations for the implementation of frameworks, policies, strategies and plans;
- The sharing of this experience of Guinea with the countries in which this URL project has been implemented, namely Cameroon, Nigeria and Tanzania. Let's say that there was a shared learning of the realities of city-countryside relations in these different countries and the related development issues.

Could you share with us the main obstacles your country faced and some of the lessons learned throughout these years of work?

It can be said that the major obstacles are not specific to Guinea, as the progress of the project has been greatly slowed down by Covid 19, with its share of prohibitions. These years of work have shown that there is an interest in Guinea to work on this theme of urban-rural relations with a real need for training and capacity building for those in charge of conducting frameworks, policies, strategies and plans.

“Guinea joined this project out of necessity because, like many other countries, it is faced with rampant urbanization with known consequences.”





The stakes are high (territorial cohesion, transport and processing of agricultural products, food security, promotion of access to rights for all urban and rural citizens, etc.) and the challenges are immense but not insurmountable (training and capacity building, data production, etc.), provided that there is real political will at all levels by investing massively in the national priorities defined during the implementation of this project

What are the most critical points that need to be emphasized in your country if we are to achieve «leaving no place behind» in food systems according to the program?

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In terms of inclusiveness in food systems, it is already important to invest in the construction and rehabilitation of communication routes (roads, rural and community tracks, crossing structures), in hydro-agricultural developments to facilitate the production and transport of agricultural products. The processing of these agricultural products is essential to improve rural incomes and increase value added. To this must be added the construction and equipping of spaces (wholesale and retail markets, etc.) that meet technical and sanitary standards to sell this agricultural and local production.

“The key is to ensure the availability of quality products in sufficient quantity to end consumers on a national market scale, calling for the optimization of production, transport, storage and distribution systems.”

The key is to ensure the availability of quality products in sufficient quantity to end consumers on a national market scale, calling for the optimization of production, transport, storage and distribution systems.

Can you share with us the achievements and progress made to date?

The regional workshop made it possible to share the experiences of the 4 countries mentioned with shared priorities, notably infrastructure and transport, and the need to promote research and development on the African continent on urban-rural relations. And this is really the interest of the collaboration between UN-Habitat and the University of Nairobi to develop research and training on urban-rural relations. For the time being, with the technical support of UN-Habitat, each country is working on formulating its own perspectives to follow up on the pilot phase of this project. This work could be shared at a later date.

With regard to Guinea specifically, important work could be undertaken with WUWM, for example, on a study in conjunction with UN-Habitat on the optimization of the supply chain of certain products essential to the country's food security. This study could lead to a development plan on a national scale for the wholesale markets of different products to allow a regular supply in quantity for all on a national scale. In my opinion, there is a lot to explore here and your experience in various countries and continents can help structure this reflection in a logic of optimization of distribution channels on a national scale. In any case, it has become clear that markets are buffers between cities and the countryside, real connectors between urban and rural areas.

Interview

with Abdul Hussaini

Representing Niger

Could you briefly introduce why your country decided to join this project and what are the main outcomes for your country of the global project?

Niger State participated in the UNDA project "Leaving No Place behind" within the framework of the ongoing collaboration between Niger State government and UN-Habitat in the implementation of the Niger State Urban Support Programme (NSUSP). This is part of the commitment of state government in creating compact, connected, socially inclusive and self-sustaining towns and cities with a component focusing on strengthening the linkages between Urban and rural spaces with a view to bridging the development gaps between urban and rural areas, foster urban-rural continuum and amongst others.

Following series of activities and technical sessions during country and regional engagements, the outcomes recorded in Niger State includes: awareness of the significance of urban-rural continuum increases; increased capacity on collection of reliable data for evidence based decision making to address urban and regional challenges; formulation of evidence based policies and strategies for strengthening urban-rural linkages and also improve the livelihood of urban and rural populations and enhancing their economic and social development.

Could you share with us the main obstacles faced by your country and some of the lessons learned throughout these years of work?

Some of the obstacles faced in the implementation of the project include; inadequate financial resources: during the period of the project, the Niger State URL project team lacked financial resources to facilitate data collection and other activities, this however delayed the project activities.

Another unforeseen but very formidable obstacle faced was the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic and increasing insecurity situation in the state which limited the frequency and the level of physical engagements during the project. Although hybrid method was employed to ensure the project keeps rolling and to also ensure inclusiveness and transparency during the project.

What are the most critical points to insist in your country if we want to achieve "Leaving No Place behind" in the food systems according to the programme ?

Based on the realities on the ground, the following are critical in achieving "Leaving No Place behind":

- Provision of infrastructure such as feeder roads, river cross/ bridges, telecommunication to improve flow of information and goods and better access to markets as well as provision of warehouses for storage of farm produce.
- Provision of support to farmers in terms of farm inputs such as improved seedlings fertilisers and pesticides, agricultural extension services etc.
- Establishing platform to aid direct linkage between rural farmers and the merchants/ markets, and for easy flow of goods from the rural farm to the consumers.





Could you share with us what are the achievements and the progresses made so far?

The achievement of the project in Niger state includes the following:

- Establishment of URL Working group.
- Reviewed relevant policies for Niger State URL Project.
- Organized capacity building workshop on data collection using digital techniques (kobo tool training) and preparation of workshop report
- Collection and analysis of data based on Niger State URL priority challenges.
- Prepared Niger State URL Situational Analysis report.
- Organized validation workshop of Niger State URL project outcomes.
- Prepare Niger State URL Policy Note.

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Could you share with us the main outcomes of this 4th workshop?

The main outcomes of the 4th and concluding Workshop on URL by UN-Habitat, which took place in Conakry, Guinea from the 15th to 18th of March 2022 are:

- Countries exchanged knowledge on project implementation process on Leaving no behind
- Countries developed and discussed post-project intervention and multilevel governance structure for leaving no place behind
- Countries explore possible partnerships with other UN development partners

“The Wholesale markets, based on the work of World Union of Wholesale Markets (WUWM), is best suited to foster Urban- Rural Linkages through its work by linking farmers and consumers.”

Could you introduce the project that was selected for your country. When it will be developed?

The immediate project for strengthening food systems in Niger State is the PROVISION OF RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES (road, warehouse, electricity). The implementation of the project will kick-off in 2023 while the project is expected to;

- protect the farmers from exploitation (by middlemen)
- eliminate food loss
- increase return on investment, and
- improve market accessibility

What do you think that could be the role of Wholesale markets to foster URL and in which way do you think that we could work together?

One of the key benefits of Niger State participation in the URL project is the understanding of the fuzziness of the Urban – Rural divide and if we are to achieve the objective of leaving no one behind and no space behind, URL concept is the most appropriate. The current scenario, common in most of our communities, between farmers and the consumers or market is against the interest of the rural farmer. The Wholesale markets, based on the work of World Union of Wholesale Markets (WUWM), is best suited to foster Urban- Rural Linkages through its work by linking the Farmers (majorly in the rural areas) and the consumers (Urban dwellers) thereby cutting the distance between the two ends and enhancing their income. WUWM can serve as a catalyst for improving the living standard of our farmers in the villages and ensuring the urban dwellers have access to fresh produce from the source in the villages. WUWM can assist in educating the farmers on the benefit of modern high value agricultural techniques, like organic farming, especially in developing countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

In facts:

- Supply chain disruptions due to COVID-19 had already exacerbated food insecurity for 821 million hungry people in low-income countries.
- In 2022 the prices of food have climbed to their highest level since 2011, according to a FAO global food index.
- Food prices increased 20.7% in comparison to last year according to a study that FAO just released.
- The IMF anticipates global food prices will rise 4.5% in 2022 and decline slightly in 2023.
- Higher food prices have contributed to a broader surge in inflation as economies recover from the coronavirus crisis and the FAO has warned that the higher costs are putting poorer populations at risk in countries reliant on imports.
- Ukraine and Russia account for about 80% of global exports of sunflower oil, one of the top vegetable oils, and 29% of all wheat exports.
- This increase on food prices will be felt most sharply in poorer countries, where food accounts for up to half of household budgets, as opposed to less than 15% in developed countries.
- Shocks to energy, food, and other commodities boost eurozone inflation to more than 4 percent in 2022, versus 2.5 to 3.0 percent in 2021.

“In 2022 the prices of food have climbed to their highest level since 2011, according to a FAO global food index”

In Focus:

WUWM Chairman and Regional Directors presents their action plan for 2022!

During last WUWM board meeting, that took place on the 24th of February, the Chairman and the Regional Directors presented their working plan for 2022 that was approved by all the board members. We interviewed them in order to share with you the main highlights of WUWM working plan for 2022!

Stéphane Layani, WUWM Chairman on The future of food systems

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the face of food systems and economies. What is the message that WUWM wants to share with the world?

These past years of pandemic brought out many challenges to the whole world and affected every aspect of human life: inequalities have increased, and vulnerabilities of various aspects of our system have highlighted. The food sector was also destabilized by the pandemic that emphasized the urgent necessity to foster more resilient



and sustainable, affordable and equitable food systems. There is no doubt that since the pandemic, food security became a main subject in the political agendas around the world. This renewed interest for the topic represents an opportunity for our sector to undergo all the restructuration that is needed in order to strengthen the resilience of food systems while becoming also impeccable in terms of sustainability.

WUWM has always worked to promote the transition to sustainable food systems, and the availability and affordability of healthy diets based on fresh food for all communities in the world. Since last year our organization has taken the lead to adopt also amid our priorities to sustain the transition to a carbon-neutral food sector. This year our goal is to work at two different levels: one to foster regional action, and second to be amid the actors that will enhance a system approach in our sector: what means to acts as a federator of the large diversity of actor of the fresh food sector. In a concrete way we are already doing this in our wholesale markets. Often public infrastructures, or with a large majority of public services among our stakeholders our markets have a social mission: to ensure fresh food availability and food safety. At country level our infrastructures reunite most of the fresh food ecosystems stakeholders (farmers, traders, logisticians, startups, municipalities, governments, unions, etc..).

If last years all the trends showed that the consumption of fresh food will highly increase in the forthcoming years worldwide, this year, international organizations, international developments banks and governments around the world has stressed the need to transition food systems into sustainability, what means amid others to foster the availability and consumption of fresh produce. At the same time with increasing vulnerability of supply chains due to climate change, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the effect of conflicts, strong territorial food systems will be key to reduce external shocks. The role of modern wholesale markets as essential infrastructures to ensure food security, reduce ecological food print of the food sector and promote better and healthier diets is undoubtedly central in this context.

Could you share with our readers your vision for the World Union of Wholesale Markets? What do you see as the future of food and what role will wholesale markets play in that future?

I believe that the transition to sustainable food systems should be among the top priorities of our sector for the coming years, and I believe that wholesale markets can play a key role in the success of this transition by bringing together the most important actors of the fresh food value chain of the world. Together our markets distribute around 50% of the fresh food distributed around the world! In this sense our organization is a unique platform that gathers 220 fresh food actors, mainly wholesale markets but also, retail markets and fresh food stakeholders around the world, its reach and potential are huge! That's why I want our organization to become the backbone of our sector to lead the transition of the fresh food sector into sustainability and towards healthier and more resilient food systems worldwide. The challenges that we want to address requires that all the actors of the agri-food chain will work together. That's why I will look forwards in the forthcoming years to strengthen collaborations and build coalitions with all the actors aiming to be key players in this transition and sharing our values.

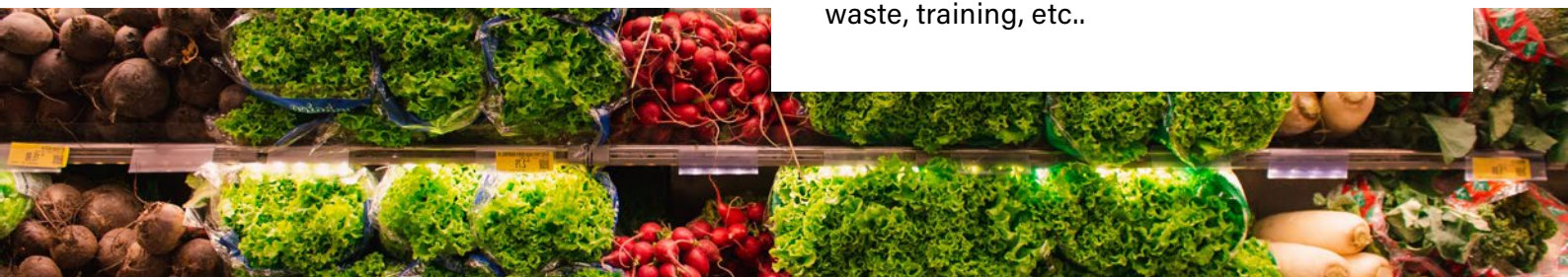
I believe that to succeed the transition of food systems we need to embrace a new way of doing things and to develop a systemic and inclusive approach that engages all the actors from the "farm to the fork". In a concrete way this means that we look forwards to include more members in our network: farmers, producers, wholesalers, logisticians, local and national governments, street markets and retailers. This will be done through the development of thematic expert-committees (innovation, green logistics, circular economy, fostering sustainable food environments, etc..). In a context of reiterates crisis we need to create new platforms that can federate decision makers and key players in order to adapt ourselves faster and prevent food disruptions. For instance, the FAO published a study at the beginning of March showing that food prices have climbed to their highest level since 2011. Food prices have skyrocketed globally because of disruptions in the global supply chain, adverse weather and rising energy prices. This study was done before the Ukrainian war that is already affecting food prices and routes.

The war in Ukraine is already having an impact on food availability and prices, and this is likely to increase in the coming months, and will need to be taking into account.

All these events could result in an important burden on poorer people around the world and need join action to underpin them. We have been working relentlessly the past years in order to strengthen collaborations and build coalitions with private actors, markets and international stakeholders and organizations of the agri-food sector but we still need to strengthen these articulations.

That's why we think that now is time to create the conditions to gather all these actors in common platforms at the international level to leverage together knowledge, learnings and innovations.

I believe that the future of fresh food supply chain will be shaped by wholesale markets, and WUWM is committed to make every effort to make the organization the backbone and reference point to share the best practices to achieve the transition, such as logistics, food security and food safety, reduction of food waste, training, etc..





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How can wholesale markets shape the future of food, especially in terms of sustainability?

The UN is expecting that 75% of the population will live in cities by 2050. The Urbanization of the world comes with big challenges in terms of policy making. As we will need to ensure that the new urban populations will have access to economically accessible to all and in good quantities healthy food.

To ensure food security countries will need an efficient, modern and robust structured fresh food sector that can ensure a sustainable territorial food environment. For this, public policy and investment to develop modern infrastructures, like wholesale markets, to ensure supply flows will be a must. Today in some country's food loss rises to almost 40% of the production! This is unacceptable when we know the amount of people starving in the region, all the economic difficulties of farmers and the high amount of highly degraded land. Without an adequate and reliable logistic system, a place where everyone can trade, good storage facilities, and the development of the cold chain this will unfortunately not change.

"I believe that the transition to sustainable food systems should be among the top priorities of our sector for the coming years."

Modern wholesale markets have proven to be critical infrastructures to ensure sustainable food environments. Wholesale markets aggregate food products produced by many farmers of all scales. Facilitating access to the market to small and medium size farmers in comparison to other actors. They can help to drastically reduce food loss, strengthen the rural-urban ties and foster short-chains, to have more stabilized prices contributing therefore to a better-quality life for farmers and urban population. Cold storage facilities can for instance extend the life span of some produce from 2 to 20 days.

In terms of resilience of the fresh food supply chain, FAO studies showed that during the covid-19 crisis countries that counted with wholesale markets suffered less fresh produce price volatility and disruptions in the supply. In this sense, modern wholesale markets are central allies to restructure in a resilient and sustainable way food systems. They have proven to be the best infrastructure to commercialize national and regional large quantities of fresh produce. Also, as our infrastructures aggregates a large number of traders with multiple suppliers the supply chain is much robust. And last but not least, modern wholesale markets are key allies to reduce food waste and losses, to have greener supply chains, they can help reducing resource use and the environmental impacts of logistic operations.

Could you share with us WUWM's key goals in 2022?

The growing international recognition of WUWM combined with a renewed interest at international and national level on food systems gives our Union the necessary boost to hope for a 2022 filled with concrete initiatives, international partnerships and achievements to get to the goal of a transitioned sustainable food system. As a matter of fact, WUWM is planning to strengthen its partnerships with major international actors and to collaborate to important initiatives at global level. The challenges that we want to address require combined effort from all the actors of the agri-food chain, who shall work together in a systemic approach. On the part of the World Union of Wholesale Markets, having in mind this general goal, our plan for 2022 is to concretely engage at regional level through our Regional Groups (Europe, Asia-Pacific, Americas and Africa) in order to develop programs, and strategies that can effectively tackle the needs and specificities of each region. Each regional director prepared a Strategic plan for 2022 and I know that they will be presented in this edition of "In Action".

Cooperation will be boosted by an increasing number of promotion campaigns, workshops and seminars to share and exchange useful information and updates. I am proud of the road we have come so far and confident about what the future holds for WUWM and the fresh food sector.

Fabio Massimo Pallottini,

WUWM Director of the European Regional Group



What is the main contribution that WUWM gives - and could give - to European markets?

WUWM is a very important global organization that includes about 96 European markets as members of the European group! This high concentration offers a stimulus to these partners to promote and share with the Union common strategies and policies, as well as the best experiences and practices. Additionally, they help representing to the main European institutions the reality, the weight and the dimension of the European market system.

What are the main challenges in fresh food supply that the European region has to face? How could they be overcome and improved through the work of WUWM?

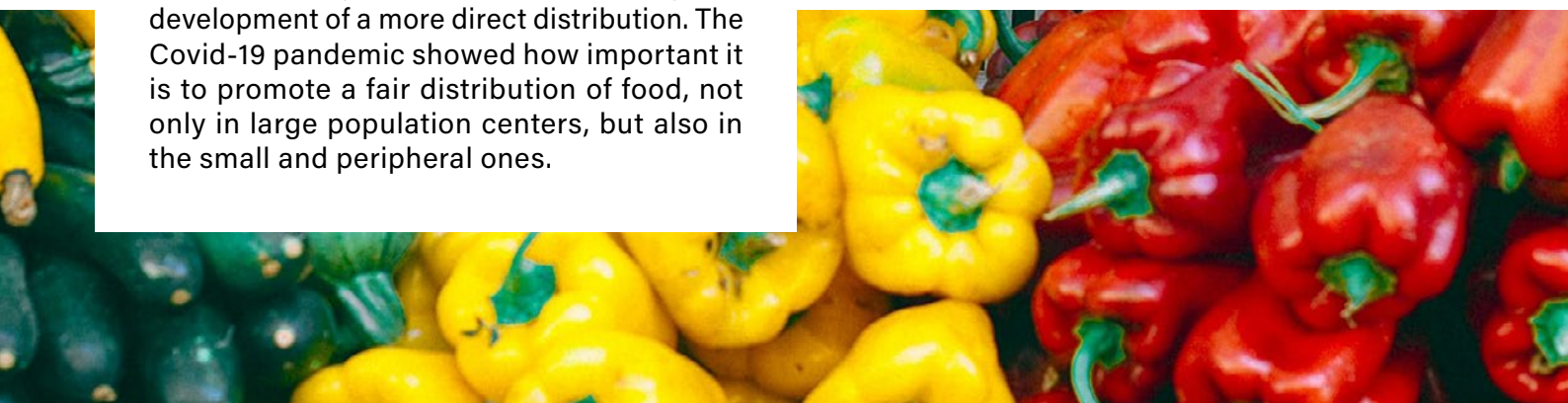
Europe represents a continent rich in history, where there is an evolved consumer, who has matured over time a particular attention and sensitivity to healthy and genuine food. The consumer's consideration represents an excellent starting point, an opportunity for our sector, given that our companies operate in the fresh and very fresh product distribution segment. The markets are to all intents and purposes very important engines for the dissemination and information of fresh products as well as promoters of a proper diet.

I would like to recall that WUWM stands at the forefront on this issue: the Union can play a role as an aggregator and facilitator of markets, encouraging a closer and more collaborative dialogue between the wholesale and retail segments, while fostering the development of a more direct distribution. The Covid-19 pandemic showed how important it is to promote a fair distribution of food, not only in large population centers, but also in the small and peripheral ones.

This is the first time that each regional member has had to submit an annual plan to the Council: could you summarize the highlights of the 2022 European Annual Plan?

Exactly, this is an important novelty: the Board has decided to organize and give concreteness to the work of regional groups by giving life to the development plans presented. The European group is the most numerous one and is also the branch with the presence of markets of longer tradition and a deeper consolidation of the European society. The plan presented foresees, first of all, recurring meetings among the various markets - at least 3 per year - where the main objectives will be shared, creating common development strategies: it is an opportunity to present an integrated and shared offer.

In addition to this important work, it is necessary to make a greater commitment to communication, disseminating the logo of the European group and of WUWM itself on all possible occasions, such as, for example, the initiatives of the individual markets, fairs, events, workshops, seminars, etc. It is important to highlight the role of our organization. In the same way, it is also interesting to organise trainings and idea-exchange meetings between European





members with the help of webinars. For example, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic situation, these major projects and programs to revitalize the European economy are underway. The current war in Ukraine and the logistical and economic difficulties that are being encountered in the distribution of food and non-food products will lead us to make important reflections for our markets.

It is important to increase the visibility and popularity of WUWM in your region, how do you plan to do this in terms of media promotion and other communication tools? How do you plan to attract more European partners?

I would like to underline the importance of increasing communication opportunities at European level. In this month of April we are having - for the first time in an exhibition event - Fruit Logistica 2022, the logo of WUWM and of the European Group clearly visible. We intend to attract more partners at European level especially in those countries where the tradition of markets is less established. Throughout the Mediterranean basin, Spain, France, Portugal, Germany and Greece, there is a high number of markets that are already members of the WUWM, but they can be researched and encouraged by highlighting the opportunities offered by joining this network. In addition, there will be a greater demand for memberships once the role and functions of wholesale markets in the European food chain will be promoted to European institutions. It is important to sign a new Position Paper.

“The current war in Ukraine and the logistical and economic difficulties that are being encountered in the distribution of food and non-food products will lead us to make important reflections for our markets.”

Could you share with us what are the major upcoming events, webinars - or other kinds of initiatives - in your geographic area that would be of interest to WUWM members in your region?

For what concerns the webinars, I would like to mention the first appointment between the WUWM partenariat, the European Group and Eurocities (a network of European cities), which will work on the theme of urban food distribution and food policy in cities and the role that agro-food markets can play in this context. Another opportunity that will contribute to highlight the role of the wholesale markets - and thus encourage the entry into this world organization - is the event organized by Italmercati and The European Hous Ambrosetti in May 2022: «Italy at the test of change: the response of agro-food markets in the warehouse”.

You emphasized the importance of regional meetings and the participation in agribusiness fairs and expos, could you give some examples of some 2022 events that you think the European members of WUWM and the World Union of Wholesale Markets itself should attend?

Within the regional plan, a calendar of the main European events in Spain, France, Germany and Italy concerning the general agri-food sector and fruit, vegetables and fish in particular was presented. The overcoming of the Covid-19 pandemic phase has generated a collective stimulus, a desire for the resumption of the fair activity, a fundamental place for the sharing of strategies and important creation of collaborations.

The European Markets must live these occasions in a new way, highlighting not only the single Market or the Markets of that Nation but highlighting the role and function of the European system.

Let's not forget that European markets have institutions that are essential points of reference. Our task is to dialogue with these institutions and share future strategies at European level. One example is the recognition of the role and functions that markets can play within the current CAP and Farm to Fork strategies.



Zengjun Ma, WUWM Director of Asia-Pacific Regional Group

What is the main contribution that WUWM gives - and could give - to Asian markets?

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WUWM provides members in the Asia-Pacific region with the opportunity to communicate with their international counterparts, especially in Europe, the United States, South Africa and Latin America and other continents. It is an important window for international communication among wholesale market practitioners in the Asia-Pacific region. Through WUWM, wholesale markets in Asia at the stage of developing countries can learn about the challenges and solutions of agricultural product circulation industries in countries at different levels of development, so as to solve their own problems through communication with international counterparts.

In addition, WUWM can provide a platform and opportunity for Asia-Pacific wholesale markets who would like to publicize themselves in international community, so as to let the counterparts from all countries in the world know the current development situation of wholesale markets and agricultural products circulation industry in both China and other the Asia-Pacific region countries, and to promote international communication and international trade with the help of WUWM.

What are the main challenges in the fresh food supply in the Asia-Pacific region? How could they be overcome and improved through WUWM's work in terms of cooperation and communication, for instance?

I think that the first challenge is the traceability of fresh food. At the same time, the cold chain and logistics problems in some less developed countries in the Asia-Pacific region also deserve our attention.

On the above 2 aspects, WUWM can assist the construction of cold chain logistics system in the wholesale markets of Asia-Pacific countries, and provide best practices of cold chain storage and transportation for Asia-Pacific countries.

This is the first time that every regional member has to present an annual plan to the Board. Could you summarize the highlights of Asia-Pacific annual plan for 2022?

We put «work goals» at the top of the work plan of the Asia-Pacific Regional Working Group (APRG) in 2022, mainly including:

- Establish direct contact to all APRG members, inviting all members and government officials in this region to take participate in trade fairs and international conferences hosted by WUWM or CAWA (China Agriculture Wholesale Association);
- Collect 6 market introduction and information of APRG members; contact 3 new wholesale markets in Asia-Pacific region;
- Launch the new website of APRG: put all promotional information of APRG on CAWA new website and take good advantage of the new platform as a window for international communication of APRG.

In order to achieve the above objectives of international communication and industry knowledge accumulation, we will combine the work of CAWA with that of APRG, and actively promote the work of APRG on a results-oriented basis.





This year, we will make greater efforts to increase the visibility of WUWM in the Asia-Pacific region through the activities and influence of CAWA. At the same time, we will enhance ties with the wholesale markets of other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, jointly address multiple domestic and international challenges, and provide members with more practical services and exchange opportunities.

It is important to enhance the visibility and popularity of WUWM in your region, how have you planned to do that in terms of media promotion and other communication tools?

The communication and cooperation with WUWM is an important part of the international business of CAWA. We always attach great importance to the publicity of WUWM in China and the Asia-Pacific region, and transmits the information and trends of WUWM to the members regularly through CAWA website, official WeChat accounts, as well as the monthly publication named «MARKET EXPRESS Asia-Pacific Region».

This year, we are upgrading CAWA website, and will pay more attention to the media publicity work. We will put the work of the APRG as a part of CAWA's international business on the website, and increase the publicity and introduction of WUWM's work; CAWA has a WeChat official account with over 10,000 followers, including China's government chambers of commerce, agricultural approval industry practitioners, dealers and service providers. Through this platform, we will increase the popularity of WUWM and APRG in China from time to time; «MARKET EXPRESS Asia-Pacific Region» has been publishing for over 2 years which has been widely praised by many readers. And as you may see, it has been continuously improved under member's suggestions. In 2022, this bilingual publication will continue to enhance the understanding and communication among China, Asia-Pacific and even global counterparts.

How do you plan to attract more Asian partners?

In 2022, CAWA will set up a Digital Professional Committee to integrate partners in the digital field and organize companies and institutions that are truly suitable for the industry.

CAWA plans to set up an industry research institute to gather industry experts and solve practical problems in the industry based on research. There are three main research directions: One is to study what policies the industry needs, such as the definition of the public welfare market and the relocation of the market. The second is to study the development law of the market itself - what position the farmers' market occupies and what development law there is. The third is to study the real path and law of industry development.

Digital means offer new possibilities for the development of agricultural supply chains. How to keep the market advantage of agricultural products through digital transformation is a problem that we need to pay attention to. At the same time, it is also crucial to organize service providers in the field of digitalization, environmental protection, cold chain and others to innovate, optimize and incubate the supply chain, then establish a supply chain platform, so as to cultivate a supply chain that suits the needs of costumers.

Could you share with us what are the main upcoming events, webinars and initiatives in your geographic area of competence that may interest WUWM members from your region?

CAWA and APRG will host the 2022 International Conference of Agricultural Produce Distribution Industry in Xi 'an, Shaanxi Province, China from June 23 to 25, 2022, which is the largest and most important international event for us in China this year. We plan to invite chairman, directors, partners of WUWM and other international experts to participate in and deliver a speech and international guests can participate online; During the same period, the 10th China International Agro-Products Trading Fair will be held from June 21 to 25, attracting outstanding Chinese and foreign enterprises to participate as exhibitors and will conduct trade negotiations on site. If any WUWM members have the demand to explore Chinese market, or would like to expand their influence in Asia especially in China through exhibition activities or title sponsorship. This event will greatly enhance WUWM's popularity in the industry in the southwest China, China and even the Asia-Pacific region, and provide a platform and opportunity for international peers to promote themselves in China.



Arturo Salvador Fernández Martínez, WUWM Director of Americas Regional Group

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What is the main contribution that WUWM gives - and could give - to the Latin American markets?

In Latin America, markets are part of the main cultural practices, linked to the development of the different original civilizations where the importance of the link between human beings and the countryside, nature and "Mother Earth" are an intrinsic part of their reason for being in harmony with nature.

Today the WUWM proposes to work towards a transition of our food systems towards a change of approach in which the concept of «Sustainable and resilient food environments that promote and facilitate the consumption of healthy diets» can be fostered, and it is in this field where the coincidences with this approach find their main area of opportunity for Latin American markets.

For Latin American markets, the economic crisis, on the one hand, and the health crisis on the other, have reconfirmed the importance of food to achieve a full and harmonious development of the population of our countries, right now about 70% of the food that reaches the tables of Latin American families go through our network of traditional markets, wholesalers, retailers and the entire distribution chain that reaches millions of localities, regardless of the difficulties of access that many of them have.

On the other hand, we are convinced that another very concrete and objective contribution of the WUWM is found in its proposal to «transform the way of designing public food policies», since this issue is fundamental in the strategies that we will have to support in the coming decades. Currently, our governments have prioritized promotion schemes for large transnational agribusinesses and their entire supply chain, their extensive production approach, based on agrochemicals and toxic fertilizers, have damaged the planet, and have developed a food system based on products that have substantially affected man and nature.

As we all know, food poverty in Latin America has increased significantly in recent years and of course we appreciate that the WUWM has a shared position on how to address this great challenge.

I do not want to miss this opportunity to mention a third area of contribution that WUWM offers to Latin American markets, and this is the important efforts it makes to weave collaboration and exchange networks among global organizations and institutions, where the experiences and proposals for action programs that have been developed in different continents and countries are an example of what we in Latin American markets can promote, without losing sight of the importance of advancing in the modernization and professionalization of our management systems, good practices and administration of our markets.

In principle, these three aspects are what we consider to be the greatest contributions that the WUWM offers to our food production chain.





What are the main challenges in the supply of fresh food in the Latam region? How could they be overcome and improved through the work of WUWM in terms of cooperation and communication?

The LATAM region of WUWM has followed closely the various events that have occurred in the world around the theme of food, the difficulties mentioned above, on the effects of the global economic crisis and the results of the health crisis, reflected in increased food poverty, shortages of products and their scarcity, it seems that they have deepened radically by the effects of the war in Europe.

Today we see with astonishment that our projections of the growing importance of the world's food systems, which will increase in the coming decades, are already showing the high impact that these variables will have on our sector.

The news that have been presented in recent weeks and days, about the collapse that is occurring in Spain of its food system, is very worrying, today this country is on the verge of a social crisis due to the unemployment that is occurring in agricultural and agro-industrial activities, due to the impact caused by the increase in the price of energy and inputs involved in the activity, the crisis in the supply chain and the growing impossibility that occurs in the field to continue with the productive activity of fresh and healthy food.

In this same sense, we see that these effects are beginning to occur in other latitudes and in other nations, as is the case of China, which today recognizes that it is going through a situation that may be just as delicate as the Spanish one.

In our region, we are no exception, although we have important energy producing countries, this is not a guarantee of control of these variables, due to the very conditions of dependence and backwardness of its productive and technological infrastructure, as well as the prevailing socio-economic conditions of years ago, if we add to this that we are one of the continents with greater effects on food, which is manifested in the increase of food poverty, we realize that the response we can give to this problem can not wait.

The call made by the WUWM to promote the concept of «Sustainable and resilient food environments that promote and facilitate the consumption of healthy diets», on the one hand, the proposal to transform the way of designing public food policies, on the other hand, and the efforts made to weave collaboration and exchange networks between global organizations and institutions, are the three aspects in which we find coincidences with our reality in Latin America and are three initiatives that have guided the «LATAM Work Program for 2022»; Today we have designed a program of activities that, through forums, meetings and exchanges between our countries, we believe will contribute, in coordination with the WUWM, to have a positive impact on these issues. The willingness of our markets to join these efforts is committed and aware of the great challenge we all face.

WUWM is growing rapidly in the Americas through a series of activities and initiatives. What new developments do you expect this year?

Every day the importance of WUWM for our markets in LATAM is reaffirmed, one of the most significant spaces is given by the important efforts to put on the discussion table initiatives and issues of general interest.

For us, the initiatives proposed by the World Union to address the challenge of food waste and losses are fundamental. In Latin America, the percentage of food waste and losses represents about 30% of the total food consumed, which is unacceptable for a region of the world with high rates of population with difficulties to cover their basic requirements, so we believe that this field of action will be of great support and acceptance in our food markets.

Undoubtedly, another issue promoted by the WUWM is and will be of great impact for LATAM, is that which has to do with the promotion of «Food environments that support the generation of greater urban-rural linkages», within the framework of collaboration with UN-HABITAT, thus promoting the concept of «Livable Cities» and whose support is based on its strategies to facilitate «access for all to food, transportation and public spaces».

Undoubtedly, the initiative of the WUWM to work jointly with GAIN (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition), we believe that in Latin America will find new and greater spaces for expansion, in this field we believe that this initiative will have good results in the countries with the greatest backwardness such as our brothers in Central America who have been affected in a spatial way by the current global crisis.

For LATAM, these institutional initiatives will represent important incentives to make progress on these issues. Our program of continental events for 2022 is based on these ideas and the proposed forums and meetings will delve deeper into these alternatives.

“The Latin America Chapter is working on the construction of its 2030 Master Plan in harmony with the WUWM initiative. It is made up of eight thematic axes.”

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This is the first time that each regional member has to present an annual plan to the Board of Directors. Could you summarize the highlights of Latam’s annual plan for 2022? What are your 3 main objectives for this year?

Undoubtedly, having a regional annual plan represents one of the most relevant initiatives to drive our organization forward. We recognize Stephane Layani’s effort to promote this idea. Today, having a document that is aligned with the current reality and focused on obtaining results in high-impact issues generates confidence and legitimizes our work.

The Latin America Chapter is working on the construction of its 2030 Master Plan in harmony with the WUWM initiative. It is made up of eight thematic axes.

Each of these axes is aligned with the precepts and initiatives of the WUWM. Its vision is of an inclusive nature with a collaborative approach among the different actors in the agrifood chain. It is enriched by a diagnosis of the condition of our markets in the Latin American continent.

This model guides and gives meaning to the institutional work through its annual work plans. Its three main objectives for 2022 are as follows:

- Promote the realization of events to capture, develop and/or promote exchanges of information that nurture the construction of plans, programs and actions that impact the areas and/or fields of action of WUWM-LATAM, in general, and of the wholesale markets of the region, in particular.
- Contribute proposals that offer innovative alternatives to the challenges and problems faced by the region in coordination with WUWM’s areas of interest and impact. Develop and operate a specific program to address a specific problem detected in each market of the region.
- Develop and operate a strategy for the inclusion of new members in the region and in parallel, design and operate a regional strategy to attract new sponsors that will allow and facilitate the World Union to fulfill its institutional mission.

It is important to increase the visibility and popularity of WUWM in your region, how do you plan to do this in terms of media promotion and other communication tools?

Currently we can see the importance that the electronic and virtual media have had for the development of our mission of being the food suppliers of Latin American families, social networks, interactive channels, virtual stores and stores, are a strategy that is taking effect throughout the continent as one of the implications of the economic and productive closure that we had due to the pandemic of COVID 19 and we believe that this type of entrepreneurial initiatives that exist today throughout our continent should be rescued.





Could you share with us what are the main upcoming events, webinars and initiatives in your geographical area of competence that may be of interest to WUWM members in your region?

The scheduled events are based on the principles and objectives that support our «WUWM LATAM Work Plan for 2022 and we believe that their content is of great interest to our agri-food communities and with that focus they are being prepared.

We have planned to hold three regional meetings during the year 2022 to implement participatory planning workshops on the «Main Challenges for the Modernization of Latin American Agrifood Markets». The first meeting-workshop will take place in Costa Rica in April, the second one will be held in Colombia in July, while the last one will be hosted by Mexico in October.

As part of these meetings, three seminars will be held:

1. Presentation of the «First Administration and Management System of an Agrifood Central». Presented by the CEDA's of Mexico. Costa Rica. April 2022.
2. «Circular Economy Manual for wholesale food wholesalers». Presented by WUWM Latin America technical team. Colombia. July 2022.
3. «Seminar on Demonstrative Exchange of good practices in MSW management in Latin American Markets». Presented by Uruguay, Peru and Cuba. Mexico. October 2022.

These events will take place on-site or in virtual format, depending on the prevailing sanitary conditions.

You have emphasized the importance of regional meetings and participation in events and exhibitions, could you give some examples of some events in 2022 in which you think WUWM LATAM members and WUWM itself should participate?

On our part we believe that WUWM LATAM and WUWM itself are an intrinsic part of this effort, the institutional presence, of course, is an incentive for everyone so it will be very important to have the presence of our World President Stephane Layani, and Eugenia Carrara, our Secretary General. We have no doubt that WUWM LATAM, counts on this initiative, to develop for the first time an institutional Work Program, with a tool that will contribute to our mission.

Of course we recognize that these technologies are not yet within the reach of all our friends in the food wholesale centers of LATAM and that is why our scheduled meetings touch and address this issue.

In our 2022 action plan we have included the initiative to implement the «First bimonthly newsletter for CEDA's in Latin America. The specialized sections are the following: environment and circular economy, food and responsible consumption, collaborative competitiveness for all, notes and news and a virtual newsletter. This project is one of the most popular among our colleagues in Latin American markets.

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How do you plan to attract more LATAM markets and partners?

Undoubtedly this is a great challenge, «to attract more markets and partners to LATAM»; the basis of our attraction strategy is, in this first stage, to disseminate and make each of the regional markets aware of the three main contributions of the WUWM that we mentioned in the first question of this interview.

- Sustainable and resilient food environments that promote and facilitate the consumption of healthy diets;
- Advocacy to transform the way public food policies are designed;
- Weave networks of collaboration and exchange among global organizations and institutions.

In addition to the strategies outlined in the previous question, in this case, to attract more markets and partners, we are preparing an agenda of personalized visits for each of the ten countries that we have set as a goal to achieve affiliation by 2022. To date, the enthusiasm shown by our partners for this initiative makes us optimistic about this challenge.



Eva Marone, WUWM Director of African Regional Group

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What is the main contribution that WUWM gives - and could give - to African markets?

I believe that the main contribution that WUWM gives to African markets is sharing experience, knowledge, and technical support.

What are the main challenges in the fresh food supply in Africa? How could they be overcome/improved through WUWMs work (cooperation, communication, etc....)?

- The deficit in road infrastructure, in distribution circuits, in cold chain equipment, in adapted transport equipment, and adapted packaging lead to huge production loss.
- The atomization of agricultural plots which makes it difficult to optimize production collection and transport.
- The lack of farmers training on the types of packaging
- The lack of national agricultural programs and support for the development of SMEs in processing, which are almost non-existent in many African countries
- The lack of regulation in the agricultural sector which remains very informal and dominated by illiterate women

This is the first time that every regional member has to present an annual plan to the Board. Could you summarize the highlights of Africa's annual plan for 2022? What are your goals for this year 2022 for the African region?

As the first board member representing an African country, my goal is to develop the WUWM's presence on the continent, to reach as much countries as possible in order to foster north south cooperation and help African countries build a solid, resilient, and optimal food supply system by supporting them in improving the territorial coverage of wholesale markets.





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“The goal is to develop the WUWM’s presence Africa, to reach as much countries as possible.”

It is important to enhance the visibility and popularity of WUWM in your region, how have you planned to do that in terms of media promotion and other communication tools?

We are already talking to the Ministries of Agriculture of several countries and use different platforms to reach out, such as regional events of international institutions like UN habitat last week. I have listed the main events in the sector this year and the goal is to have the WUWM represented in each one of them.

Also, we are organizing the first African regional conference of the WUWM in Abidjan Ivory Coast in July this year, which will increase our visibility in the region, if not on the continent. Invitations to the event will be sent to all Ministries of Agriculture in Africa, who will be able to extend them to their respective markets. Regional Media outlets such as Africa News and Jeune Afrique will also be used to broadcast the event.

How do you plan to attract more African markets and partners? How do you plan to reach out to all markets of Africa?

Reaching out to all markets in Africa will take some time, as we know WUWM is so far only present in 4 countries on the continent...

It is going to be a step-by-step process and my strategy is to adopt both an opportunistic individual approach and a targeted regional one, starting in West and North Africa, then moving to South Africa, then East and Central Africa.

Attracting more African markets and partners will be done by highlighting the benefits of our cooperation network, as I said earlier in terms of sharing experience, knowledge, and technical support. A good example of this is that last month we were able to organize the visit of Rungis, the biggest wholesale Market in the World by the management team of one of our African members the Bouake Market. This visit and the exchange and discussion that it enabled where a truly valuable experience for the Bouake Market. In the own words of Mr Saganogo the director, it was a “very enriching visit for us and very fruitful exchanges which allowed us to understand and get inspiration from the economic model of Rungis”.

You have emphasized the importance of regional meetings and participation in events and exhibitions, could you make some examples of some events of 2022 that you think African members of WUWM/ and WUWM itself should participate?

Sure, here are a selection of major events where the WUWM should be present, as an organization, but also could be of real interest for our members who are interested in increasing cooperation with African countries in terms of food distribution.

SARA - Salon De L’agriculture Et Des Ressources Animales - Ivory Coast November 2022

SIAM - Salon International De L’agriculture Au Maroc – Morocco April 2022

AFRICA AGRI FORUM – October 2022

AGROFOOD WEST AFRICA – ACCRA – December 2022

In Events:

Save the date and join us: Love Your Local Market Campaign (LYLM) will be launching in May in Lisbon!

The Love Your Local Market (LYLM) campaign celebrates wholesale and retail markets, both street and covered. Originally born in the United Kingdom in 2011, the event expanded globally and has been coordinated and supported by the WUWM since 2014. This year, we are pleased to announce that Portugal is going to host the launch of the Love Your Local Market Campaign of 2022. The event will be managed nationally by Sociedade Instaladora De Mercados Abastecedores, S.A (SIMAB) the public company in charge of Portugal's wholesale markets in collaboration with the Portuguese government and local municipalities. LYLM events will take place throughout the month of May in Portugal itinerantly, locating events in a number of different cities next to wholesale markets.

The general campaign is aimed to empower and give visibility to fresh food street markets, while promoting healthy food systems at all their stages, from production to consumption. This year campaign theme is "Support local production".

From May 6 to May 28, the whole country will be rich in events of all kinds to celebrate Love Your Local Market. Braga, Lisbon, Faro, Evora, and many other municipal markets will host day and night events and activities, such as music concerts, art exhibitions as well as conferences, institutional speeches and educational workshops in collaboration with schools and other professionals. The official launch will take place in Lisbon on the 13th and 14th of May.

"LYLM 2022's campaign will be celebrated during the month of May in many cities around the world. All our markets members are called to join this campaign! The official launch will take place in Lisbon on the 13th and 14th of May."



your local
market

LYLM 2022's campaign will be celebrated during the month of May in many cities around the world. Stay tuned with your country wholesale markets/ city markets for more information about precise events in your country! All our markets members are called to join this campaign!

The ambition of LYLM is to attract and engage as many people as possible to celebrate fresh food markets and reinforce their work to ensure and promote healthy and accessible diets.

Interview

with Joao-Tiago Carapau

SIMAB Group's (Portuguese wholesale markets) Corporate General Manager

This year SIMAB proposed to organize LYLM in your country. Could you briefly explain us why? What is the situation regarding fresh food consumption in Portugal?

For SIMAB, organizing LYLM in Portugal is a unique opportunity - in partnership with WUWM and with the excellent work that this entity has been developing in recent years in the promotion of quality food systems around the world - to strengthen our strategic interest in this initiative, using it as a tool to disseminate the decisive importance of local production and markets for consolidating short food supply chains and local food systems, valuing endogenous products and promoting consumption habits of healthier fresh products, in territorial articulation with the logistics and wholesale trade generated every day in the Group's four wholesale markets: MARB, in Braga; MARÉ, in Évora; MARF, in Faro; and, MARL, in Loures.

The LYLM promotes food systems, hence representing all the phases from production to consumption. You have chosen «Strengthening short-circuits and local production» as your main theme for this year's LYLM campaign. Could you present your theme to our readers and also explain the reason of this specific choice?

"Strengthening short-circuits and local production" is our claim for this year because, besides always having considered that Wholesale Markets and Municipal Local Markets are a fundamental instrument of public policy to promote and articulate national agrifood based production and commerce, the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic and now the war in Ukraine have unequivocally reinforced this link and the need to continuously ensure logistics operations and countries' food and non-food self-supply.



In Portugal, as in Europe and the rest of the world, wholesale and retail markets have been - and always will be - immediate vehicles of proximity and diversity for the sales and valorisation of local productions, regardless of the fact that there is also an increasingly - and fortunately - diversified offer of products from multiple countries. We believe that it is in the wholesale and retail markets that the concept of 'Glocal' ('Think Global, Act Local') can be decisively to economic agents and citizens. An open economy and society should also involve greater dissemination and capacity to value endogenous products, not only to promoting their consumption by local populations, namely those in urban areas (who are often unaware of their origins and production methods), but also as products of enormous added value in terms of wider consumption, for example for tourists, hotels and restaurants, and even for an agrifood export offer.





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What is the main objective you have in mind when thinking about LYLM taking place in Portugal?

The LYLM campaign in Portugal during the month of May aims to achieve three main objectives, through the promotion of 'May, month of the Markets' in several Local Municipal Markets located in the areas of influence of the four main Wholesale Markets of the SIMAB Group, from north to south of the country:

(i) Reinforce the importance of the logistical proximity agents, as well as the wholesale operators, retailers and small and medium-sized agricultural and agrifood producers in the functioning of the national Economy and in ensuring their independence and added value in terms of food and non-food products and services;

(ii) Promoting local wholesale e retail markets as platforms and commercial facilities that are essential to the life of cities and to the enhancement of the surrounding rural territories, particularly in the more populated and urbanised territories of metropolitan areas and intermunicipal communities;

(iii) Affirming SIMAB and its markets as a public policy instrument that promotes better integration between agricultural and agrifood production, commerce and logistics, and territorial planning and development, highlighting its permanent connectivity to national socio-economic agents, Portuguese municipalities, international institutions in like WUWM, and initiatives that promote education and food solidarity (such as '5 a Day' programme and 'Food Bank').

This year's LYLM campaign will be particular as you will launch it in different locations. Could you share with us a little bit more about the programme? Why you decided to make one month of events insted of just choosing one location?

For us it is very important to take advantage of this excellent international initiative that WUWM/LYLM promotes every year, to give more visibility and promotion, in our country, to the key role that Wholesale and Municipal Local Markets have for local production, trade and consumption. Being 'May, Month of the Markets' and SIMAB an entity that operates all over Portugal, we want to strengthen this opportunity using each of the four weeks of May to promote a joint initiative between one of the four Wholesale Markets of the SIMAB Group and one or more Municipal Local Markets in its area of influence, on each of the four Fridays and Saturdays of the month.

"Wholesale and retail markets have been - and always will be - immediate vehicles of proximity and diversity for the sales and valorisation of local productions."

We will start in Braga, in Northern Portugal, on the 6th and 7th of May; then we will make the official launch of the LYLM initiative in Lisbon, on the 13th and 14th of May, counting with the kind and honourable presence of WUWM leaders; on the 20th and 21st of May the promotion will take place in Évora, in the Alentejo; and, we will finish in Southern Portugal, in the Algarve region, in Faro, on the 27th and 28th of May.

“Organizing LYLM in Portugal is a unique opportunity to promote high quality food systems around the world”

The campaign will be coordinated by SIMAB with the participation of local city councils and the Portuguese government: how can the relationship between markets and local government be further strengthened?

SIMAB is the majority shareholder in the main four Wholesale Markets in Portugal, and in all of them its shareholder partners are the Municipalities where those markets are located. Thus, for over 25 years, SIMAB, as a public company under the tutelage of the Ministry of Economy, has been working in close partnership with Municipalities - not only those present in the Wholesale Markets, but also many others for which it develops consulting and technical assistance projects.

The LYLM initiative - of which SIMAB is the managing entity responsible in Portugal delegated by WUWM - and its launch this year in our country is another way to bring this joint work closer at local level in favour of producers, logistics operators and wholesalers and retailers of food and non-food products, knowing that Municipalities play a vital role in the design and promotion of policies and actions for a more balanced, long-lasting and sustainable territorial planning and development, as well as in the mobilisation and engagement of citizens, companies and local public and associative entities.

So, this initiative ‘Love Your Local Production’ may also be translated as ‘Love Your Local Council’

What are the main events and activities planned for this occasion? Which ones do you believe can reach more engagement also on the part of the general public?

The main program of this initiative will take place during its official launch, on the 13th and 14th of May, in Lisbon. On Friday night, there will be a commemorative institutional and cultural event at MARL - Mercado Abastecedor da Região de Lisboa (Lisbon Wholesale Market) and, on the following Saturday morning, an evocative ceremony of the ‘Love Your Local Market’ at one of the main Local Municipal Markets in the capital, which will have the presence of entities and individuals linked to the Portuguese Government, the Municipality of Lisbon, WUWM and SIMAB / MARL.

In this particular moment, as well as in the other three to be held in Braga, Évora and Faro, we intend to involve local populations and the general public through events specially designed to animate the Local Municipal Markets that will host this initiative, such as musical moments, recreational-artistic activities and information and dissemination sessions associated with healthy food education and nutrition.

The intention is also to promote this opportunity in the national and local media, as well as through social networks, taking advantage of SIMAB to also publicise the ‘SIMAB Academy’ project (our new project in the area of capacity building and vocational training), as well as to launch the new Portuguese website for the LYLM initiative: www.gostodomeumercado.pt.





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Interview with Jean-Paul Auguste

Director of WUWM Retail Group

Since its launch in 2014, Love Your Local Market (LYLM) has only grown. Can you tell us in a few words what is the goal of LYLM? and what are your objectives for the next years?

Twenty years ago we noticed in France and also with our English colleagues of the The National Association of British Market Authorities (Nabma) that there was no real collective approach to gather all the retail and wholesale markets under the same banner, and to be able to promote our activities, to show to the local, regional or national administrations and institutions, that the world of markets represents a core tool for urban food policies and to promote healthier diets, a real economic force, a living energy and an important part of the community life.

“From a few hundred cities or markets participating in LYLM, we have gradually grown to more than 4,000 worldwide!”

We needed also to create a sufficient critical mass that interests the media. Our retail and wholesale markets live separately, except for rare cases of private or public organizations that group together several markets. Our geographic dispersion and the relatively small economic size of each market, compared to the considerable media and capital strength of the supermarket chains, means that we are rarely identified as a global force that serves communities and populations! Our first attempts in France and the UK led us to understand that we had to go beyond national boundaries and create an international Campaign. From this came the LYLM. From a few hundred cities or markets participating in the operation, we have gradually grown to more than 4,000 worldwide, mainly in Europe. The Covid19 crisis has broken this evolution. It is time to restart and give this collective approach the success it deserves.

The year 2022 is therefore the opportunity to relaunch LYLM after two years marked by the Covid epidemic. What are your objectives in terms of the scope of the campaign?

If the brand and the logo can be used throughout the year in small local campaigns, it is necessary that the greatest number of markets participate at the same time in the annual operation to give it the greatest critical mass, thus the greatest media impact for all! This is how everyone can get their share of media impact to help our fresh food street

“The access to the campaign is free and the only obligation is to register.”

markets alive. We remain modest in 2022 as some participants have not been able to budget for expenses at the end of 2021 in the unknown of the health rules at the beginning of the year. However, we expect to exceed the 2,000 mark this year, with more than 15 countries participating, which is already a significant increase on last year's difficult first attempts. We have finally been able to prepare a joint celebration next May, after the cancellations of previous years.

Our goal now is to prepare ourselves for 2023 to get back to the pre-covid level, before resuming the progress we had. In 2019 nearly 25 countries, from all continents, had at least one market or professional union participating.

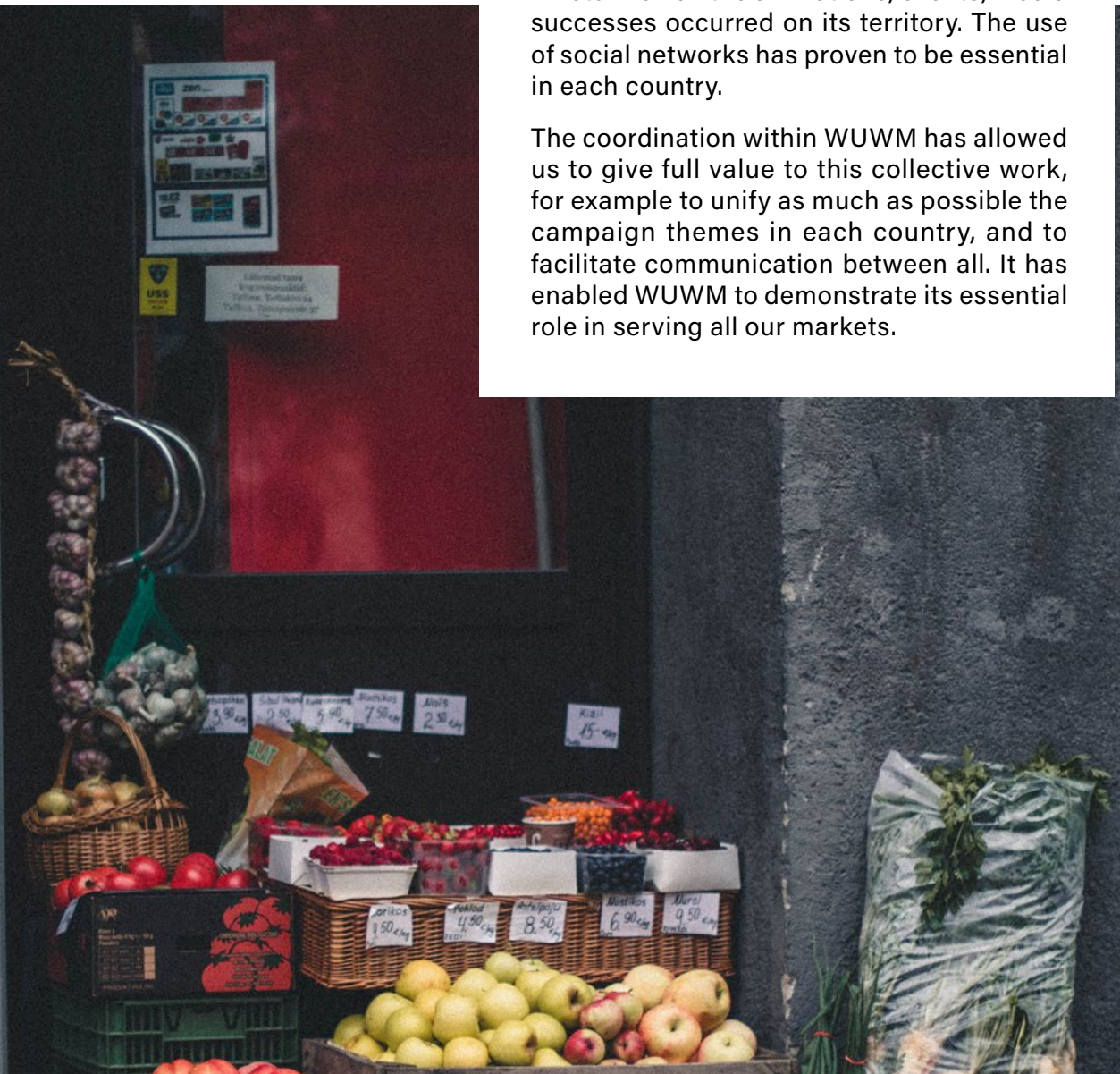
Can you quickly tell us about the launch of the campaign?

The main event will take place on May 13 and 14, 2022 in Portugal, in Lisbon. WUWM will report on all the details and members who can be invited to join us there and participate in this celebration of markets, the celebration of our whole profession. In each country, the associations and unions of markets will also organize the same celebration in one place. In France, for instance the launch will be in L'Haÿ les Roses, near Rungis. But the animations and celebrations that will take place in each market throughout the month of May, even extending into June.

Can you quickly explain to the members who would like to join the campaign what they have to do?

The access to the campaign is free and the only obligation is to register, to use the same basic logo, to practice one or more events at the same time as the others, mainly during the month of May of each year. It is to inform in return on all the animations, events, media successes occurred on its territory. The use of social networks has proven to be essential in each country.

The coordination within WUWM has allowed us to give full value to this collective work, for example to unify as much as possible the campaign themes in each country, and to facilitate communication between all. It has enabled WUWM to demonstrate its essential role in serving all our markets.





Innovation:

WUWM stands with Ukrainian refugees

The World Union of Wholesale Markets (WUWM) stands in solidarity with Ukrainian civilians in these times of conflict and has mobilized to provide assistance to ensure accessibility to food and basic goods to Ukrainian refugees in Poland and Bulgaria, and in Ukraine when supply is possible.

The action is coordinated by Lublin wholesale market, located 97,6 km from the border between Poland and Ukraine, and by WUWM European group.

We have interviewed Artur Niczyporuk, CEO of Lublin market, in order to share with our members more information about the action. Don't hesitate to contact us if you want to help!

Your market is at the frontier with Ukraine and in the last weeks, due to the war in Ukraine, your municipality has been receiving Ukrainian refugees flying out the conflict. Could you please update us a bit about the actual situation in Lublin and in Poland in general concerning the refugees?

Since 24 February of this year, i.e. the day of the Russian Federation's aggression, over 2.2 million refugees from Ukraine have crossed the Polish-Ukrainian border. In response to the dramatic events of war in Ukraine, the City of Lublin shows solidarity with our neighbors and provides aid, which involves the following forms. Among them organising donation points. Collections are co-coordinated by the Polish Red Cross (PCK). To date, over 1300 meals are given out every day in the accommodation points managed or organised by the City of Lublin. The City has also sent 30 humanitarian aid shipments to Ukraine.



**CALL FOR DONATIONS:
WUWM STANDS IN
SOLIDARITY WITH
UKRAINIAN CIVILIANS**

You have proposed to coordinate a specific action in your market, giving storage place, articulating with the Polish Red Cross, and coordinating donations around Europe, to help the Ukrainian refugees. Could you please tell us a little bit more about the action? How does it work? What can you say about it is it a success?

Lubelski Rynek Hurtowy S.A. (Lublin Wholesale Market), in close cooperation with the Polish Red Cross (member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement), has created within its premises a permanent collection point within the wholesale market for people affected by the war in Ukraine. The Polish Red Cross is prepared to organise help for the victims of the military conflict. Companies conducting their activities on the premises of Lublin Wholesale Market actively participate in collecting donations. The items are donated to a station within Lublin Wholesale Market, and also some of them are packaged and sent to Ukraine.

"Citizens of Ukraine affected by the need help from all of us, so it will be very grateful for any help and donations from our members."

WUWM European members are committed to go on supporting you by sending good needed to come to support Ukrainian refugees. What are the most urgent needs? What do you want to say to our members, so they can support more your work?

We need:

- **LONG SHELF LIFE FOODS:** canned foods, oil, sugar, pasta, flour, groats, rice, tea, coffee, sweets, UHT milk, infant formula, canned vegetables/fruit (such as beans, peas, corn, pineapples, peaches), tomato purée in cartons, dried fruit, nuts.
- **COSMETICS AND DETERGENTS:** shower gels, shampoos, soaps, toothbrushes and toothpastes, protective creams, diapers for children, laundry liquids, dishwashing liquids.
- **DRESSING MATERIALS,** particularly for wounds and burns: thermal blankets, sterile gauze, sterile compresses, elastic bandages, saline solution ampoules, disinfecting agents, disposable gloves, sterile triangular bandages, tourniquets, bandage scissors.
- **OTHER ITEMS:** hot drinks boilers, disposable dishes, thermal cups, thermos flasks, socks, underwear.

Is there any critical issue that you would like to share with our members?

Citizens of Ukraine affected by the war caused by the Russian Federation need help from all of us, so it will be very grateful for any help from the World Union of Wholesale Markets. If you express your willingness to donate items, Lublin Wholesale Market will coordinate collections in terms of information and organisation as part of its partnership with the Polish Red Cross.

In WUWM's World

March 14-18th — WUWM participated as key speaker in the workshop "Leaving No Place behind: Strengthening Urban-Rural Linkages in Africa" regional workshop in Guinea Conakry

March 7th — Presentation of the Love Your Local Market Campaign 2022

March 15th — WUWM took part in Qatar's International Agricultural & Environmental Exhibition 2022 in Doha and visited new member Aswaq's wholesale markets.

March 21st — WUWM applied to co-organize a networking event at the World Urban Forum 2022

March 25th — WUWM joined the OECD-FAO Agri-advisory Group

March 29th — WUWM participated as a key speaker in the Launch of the Technical Network of Municipal Experts on Urban Food Markets organized by the FAO

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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.

