

Summary of Side Event Investing for Reshaping Food Systems



Hosted by the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations, the Permanent Mission of Jamaica to the United Nations, and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

In the context of the 2018 United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF), the Permanent Missions of

Canada and Jamaica to the United Nations and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) hosted a side event to bring attention to the importance of investing in reshaping food systems to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and achieve broad-based development.

The side event convened on 11 July 2018 in Conference Room 9 and advocated key policies and investments to reshape food systems that can help us achieve multiple SDGs by 2030 – food systems that are efficient, inclusive, climate-smart, sustainable, nutrition- and health-driven, and business-friendly.

The moderator, *Rajul Pandya-Lorch, Director of Communications and Public Affairs, and Chief of Staff, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)*, noted that more than half the SDGs relate to food security, yet nutrition and hunger are still on the rise after years of progress. Undernutrition persists, and crises of overweight, obesity, and noncommunicable diseases continues to grow. Additionally, she noted, agriculture is pushing planetary boundaries and climate change requires drastic action. Accordingly, she said, it is crucial that we advocate the importance of reshaping food systems to achieve the SDGs.

H.E. Louise Blais, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, said the development community has been discussing such approaches for a long time while problems have grown. Thus, “we need to transition from policy dialogue to concrete actions,” she concluded, noting that the problems are global, hitting both low-income and high-income countries. “In Canada, food systems are currently unsustainable, with millions being left behind including indigenous populations that experience high levels of anemia, while simultaneously large amounts of food and water are wasted”, she said.

H.E. Courtenay Rattray, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations, reaffirmed Jamaica’s commitment to encouraging the production of local food and noted that the country’s agricultural sector’s contribution to GDP increased from 6.6 percent in 2016 to 7.3 percent in 2017. “Hunger and poverty must be addressed by raising productivity and incomes,” he added, concluding that it is critical to align national agriculture, nutrition, and other initiatives to make policies coherent.

Shenggen Fan, Director General, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), urged that significant investments—like those made in the big staple crops—be made in healthy foods, such as fruit and vegetables. He noted that current agricultural subsidies not only contribute to climate change but are also not sustainable and called for taxes on unsustainable food products in wealthy countries and particularly those where meat consumption is high.

Nichola Dyer, Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), The World Bank, said empowering local leadership is critical, along with investing in inclusive food systems that are outcome-driven and can address multiple challenges including reducing farmers' risk, empowering women and girls, and increasing the capacity of smallholders. She recommended investment in inclusive food systems that directly support smallholder farmers and agriculture-based micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and strengthens links between smallholder farmers and formal markets. Additionally, she indicated that we need outcomes focused on inclusive partnerships among all private sector actors, and to promote agro-ecological approaches that support biodiversity and sustainable water management while at the same time empowering local leadership and governance.

Claudia Sadoff, Director General, International Water Management Institute (IWMI), said agriculture continues to stress planetary systems and that inefficient water use is still a key problem. She noted, “this means we must accelerate the productivity of water used in agriculture and adapt agricultural systems to a more water-scarce world”. Food systems, she said, must also become more resilient to disruptions via tools, such as better forecasting and warning systems, along with stronger social safety nets that include flood and drought insurance.

Gerda Verburg, Coordinator of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement, noted that nutrition and food security are cross-cutting issues and we must ensure there is political ownership of the issues. Despite the 2008 food crisis, she said, overall investments in agriculture and food production decreased between 2001 and 2016. Therefore, to make progress, individual countries must own these issues and mobilize commitment from all stakeholders—governments, civil society, private sector, and researchers. She recommended a broader approach that enables all people to access sustainable healthy diets.

Chantal-Line Carpentier, Chief New York UNCTAD, recommended a focus on gender equity, and said national development banks should provide more investment in female entrepreneurship in rural areas and officials should consider the impact of trade agreements on women. Efforts to build stronger food systems should focus on gender equity, fostering female entrepreneurship. She also noted that agriculture ministers should change their perspective to view investments as supporting small micro-enterprises rather than “funding farmers” since pro-poor, bottom-up technologies responsive to local needs are critical.

In ensuing discussion, topics included:

- Strong political leadership is urgently needed to fix food systems that face unprecedented stresses from climate change, conflict, and other problems.
- Collaboration between national and local governments is critical to making the investments required for reshaping food systems.
- The critical need for more investment in rural development specifically, where some of the most vulnerable of populations reside, as a means of operationalizing the principle of “leaving no one behind”.

- The crucial role of livestock and dairy for livelihoods, and nutrition, particularly in developing countries.
- The need for due consideration of the rural/urban nexus in reshaping food systems for sustainable development.

Annex I.0: Programme

Programme - Investing for Reshaping Food Systems

Conference Room 9 | 1:15 – 2:30 PM

1.15 – 1.25pm	Opening Remarks by the Ambassadors of Canada and Jamaica <i>H.E. Mr. Courtenay Rattray, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations</i> H.E Ms. Louise Blais, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations
1.25 – 1.35pm	Keynote Address: Re-shaping food systems <i>Shenggen Fan, Director General, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)</i>
1.35 – 2.15pm	Moderated Panel <i>Moderator: Rajul Pandya-Lorch, Director of Communications and Public Affairs, and Chief of Staff, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)</i> Panellists: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chantal-Line Carpentier, Chief, New York Office, UNCTAD• Nichola Dyer, Program Manager, Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), The World Bank• Claudia Sadoff, Director General, International Water Management Institute (IMWI)• Gerda Verburg, Coordinator, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement
2.15-2.25	Question and Answers
2.25 – 2.30	Closing Remarks <i>Shenggen Fan, Director General, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)</i>

Annex 2.0: Photos

