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[Can multi-stakeholder mechanisms help achieve inclusive collaboration and joint action (for food systems transformation)?]

[One of our leading global challenges is providing healthy diets to the world's population while staying within planetary boundaries. The task is immense and even more daunting in the context of fast population growth, urbanization, changing consumption patterns, climate change and the depletion of natural resources. In the past, interventions in our food systems led to some positive results but also resulted in negative trends, such as an increase in unhealthy diets with low nutritional value, limited access of small-scale producers to viable markets, food loss and waste, food safety hazards, health issues, and an increased ecological footprint and natural resources depletion. There is an increasing consensus within the international community that countries need to adopt a systems approach to food policies if they are to be successful in tackling intertwined, persistent and worsening problems of food insecurity, climate change, resource use, poverty and health. A food systems approach broadens the viewpoint and includes the integrative nature of the food system rather than looking at it as separate pieces or sectors. It promotes integrated and coherent policy-making to align different policy agendas and cross-cutting issues (e.g. agriculture, environment, trade, health, food safety) to better meet the needs of food systems actors and support multiple sustainable food systems outcomes (environmental, socio-economic and health). To apply a food systems lens to their policies, governments must rethink food systems governance and institutional arrangements to promote inclusive collaboration, embracing a variety of voices (from different types of actors and agendas) instead of individual and sectoral perspectives. In addition to bringing all relevant actors together, various levels of governance need to be involved (from national to sub-national, cutting across administrative borders). Governments also need to increase their capacity to undertake holistic assessments of food systems issues and engage in strategic decision-making, acknowledging interlinkages between various sustainability interventions along the entire value chain (from food production to consumption and to waste issues) and balancing the inevitable trade-offs between outcome goals. In this context, multi-stakeholder mechanisms (MSMs) constitute an important element for embedding collaborative and coordinated food systems approaches in policies. In this report, the term "sustainable food systems multi-stakeholder mechanism" (SFS MSM) refers to a formal or informal participatory governance mechanism or collaborative arrangement that brings together diverse food systems actors (e.g. government, private sector, NGOs, farmers) with different food-related agendas (e.g. environment, health, trade, agriculture), from all stages of the value chain (from production to consumption), in an inclusive way to collaborate in pursuit of sustainable food systems. In practice, SFS MSMs vary in their forms (e.g. food policy councils, food security committees, sustainable food labs), their durability (permanent or ad hoc), legal status (whether or not they are created by a governmental decree) and representativeness (level of government and stakeholder participation). They can also operate at different scales (e.g. municipality/county, department/province, multiple departments/provinces, national), and their roles and mandates

remain diverse. These groups usually convene stakeholders to share perspectives on food systems challenges, develop innovative solutions and influence food-related policy-making and planning. They are also increasingly involved in policy implementation..]

Ten outstanding cases were selected and studied, three at national level: France, Denmark and India; and seven at sub-national level: Ghent, London, Montreal, Los Angeles, Quito, La Paz and Antananarivo. The individual summaries of the case studies can be found in Chapter 3.

Bibliographic references

<https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/programmes/sustainable-food-systems/multi-stakeholder-mechanisms>