#AfricanCITYFOODmonth

July 2020 | Brought to you by ICLEI Africa, FAO & RUAF

EVENT REPORT

Overview ▶

Themes ▶

Thematic infographics ▶

Webinars ▶

RISE Africa Photography Competition ▶

Social media coverage ▶

Closing reflections ▶

Way forward ▶

Reflecting on #AfricanCITYFOODmonth 2020

MENU

AfricanCITYFOODMonth is a platform created by ICLEI Africa, FAO and RUAF to support cross-sector, multi-stakeholder engagements and knowledge sharing about urban food systems. The platform recognises that food can be a powerful lever for solving many of our cities' problems - it is connected to so much of how we plan and run our cities as well as our daily lives. Using food as an entry-point in Africa, we can support daily nutrition and wellbeing for millions of urban dwellers, regenerate ecosystems, connect our citizens to each other, mitigate, and adapt to, a rapidly intensifying climate crisis, end the injustice of malnutrition, celebrate local food cultures and improve economic participation.

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth 2020

Throughout July 2020, the inaugural #AfricanCITYFOODMonth Campaign was convened to share ideas, resources and actions around the theme of Repositioning Resilient and Nutritious Food Systems in African Cities. This theme reflects on our midway point through the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition, the commencement of a Decade of Action for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, the upcoming UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, and on strengthening 2030 Action for achieving the Paris Agreement. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting responses, this campaign was key in bringing together policy makers, mayors, urban communities, researchers, agri-food entrepreneurs and food system advocates to reflect on the immense disruptions that Africa's food systems are currently experiencing. The crisis has made plain the many structural and deeply connected challenges that underpin our urban food systems, and reminded us that food can be a vital lever for addressing many of our city's challenges, and shaping the equitable, sustainable cities that we seek.

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth was convened by ICLEI Africa, FAO and RUAF, with the support of Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, African Centre for Cities, WWF South Africa, Rikolto, Ellen MacArthur Foundation and the South African Urban Food and Farming Trust.

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth was well received by local government officials and food system actors from across Africa and the world, and has set a strong foundation for future campaigns. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, activities for #AfricanCITYFOODmonth 2020 were all online, and participants were encouraged to share resources, videos, case studies and ideas using social media, and by joining a series of webinars. Over the course of six webinars, we have had over 620 unique participants from 254 different cities and 480 different organisations around the continent and the world. **Through our open webinar series, Instagram as well as our widely shared online tools and resources, many people could share insights on the month's themes.**

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth presented the following sub-themes, each with their own aims and guiding questions:

MENU

Theme	Aims	Guiding Questions
Food in our cities & Our Future Food Systems	• Providing an overview of urban food system perspectives • Introducing the FAO Urban Food Agenda for improving food systems • Sharing experiences from cities actively engaged in urban food systems • Articulating the role(s) of local governments within the food system	• How do you approach food in your cities? • Which stakeholders influence your food system? And how? • What is the role of local government in shaping your food systems? • What are the challenges facing your food system? • What visions do you have for your future food system? • What steps are you taking to address these challenges and approach this future?

Resilient food systems	• Building cities' capacity to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to shocks and stresses to its food system.
	• Discussing how cities are responding to Climate Crisis in our cities
	• Hearing from African cities on the impact of COVID -19 on their urban food systems
		• What are the key factors that support or undermine the sustainability and resilience of your food system?
		  * In respect to supply chains and origin of the food?
		  * In respect to the level of food insecurity?
		  * In respect to the policies governing city food systems?
		• What are the main climate shocks affecting your local food system and how prepared is your city for shocks and climate change?
		• What are the main challenges with, and how is your city currently responding to, mitigation measures facing the COVID-19 pandemic?
		• What policies, institutions and technologies can enable locally driven design of resilient urban food systems integrating multiple risks (e.g climate, pandemic)?
		• Where to get information and how to connect for joined action towards more resilient food systems.

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth presented the following sub-themes, each with their own aims and guiding questions:

MENU

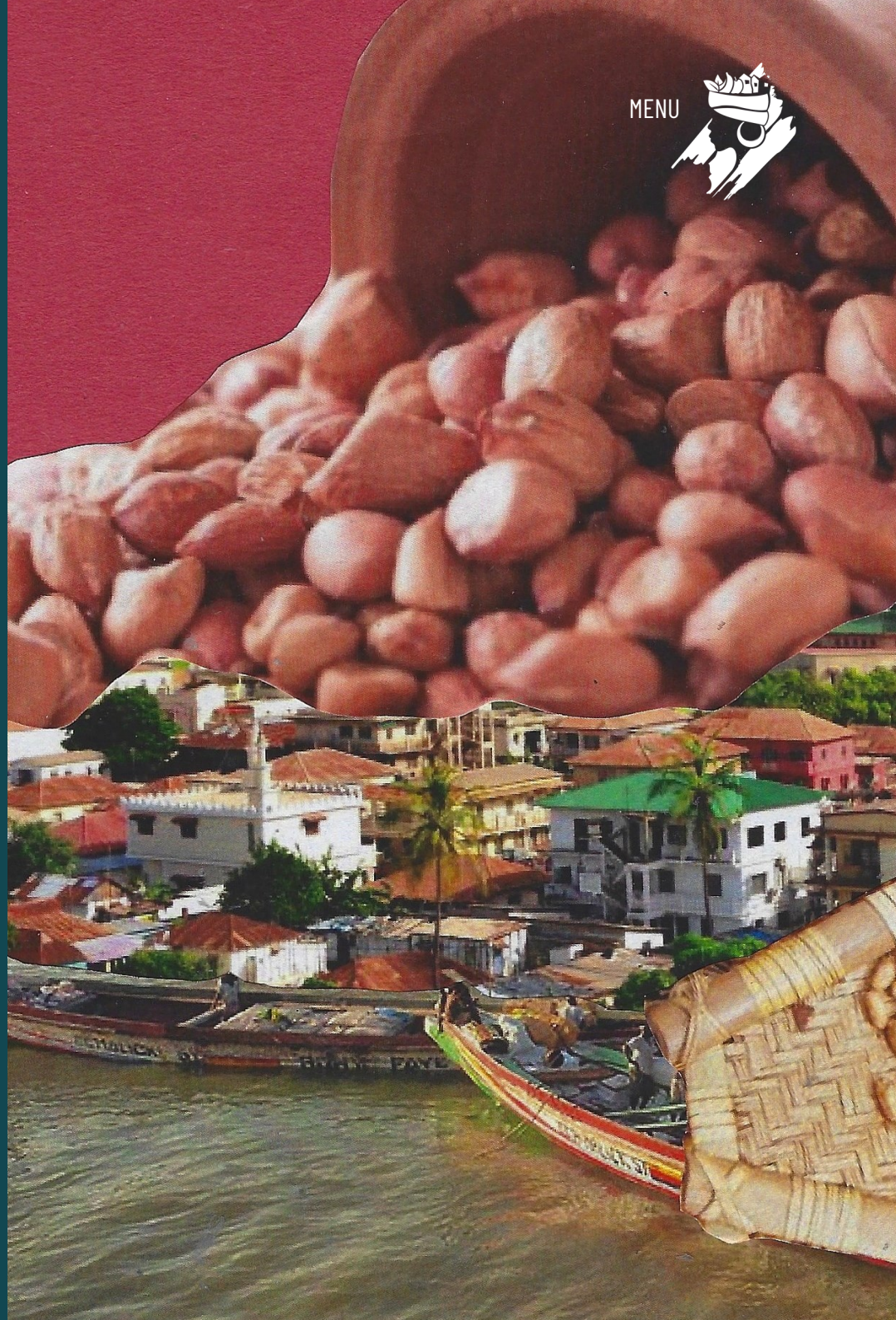
Theme	Aims	Guiding Questions
Nourishing our cities	• Taking a systems perspective on ensuring adequate nutrition and food security in African cities • Understanding the levers for improving food nutrition and food security in African cities • Exploring Sustainable Diets	• What are the typical diets in your city? • What is a local, diversified, nutritious diet? • What is the role of indigenous foods in sustainable diets? • What affects the access to nutritious food in your city? • Is your city exploring options for promoting and enhancing indigenous foods and diets? (Links to Chefs, Hoteliers, etc.) • What mechanisms can be implemented in a way to increase innovation in food processing? • How are you responding to stunting, obesity and other forms of malnutrition?
Sustainable food value chains	• Good Governance, Policy and Practice • Understanding what are the components of a sustainable food value chains • Highlighting the linkages between food, water, health and biodiversity • Deep dive into the problematic of the food safety in our cities	• What does sustainability mean for your food systems in your city? • How does food flow within your city? How can this be more sustainable? • Who are they key stakeholders in your city's food value chain? • What are the circular economy initiatives shaping your cities' food value chain? • What are the main challenges and solutions in having safe food for all?
Youth, women, business & innovation in urban food systems	• Promoting innovation for improved urban food systems • Understanding instrument policies, incentive mechanisms and de-risking measures to spur agri-businesses in and around African cities • Highlighting the role of youth and women in innovating African city food systems	• What are the investment opportunities in your city's food system? • What are the challenges faced when investing your cities' food systems? • What financing models and services exist to support food system entrepreneurs and innovation in your city? • How are we encouraging youth participation in agri-economies? • What is your experience with innovation in your food systems (e-commerce, ICT, high input urban agriculture etc)

Reflecting on **#AfricanCITYFOODmonth** themes

While participants were encouraged to share ideas, resources and actions that they were undertaking in relation to these themes, the themes were also anchored by a series of webinars which drew experts from cities, business and civil society to reflect on these questions. This digest reflects on the ideas emerging from the webinars and their significance for shaping sustainable urban food systems in Africa. This digest is by no means exhaustive, and readers are encouraged to watch the webinars themselves , or peruse the presentations , explore the #AfricanCITYFOODmonth twitter feeds for resources, some of which are included here, and join RISE Africa, by following our Instagram page and subscribing to our monthly digests.

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth webinars

- Food in our cities | Understanding systems approaches to food
- Resilient food systems in the face of COVID-19 & climate crisis
- Nourishing our cities | Food environments for good nutrition
- Sustainable food value chains | A focus on circularity
- Youth, women, business & innovation in urban food systems | Supporting inclusivity and innovation
- Our future food systems

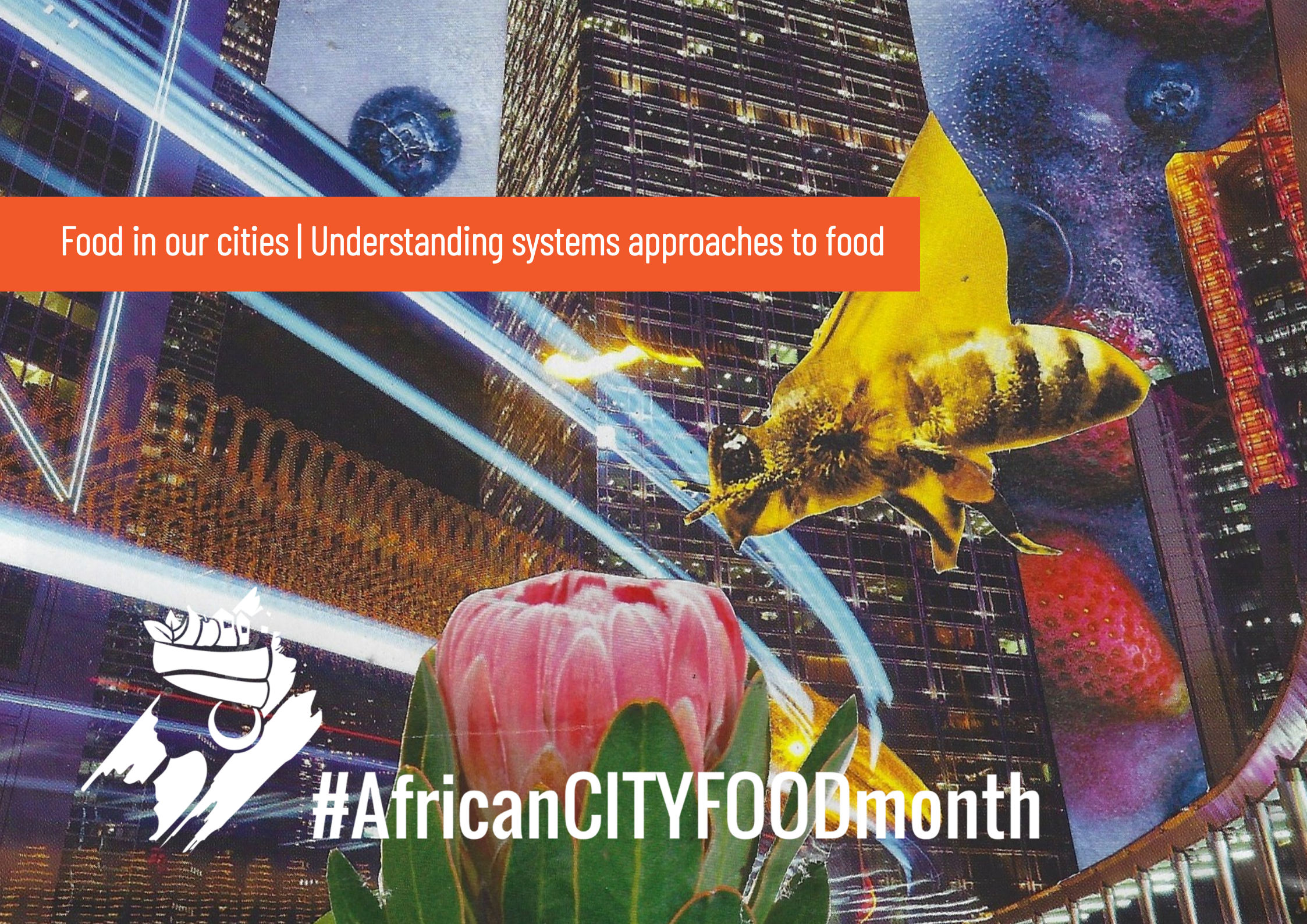


Favourite foods of #AfricanCITYFOODmonth webinar attendees

MENU

Where do #AfricanCITYFOODmonth webinar attendees live?

Addis Ababa
Johannesburg
Dakar
Porto Alegre
Edinburgh, Scotland
Ziguinchor
Ouagadougou
Oslo
Sousse
Hyderabad
Quito
Rabat
Assiut
Cidade Velha
Cork, Ireland
Makurdi
Athens
Rangpur
LOS ANGELES
Rome
Windhoek
Milan
Dar es Salaam
Berlin
Mkushi
Dhaka
Accra
ROMA
Washington, DC
Lyon
Geneva
Durban
Bridgetown
Bissau
Lusaka
Bamako
Johannesbrug
Tamale
Phnom Penh
Rme
Montpellier
Banjul
Brasília
Valencia
Amsterdam
Madurai
Cape Town
Johannersburg
Kenya
Bouaké
Luanda
Tshwane
Johanesburg
Gombe
Brussels
Tirana
Yaounde
Cairo
Paris
Nsukka
Waterloo
Brisbane
Centurion
Pretori
GIZA
Bonn
Kisumu
Utrecht
Verona
Strasbourg
MOMBASA
Thies
Maiduguri
Quelimane
Tsukuba
São Paulo
N'Djamena
Kakuma
Abidjan
Sydney
Port louis
Rotterdam
Lagos
Nairobi
Ibadan
Pretoria
Montreal
Ambato
Misau
Harare
Split, Croatia
santa monica
Belgium
The Hague
Kampala
Milano
London
Uganda
Abuja
Praia
Flower Mound
Wageningen
Abu Dhabi
Yaoundé


Food in our cities | Understanding systems approaches to food
#AfricanCITYFOODmonth

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth webinars

WEBINAR OVERVIEW | MENU

Food in our cities | Understanding systems approaches to food

Watch on Youtube

This webinar launched the #AfricanCITYFOODmonth Campaign, with welcome by Paul Currie, Manager: Urban Systems Unit, ICLEI Africa, and opening statements by Patrice Talla, FAO Subregional Coordinator for Southern Africa and FAO representative for Zimbabwe and eSwatini, Anna Scavuzzo, Vice-Mayor of Milan, and Jamie Morrison, Director and Strategic Programme Leader for FAO's Food Systems Programme.

The discussion explored the FAO Framework for the Urban Food Agenda and its strategies for leveraging local government actions to ensure sustainable food systems and improved nutrition in addition to other experiences from African cities. Various approaches were introduced be introduced for improving food systems at local level including the City Region Food Systems approach, the NADHALI approach and perspectives on Food Policy and Governance.

Paul Currie
Manager: Urban Systems Unit, ICLEI Africa

Patrice Talla
FAO Subregional Coordinator for Southern Africa and FAO representative for Zimbabwe and eSwatini

Anna Scavuzzo
Vice-Mayor of Milan

Jamie Morrison
Director, Food Systems and Food Safety Division, FAO

Mphumuzi Sukati
Senior Nutrition and Food Systems officer – FAO Regional Office for Africa

Rebeccah Wanjiru
FAO Kenya

Jess Halliday
Associate, RUAF Global Partnership on Sustainable Urban Agriculture and Food Systems

William Chilufya
Regional Advocacy Manager for Sustainable Diets, Hivos Southern Africa

Food in our cities | Understanding systems approaches to food

Watch on Youtube

The FAO Framework for the Urban Food Agenda was outlined by Jamie Morrison, in which 7 Comprehensive Areas of Support (CAS) are:

Enabling:

1. National Urban and Territorial Policies and Transformative Institutions
2. Integrated Food System Planning and Inclusive Local Food Governance

Executing:

3. Short Food Supply & Public Food Procurement
4. Agri-Food Innovation Across Small Towns
5. Food and Green Environments for Healthy Cities
6. Optimised Supply Chains & Circular Bioeconomy

Expanding:

7. Evidence-based Outreach for Improved Global Urban Food Governance

It is quipped that #AfricanCITYFOODmonth is directly supporting CAS 7 by providing platforms for cross-sector, regional and multi-stakeholder learning and engagement. FAO, ICLEI and MUFPP each emphasised the value of city-to-city learning programmes in Africa, both for cross-learning between African cities, but also for what the world can learn from African approaches.

"It is very important to the FAO that we build a network of cities with systematic and regular dialogue on supporting the development of urban food systems."

Jamie Morrison, Director, Food Systems and Food Safety Division, FAO

Milan Vice-Mayor Anna Scavuzzo provided an overview of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP), noting that 210 cities have signed the MUFPP, with 33 African signatories showing active participation. The MUFPP offers seven key principles for improved urban food systems each with a series of recommendations with which to engage. She notes that African cities are very active in this network, noting successes by Lusaka in promoting social inclusion through food, Antananarivo's successes in urban agriculture and Dakar's efforts in promoting food gardens by citizens. She looks forward to the 2020 iteration of the MUFPP prizes and invites cities to showcase their efforts.

Muzi Sukati contextualised Food systems in relation to Africa's rapid urbanisation, poverty and informality in Africa – cities show between 20% & 90% informal systems, with many people eating street-food as their main food source: For example, 70% of Dar es Salaam residents eat outside of their homes, mainly from street vendors. It should be noted that many African urban challenges are similar across cities, but many cities do have different manifestations of these challenges. Thus context-based assessment is vital.

Rebecca Wanjiru, FAO Kenya, presented the NaDhali Approach in Nairobi, which aims to promote coordinated efforts across sectors and actors in addressing food system challenges. A Rapid Urban Food System Appraisal Tool (RUFSAT) has supported Nairobi City Council with: Policy Analysis, Interactive GIS, Consumer Analysis, Sustainable Food Value Chain Analysis and Governance Analysis, to identify hotspots for intervention in the food system. Lessons from the NaDhali Approach are to:

- Bring all relevant stakeholders to the table
- Recognise that building strong inclusive stakeholder platforms takes time
- Strengthen local capacity of government officials, local institutions on food system analysis and planning

Food in our cities | Understanding systems approaches to food

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- Create linkages between the governance mechanism (multi-stakeholder engagement) and the assessment right from the start to end
- Strengthen peer-to-peer learning at county, sub regional and regional level
- Strengthen partnerships with institutions, communities for a better and comprehensive assessment.

Jess Halliday, RUAF, provided an overview of City Region Food Systems (CRFS) Approach. This is a useful approach to support cities to understand the wider reach of food systems that interlink urban, peri-urban and rural processes. A city-region food system is understood as: All the actors, processes and relationships that are involved in food production, processing, distribution and consumption in a given city region" – A sustainable and resilient CRFS promotes:

- increased **access to sufficient, nutritious, safe and affordable food,** for both rural and urban residents; supports local food cultures and sense of identity;
- **fair, decent jobs** across value chain & other sectors in rural, peri-urban & urban areas;
- **better economic, social, environmental conditions** in urban and nearby rural areas
- **increased resilience** to shocks, including climate shocks and stresses, and reduced dependence on distant supply sources;
- **integrated rural-urban linkages** – connected food, nutrient and resource flows, strengthened social relations between consumer and producers, inclusivity;
- **ecosystem and natural resources management** – agro-ecological diversity, protected urban ecology/ecosystems, reduced ecological footprint;
- **participatory governance** – appropriate food policy and regulations in context of urban and territorial planning, transparency and ownership across food supply chain.

William Chilufya, Hivos Zambia, contextualised the work they are doing in Zambia, noting that malnutrition in Lusaka is varied, with obesity and stunting event seen within same families. The

"It is only when we begin to understand the drivers of food insecurity, malnutrition and obesity, that we shall truly be able to rebuild resilient and sustainable food systems, especially in our African cities."

Dr. Patrice Talla, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)

Food Change Lab methodology has undertaken mapping of issues, then an initiative prototyping process, where solutions are tried. For example, improving food environments in markets. Another campaign to promote sustainable balanced diets was started, and has the buy-in of Lusaka City Council – this notes the importance of 'intermediary' organisations for leading collaborative food system work.

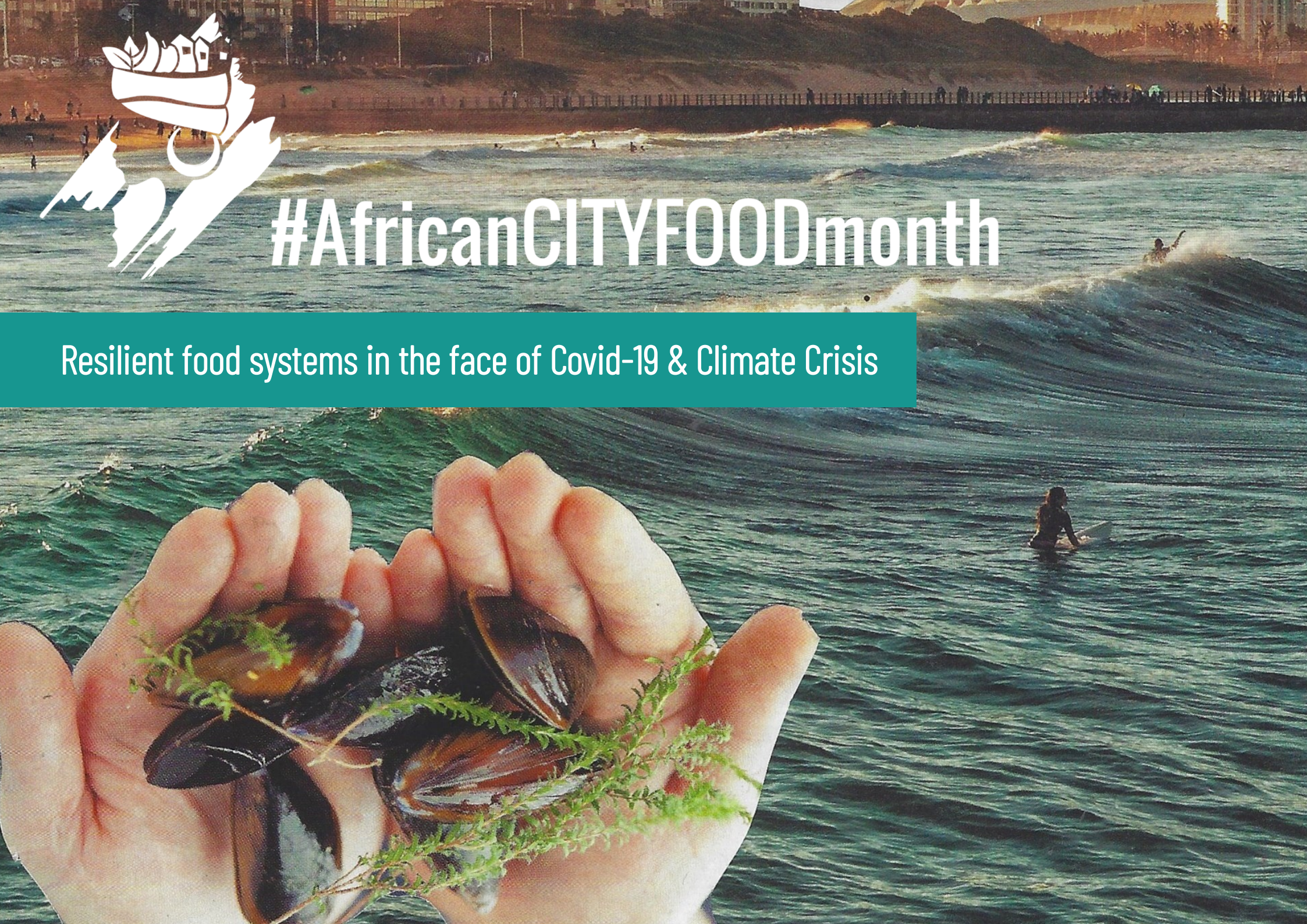
This webinar set a basis for further discussion, noting that food system issues must be tackled collectively, across departments, and across sectors. Food is also noted as an important entry-point for addressing health, environment, climate and social challenges.

"Understanding our city food systems requires good data to inform decision making and multi stakeholder collaborations to build better food systems for all."

Rebecca Wanjiru, FAO Kenya

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth

Resilient food systems in the face of Covid-19 & Climate Crisis



#AfricanCITYFOODmonth webinars

Resilient food systems in the face of Covid-19 & Climate Crisis

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This discussion provided space for African cities to share their experiences and strategies for a more resilient urban food system. Insights were shared from the FAO Questionnaire: Food Systems and COVID-19 - Municipal Response to the Emergency, which fielded over 200 African city responses. Discussions took the COVID-19 pandemic as a starting point from which to explore long term approaches for ensuring continued access to nutritious food in the face of climatic and political shocks.

The webinar provided an engaging platform for multi-level city food systems stakeholders to share the impacts of COVID 19 restrictions on their food systems as well as reflections on the way forward to building more resilient cities that can withstand and flourish during and after crises such as the COVID pandemic and climatic change shocks. Among the panel were food systems policy stakeholders from the FAO, Mayor of Quelimane as well as city officials from Antananarivo, Dakar, Kampala and Kisumu.

Jamie Morrison
Director, Food Systems and Food Safety Division, FAO

Honourable Mayor Manuel Araujo
Mayor of Quelimane, Mozambique

Rokhaya Fall
Head of the Office of Cooperation, City of Dakar, Senegal

Junior Bitsoumanou Nkounkou
FAO Représentation, Republic of Congo

Esau Galukande
Deputy director for production and marketing, Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA), Uganda

Jay Ralitera
Advisor to the Mayor, Commune Urbaine Antananarivo

Gilchrist Okuom
County Minister in charge of Agriculture, livestock and Fisheries. County Government of Kisumu

Resilient food systems in the face of Covid-19 & Climate Crisis

Watch on Youtube

Dr. Jamie Morrison, FAO, shared analysis of the African municipal response to covid-19, in which 202 African cities participated, showing that African cities shared a global trend in response, with the main actions including closing restaurants and street vendors, closing school canteens and closing or restricting food markets. Effects of covid-19 and its response include:

- panic buying
- increased food losses
- permanent or temporary shortage of basic foods
- increased prices of food basket commodities
- limited availability and access to nutritious foods, especially staple and fresh foods in poor areas
- increased risks to vulnerable people's food security and nutrition

Notably, the panic buying and increased risk to the vulnerable were seen more sharply in cities (>500k people) than towns (25k-500k) and small towns(5k-25k).

Key responses by the municipalities include:

- providing direct financial resources to the vulnerable
- providing logistical support for food distribution
- monitoring food markets
- providing direct purchases from local producers

The city officials reinforced these findings, noting that different levels of restrictive lock down measures have been instituted to curb the spread of the Corona virus. Some of these measures are:

"It is important for local government to take the lead in these challenges, because local government is at the forefront of, not only environmental and climate challenges, but also food and social challenges, and we have got the legitimacy and the proximity to deal with many of society's challenges."

Mayor Manuel Araujo, Quelimane

- Restrictions in the operations of food markets and retail spaces as well as food distribution points (both formal and informal)
- Loss of agricultural livelihoods related jobs due to closure of business and movement restrictions
- Restrictions in personal mobility and the use of public transport to access food and employment
- Closure of schools and school canteens
- Rationing/ setting limits on food quantities to buy.

"Any change we want to see in our African Urban food systems, relies on a strong capacity for coordination and delivery of the food to the most needed and on a capacity to produce better, more local and nutritious food."

Lewis Hove, Southern Africa Resilience Coordinator, FAO Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa

Resilient food systems in the face of Covid-19 & Climate Crisis

Watch on Youtube

Moreover, from the FAO survey, smaller towns appeared to be more resilient possibly due to better linkages to the rural and urban areas as well better coordination among the social and economic factors.

Furthermore, with the lockdown, opportunities have emerged within the cities that have contributed to the short term resilience in the face of the pandemic. These have the potential of being integrated into long term resilience strategies of urban areas. Some of the responses or opportunities noted were:

- Use of ICT platforms that are easily accessible such as mobile money and online food commerce in Congo Brazzaville and Kampala
- Establishing/ strengthening local coordination and partnerships with civil society, religious organisations and institutions to enable distribution and access to food. More notably in Congo Brazzaville and Dakar
- Use of informal city services such as boda boda motorcycles in Kampala city to supplement the transportation and delivery needs of food to city residents
- Promotion of urban farming, with arguments that if urban farming is well planned, it has numerous gains for urban households:
    - It can provide continuous household food regardless of what is happening around

"Our objective is to better coordinate and improve access to food by involving different stakeholders including the private sector, institutions, city residents and peri-urban food suppliers in order to put in place a resilient food system."

Jay Ralitera. Advisor to the Mayor, Commune Urbaine Antananarivo

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth webinars

Resilient food systems in the face of Covid-19 & Climate Crisis

- Creates additional sources of income and employment where excess is sold off to markets or neighbours
- Increases household savings on food
- Promotes recycling of urban waste especially where organic waste is composted into manure

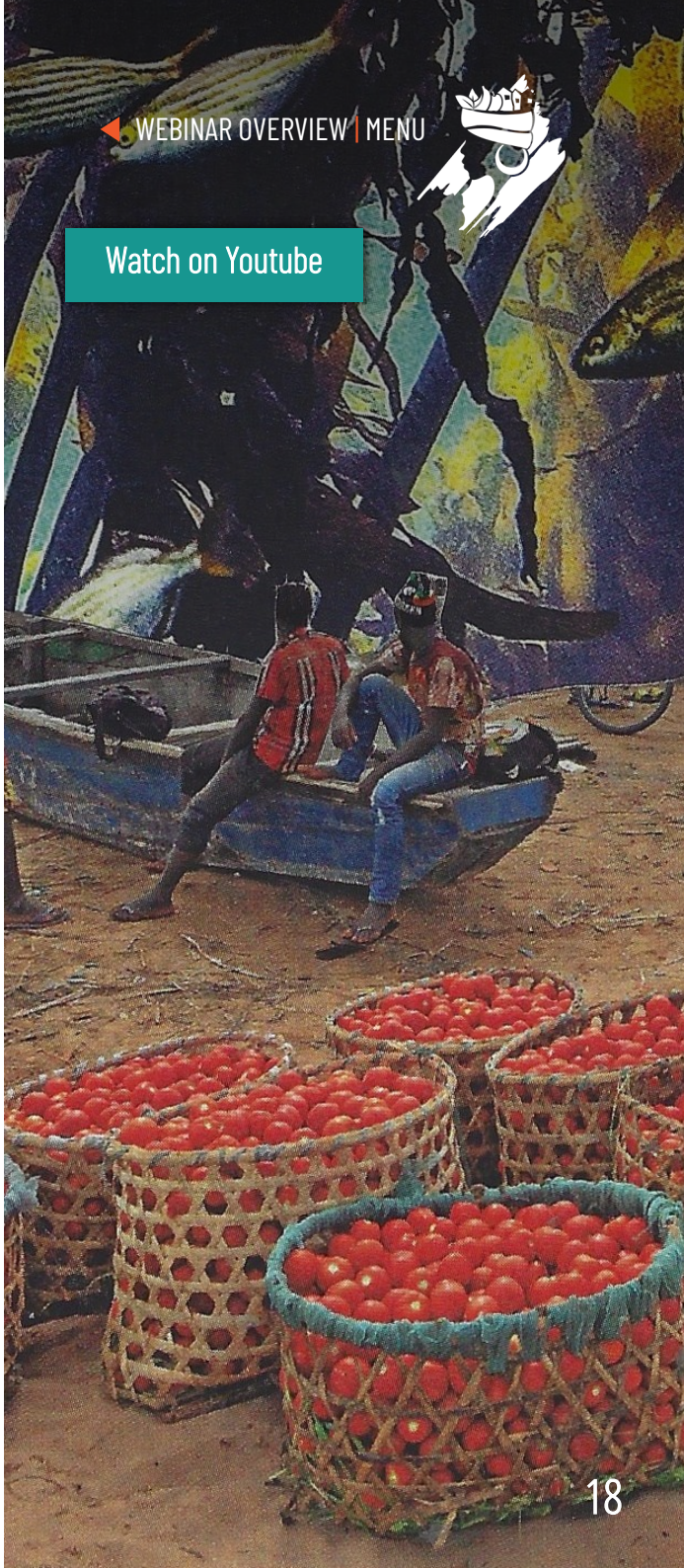
The COVID pandemic has more than ever exposed the fragility of city's food systems and resilience to disasters and therefore has provided a platform for city stakeholders to reflect on and build more resilient and sustainable urban food systems integrated with the wider resilience strategies. Some of the ways in which cities are currently doing this is through:

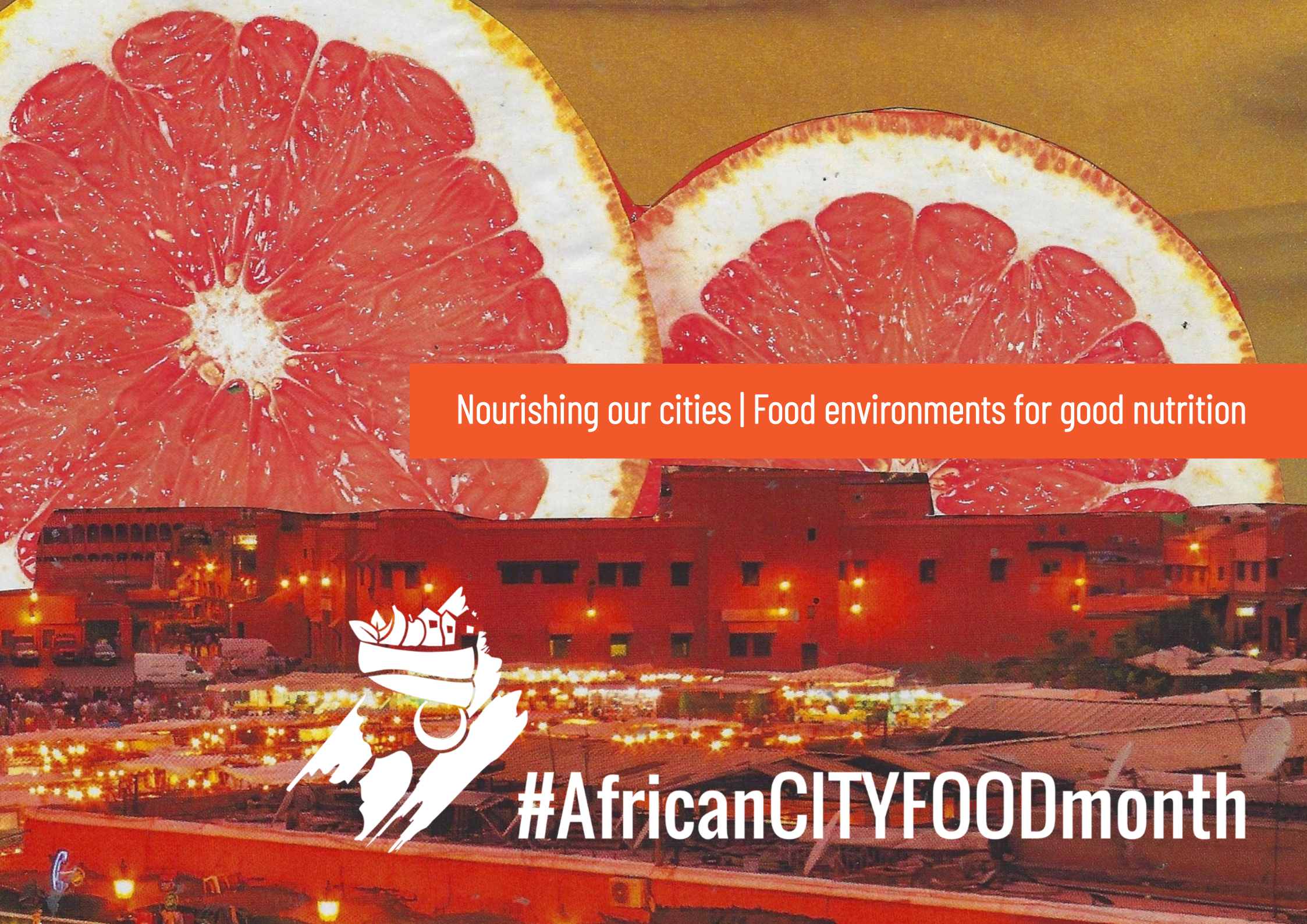
- Strengthening holistic approaches in the management of food systems while fostering national- local coordination and support between all city stakeholders especially civil society and grass roots organisations.
- Facilitating access to food for the most vulnerable through social protection programmes complemented by efficient and innovative food and agricultural inputs distribution networks that incorporate the use ICT to reach the wider population.
- Development of urban and peri urban production and short supply chain that provide an opportunity to build more resilient urban food systems. More notably Kampala launched the Urban Farming Resource Centre to support the emergence of urban farming units. Other cities driving the implementation of urban agriculture are Antananarivo, Dakar and Kisumu

City officials and policy stakeholders acknowledge that cities still have a huge role to play in formulating and implementing short and long term food systems resilience strategies that are well integrated into the overall resilience policies. However, with the impacts of the pandemic and lockdown restrictions, and the emergence of many structural challenges, this has become an area of priority within the cities.

"At Kampala City Council, we want to consolidate the numerous gains from urban farming, we want to increase the number of farmers involved in this activity as well as the inputs, in partnership with different stakeholders."

Esau Galukande, PhD is the Deputy Director Production and Marketing at Kampala Capital City Authority




Nourishing our cities | Food environments for good nutrition
#AfricanCITYFOODmonth

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth webinars

Nourishing our cities | Food environments for good nutrition

Watch on Youtube

Malnutrition undermines the potential of our people, the ability of our economies to grow, and the likelihood of approaching sustainable development in our cities. Instead of focussing on technical nutrition, this webinar presented a conversation on how urban food environments can contribute to good nutritional outcomes.

Cities across Africa are experiencing many unprecedented challenges, from rapid urbanisation, unsustainable development and exponential population increases – nutritious and healthy foods and diets should not form part of these shortcomings. As part of the AfricanCITYFOODMonth Campaign, Food Nutrition was earmarked as a crucial consideration for cities, as part of the wider food system.

The webinar aimed to put the interlinkages between nutritious food and the food environments in cities at the centre of discussion, with this dedicated session bringing provocations and interventions from experts and city perspectives. The panel included researches, through leaders and practitioners tuned in from Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania with attendees ranging from all over the globe. This all added to rich discussions and an engaging session.

Gareth Haysom
Researcher, African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town

Mercy Chikoko
Nutrition Officer, FAO Subregional Office for Southern Africa

Stella Kimambo
Food Security and Nutrition Specialist, FAO Tanzania

Joyce Kinabo
Professor of Human Nutrition, Sokoine University of Agriculture,

Paul Opiyo
Researcher, Kisumu Local Interaction Platform

"Understanding the psychology of eating is very important. People need to be empowered with the right information to enable them to make the right decisions with regards to choosing and purchasing healthy, nutritious food."

Professor Joyce Kinobo, Sokoine University of Agriculture, Dar es Salaam

Nourishing our cities | Food environments for good nutrition

Watch on Youtube

Gareth Haysom, African Centre for Cities, emphasised the interconnectedness and complexity of nutrition in the urban context by articulating food security as an underpinning element through its various lenses of AGENCY, STABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY, ACCESS, AVAILABILITY AND UTILISATION. There is a real need to address food insecurity, particularly at the household level - with subnational and local governments having a key role to play from a design, planning and governance perspective. Haysom suggests that investment in robust food system infrastructures is the only way to support systemic improvements to food environments and therefore food security, including nutition.

Mercy Chikoko, FAO Sub region for Southern Africa, provided an overview of FAO's Food Based Dietary Guidelines as a useful tool which cities and its stakeholders can utilise to explore healthy and sustainable diets. The guidelines advocate for healthy, balanced diets which include all food groups; **Improving sustainable balanced diets requires interventions in three main dimensions:**

- **Supporting behaviour change towards balanced diets**
- **Improving food environments in cities, such as markets, community gardens, vending areas and restaurants**
- **Implementing appropriate policy and programmes**

Stella Kimambo, FAO Tanzania, and Joyce Kinobo, Sokoine University of Agriculture, explored the linkages between and opportunities to strengthen food security in urban environments, yielding strong, practical recommendations from cases in both Tanzania and Kenya:

- Strengthen local governance (policy environment) in the food system;
- Increase general awareness and understanding at the citizen level;

"We need to ensure cities focus explicitly on food and this focus must move from just urban food growing."

Gareth Haysom, Researcher, African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town

"Imagine a city where food landscapes are embedded in the overall function of the city – A city we can eat! – this must consider production, retail and food culture."

Solophina Nekesa, Professional Officer, ICLEI Africa.

- Establish food markets at ward level;
- Promote fruit and vegetable consumption;
- Connect retail with green space and public space as best as possible

Paul Opiyo, Kisumu Local Interaction Platform, shared their efforts to improve nutrition in Kisumu, noting that:

- Nutrition education is often the focus of government. However, there are other factors that are equally important:
- Investment in urban infrastructure and services to improve access to healthy foods - convenient markets, water and energy .
- Promotion of fruits and vegetable consumption - bring down their cost and increase access.
- Mixed land use is proposed for informal settlements in transition to include both commercial and residential premises and support informal food retailers to develop food retail outlets that comply with hygiene and safety standards within residential areas and along the transport routes.

Sustainable food value chains | A focus on circularity

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Sustainable food value chains | A focus on circularity

Watch on Youtube

Our food systems operate in a linear manner, with associated impacts of extractivism, ecological degradation, poor waste management and social inequity. Ellen MacArthur Foundation led a discussion on how we are already shaping more circular food systems in African cities, and what more we need to do.

Their interactive session presented key cases for engagements, which are linked here:

- Duck-Rice farming
- Judith Nayulima - One acre farm
- Waste Transformers South Africa
- Waste transformers in Sierra Leone
- Biobuutz Limited
- Ligue os Pontos - Connecting the Dots

Emma Chow & Nick Jeffries, Ellen MacArthur Foundation guided participants on a journey through principles of Circular economy and case studies which reinforced the lessons. Three principles of circular economy were noted as:

- Design out waste and pollution
- Keep products and materials in use
- Regenerate natural systems

Their analysis of food related impacts suggests that for every dollar spent on food, there is a dollar's worth of impact related to consumption (obesity, hunger and micronutrient deficiency) and another dollar worth of impact related to production (economic, environmental and health).

When relating circular economy to food, they propose the three levers of change are to:

- Source food grown regeneratively, and locally, where appropriate
- Make the most of food, through investing in by-products and the bio-economy
- Design and market healthier food products to influence consumer choices

The webinar closed with a presentation of, and request for comment on, a new survey for local governments and urban actors to assess the circularity of their food systems. Ellen MacArthur Foundation will be launching this survey in the months to come.

"We define the linear economy by a take-make-waste system – we take finite materials out of the ground, make all sorts of products out of this, and most of these products end up going to waste. This is true in almost all areas of the economy today, including food."

Emma Chow, Ellen MacArthur Foundation

Emma Chow

Project Lead, Food Initiative, Ellen MacArthur Foundation

Nick Jeffries

Senior Expert, Food Initiative, Ellen MacArthur Foundation

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth
Youth, women, business & innovation in urban food systems |
Supporting inclusivity and innovation

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth webinars

Youth, women, business & innovation in urban food systems | Supporting inclusivity and innovation

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This webinar explored different opportunities for investing to improve food systems that are inclusive and generate jobs for local businesses. Youth and women entrepreneurs shared their experience and examples of how innovation can shape the urban food system and how to leverage on their potential for future more sustainable and more local food systems.

One of the major challenges Africa faces is unemployment, in particular for youth resulting into rural urban migration. Moreover, a large proportion of the food consumed in the cities is imported and this has related macroeconomic unsustainability. Also food safety and related health issues along the food value chain are key concerns. An underlying theme for this discussion on improving youth and women in the food system, guided by Barbora Hladka, was the need for strong enabling environments (typically supported by government), and innovative and experimental approaches (driven by entrepreneurs and the private sector).

Barbora Hladka

Agribusiness Officer, FAO, Subregional Office for Southern Africa

Alain Onibon

FAO Investment Officer, Johannesburg

Paul Currie

Manager: Urban Systems Unit, ICLEI Africa

Seynabou Dieng

Co-founder & Manager, Maya, Bamako

Paul Sheppard

Managing Director, Future Farms SA

Lovin Kobusingye

CEO & Co-founder, Katifarms, Kampala

Fanta Guindo,

Quality Manager, Institute of Rural Economy at the Laboratory of Food Technology, Bamako

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Alain Onibon, opened the discussion by reinforcing the need for systems approaches when approaching any form of improvement to food in cities. He explained that these policy instruments must be matched to the right task. He proposed seven key policy tools to improve urban food systems:

Spatial planning and production infrastructure policy

- Securing agricultural areas around the cities devoted to high value commodities production (eg horticulture, mushrooms)
- Protect those spaces against the expansion of cities
- Promote the development of production infrastructures in those areas: irrigation, green houses, other special economic zones...

"Doing business in a landlocked African country like Uganda is hard. E-commerce, ICT platforms, easier access to capital as well as agri-business expertise can play a key role in shaping the urban food system."

Lovin Kobusingye, Kati Farms

- Plan the localization and promote appropriate food distribution infrastructures in the cities: supermarkets, malls, convenience stores....

De-risk urban agriculture

- Set-up a facility to upgrade the organization of value chains for your priority commodities
- Set-up a risk sharing facility

Promote inclusiveness smartly

- Set-up a facility to blend public resources with bank financing
- Combine with risk sharing measures

Equip each big city with a food market hub

- In addition of being an appropriate commercial infrastructure, a food market hub is also a company
- In many cases, a joint venture between municipality, private companies, farmer organizations and possibly the central government.
- Food market hubs structure value chains by linking production subsystems with wholesalers and retailers.

Social protection policy to ensure food and nutrition security for all

- School feeding policy, particularly in poor suburbs
- Food aid for the vulnerable
- Invest in nutritional education campaigns
- Enforce quality standards to protect consumers

Environmental policy

- Define environmental norms and rules
- Enforce compliance
- Monitor the state of environment around production and commercial infrastructures

Observe the food system

- Monitoring function
    - Level of malnutrition
    - Food supply parameters
    - Food quality parameter
    - Jobs in the agriculture and food systems
    - Local value chains performance
- Informs revision of policy instruments

Seynabou Dieng shared her experiences on building Maya, a food processing and packaging business that is adding value to local foods and challenging the current 'valorisation' of foreign

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foods that are imported. Challenges to her work have included access to finance, accessing good quality local produce and promoting the company's products. Nevertheless, the products are receiving attention locally and demand in neighbouring countries.

Paul Sheppard, Future Farms SA, shared their approach to urban agriculture through hydroponics and youth training. They have built 22 rooftop farms in the city of Joburg, with these benefits:

- Direct Access to city markets and retailers
- 95% Less water requirements
- ZERO soil requirements
- Any City, Any Location
- Over 100 trainees trained in Hydroponics
- Plant growth averaging 26 days to harvest
- Indoor control of pests and diseases – limited exposure
- Out-of-season crop growth
- Located 2minutes from the offtake client – no cold transport required.

The placement of farms in the city centre reduces the costs and impacts of transporting food, and investing in cold storage. The process has also built interest in youth participation in urban agriculture.

Lovin Kobusingye, shared her efforts to support over 1000 fish farmers with access to market: there was minimal demand for farmed fish, meaning the raw product was available – Lovin noted that the development of innovative products, such as fish sausage, gave them a competitive edge and built a market for the farmed fish. She describes the journey to developing this small enterprise as requiring trust building along every aspect of the food value chain, and

"In Mali, there are very few good quality, local agro-food products in the markets, most of them are imported from Europe. That is why I decided to set up an agro-food processing company that uses local food and spices to create innovative, affordable and highly nutritious products."

Seynabou Dieng, Maya

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requiring support from the government.

Paul Currie, presented lessons from Arusha's own-revenue soft loans, which are given on a revolving basis to youth, women and people with disabilities. This facility is a national mandate that local governments divert 10% of their revenue to the loans, which has shown differing levels of success across Tanzania. In Arusha, between 2017 and 2019:

- **285 Youth, 870 Women and 36 disabled** from 25 wards trained on leadership entrepreneurship skills, loan payment and life skills
- In 2017 – 2019 Soft Loans were provided to:
    - **290 women groups** totalling Tsh 1 475 000 000;
    - **285 youth groups** totalling Tsh 1 505 000 000;
    - **12 groups of people with disabilities** totalling Tsh 60 000 000.
- 1450 Women, 1425 Youth and 60 People with Disabilities have employed themselves in different activities such as Agriculture, Livestock Keeping, Restaurants, Saloons, Agro Processing, and selling second-hand clothes

This is an excellent example of both national and local government creating enabling environments to support inclusion of youth, women and people with disabilities into the economy. It shows how food systems can be valuable entry points for employment and starting new businesses.

Fanta Guindo closed the sessions with a further reflection on enabling environments, particularly on how research institutions can support new business efforts, through technical training and guidance, business plan development, and examining the feasibility of proposed business ventures. The Institute of the Rural Economy at the Laboratory of Food have developed an IT-Hub that has allowed:

- Comparison of technologies and advice for the choice of equipment or packaging best suited to the company,
- Technological information on production processes and equipment, packaging, waste treatment, recovery of by-products, etc.,
- Explanation of appropriate national or international standards or other regulatory information,
- Orientations to appropriate training,
- Connection with specialized points of sale,
- Advice on suitable financing solutions and referral to financing windows.

Our Future Food Systems

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth webinars

Our Future Food Systems

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The closing webinar for #AfricanCITYFOODmonth reflected on the themes and provocations of #AfricanCITYFOODCampaign and proposed key considerations for improving food systems. It also shared a number of future food visions and the efforts to achieve them.

Maire Mouctar Mamoudou

Mayor, President of the Special Delegation for the City of Niamey

Mayor Mohammed Adjei Sowah

Accra Metropolitan Assembly

Lewis Hove

Southern Africa Resilience Coordinator, FAO Subregional Office for Southern Africa

Jane Battersby-Lennard

Associate Professor, African Centre for Cities

Elizabeth Kimani

African Population and Health Research Center, Nairobi

Khodani Mulaudzi

Resilient40 WWF South Africa

Ryan Fisher

Professional Officer: Urban Systems, ICLEI Africa

Vice Mayor Anna Scavuzzo,

Comune Milano, Milan Urban Food Policy Pact

Patrice Talla

FAO Subregional Coordinator for Southern Africa and FAO representative for Zimbabwe and

Kobie Brand

Regional Director, ICLEI Africa and Deputy Secretary General, ICLEI

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Reflecting on the overall theme of #AfricanCITYFOODmonth, **Repositioning Resilient and Nutritious Food Systems in African Cities,** Lewis Hove reminded us that the current ordeal of the COVID19 crisis is an opportunity to re-establish and improve the resilience of our food systems, noting that many cities and food system stakeholders are doing so already. The effects of the crises force us to reflect on where, how and by whom the food we consume is produced, processed, transported and sold. The crisis is raising these questions regardless of one's wealth or where one lives. Increasingly, urban consumers seem to care more about the food they eat, and through this, have a role in driving change to more resilient, nutritious food systems. However, as they are the final segment in the food value and supply chain, they are affected severely by the effects of the pandemic, but also other crises in the food systems, including droughts and emerging issues, including the floods, Desert Locust in Eastern Africa and African Migratory Locust in Southern Africa. Strong coordination is needed to support consumer choice, private sector involvement, and to build institutions and policies that can produce better, more local and nutritious food.

Maire Mouctar Mamoudou of the City of Niamey, explained how food systems activities were necessarily connected to environmental considerations. He explored the role of urban planning in clearly demarcating space for food activities. For example, urban agriculture could serve as valuable buffer zones between built environment and natural assets that need protecting.

Mayor Adjei Mohammed Sowah, Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), shared a number of initiatives being undertaken in Accra to support food system improvements.

- Citizens, particularly middle class, are encouraged to take up home gardening, farming and livestock keeping, with the AMA providing training and seedlings. The AMA is also demonstrating the practice of home gardening at the Metropolitan offices.
- Rebuilding the fishing harbour in Tema is expected to support a boost to fishing in Accra and support economic growth. Fishing inputs are expensive, so the AMA is subsidising the costs of these inputs, and allowing fishers to pay for these inputs over time, by providing guarantees.
- Farmers, Livestock keepers and Fishers are celebrated through a national holiday on every first Friday of December, in which awards and donations are given. This draws national attention to the importance of agriculture in Ghana's economy.
- Finally, the buffer stock system has been effective for stabilising food costs by buying excess foods and releasing them.

Jane Battersby-Lennard shared three vital actions to improve food system governance. The first is a move from solely food-specific policies or programmes to food-sensitive ones that understand the wider importance of the food system and how it interacts other urban processes. For example, we cannot speak of food access, without investigating if people have access to clean water and energy to cook their food.

The second is the need for more civil society engagement in urban food systems. As a result of Covid-19, there has been an increase in crisis networks, in which people have seen the

"We have seen that 'food' demonstrates the most powerful interlinkages between our cities, our environment, our health and wellbeing, our nature and our climate, and offers vast potential for improving equity and sustainability on our planet."

Kobie Brand, Regional Director, ICLEI Africa and Deputy Secretary General, ICLEI

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centrality of food and mobilised around it. However, while many of the networks have emerged in response to crisis, the question is how they could shift to offer a systemic response.

The current crisis may see a reduction in project funding and finance flows to local governments. Therefore, the third action will be to work within the limited resources available and use this as an opportunity to do things differently. This may support more cross-departmental engagement, shift from projects to redeveloping policy, and force private, civil and government entities to work together in new ways.

Elizabeth Kimani shared the vision developed for Nairobi as part of the Rockefeller Foundation's Food System Vision Prize: Restoring Nairobi to "A Place of Cool Waters" through a Regenerative, Transformative, Human-Centered Food System. The vision identifies challenges that 60% of Nairobi residents live in informal settlements, that there is unequal access to food and a double burden of malnutrition, and that there are food safety and food waste issues. The vision imagines "a food secure, well-nourished and healthy population" and "a clean and green environment where people live in peace and harmony." The vision proposes to use innovative urban farming, the connection of high- and low-income areas through food production and delivery, a food rescue system to redirect food before it is wasted, and upskilling in agri-business.

> **"A sustainable city is one that can feed its citizens. Urban planning must include food and urban agriculture as structural aspects of the city that support many interconnected social and environmental priorities."**
>
> Maire Mouctar Mamoudou, City of Niamey

Khodani Mulaudzi reflected on how we ensure that a food system change is a just transition. She reflects that there is already a transition underway due to climate crisis and that Covid-19 is driving another transition. However, for either of these transitions to result in just outcomes, which do not reinforce the current vulnerabilities and power structures. Here, the term "just transition" does not only define WHAT the new system will look like, but it also defines HOW that transformation is carried out. Khodani presented a few reflections on what a just food system transition could entail:

- **Broadening access** to resources which belong in the commons, for example water and land
- **Democratizing decision making** to build trust and mechanisms for multi-level engagement across sectors and power dimensions
- **Invest in Diversity** across scales, crops, climate zones, and people
- **Acknowledge different ways of knowing** and support the Iterative feedback loops between science, culture, traditional knowledge, policy and implementation
- **Recognize**, name and address power imbalances
- **Improve Resilience to shocks**, by strengthening linkages in the food system and urban footprint.

Ryan Fisher argued that it is vital to understand the relationships between food and nature. Food, through urban agriculture, productive trees and community gardens, can be a useful motivation to bring more nature into cities. Embedding more nature into our cities can assist with climate mitigation and adaptation, flood attenuation, and temperature regulation, while providing space for recreation, public engagement and mental and physical wellbeing.

Vice Mayor Anna Scavuzzo expressed the excitement of the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP) in participating in #AfricanCITYFOODmonth and reiterated the importance of cities in promoting and leading sustainability. Since 2015, the MUFPP has supported the coming together of cities to commit to integrated food policies, and offer learnings and solidarity between cities. Thirty-five African cities have signed the pact and have been active in the network. African cities face huge

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challenges, and appear to be less resilient to shocks. Covid-19 has shown that cities are on the front line of crises, and Mayors have had to be responsive and adaptive, often without resources. These crisis reinforce the importance of solidarity and peer learning. The Vice Mayor closed by inviting city submissions to the Milan Pact Awards that recognise innovation and efforts towards sustainable food systems. These submissions and those from previous years, are forming a library to promote and support the uptake of innovative solutions.

Patrice Talla shared closing reflections on #AfricanCITYFOODmonth by reminding us that the dominant approach to building more resilient food systems still focusses on production that is far from urban areas and consumers. However, he remarks that the Covid-19 crisis has shown us that cities have a huge role to play in developing resilient food systems. Urban dwellers and their mayors have had to quickly focus on keeping food prices affordable, wet markets operational and new food delivery systems and logistics functional. Covid-19 has directly shown that food has become a matter for all citizens, all consumers and cities themselves. Several cities, big and small, have shown the agility of urban food actors to innovate and shape resilient food systems.

He closed by celebrating the varied cuisines found in Africa and lamenting that we are not investing in sharing this culture more widely and investing in local value addition. Value to African food products will support changing the narrative from countries that are dependent on imports, while supporting food access and food safety. Aligning our visions through joint engagements, such as #AfricanCITYFOODmonth, will allow us to learn together and take collective action to this end.

Local government's role improving food systems includes putting incentives in place for urban consumers to increase purchase of locally produced and processed food and for formal retailers to procure local foods, organizing informal markets so they are competitive and safe, creating enabling environments for local micro, small and medium agri-enterprises so they are able to drive food system change and appealing to National Governments to supporting this movement with the right policies.

Kobie Brand closed the session with a word of thanks to #AfricanCITYFOODmonth partners and a call to continue the momentum around urban food system learning and exchange.

"Managing food systems in the city is often forgotten by city officers on the assumption that all food comes from the hinterland, and we are simply the consumers. We are challenging this through education home gardening, farming and livestock keeping, building a new fishing harbour, and celebrating our farmers."

Major Adjei Mohammed Sowah, Accra Metropolitan Assembly

"The Covid crisis and the food systems collapse that we've seen has made governments realise the centrality of food to urban life. So perhaps the tragedy of covid-19 might provide us with an opportunity for embedding food in urban planning, in urban policy making and urban programming more directly. In the context of the Covid Crisis, we are in deep trouble. However, I think it is possible to use this crisis to reimagine urban food governance."

Professor Jane Battersby-Lennard, African Centre for Cities

RISE Africa Photography Competition: #hiddenflows

The RISE Africa Annual Photography Competition is off to a wonderful start and we've had numerous compelling submissions to this year's theme: #hiddenflows

June explored how #food moves through our cities, nourishes our citizens and promotes cultural expression. We saw themes such as the impact of COVID on supply chains and the vulnerabilities that exist in the food system, the gender distribution at various points in the supply of food and the various informal ways in which food is sold and accessed.

#Food winners and finalists are shown here. For more vibrant images, please follow us on @futureafricancities.

#hiddenflows contributes to the Inclusive Metabolism project, a collaboration between the Food Security Initiative Stellenbosch University, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, and ICLEI Africa with funding from the LIRA 2030 programme.

WINNER

FINALISTS

#hiddenflows SHORTLIST

@xi.stories

@xi.stories

@gabs_pics

@onagraphy

@naibishotit

@naibishotit

@onagraphy

@smoscareface

@ayandandamane

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth social media coverage

MENU

RUAF @ruaf · Jul 13
How can food environments contribute to good nutrition? Join the next **#AfricanCITYFOODmonth** webinar to find out.

> **ICLEI Africa** @ICLEIAfrica · Jul 13
> The #GlobalNutritionReport 2019 states that Africa's prevalence of stunting in under-5s is 30%.
>
> Let's break down nutrition & malnutrition, & explore improved access to nutritious #food in our #cities.
>
> Join #AfricanCITYFOODmonth
> 15 July, 2PM CAT
> us02web.zoom.us/webinar/regist... @GNReport

FAO Southern Africa @faosfsafrica · Jul 3
For **#AfricanCITYFOODmonth** share with us your ideas of how to improve the food systems you see around you. Share your ideas using **#AfricanCITYFOODmonth**
Tags: @fao @iclei @icleiafrica @ruaf

#AfricanCITYFOODMonth #urbanfood

Ede Ijjasz-Vásquez @Ede_WBG · Jul 17
#Cities can play an important role in #foodsecurity, #foodwaste and innovations - share experiences in **#AfricanCITYFOODMonth** twitter.com/ICLEI/status/1... @ICLEI

> **ICLEI** @ICLEI · Jul 1
> #AfricanCITYFOODMonth
> Highlighting innovative and evolving African urban #FoodSystems, the social campaign runs from 1 to 31 July, providing a platform for #localgovernments and food stakeholders. africa.iclei.org/cityfood/
>
> Engage with the hashtag and share your stories and photos
> Show this thread

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth

Rikolto (VECO) @rikolto · Jul 27
WEBINAR | Women and young entrepreneurs as the driver behind change in our food system? Join the discussion on 29 July at 3pm EAT.
#AfricanCITYFOODmonth

Register here: us02web.zoom.us/webinar/regist...

UrbanAfricaACC @UrbanAfricaACC · Jul 15
#AfricanCITYFOODmonth In response to a question regarding food system considerations as Africa continues to rapidly urbanise & build infrastructure @GarethHaysom responds
- We need to ensure cities focus explicitly on food, & this focus must move from just urban food growing

CitiesWithNature @CitiesWNature · Jul 23
Our #CitiesWithNature BUZZ July edition is here!

This month features @IUCN, @WWF @cityofmelbourne, @CityofJoburgZA, @10MinWalk, **#AfricanCITYFOODmonth**, @TNatureOfCities, @McGrathGreen, @JananiSivarajah & more.

Read more & subscribe to future editions: bit.ly/CWNbuzz

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth social media coverage

MENU

ipbes
@IPBES

#DYK 80% of all food produced globally is destined for consumption in urban spaces? - @FAO

This month, @FAO & @ICLEI will highlight diverse, innovative & evolving African urban food systems

#AfricanCITYFOODMonth 🌍🌽

Learn more 👇
fao.org/urban-food-age...

Future Proof Banjul
@FBanjul

Meet Njagga Samba, project coordinator Crab Island where Future Proof Banjul supports urban gardening and building resilience through women empowerment. #AfricanCITYFOODmonth @ICLEIAfrica Supported by @EUinTheGambia and @LoweMayor #SustainableDevelopment

Urban Food, Crab Island, Banjul
Matarr Njagga Samba, project coordinator Crab Island, talks about urban gardening on the site. Crab Island will be ...
youtube.com

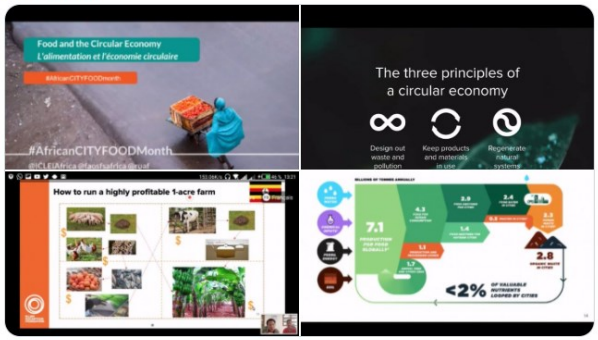
World Future Council
@Good_Policies

🍇9 recommendations for #foodsecurity! 1️⃣ Guiding sustainable (food) policy-making & #urbanplanning by multi-stakeholder collaboration ensures #inclusiveness, acceptance & #fairness #LeaveNoOneBehind #AfricanCITYFOODmonth @FAO @BROT_furdiewelt
Read all 9👉worldfuturecouncil.org/together-for-f...

Élias Opportun GUIVI
@guivielias

Les systèmes alimentaires doivent pourvoir sortir du schéma linéaire et adopter les principes de l'économie circulaire.
#food #AfricanCITYFOODmonth
Cc @circulareconomy @ICLEIAfrica @ICLEI_Canada @AfriCANcircular

Translate Tweet



Let's Food Cities
@LetsFoodCities

In 2010, the @eThekwiniM (Durban) decided to invest the roof of one of its offices, located in the city center, in order to create a space dedicated to agriculture.
youtube.com/watch?v=4dJGkO...
#AfricanCITYFOODmonth @Nourishingourcities @ICLEIAfrica @faosfsafrica @ruaf

(EN - FR) Durban (Afrique du Sud) - Initiative #2: eThekwini ro...
Durban (South Africa) - Initiative #2: eThekwini rooftop garden
In 2010, the municipality decided to invest the roof of one of i...
youtube.com

12:42 PM · Jul 13, 2020 · Twitter Web App

3 Likes

Let's Food Cities @LetsFoodCities · Jul 13
Replying to @LetsFoodCities
The objective of the garden is to educate about the importance of self-production and the consumption of fresh vegetables, and to create a replicable model. 5 people work full time to maintain the garden. #AfricanCITYFOODmonth @Nourishingourcities @ICLEIAfrica @faosfsafrica @ruaf

1 1

Let's Food Cities @LetsFoodCities · Jul 13
Know more about Let's Food work with @eThekwiniM : letsfoodcities.com/en/lets-food-c... #AfricanCITYFOODmonth @Nourishingourcities @ICLEIAfrica @faosfsafrica @ruaf

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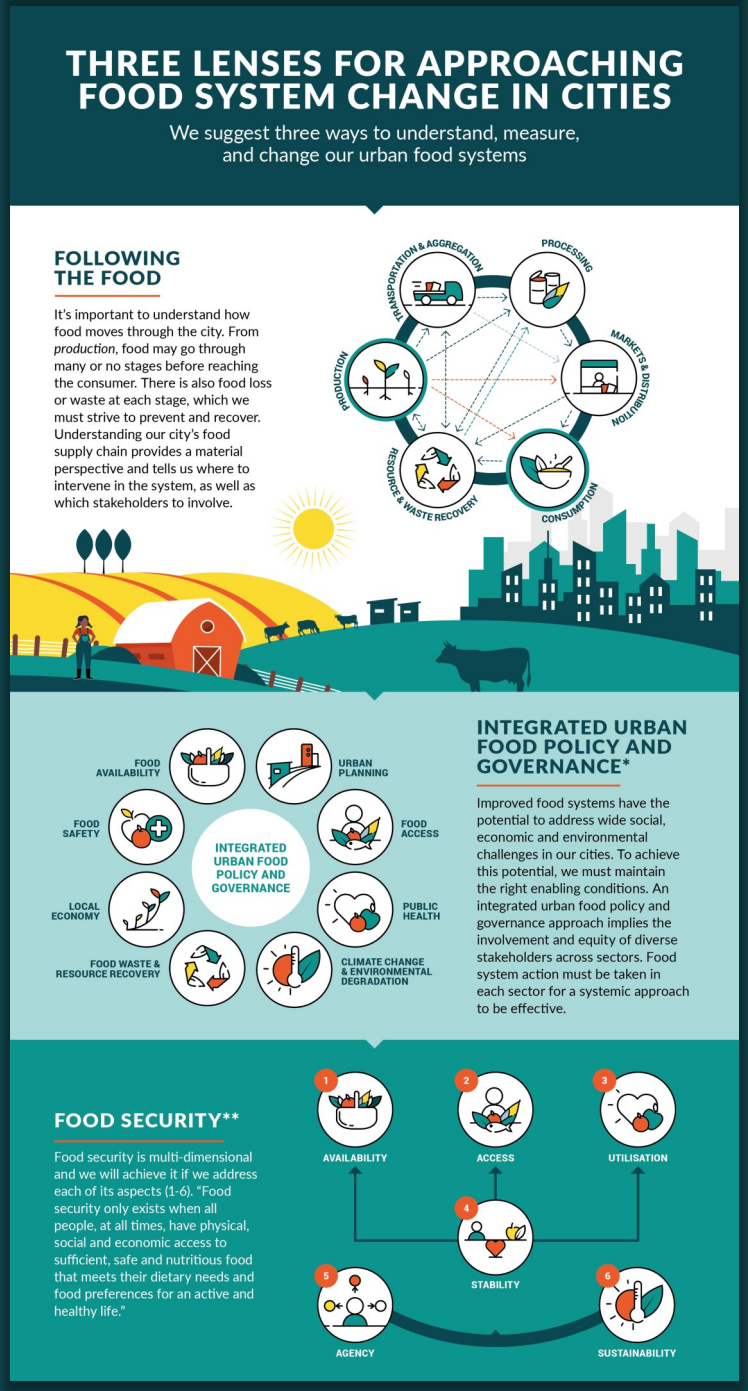
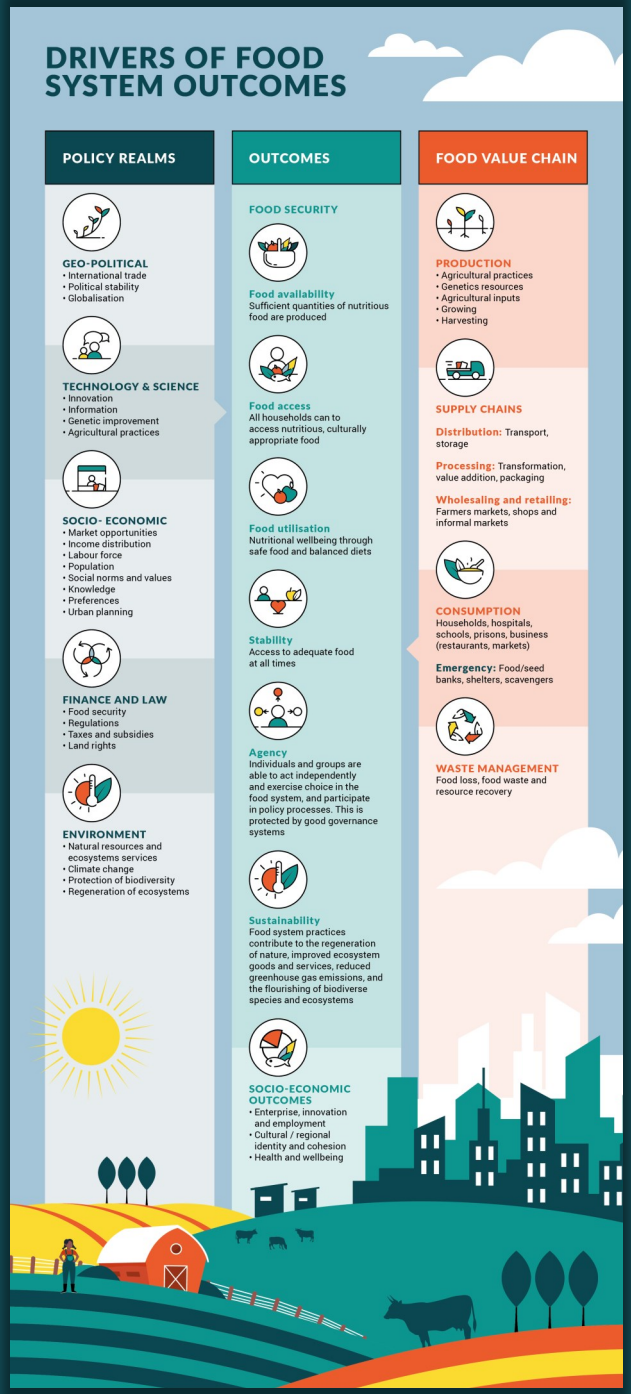


Download three lenses for food systems infographic

Download food system outcomes infographic



MENU

#AfricanCITYFOODmonth thematic infographics

Food Systems Perspectives

Much of ICLEI Africa's food work with our local government members is to support the uptake of food systems perspectives. We suggest understanding food systems through three lenses, and we support local governments and food system stakeholders to identify and articulate the drivers of food system change, as well as their desired outcomes. These perspectives complement the FAO Framework for the Urban Food Agenda (page 12), which articulates seven comprehensive areas of support for improving urban food systems.

Closing reflections

MENU

While there is growing awareness of the importance of food system perspectives globally, food is still typically equated with production, agriculture and rural. Nevertheless, urban dynamics drive a growing demand for food production and increasing long supply chains, and despite food availability, many urban citizens are not accessing or consuming nourishing food. The aim of much of ICLEI Africa's work, including the co-convening of #AfricanCITYFOODmonth, is to demonstrate the vital role of local governments and local food system actors in contributing to food security.

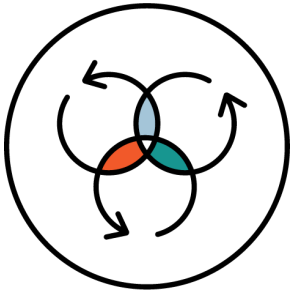
What is notable is that food typically remains a national or regional mandate in many countries, and while local government is closer to the realities of food insecurity it does not necessarily have the mandate or resources to invest in improving food systems. Despite this, it is often expected to do so. Because of this, many cities are trying to understand and define their role in improving food systems.

Where strong multi-level governance around food does exist, many cities question how to implement effective food programs, as well as which stakeholders can support them in doing. This #AfricanCITYFOODmonth, taking place during the covid-19 pandemic, has showcased a number of key approaches for practical food system change and has drawn together many organisations and individuals working on urban food across the themes of agriculture, safety, nutrition, urban planning, governance, resource productivity, equity, culture and justice. A few closing reflections of the month are shared here.

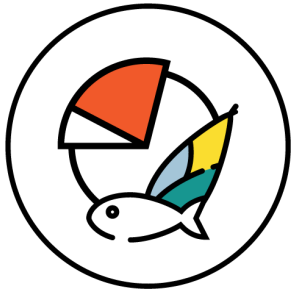
"We have seen that 'food' demonstrates the most powerful interlinkages between our cities, our environment, our health and wellbeing, our nature and our climate, and offers vast potential for improving equity and sustainability on our planet."

Kobie Brand, Regional Director: ICLEI Africa

Closing reflections

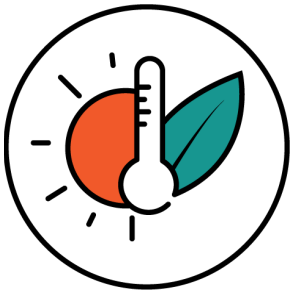


Systems approaches to food are vital for identifying interconnections and the interventions which can have cross-sector impact. Taking these opportunities forward requires integrated, multi-level policy processes and collaborative efforts.

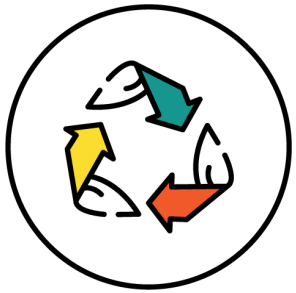


We can only insure true food security in our cities if we **end the injustice of malnutrition**. Robust infrastructure, behaviour change, enabling food environments and strong multi-level policy and governance are key tools for improving nutrition in our children and our citizens.

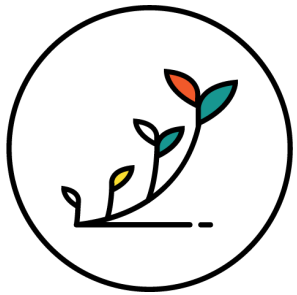
Cities have a key role in **creating enabling environments** for businesses and entrepreneurs to innovate. They can also provide important social protections, and **inclusion of women and youth** through novel policies and financing mechanisms. The key ingredients to do both are trust, leadership and access to resources.



Cities are taking the lead in responding to the current Covid-19 pandemic, acting as change agents at the forefront of action that force their leaders to be innovative and fast-paced in realizing a “new urban normal”. The **lessons on food system resilience,** learned though the Covid-19 paandemic can improve our responses to not only the climate crisis, but indeed to collectively achieving the Sustainable Development Goals at the local level.



Our food systems operate in a linear manner, with associated impacts of extractivism, ecological degradation, poor waste management and social inequity. We can shift to more **circular food systems** by: sourcing food grown regeneratively, and locally, where appropriate; making the most of food, through investing in by-products and the bio-economy and designing and marketing healthier food products to influence consumer choices.



The **future of our food systems, and the future of our cities** will only be sustainable if we embrace the role of local governments in improving food systems. We must consider any food system interventions through the principles of a **just transition**, and we must contemplate how food, and different sectors of society can interact to support our citizens’ wellbeing and long-term sustainable outcomes.

Way forward

AfricanCITYFOODmonth 2020 was the first of a series of virtual food campaigns to be hosted annually focusing on different themes around Africa's evolving food systems. If you would like to be an implementing partner or supporting partner for AfricanCITYFOODmonth in the future, please contact us through riseafrica@iclei.org.

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BACK TO TOP

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