

ACTION TRACK 2 – Shift to healthy and sustainable consumption patterns
Group of Friends of Food Systems Summit (GoFFSS) workshop
Tuesday, 3 November 2020 14:30-17:30 CET

Chair's Summary

On 3 November 2020, the informal Group of Friends for the UN Food Systems Summit (GoFFSS) hosted a workshop on *Action Track 2 (AT2) – Shift to healthy and sustainable consumption patterns*, moderated by Ambassador Ulrich Seidenberger of Germany. More than 140 participants attended. Five questions were provided in advance to the membership to guide short interventions with a view to identifying any gap (missing or glaring issue) in the AT2 papers, to be complemented by written comments if desired.

Presentations

- AT2 Discussion Starter by Gunhild Stordalen, EAT Foundation, AT2 Chair.
- AT2 Background Paper by Marta Hugas, Chief Scientist at European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), Sub-Group Focal Point of the Scientific Group (TBC).

Discussion

The following key points were raised by several delegations, and are organized below along the five guiding questions formulated for each AT:

1. Do the AT2 papers clearly articulate the key objectives and targets they wish to achieve?

- Avoid taking a 'one size fits all' approach: Cultural diversity and context-specificities of healthy diets across countries and regions should be taken into due consideration. For example: It is important to focus on balancing the diet as a whole, according to the actual situation in each country, instead of setting unified standards for the consumption of each product.
- The AT2 Scientific Group paper would benefit from a documented assessment of the current situation, including an assessment of the differences in the different parts of the world. An accurate and science- and evidence-based approach is important; a partial approach to references is not going to deliver. With regard to the AT2 Discussion Starter paper: The reference to food in itself as "number one driver of premature mortality" is viewed in a critical light and the paper should stick more to the subject of discussion.
- There is a need to ensure coherence on terminology. AT2 should use agreed UN-language used and should not include concepts that are not internationally agreed (e. g. "sustainable healthy diets"). There is no definition of "healthy/unhealthy food" and therefore these terms should be avoided whereas the concept of "healthy diets" is commonly acknowledged.
- The outcome should be practical, it is important to find concrete solutions to attain the goals of the Agenda 2030.

2. Do the AT2 papers identify all of the key issues: the political, economic, social and environmental factors that can assist or impede success?

- Capacity development and raising awareness on healthy and sustainable consumption pattern should be given more importance. In calling for changes to consumption patterns, it will be important that proposals provide as many different options that can succeed in different settings.
- Modifying behavioural changes is seen as a key topic of AT2, while the other topics addressed are rather 'enablers' to make it happen. Nutrition education for all actors in the food system needs to be more highlighted. More importance should be given to school education on healthy food and school feeding programs. Schools and other early childhood facilities should be listed as central settings to improve the nutrition of children and adolescents (e. g. cooking training,

social media). Proposals should be also made to specifically promote nutrition education and awareness raising at home. However, not only actions at the consumer level are important, but also at the producer level.

- The role of trade is not well considered with respect to its importance for healthy diets. Shorter and/or local supply chains are not inherently better able to supply healthy and nutritious food. Both local value chains and international trade have their value.
- The need to intensify efforts to reduce and prevent food loss and waste along the production and supply chain (including retail waste and reducing waste in households) at regional, national and international levels. The role of governments regarding the reduction of waste of food and of food packaging could be further developed.
- Under the section 'Incentivizing markets and corporations to provide healthy foods' of the AT Discussion Starter paper, it should be considered to add an environmental component – having in mind the environment also puts pressure on food systems and not only the other way around.
- A useful focus for action could be on strengthening the capacity of food safety systems and institutions and the role of technology should be further stressed.
- The AT should consider healthy diets as coping/prevention strategy in the context of pandemics, the issue of affordability should be elaborated in more details and public procurement (besides other tools) as well as AMR are important focus areas of AT2.

3. Do they identify all of the key actors and stakeholders?

- Enhancing coordination and cooperation is important: improve collaboration among all actors involving governments, the private sector (priority), CSOs, academic and research institutions, producers, consumers and other relevant stakeholders.
- While many of the key stakeholders on global food production and processing are currently seen as part of the problem, they will also need to be part of the solution.
- In general, the focus should not only be on consumers. The key role of food business operators in redesigning a food chain could be further highlighted and small-, medium- and macro producers should be included. Special attention should be given to women and youth.
- The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is a key actor that should be included in AT2. The CFS guidelines and policy recommendations should be referred to and taken into due consideration.

4. Do they sufficiently address all cross-cutting levers of change such as gender, innovation and financing?

- Gender issues cannot be overemphasized. Within the AT Discussion Starter paper, integration of gender equality and the empowerment of women are limited to the list of examples of enabling interventions at the end.
- Creating more nutritious food at a more affordable cost and with reduced environmental impacts will require significant investment in innovation and technology.

5. Do they identify synergies and/or trade-offs within the key elements of the AT and with other ATs?

- Country-specific and context-specific issues are of crucial importance when analyzing the economic and social trade-offs and synergies deriving from food system changes. Before analyzing the trade-offs of different food production and consumption scenarios, there is a need to first clarify specific target groups, including vulnerable groups.
- The Discussion Starter paper is almost exclusively devoted to the pursued benefits but no trade-offs. One major current challenge that is identified in the paper from the scientific group is the current higher costs of healthy diets and thus their lower affordability for rural livelihoods.
- The synergies should also be emphasized more, especially with regard to AT 1, 3 and 4. A link with AT5 could also be developed – this could include COVID-19 and its impact on food systems.

- There is a need to be clear about how AT2 will focus on sustainable consumption to avoid duplication of efforts regarding availability/access to healthy foods (AT1) or sustainable production (AT3).

Other than Gunhild Stordalen and Marta Hugas, Francesco Branca, Director Dept. Nutrition and Food Safety WHO (UN anchor organization for AT2), and Youth Vice Chair, Lana Weidgenant (Real Food Systems), commented on points raised by Member States as stated above.