



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



**IDOS**

German Institute  
of Development  
and Sustainability

# Report of the International Exchange Forum on Sustainable Public Food Procurement 2022

Overcoming Challenges and Learning Lessons  
from Local Governments

25 October – 27 October 2022 | 10:00 – 17:50 (CEST) | Online  
Jointly hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of  
the United Nations (FAO) and the German Institute of Development and  
Sustainability (IDOS)

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## Forum context

According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), public procurement accounts on average for 10 to 15% of GDP globally and can amount to as much as 30% in developing countries. Public procurement is therefore considered a huge lever across different government levels to impact consumption and production patterns. In the past years, governmental organisations across the globe have started to recognise this potential and have used their influence by demanding and procuring products and services that are better for the producers (e.g. decent working standards), for the economy (e.g. fair payment) and for the environment (e.g. minimal use of resources, nature conservation). Through such practices, public bodies are contributing directly to indicator 12.7 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals “promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities”.

Within the wider context of Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP), the subcategory for food is receiving growing attention by procurement officers and practitioners. Sustainable Public Food Procurement (SPFP) is increasingly recognised as an instrument to drive inclusive and sustainable food systems and healthy diets. As with any big change process, the transition to sustainable food systems through SPFP is picking up at varying speeds with some cities and entire nation states spearheading, whilst others being at the very beginning of changing old practices. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS) are currently running a joint project that supports the implementation of SPFP.

The project called “Improve sustainable public food procurement practices in municipalities to catalyse sustainable urban food systems” has as its objective to improve local government’s sustainable public food procurement practices as an instrument to contribute to more sustainable food systems, making these more environmentally friendly and inclusive to small-scale producers and retailers while increasing availability and accessibility of healthy and diversified food to consumers. It aims, through the promotion of knowledge exchanges, intercity collaboration and documentation of experiences, to improve the capacity of municipalities’ public officials in Africa and Latin America to implement sustainable public procurement programmes to catalyse a shift toward sustainable urban food systems. Municipalities are acknowledged as crucial actors to enact a transformation of current agri-food systems, since they comprise a large part of total public procurement expenditure.

Embedded within the joint project by FAO and IDOS is the International Exchange Forum on Sustainable Public Food Procurement 2022 – Overcoming Challenges and Lessons Learned from Local Governments. The objectives of the event were:

- to enable an exploration of research and policy gaps based on the widespread participation of distinct stakeholders,
- provide policymakers with insights on how to adapt their policies in order to pave the way towards sustainable agri-food systems,
- to offer a space for sharing stories about challenges and barriers and how they can be overcome, so that others who want to follow suit can learn from it and adapt to the own context,
- and to foster mutual learning experiences and equip stakeholders to take collective action.

This three-day event created a space for procurement actors from academia, the public sector and civil society organisations to form partnerships and participate in exchanges on an international scale.

The event aimed to facilitate exchanges on the following key topics in relation to SPFP:

- the role and responsibility of local governments
- the link of SPFP to the broader debate on public procurement
- entry points for transforming current agri-food systems to be more sustainable
- the inclusion of vulnerable groups
- the importance of partnerships and networks
- regulatory challenges

The forum offered insightful perspectives and inputs on this timely topic with practitioners, researchers and policy makers from Africa, Europe and Latin America. The diversity of stakeholders participating enabled an exploration of research and policy gaps, as well as provided policymakers with insights on how to adapt their policies to pave the way towards sustainable agri-food systems.

The forum offered a wide variety of sessions, including regional sessions with in-depth discussions, power networking and city exchanges. The red thread throughout the forum was the different challenges of implementing food procurement practices and how to tackle these. Simultaneous translation from and to English, French and Spanish was provided throughout the event to reach an international audience and to make the event as inclusive as possible. As such, this documentation of the event is also made available in these three languages.

## Forum Day 1 – 25 October 2022

### Keynote speech

*Betina Bergmann Madsen – Chief Procurement Officer at the Municipality of Copenhagen, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Denmark*

Betina is a business lawyer by training and has been working as a public food procurement professional since 2009. In 2021, Betina participated in the UN Champion Network, which helped her to gain a greater understanding about the food system.

In the keynote speech, she shared her thoughts on the systemic implementation of the necessary green measures needed to change the food system. She also brought in her procurement lawyer perspective working in a city with high political green ambition.

In her speech, she aimed to provide insights into the challenges faced when implementing green and sustainable requirements in public food procurement contracts.

She started highlighting that, although procurement is a powerful tool to make sustainable and systemic changes, it is not without challenges, risks and thresholds. Highlighted below are some points that are key to support the implementation of SPFP initiatives from a procurement officer perspective. She emphasised that, despite their importance, they are rarely discussed.

- Procurement officers need to be well trained and surrounded by experts. Often procurement officers write procurement documents alone, they lack specialised knowledge on products they procure and are unaware of their key role in the transformation of the food system.
- Beyond having product knowledge and expertise, procurement officers need to ensure that political demands are included in the tender. The procurement officers need to know about the institutional policies and need to make sure they are implemented in the tender.
- It is a challenge to translate nutritional guidelines and promote the development of more sustainable food systems through tendering. Such goals are often not incorporated in tenders by procurement officers because they link it with practical outcomes of a public contract and are unaware this is actually a part of the tender process for example a tender for school meals should also contain demands on the menu planning, the production of the meal and therefore food products to be purchased.
  - Next to policy, guidelines, European ruling and national law, there is also a supranational level to keep in mind. The higher the level or the more abstract guidelines are, the more difficult it becomes to make procurement officers to implement them. The UN SDGs are broadly overlooked and thus will often not be considered to implement, national policy requirements may be so broad they are considered to be unimplementable. It is an absolute necessity to pin this down to a manageable level. A local food policy may help to make the procurement officer aware of requirements that need to be incorporated into the tender, but might not know how to, and in the worst case, can reject it as not legal requirements or unfeasible. Next to a food policy, it is advisable to provide guidelines and recommendations to tackle this issue.
- Another challenge is that guidelines and recommendations rarely reach the procurement officers and the procurement officers would not know they exist, and therefore not know where to look for them. Leading examples are the EU Commission's Green Public Procurement Guidelines (GPP) and the UN's Strengthening Sector Policies for Better Food Security and

Nutrition Results. The GPP guidelines have at best been published on a government website. For the first meeting of the Danish procurement officers' network the members were asked if they heard about the GPP – nobody knew about its existence. The following problem is then if the procurement officer becomes aware of such publications, they lack time to read to long reports on what can be considered in food procurement. Also is noticed that these reports do not give concrete tips and tricks on what to do specifically to meet the recommendations. And to add upon this an extra challenge, especially if the procurement officer cannot see the "bigger picture" and why it is important and relevant to incorporate the requirements in their tender, there won't be an incentive to implement.

- Procurement and new contracting are often subject to a requirement and expectation of savings. You need to do more with less. The procurement officer may therefore be concerned that increased requirements will both delay the tendering process and increase the price of the final contract which causes a fifth threshold.
- Risk of imposing green requirements in tenders can inadvertently push developments in the wrong direction. A good example is the requirement for sustainable fish. Some believe that if we require all fish in public tenders to be MSC and ASC labelled then the problems of achieving sustainable fisheries will be solved by the public sector. However, if we move exclusively to MSC and ASC labelled fish, then we may force small fisheries that cannot afford and resource such certification, to close. This example shows it is important that areas in which we create green requirements and criteria be fully clarified before implementation. If many others copy such a tender, there could be a butterfly effect of a well-meant measure causing great harm.

Betina concluded that we cannot expect that recommendations on how to change the food system through public procurement will automatically be implemented and result in the necessary systemic changes.

#### Questions from the chat:

- Q: Are there challenges or risks in food procurement regarding multinationals/ large companies working in the country versus the national small holders? How can we work to create fair access to local smallholder producers (in some of the high nutrition value crops grown)? Women grow these, but these crops are not in the national priorities and will ask for efforts to organise the local smallholder producers.
- Q: How does this procurement contract work together with the stock to ensure food security in times of crises?  
A: Do a market analysis, divide the bid into smaller contracts and bind the price to a certain level (so that there is no fluctuation, due to changes in circumstances)
- Q: Sustainable public food procurement (SPFP) joins public policies (sustainable development, fighting food vulnerability and food deserts), technical knowledge (nutrition, educational projects, logistics, etc.), and public procurement (bureaucratic process, business function, administrative law, etc.). This increased complexity is a driver (more resources, access to political agenda) or a barrier (lack of capacity) to SPFP goals?  
A: Probably both. Procurement officers need to be surrounded by experts (e.g., nutritionists and experts in environmental issues), as they cannot possibly know everything themselves. So the increased complexity is a barrier, but if the procurement officer works together with others to gain their knowledge and integrate that in the tender it can be a driver.
- Q: Do procurement officers have a list of potential food suppliers whom they can invite to submit a bid or quote?  
A: Some cities do have a list. In Denmark, such a list is difficult to find, so the strategy was to

reach out to suppliers that you know and to ask them whether they know other suppliers. It needs to be word-of-mouth, where the structure is built along the way. It is very difficult for officers, who are not an expert on the topic.

- I agree @Bettina, we need to develop strategies to target different actors, but then consider the situation of smallholder farmers that will be your suppliers. In your experience, who should be invited to help the procurement officer to evaluate the food specification, quality?
- Q: According to your experience what are the most sensitive aspects in the contract management phase, where deviations from what is required frequently occur?

## Session 1: Linking PFP to the broader Sustainable Public Procurement (SPP) Debate

*Moderator: Florence Tartanac, FAO*

*Speakers: Lamia Moubayed Bissat, UNEP expert and Vice-Chair of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration*

*Roberto Caranta, Professor at the Law Department of the University of Turin, Italy*

*Luana Swensson, Policy specialist for sustainable public procurement at the Food and Nutrition Division (ESN) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations – FAO*

The objective of this session was to present and discuss the topic of linking public food procurement (PFP) to the broader sustainable public procurement (SPP) debate. The idea is to introduce the sustainable public procurement debate and then explore the recognition of sustainable public procurement by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Next, the work of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and of the One Planet Network was presented followed by the increasing international recognition of SPP and PFP, its reach, potential and challenges and how food is an important and integrated part of it.

### **Presentation by Lamia Moubayed Bissat**

Main takeaways:

- At the core of the UNEP mission: How can we work with governments so that they see the full potentials of SPP as accelerator of all SDGs?
- Transition of public procurement from a transactional function to a strategic function
- SPP is “a process whereby public organizations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life-cycle basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organization, but also to society and the economy, whilst significantly reducing negative impacts on the environment.” This definition was adopted under the 10 YFP SPP Programme.
- SPP materializes a paradigm shift from procuring the cheapest solution (saving money) to achieving the best value for money on a whole life-cycle basis (incorporating sustainability)
- Food and catering services is becoming one of the priority procurement categories to incorporate sustainability issues, ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> place in 2021 (compared to 11<sup>th</sup> in 2017) in the top ten of products and services categories prioritised for SPP implementation. This is likely

due to a rise in sustainable food policies i.e. the EU Farm to Fork policies and their effective backing with sustainable procurement of food services.

- SPP challenges:
  1. Legislative & policy framework; e.g., lack of embedded SPP goal setting in overarching policies and public communication on SPP targets
  2. Organisational resources and culture; e.g., absence of high-level buy-in & support from executive management
  3. Capacities and tools; e.g., training gap in designing and implementing SPP-informed tendering procedures
  4. Supply market readiness; e.g., lack of communication on SPP goals & objectives to market
- Topics for continued discussions: the development of systems and indicators to measure change, reforms to EU directives on procurement, and the relationship between green growth strategies and sustainable diets.

### **Presentation by Roberto Caranta**

Main takeaways:

- There is a remarkable shift in the public procurement role from transactional to strategic
- European Union's 2014 public procurement law reform empowered (not mandated) SPP
- Life-cycle cost as a new tool for developing sustainability through public procurement
- European Green Deal built targets on fighting climate change, supporting sustainability initiatives and changing the philosophy of SPP from an optional to a mandatory tool.
- New European Union's sustainable products initiative aims to make sustainable products the norm and it incorporates SPP through the A Renovation Wave for Europe and Farm to Fork strategy. Product-level requirements will be set in product-specific legislation and will include rules to make them more durable, reliable, reusable, upgradable, repairable, easier to maintain and refurbish, and energy and resource efficient.
- A Renovation Wave for Europe – greening our buildings, creating jobs, improving lives: develop GPP criteria for public buildings such as office buildings and schools related to life cycle and climate resilience and based on level(s).
- Farm to Fork: to improve the availability and price of sustainable food and to promote healthy and sustainable diets in institutional catering, the Commission will determine the best way of setting minimum mandatory criteria for sustainable food procurement.
- This shift in the public procurement role is not restricted to the European Union, as shown by examples in the United States and China. The Biden Administration issued an executive order seeking to leverage United States procurement power to promote investment in clean energy. China has a double carbon goal: realizing peak carbon emissions before 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality before 2060.
- The tyranny of lowest price (mechanical and soulless procurement) is over, it is time for incorporating wider sustainability issues (fight climate change, deal with social issues)
- Saving money is still an important part of public procurement, but from a long-term perspective instead of a traditional short-term one



## Presentation by Luana Swensson

### Main takeaways:

- Sustainable public food procurement (SPFP) is recognised as a development tool and as an entry point to trigger more sustainable production and consumption patterns
- SPFP contributes to achieving SDG 12
- SPFP comprises initiatives in several areas, i.e. school feeding programmes, army, prison and hospitals
- Food and catering services are among the main categories prioritised by the governments to include sustainability issues.
- Challenge: there is a disconnection between SPFP initiatives and the broader SPP debate and agenda. The linkage between food procurement initiatives and the broader SPP agenda and debate seems to be clearest in high-income countries (and especially the countries of the European Union), where most research on SPP practices has been conducted. In these countries, SPP has been most commonly associated with environmental concerns, with a more recent and progressive integration of other social and economic concerns. In low- and middle-income countries, the direct linkage between food procurement initiatives and a broader SPP agenda or debate is not so evident. Most often, such initiatives are neither reported as an implementation of or contribution to SDG target 12.7, nor studied as a significant example of SPP
- Many reasons may explain why PFP initiatives are often disconnected from a broader SPP agenda or debate:
  1. PFP initiatives developed in function of specific entry points that are different from common entry points of the broader SPP debate (i.e. health, nutrition or agriculture). These entry points are often not the same entry points as those of the broader SPP debate, which may focus, for instance, on the inclusion and support of SMEs, rather than of farmers or farmers' organizations.
  2. PFP programmes, i.e. school feeding programmes, are mostly designed and implemented by ministries and agencies other than those that are involved in the design of SPP policies. The latter are often those working on environmental, economic and financial affairs. Meanwhile, food procurement initiatives, and especially school feeding initiatives, are mostly designed by ministries and agencies working in the fields of education, social protection or agriculture. The lack of multi-stakeholder dialogue and coordination among these different actors is very evident in many countries. It constitutes an important bottleneck for the further development of food procurement initiatives within the SPP agenda and debate.
  3. The data on SPP and sustainable PFP, especially from low-income economies, is still very limited. In its Global Review of Sustainable Public Procurement of 2017, the UNEP found that of the 56 national governments that participated in the survey, only one (Côte d'Ivoire) was from Africa. More data and research are needed to gain a better understanding of the two agendas and promote their development and connection. Here, the importance of multidisciplinary research must be stressed. The researchers involved in the analysis of PFP initiatives (and especially of HGSF initiatives) often focus on specific areas of knowledge and use specific entry points. These entry points may not be directly linked to SPP. In addition, public procurement researchers often do not treat food procurement and its peculiarities as a key study area, especially in the Global South. A multisector and multidisciplinary approach to PFP is therefore key; it is one of the pillars of this publication.

- The recognition of PFP initiatives as an important part of SPP is key:
  - to reinforce both agendas at local, national and international levels
  - promote a systems-based approach
  - support the development of proper regulatory and policy instruments for effective implementation This happened while including small and medium enterprises (SMEs) on the public procurement agenda.
- Example of SMEs: Many countries have developed specific instruments to support the inclusion of (SMEs) on public procurement initiatives. Nevertheless, farmers and their organisations may not fit under the legal definition and established criteria for SMEs (e.g., size, volume of transactions, number of employees, legal form to be adopted). Despite their economic and social relevance, they may not be allowed to benefit of these instrument to support their inclusion into public market opportunities.
- Overcoming challenges: promoting multisector coordination, knowledge exchange at multiple levels and development of multidisciplinary research are key strategies
- FAO has been working at global level with a multiple partner to promote to strength the linkages between PFP and the broader SPP agenda and promote a multi-sectorial and multi-disciplinary approach to SPP.

### Discussion round with Q&A

Questions & remarks in the chat:

- Q: (1) Normally, in a particular country, who is the procurement entity that conducts procurement? Is it the school, commune, district, at provincial or national level? Among these levels, who is giving home-grown feeding programmes the right to do the food procurement? (2) At local level, when the procurement entity is entitled to do procurement they may have to comply with public procurement law of a particular country. Would you share more how other countries conduct procurement from home-grown feeding programmes by telling more about who does the procurement, which guidelines they use, the local supplier...?  
Q: I think all speakers made the important point of coordination between different public entities as essential to realise sustainable public food procurement. My question to the speakers would be; how do we best achieve this within the context of the institutional design for procurement regulation/control? What type of organisational approaches or design in relation to procurement specifically would be optimal to drive the levels of cooperation between different public entities (departments/agencies etc.) in a particular country?  
A: answering both questions; institutional coordination and training are important for the sellers as well. Programs should be developed involving farmers' organisation to train farmers to participate directly in procurement with no intermediaries and the procurement process should be simplified, using e-procurement if the infrastructures are there.  
Chat comment from participant: In Latin America, legislation related to family farming in some countries facilitate the participation of small-scale producers in PFP programmes as it provided a legal framework for these actors, usually inexistent.  
Chat comment from participant: adding to the buy-in from politicians, the development of technical capacities at the different levels and sectors is also key to understand the multi-dimension of the PFP and to identify specific sectorial roles.
- Q: @Luana, are there countries where there have been decentralisation efforts so that smallholders could become eligible as suppliers?

- **Q:** If farmers and local producer are not legally compliant as SME or registered, in what way can we engage them to attend in bidding process in an acceptable way?  
**A:** Governments should support local farmers to achieve the link between demand (consumption) and supply (production). There are tools such as framework agreements that can work on local conditions, although some regulations do not allow the direct use of local production requirements (such as the European Union's).  
Comment from chat: In countries such as Brazil, with a high-level of electronic procurement implemented, interesting tools are reducing costs of potential suppliers' participation on supplier selection. This also contributes to bringing local producers to the procurement game.
- **Q:** @Lamia: how much has been done on gender responsive procurement?
- **Q:** I would like to thank the speakers for their valuable contributions, especially for Luana's clear presentation, which shared not only possible paths forward, but also fundamental work promoted by FAO to help countries, i.e. development to mitigate today's great challenges. On the speech "what could be done", we noticed two other challenges about which I would like to hear from the speakers. The first concerns the lack of knowledge/politic will with regards to the triple pillar of sustainability. In Brazil, for example, sustainability is still an agenda very connected with solid waste management or recycling, and only a few debate about food procurement. So how and who should raise awareness among these authorities? A second challenge concerns the lack of a minimum parameter for the achievement of sustainability.

Main discussion points by the speakers:

- Institutional contexts matter while developing SPFP initiatives, including buyer-supplier interactions and intragovernmental collaboration
- Bottom-up approach is relevant to SPP (as local initiatives are bringing innovation) reinforcing the need of sharing practices and experiences
- There are different organisational models in SPFP initiatives from decentralised to centralised, including hybrid ones
- Training, guidelines, and communication are important to develop expertise in SPFP, including helping local producers to comply with public procurement formal requirements

Resources:

- FAO, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and Editora da UFRGS. 2021. Public food procurement for sustainable food systems and healthy diets – Volume 1. Rome.  
<https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb7960en>  
More information and publications on the FAO webpage:  
<https://www.fao.org/nutrition/markets/sustainable-public-food-procurement/en/#c858497>
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) publication: [Sustainable Public Procurement 2022 Global Review](#)
- Some useful insights on gender procurement  
<https://www.open-contracting.org/what-is-open-contracting/gender/>  
Gender responsive public procurement:  
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/04/procurements-strategic-value>,  
The EU perspective: <https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-responsive-public-procurement>  
[https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/promoting-gender-equality-through-public-procurement\\_5d8f6f76-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/promoting-gender-equality-through-public-procurement_5d8f6f76-en)

## Session 2: The role of local governments

*Moderator: Cecilia Marocchino, FAO*

*Speakers: Peter Defranceschi, Head of Brussels Office & Global City Food Programme Coordinator at ICLEI Europe – Local Governments for Sustainability, Belgium*

*Annamaria La Chimia, Professor of Law and Development & Director at the Public Procurement Research Group at the University of Nottingham, UK*

*Claudia Paltrinieri, Owner and Director of Foodinsider, Italy*

The idea of this session was to focus on the role of local governments; how they are key players for making changes, driving the agenda and implementing sustainable public food procurement initiatives. It also includes challenges they may face, including the need for further recognition. The first presentation covered a more global perspective. The second presentation focused on a research conducted in Italy in a European/global context highlighting the assessed gaps connected to the local governance and local public actors. The final presentation covered another perspective on Italy and on the experiences Foodinsider has collected through the ranking of Italian school canteens and the work they have been doing with several municipalities.

### **Presentation by Peter Defranceschi**

Main takeaways:

- Citizens usually do not understand the relevant role of local government.
- Public food procurement can be a responsibility of national, regional or local governments.
- Food waste is a big issue that Sustainable Public Food Procurement (SPFP) can contribute to.
- Climate change action, food procurement, and food waste management are interconnected.
- School Food 4 Change (SF4C) project: an initiative delivering sustainable, healthy school meals in over 3.000 schools, impacting over 600.000 children and young people in 12 European Union member states.
- ICLEI is involved in the *Buy Better Food Campaign for sustainable food on the public plate*, or *Buy Better Food Campaign*, which is a coalition of pan-European non-profit organisations – including networks of local and regional governments, as well as civil society organisations focusing on climate change, health and human rights. The Campaign calls for the uptake of public food procurement rules that work for the environment, consumers, and workers, and that provide healthy food to European citizens in public places, such as schools, hospitals and elderly care homes. The Campaign strives to represent a diverse pool of members with different backgrounds, affiliations and expertise. The Campaign calls on the European Commission to:
  1. Set minimum EU-wide food procurement requirements that benefit One Health and are fair and inclusive to producers, communities and future generations.
  2. Propose 2030 targets for:
    - the public procurement of 20-50 percent organic, high quality and sustainable food for public canteens, schools and kindergartens;
    - nutrition policies to be based on planetary health diets (more plant-rich, with ‘less and better’ meat and only demonstrably sustainable fish), without forgetting context-specific adjustments (e.g. geographic location, culture, etc.).

3. Enable the inclusion of educational programmes on healthy food systems and diets into school curricula.
  - Schools as catalysts to food cultural change.
  - It is time for moving from promoting single practices to a standardising approach (school meals are about culture, social justice, territory and food education).
  - SFPF is also about procuring education.
  - ICLEI is the lead author of the Manifesto for Establishing Minimum Standards for Public Canteens across the EU. This Farm to Fork Procurement Manifesto (hereafter 'F2F Procurement Manifesto') aims to inspire the European Commission and the EU Member States as well as regional and local public authorities with seven actionable propositions for establishing minimum standards for public canteens in Europe. This F2F Procurement Manifesto, produced in the framework of the EU Food Policy Coalition, presents seven mandatory (minimum) and optional criteria for public canteens:
    1. Healthy food
    2. Organic and other agro-ecological products
    3. Small-scale farmers support
    4. Climate action
    5. Social economy and labour rights
    6. Fair trade
    7. Animal welfare standards
  - Short food supply chains can have an impact on developing the territory (as demonstrated by the Italian example).
  - Schools can contribute to fighting food vulnerability.
  - Knowledge exchange and a network of food procurers are relevant for SFPF.
  - SFPF: healthy people, healthy landscape, and healthy climate

### **Presentation by Annamaria La Chimia**

#### **Main takeaways:**

- Based on the questionnaire developed by Public Health Nutrition Research Ltd, UK; within the EU context, school food policies (SFPs) can be organised in various ways. They can be separate, stand-alone (national/regional) government policies or can be embedded in other policies such as for health or education. Objectives of SFPs area: to improve child nutrition, learn healthy habits, reduce/ prevent obesity, reduce/ prevent malnutrition, tackle health inequalities and to improve attainment.
- Food for Schools (F4S) in Italy is a disjunctive normative framework. It is a multi-ministerial administrative framework on national, regional, local and individual level (school by school). The legislation allows from minimum nutrition standards to incentives for organic food programmes.
- The school food policy is based on an "on demand" service (selective vs. universalist approach). It is a separate policy with no integration with other policies. SFPs are stronger in wealthier areas.
- The school food policies in Italy have benefits, but the way they were implemented is increasing inequality between territories. Despite similar policies, Italian regions implemented school food policies differently. Influential factors: level of government capacity, local goals (a will to discriminate for benefit of local producers). Italian regions with a higher GDP per capita provide school meals with a combination of food and education.

- There is a misalignment between technical expertise and inefficient bureaucracy (Italian regions: north vs. south)
- Open questions: For public procurement, the market and the logic of competition win in the European regulation. Is this a missed opportunity for multifaceted local policy? How to protect labour, local food chains and sustainable choices in this regulatory framework?

### **Presentation by Claudia Paltrinieri**

#### Main takeaways:

- School canteens are complex and should be understood by a multisector approach.
- Foodinsider did a questionnaire among school canteens in Italy to measure the quality of ingredients, the balance of the diet, and the sustainability of the menu. The results highlight a significant gap in the scoring between the top 10 school canteens and the others.
- Other significant results found were that:
  - The same ingredients used in school meals can lead to good or bad quality meals, depending on the school canteen management. Therefore, the school canteen management plays an important role.
  - School canteen change management improved the ranking of a school canteen in Sesto Fiorentino from 25<sup>th</sup> to top 10, including an increase in the quality of food. Qualità & Servizi is a public company (in house) that manages the Services of School Catering of 6 municipalities in the countryside of Florence and they were responsible for this change. From 2015/16 to 2021/22 changes were monitored for the monthly offer of cereal variety (increase), meat (more than halved), processed meat (reduced to zero), legumes as main protein dish (increased) and legumes (increased). The case also reported that in 2015/16 the offer of local food and short supply chains was not mentioned, whilst in 2021/22 it amounted to 73% and 83% of the total. Organic food offer increased from 25% to 60%, electric vehicle use from 0 to 100% and the use of recipes from local gastronomy went up from 1 to 6 times.
  - Best practices can contribute to disseminating the idea that change (from a basic diet to a healthy diet) is possible.
- The objective of school canteens may be different: feeding, nourish healthily or nourish the community.
- In 2021, Italy adopted a new law on Green Public Procurement called “Minimum Environmental Criteria” (“Criteri Ambientali Minimi” - CAM). The law defines the rules of tenders for school canteens service and is assessed as a driver of change. The criteria include:
  - 50% organic food
  - Biodiversity
  - Less red meat
  - No processed food
  - Connection to territory
  - Increase in competence
  - No plastic
  - Monitoring circular economy (stop food waste)

The main result of the 7<sup>th</sup> rating: the application of CAM with new tenders has improved menus (higher score) and made the service greener.

- The quality of menus depend(ed) on the governance of the municipalities and their vision and competence. The Minimum Environmental Criteria Law extends the green change to all the municipalities with the new tenders.

### Discussion round with Q&A

Questions & remarks in the chat:

- Q: @Claudia; what was the hardest challenge to face in your concrete experience?
- Q: @Claudia, it is interesting to see changes in the use of legumes, vegetables and fruits; did this diversification increase the costs of logistics and the procurement system?  
A: Costs of logistics have to be considered while developing a diversified menu.
- Q: @Annamaria: if I understood you correctly, you were saying that the legal issue with LOCAL food procurement (in EU) could be overcome by stressing the implementation of local/regional sustainability goals/ policies?  
A: Procurement criteria that do not specify origin but impacts can be useful, as local requirements are not allowed by some procurement legislation as EU's
- Q: I would like to consult from the point of view of suppliers, what kind of profile do these suppliers have? Are they large, medium or small local producers?  
A: Small-scale farmers have to be considered on SPFP, i.e. the Brazilian experience, which is driven by legislation on mandatory food procurement from local producers.
- Q: @Claudia, how do you value the relevance of the ranking for the food quality of school canteens to stimulate improvements in the school feeding programs at municipal level? Was this an important driver?  
A: Yes, the rating has pushed the change of the menus. Last year, the municipalities of Aosta that was at the bottom of the rating decided to increase the quality to reach a higher position. This year, Aosta has increased the quality of the menu a lot and is in the 14<sup>th</sup> position.
- Q: @Peter: who is the local game changer that deflagrates the shifts in a society? Is there huge differences between wealthier and poorer communities that want to adopt a more sustainable public procurement or way of life?

Resources:

- ICLEI links & resources:  
Manifesto for establishing minimum standards for public canteens across the EU:  
<https://iclei-europe.org/publications-tools/?c=search&uid=AXvXw6K2>.  
The School Meals Petition:  
[https://secure.avaaz.org/community\\_petitions/en/eu\\_kommissarin\\_fur\\_gesundheit\\_dr\\_stell\\_a\\_kyriakides\\_eu\\_eine\\_gesunde\\_mahlzeit\\_fur\\_jedes\\_kind\\_in\\_jeder\\_schule/](https://secure.avaaz.org/community_petitions/en/eu_kommissarin_fur_gesundheit_dr_stell_a_kyriakides_eu_eine_gesunde_mahlzeit_fur_jedes_kind_in_jeder_schule/)  
The Power of the Public Plate:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aescLPkIQ7g&list=PLsgoH3BX-BpQBbfErv08-RcsUllrK0z6i>
- Foodinsider: <https://www.foodinsider.it/>

## City exchange – Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso & Liège, Belgium

*Moderator: Kristin Schmit, IDOS*

*Speakers: Léticia Nonguierma, City planner at the City of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso*

*Harouna Maiga, Planning economist and expert in development management at the City of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso*

*Davide Arcadipane, Cabinet Secretary and Referent in short circuits, urban agriculture and sustainable food for the City of Liege, Belgium*

At the start of this year, the FAO and IDOS bundled forces and started collaborating on a project on sustainable public food procurement. One of the main components of this project was the organisation of city exchanges between three European cities and three cities in Latin America and Africa. The idea behind these exchanges was to match cities and have two online exchanges, where they could present their sustainable public food procurement practices and school feeding initiatives. They exchanged about similarities, but more importantly about challenges, they might be facing when implementing such practices and initiatives. The aim was to foster mutual exchange and learning between the cities. For this session, the focus was on the exchange between the city of Ouagadougou and the city of Liège.

### Presentation by Liège

Main takeaways:

- The City of Liège officially begins its journey of political decisions in 2017 with the inclusion in the Milan Urban Policy Pact Milan Pact and subsequently a common urban Master Plan for the 24 municipalities, a debate on school food at the Municipal Council (2018) and objectives in the political program (2019-2024, communal term), among which: a hub dedicated to the short-circuit sustainable business and a vegetable processing company.
- Examples of sustainable food actions:
  - Weekly local producers' market (Marché Court-Circuit)
  - The foundation of a sustainable and inclusive Food Center in partnership with associations, which supports food awareness raising actions for Liège citizens with attention to disadvantaged groups.
  - A food production relocation program thanks to the CREaFARM program which makes public agricultural land available to local and urban agricultural projects (2018)
  - An annual food transition festival "Nourrir Liège"
  - The ongoing creation of a logistics hub for the actors of the short circuit in Liege
  - Establishment of sustainable canteens within nurseries and basic municipal schools in good collaboration with the ISOSL intermunicipal company, producer of meals.
- ISoSL; what role does the intercommunal have in feeding children in Liège?
  - A mixed inter-municipal company (nine municipalities including Liège), which provides a public service (health care) with 3600 employees, seven kitchens (one central) preparing 12,000 meals per day (of which 3,000 for nurseries and schools) for 140 basic schools and 55 crèches. It is a strategic player for sustainable food in Liège.
- Liège wants to go 100% local organic by 2024 by a systemic farm-to-fork strategy.
  1. Supply
    - Challenges:
      - How to change the ways of sourcing so that sustainable products enter kitchens?
      - How to define a purchasing strategy consistent with values of sustainable food?



- How to use purchasing power of ISOSL to invest in local, sustainable and resilient food?
- A redefinition of the purchasing strategy was carried out, in partnership with specialised lawyer.
- 2. Sustainable menus
  - ISoSL cooks and dieticians define new cycles of healthy and balanced menus with fresh and seasonal products by adapting to the range of sustainable raw materials.
- 3. Waste reduction
  - The objective is to reduce waste at each stage of food flows to save money to be reinjected into quality food. The reduction in waste makes it possible to reinvest in sustainable production sectors without affecting the sale price of the meal (e.g., meal ordering app).
- 4. Communication and training
  - The aim is to develop a communication strategy on sustainable food to inform ISOSL staff, children, parents and teachers of the benefits of the new policy. It also aims to train cooks in the development of menus. They are setting up training for staff to raise awareness of agricultural and food issues (e.g., food poster for kids).

## **Presentation by Ouagadougou**

### Main takeaways:

- Ouagadougou faces many challenges related to infrastructure, urban poverty, unemployment (especially for youth and women) and environmental protection. The health and security crisis has led to internal migratory flows aggravating existing problems. The issue of sustainable urban food is crosscutting in a city that welcomes 200,000 new inhabitants every year, while arable land on the outskirts of the city is increasingly occupied for housing purposes.
- Since 2018, the city has been resolutely committed to an agroforestry approach as part of the rehabilitation of the green belt, which covers more than 2100 hectares, to strengthen the local production system. The belt can potentially solve many challenges. The approach aims to help meet the city's food autonomy needs and contribute to access to healthy and sustainable food.
- Public procurement procedures at the local level are governed by centrally enacted regulations with specific guidelines on food procurement.
- Public food markets in Burkina Faso in general and in Ouagadougou in particular are organised to supply school canteens, prisons, service restaurants, hospitals, etc.
- Numbers on school food:
  - 1100 schools (public and private) with school canteens
  - Menus, include rice, beans, couscous, pasta, lentils and mungo beans
  - Development of 15 hectare for the benefit of nearly 500 women who now work there
  - Structuring of market gardeners: census of market gardeners (3112), including work equipment for 201 market gardeners
  - Support for school canteens in 12 schools (2022-2024)
- Actions:
  - Grouping of producers into cooperatives to meet public orders
  - Transfer of funds from the State to the commune on time (from the first quarter of the calendar year)
  - Signature of the various contracts on time (beginning of the first quarter of the school year with a deadline of thirty (30) days for execution)

- Existence of organised structures for the management and monitoring of school canteens (technical services of the commune, CCEB, controllers at CEB level, provincial controller, management committees, parents of pupils)
- Challenges:
  - Producers' inability to meet demand (60% of food must be local according to state directive)
  - Lack of availability of local production due to late harvesting by producers
  - The availability of state foodstuffs does not cover the whole year
  - Difficulty of transporting products
  - Direct agreement procedures require compliance with price lists that are not in line with market price

### **Discussion round with Q&A**

Questions & remarks in the chat:

- Q: @Davide, you mentioned the reduction of costs by organising meetings between different producers, what is the extent of this reduction?
- Q: @Davide, how do you determine fair price?
- Q: I would like to know the disability component in these programmes; the inclusion of disability in food with inclusive, diversified and quality education.
- Q: question for Burkina Faso; do laws or incentives exist in your country to promote local supply by producers?

### **Regional Session Latin America**

*Moderator: Pilar Santacoloma, FAO*

*Discussants: Marisa Siboldi, Sustainable Development and Supply Chain Consultant, Argentina*

*Sara Granados Ortiz, Food systems specialist (Governance) & regional focal point for the FAO- Urban Food Agenda; Food Loss & Waste Prevention at the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean*

The aim of this session was to create an interactive space, where the discussants and the audience would be able to share their public food procurement experiences and get into dialogue with each another. For this purpose, the chosen format of the session resembled a talkshow. Rather than offering a lecture-type event with presentations followed by Q&A, the intention was to create an open space, where participants would feel invited to share their stories. To get an idea of the views on issues related to sustainable public food procurement a live poll, which served to start up a lively debate.

### **Questions to audience and discussants**

A set of four poll questions were asked. The final question was an open question posed directly to the discussants and the audience. In total, there were 16 participants, who responded to the poll. The voting was anonymous and the answers were displayed to the audience after the voting. The participant pool was quite diverse with three representing the academic sector, three from the local government, three from a civil society organisation and one from a national government. The other six

participants belonged to another organisation that was not included in the categories. In terms of work experience in the area of sustainable public food procurement, the majority (5 out of 16) indicated to have 6-10 years of experience. There was a great mix with one having no experience, three with less than one year, three between one and two years, two between three and five years and two who have more than 10 years of experience.

1. What do you think are the main benefits of procuring food sustainably?
  - a. Support vulnerable producers (i.e. women, SMEs) and stimulate community economic development
  - b. Increase the quality of food served in public settings
  - c. Promote environmental sustainability
  - d. Ensuring the nutritional quality of the food supply
  - e. Other
  - **Results:** Note that for this question the participants were allowed to give more than one answer. Almost all participants (15 out of 16; 94%) considered support to vulnerable producers to be a main benefit of procuring food sustainably. 11 out of 16 participants (69%) found that promoting environmental sustainability and ensuring the nutritional quality of the food supply were the main benefits. 10 out of 16 participants (63%) thought an increase in the quality of food served in public settings was a main benefit of public food procurement, whilst 1 participant indicated that there are other main benefits.
  
2. Do you agree with the following: "Food should be procured as much as possible from local smallholder farmers?"
  - a. Yes, it is important to support local smallholder farmers
  - b. Yes, but in reality it is too difficult to procure from local smallholder farmers
  - c. Yes, but only when they are organised in farmer cooperatives or associations
  - d. No, the supplier who can supply the best product for the best price should supply
  - e. Not sure
  - **Results:** Note that for this question the participants were allowed to give only one answer. The first answer was the most answered question. 50% of the participants agreed that food should be procured as much as possible from local smallholder farmers, because it is important to support these farmers. The other 50% of participants was equally split between answer b and c; they believe that food should be procured from local smallholder farmers, but in reality it is too difficult and it should only be procured from these farmers when they are organised in cooperatives or associations. None of the participants indicated that food should not be procured from local smallholder farmers.
  
3. Do you agree with the following statement: "The majority of food purchased should be organic or from agro-ecological approaches?"
  - a. Yes, organic food is better for the environment
  - b. Yes, but organic food is more expensive and there is not enough budget for it
  - c. Yes, organic (agri) food is healthier.
  - d. No, other factors are more important, like the price and/ or supply of local food
  - e. No, there are not enough suppliers, who produce organic food
  - f. Not sure
  - **Results:** Note that for this question the participants were allowed to give only one answer. For this particular question, the answers were quite diverse. The most common answer was that the majority of food purchased should be organic or from agro-ecological approaches, because it is healthier. 31% (5 out of 16 participants) gave this answer. Almost just as many participants

(4 out of 16; 25%) agreed with the statement, but thought that organic food is more expensive than non-organic food for which there is no budget. There were also some participants, who argue organic food is better for the environment (3 out of 16; 18%), whilst two participants find other factors like price and/or supply of local food more important and two participants are not sure about their views on this statement.

4. What do you think are the main challenges of procuring food sustainably?

- a. Lack of budget
- b. Lack of infrastructure (i.e. kitchens to prepare the food)
- c. Lack of adequate logistics (e.g. fresh food turns bad)
- d. Product availability and/or suppliers' capacity to meet requirements
- e. Organisational and managerial capacity of suppliers to meet needs
- f. Lack of political will
- g. Complexity and lack of clarity of public procurement rules
- h. Procurement personnel is not motivated or well-prepared
- i. Kitchen staff is not adequately trained
- j. Sustainability is too complex
- k. Other

- **Results:** Note that for this question the participants were allowed to give more than one answer. Regarding the question on main challenges of procuring food sustainably, most participants (11 out of 16; 69%) answered organisational and managerial capacity of suppliers to meet needs, followed by a lack of adequate logistics (e.g. fresh food turns bad) and the complexity and lack of clarity of public procurement rules. After that, the participants (44%) considered the lack of motivation and unpreparedness among procurement staff as well as a lack of political will to be great challenges. Next, a lack of infrastructure (i.e. kitchens to prepare the food), product availability and/or suppliers' capacity to meet requirements and inadequately trained staff were said to be challenges by 3 out of 16 participants. Finally, only two participants indicated the complexity of sustainability and a lack of budget to be the main challenges of procuring food sustainably.

5. In your opinion, what could be done to overcome some of the above challenges and support the implementation of sustainable public food initiatives? Could you give some concrete examples?

- This answer was the start of an open discussion between audience and discussants and was posed directly to them, rather than through the poll.

### **Inputs by discussants**

*Marisa Siboldi*

- Sustainable Public Food Procurement (SPFP) is context dependent; there are differences in SPFP in European and Latin American countries.
- Importance of strategic vision of the implementers; procurement officers should have a more holistic view considering e.g., the possibility of creating value with purchasing decisions, rather than to focus on supply side issues.
- Procurement officers should take into consideration the opinions of the experts in different areas to make informed decisions.
- Procurement decisions must be settled and institutionalised in the current government and cannot depend on the purchasing decision of a single civil servant.

- Procurement in Latin America has traditionally focused on price, due to a fear of decreasing the transparency of the process, but it is important to go beyond that.
- Support for social economy producers and micro-enterprises in Argentina comes from a welfare vision, but there is no support to strengthen capacities or make officers independent.
- Importance of education and training; for procurement officers, for children to appreciate the products and spread the word, and for producers to be able to understand and meet public procurement requirements to participate in bigger and more formal markets.
- Challenges for SPFP:
  1. Lack of political will
  2. Lack of adequate information of those who make the decisions and therefore, lack of incentives or articulation
  3. Lack of logistics
  4. Lack of formalisation of small-scale producers. Most of the fruit and vegetable products are purchased informally.

#### *Sara Granados*

- Latin America and the Caribbean have a long history of trying to incorporate sustainability concepts in public procurement, such as the case of Brazil.
- During the pandemic, the FAO conducted a survey in certain municipalities where they found out that they had difficulties to keep food distribution active, especially for school canteens. They established some governance elements and elements to consolidate these governance bodies for after the pandemic, i.e. food safety councils or food safety ordinances. Many local governments were involved trying to understand the dynamics of the supply operation at local level or making use of geolocation of family farms, main food centres or state buyers.
- Capacity building for PFP was done through collaborative logistics and innovation, where transport companies or couriers could facilitate the process, apps allowed for traceability and packaging was made more sustainable.
- Local food supply component of PFP makes it easier for pupils/ students to visit the sites where the food is produced (e.g., fishing area, where they used to eat canned fish as a school meal).
- Challenges for SPFP:
  1. Growth of intermediate cities (1000-1mill inhabitants), where mayors have to be very creative in order to face big challenges of the supply chain. Example of Mexico: strong supply and demand link, but the middle links of the supply chain are highly privatised, vertical and lack information. Challenge: how to establish public-provider alliances, multi-stakeholder spaces where it is possible to coordinate with retailers, wholesalers, representatives of cooperatives and to improve logistics and biosafety protocols? How to add dynamics to these short circuits of coordination?
  2. Very boutique experiences and problem of how to scale them up to incorporate elements of local diversity in the menus, among other novel criteria.
  3. Component of political will, but also important the lack of expertise of municipal teams. Thus, it is important to make use of mechanisms of interaction with suppliers, cooperatives or retailers, who are the ones who have knowledge. Intermediaries are key to incorporate sustainability objectives.

## Discussion round with Q&A

### Main discussion points:

- Need for a revalorisation of farming, because young people do not want to stay in the countryside.
- Need for centralisation of SPFP roles within local governments. The state has to offer clear rules of the game.
- Discourse around SPFP has taken hold, but implementation is a fundamental challenge.
- Very important challenge: how small producers can be recognised as economic agents, who can participate in SPFP.
- Experience in Brazil has generated lessons learned and local governments are recognised to be first level actors. Local governance allows these programmes not to disappear over time.
- Need for information to be able to know where the products are, how the supply chain moves, where costs can be reduced, and how the supply system works as a whole. How to supply institutional demand?
- Important to highlight the rapid urbanisation of countries and the issue of privatisation and how large players in the supply chains are taking on SPFP role. We are leaving out the main players at the local level.

### Experiences shared by audience:

- A participant from Rosario, Argentina agrees with what was shared and adds one more challenge. The issue is that public procurement consists of a multitude of bureaucrats, who make the purchases, manage the budgets and give the purchase orders. They all manage procurement in their own way, so it is difficult for potential suppliers to know how to put in a bid. The state expects producers to be organised, whilst the state is not properly organised itself. *Marisa's response: for the market the key challenge is to understand what the SPFP system is asking for.*
- Regarding 30% compulsory purchases from family farmers in Brazil, there is no availability of data. In this context, if academics publish data, but the civil society does not know of the existence of these publications and hence have no information, it is useless. There is a lack of monitoring and implementation. Local problems are shared in Latin America, but it is challenging to adapt regulations to the local context or to provide family farmers with training to be able to participate in tenders.
- Importance of multisector actions to address SDGs. Challenge: to have an overview of programmes given the lack of data. Brazil states that municipalities must buy a 30% from family farms and there is a legal guarantee, but local governments still do not comply. Moreover, there is a vacuum in concrete actions and strategies for local governments to operationalise public policies, i.e. SPFP, which continues to be seen from the point of view of assistance.

*Marisa's response: articulation is key, e.g., in Paraguay, they established dialogue tables with suppliers where they intervened as third parties and the buyers were listeners. It was possible to hear about things that the purchasing systems did not know, due to a lot of ignorance and lack of community. In Latin America, there are no procurement specialists in a particular area and this creates mistrust in SPFP.*

- Sara Granados about FAO work with the government of Antioquia, Colombia → Four elements to highlight:
  1. Facilitation of logistics and training of leaders

2. Strengthening traditional food channels, free fairs or itinerant markets through food safety or price determination training. Systems stability and the use of the market as a market.
3. Strengthening dialogue tables between various actors and of spaces for consumer and producer articulation
4. Developing certifications for family farming to evidence their good work.

Questions & remarks in the chat:

- An important component of the Brazilian law is the prioritisation of purchases of local products, socio-biodiversity and vulnerable groups (settlements, quilombolas and indigenous people). Priorities are components of sustainability. We have evidence that the Food Procurement Programme (PAA, now called PAB) has gone a long way in adopting these prioritisations. Studies on this issue in school feeding are still incipient, but it is known that compliance has advanced over time (an article on the subject will be published soon).
- Moreover, in Brazil, the National School Feeding Programme establishes that the local government authority (mayors) must use at least 30% of the funds provided by the Federal Agency to buy school lunches through smallholder farmers. Despite this legal guarantee, many cities still do not meet this legal target, which shows the non-compliance of local governments. There is still a gap in concrete actions from public policies to encourage these categories, which, as Marisa pointed out, is still seen from the point of view of existentialism with small subsidies compared to the incentives for monocultures.
- I agree (with the discussant) and have experienced all the challenges listed. From our experience in the Province of Santa Fe (Argentina), we can add to the point on the level of decentralisation of government procurement. Both at local and provincial level there is little coordination for centralised procurement. There is a multiplicity of state actors making purchases. The state argues the need to organise producers (associations and cooperatives), but this is not the case with the actions of the state itself with regard to demand.
- Shortening payment terms for producers is key because small family farmers need immediate \$\$ to renew their production cycles.

## Forum Day 2 – 26 October 2022

### Regional Session Africa

*Moderator: Gilles Martin, FAO*

*Discussants: Monica Oyanga, Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation Kisumu County, Kenya*

*Annick Sezibera, Executive Secretary of the Confederation of Agricultural Producers' Associations for Development (CAPAD), Burundi*

*Bereket Akele, International Consultant of Policies and Programmes (Head of School Feeding Unit), World Food Programme (WFP), Sierra Leone*

The aim of this session was to create an interactive space, where the discussants and the audience would be able to share their public food procurement experiences and get into dialogue with each another. For this purpose, the chosen format of the session resembled a talkshow. Rather than offering a lecture-type event with presentations followed by Q&A, the intention was to create an open space, where participants would feel invited to share their stories. To get an idea of the views on issues related to sustainable public food procurement a live poll, which served to start up a lively debate.

## Questions to audience and discussants

A set of four poll questions were asked. The final question was an open question posed directly to the discussants and the audience. In total, there were 16 participants, who responded to the poll for questions 1 to 3, whilst question 4 was merely answered by 12 participants. The voting was anonymous and the answers were displayed to the audience after the voting.

The participant pool consisted of four representing the academic sector, one from a national government, six from a civil society organisation and five, who indicated not to belong to any of the categories listed. In terms of work experience in the area of sustainable public food procurement, the majority (5 out of 16) indicated to have 6-10 years of experience. There was a great mix with three having no experience at all, four with less than one year, two between one and two years, one between three and five years and one with more than 10 years of experience.

1. What do you think are the main benefits of procuring food sustainably?
  - a. Support vulnerable producers (i.e. women, SMEs) and stimulate community economic development
  - b. Increase the quality of food served in public settings
  - c. Promote environmental sustainability
  - d. Other
  - Results: Note that for this question the participants were allowed to give only one answer. A majority of 63% of the participants considered support to vulnerable producers to be the main benefit of procuring food sustainably. Only three participants (18%) believed that promoting environmental sustainability was the main benefit and two participants thought an increase in the quality of food served in public settings was a main benefit of public food procurement. Finally, one participant indicated that there is another main benefits.
  
2. Do you agree with the following: "Food should be procured as much as possible from local smallholder farmers?"
  - a. Yes, it is important to support local smallholder farmers
  - b. Yes, but in reality it is too difficult to procure from local smallholder farmers
  - c. Yes, but only when they are organised in farmer cooperatives or associations
  - d. No, the supplier who can supply the best product for the best price should supply
  - e. Not sure
  - Results: Note that for this question the participants were allowed to give only one answer. With 9 out of 16 votes, the first answer received most of the votes. This indicates that the majority (56%) finds it important to support local smallholder farmers. 31% of respondents, however believe that in reality it is too difficult to procure from local smallholder farmers and the remaining 13% thinks that food should only be procured from these farmers when they are organised in cooperatives or associations. None, if the participants indicated that food should not be procured from local smallholder farmers.
  
3. Do you agree with the following statement: "The majority of food purchased should be organic or from agro-ecological approaches?"
  - a. Yes, organic food is better for the environment
  - b. Yes, but organic food is more expensive and there is not enough budget for it
  - c. No, other factors are more important, like the price and/ or supply of local food
  - d. No, there are not enough suppliers, who produce organic food



- e. Not sure
  - Results: Note that for this question the participants were allowed to give only one answer. Half of the respondents voted for the first answer, agreeing that organic or food from agro-ecological approaches should be procurement, because it is better for the environment. Another group of participants (5 out of 16) agreed with the statement, but thought that organic food is more expensive than non-organic food for which there is no budget. Finally, 18% of the participants argue that other factors like price and/or supply of local food are more important and that therefore the majority of food should not be procured from organic or agro-ecologically produced foods.
4. What do you think are the main challenges of procuring food sustainably?
- a. Lack of budget
  - b. Lack of infrastructure (i.e. kitchens to prepare the food)
  - c. Lack of adequate logistics (e.g. fresh food turns bad)
  - d. Product availability and/or suppliers capacity to meet requirements
  - e. Lack of political will
  - f. Complexity and lack of clarity of public procurement rules
  - g. Procurement personnel is not motivated or well prepared
  - h. Kitchen staff is not adequately trained
  - i. Sustainability is too complex
  - j. Other
- Results: Note that for this question the participants were allowed to give more than one answer and that 12 participants in total voted. Regarding the question on main challenges of procuring food sustainably, most participants (9 out of 12; 75%) voted for product availability and/or suppliers' capacity to meet requirements and complexity and lack of clarity of public procurement rules. A lack of adequate logistics was almost equally considered to be a big challenge (50%). After that, a lack of budget, a lack of infrastructure and a lack of political will were thought to be main challenges. The answers that received the least votes include inadequately trained staff (4 out of 12), a lack of motivation and unpreparedness among procurement staff (3 out of 12) and the complexity of sustainability (2 out of 12). Finally, one participant indicated there are other challenges not included in the answers.
5. In your opinion, what could be done to overcome some of the above challenges and support the implementation of sustainable public food initiatives? Could you give some concrete examples?
- This answer was the start of an open discussion between audience and discussants and was posed directly to them, rather than through the poll.

### **Inputs by discussants**

*Bereket Akele*

Main points:

- SFPF has multiple benefits for producers, consumers, and the territory development.
- Food provided by the local community is usually fresh food, improving the school meals.
- From experience: farmers have indicated that they can produce more when they know there is a market for their produce.

- Buying food from local producers also has its challenges, e.g., in ensuring quality and quantity. In the case of Sierra Leone there is a food deficit, which exacerbates this issue. The minimum required quality (according to international standards) may not be met.
- In Ethiopia, there are guidelines on the procurement from smallholder farmers, which is supported by the national government.
- In Ethiopia, 30% of payment for suppliers is done in advance and the flow of money is very transparent. The payment is done to a farmers' cooperative (a farmer-based organisation and not private) that negotiates a good market price without an additional broker getting in the way.
- Nutritional food is considered to have mutual benefits for all actors involved in the food procurement process.
- There was a successful project in Ethiopia, where women were provided with seeds and logistics to be able to supply the food on a daily basis for procurement on a decentralised level.
- Non-local and imported food is procured to complement the local production and to avoid food shortage. The local food used to be less expensive than it is now.
- Large-scale procurements, i.e. open tenders, can be challenging to small producers. Linking schools to small producers can be a strategy to incorporate local products in public procurement. Capacity building and transparency on tenders can also contribute.
- Local food producers are a pillar of the development of sustainable markets. Governments should buy their products from local producers even if the starting prices are higher, as prices can be lowered and quality can be raised along the partnership.

*Monica Oyanga*

Main points:

- Small producers struggle to comply with procurement requirements, such as with formalisation procedures (e.g. getting registered as a regular business) and the obtaining of certificates.
- Challenges regarding payment time result in less participation of local producers on tenders.
- Advantages of local producers supplying: offer of fresh food, food is affordable for the consumers, improving the nutritional status of children and businesses led by women are getting supported and can grow.
- The lack of knowledge on how to be a governmental supplier, including operating the procurement electronic system, which can be a barrier to including local producers on tenders.
- Costs of production are a challenge for developing local production of some types of food, even if the selling prices are suitable (e.g. tomatoes production in the city of Kisumu).

*Annick Sezibera*

Main points:

- Annick has done ten years of intense work on procurement in schools and worked with the government of Burundi and the World Food Programme (WFP) on giving vulnerable groups in society (i.e. women, young farmers) access to the public food procurement market. Supporting factors where the planning of seasonal crops and setting up prices. It helped create among the producers trust in the public food procurement system.

- The access of local producers needs to be improved. For example, potential suppliers have to be included in the procurement database, which can be a challenge.
- The SPFP legislation is being improved with inputs from the local community. There is a proposal to push the government to set up a specific programme for developing local canteens, including funding, engagement of local producers, participation of the local community in supervising food quality and developing alternative energy sources to reduce costs of food production.

### Discussion round with Q&A

Main discussion points:

- Main challenges of procuring food include lack of adequate logistics, potential suppliers' capacity to meet requirements and the legal framework of public procurement.
- Transparency and capacity building of potential suppliers are relevant for SPFP.
- SPFP can secure food quality and economic development on the territory, as well as develop confidence of the local producers.

Questions & remarks in the chat:

- The major challenges in Africa are a lack of awareness among people and long-term affordability. We created SAFA-CORD (Sustainable Agriculture for Africa – Community on Regional Diversity), to ensure that people from Africa know the importance of PFP and create affordability of food in the long-run.

### Session 3: PFP – entry points for FS transformation

*Moderator: Mía Reiss, Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean of FAO*

*Speakers: Florence Tartanac, Senior Officer at the Food and Nutrition Division (ESN) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations – FAO*

*Leticia Baird, Public Prosecutor and Sustainable School Programme Manager at the Public Ministry of the state of Bahia, Brazil*

*Fatou Ndoeye, Head of the Planning Division and Integrated Development at the Departmental Council of Rufisque, Senegal*

The aim of this session was to provide an overview of the entry points for food system transformation provided by (sustainable) public food procurement (SPFP). The first presentation covered a holistic view on these entry points and shared some impacts of Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) initiatives in Ethiopia and Kenya, followed by insights on the instruments, enablers and barriers towards successful implementation of PFP. The second presentation specifically addressed a school feeding programme implemented in Brazil, whilst the final presentation explored how school food provision is used as a tool to promote changes in local food systems, providing balanced, healthy meals that benefit local producers, but also schoolchildren and the community in Rufisque, Senegal.

## Presentation by Florence Tartanac

### Main takeaways:

- PFP can influence food consumption and production patterns and deliver multiple economic, social, and/or environmental benefits to a multiplicity of beneficiaries.
  - Depending on the choice of what food to purchase, PFP can lead to an increase in the variety and quantity of nutritious foods served in public institution canteens and promote the value of local dietary habits and traditional nutritious food.
  - Depending on the choices of also from whom (local smallholder farmers) SPFP can stimulate smallholders to produce more local, nutritious and diversified crops. This production diversification may lead to increase in:
    - farmers' consumption of more diversified and nutritious food
    - the availability of more diversified and diverse products in local markets

In this way, PFP has the potential to have a direct impact on the food consumption, dietary diversity and nutrition status of children, farmers and the community.

- Similarly, depending on the choice of from whom food should be purchased (e.g. from local smallholder farmers and other vulnerable producers' groups, such as women and youth) PFP can become an instrument to:
    - support the local and smallholder agriculture production and stimulate community economic development.
    - encourage, facilitate and reduce the risk of investments for farmers to increase and diversify their agriculture production, which may contribute to increasing their incomes and access to formal markets.
- PFP can also generate benefits for a range of actors along the value chain and constitute an important market opportunity for small processors and micro, small and medium food enterprises. When targeting specific types of suppliers it can also contribute to youth empowerment and gender equity
- By targeting food that is produced in a specific way, PFP can support forms of agricultural production that ensure environmental sustainability and biodiversity. It has the potential to promote the transition to agro-ecology or organic agriculture- and biodiversity-attuned practices and environmental benefits in terms of reduced packaging, food waste and lower food miles.
- Governments have the power to set a positive trend. Through PFP they can:
  - Send a signal about their ambitions on the future direction of the food systems
  - Incentivise supply chain actors to align their values accordingly
  - Accelerating a transition towards sustainable food consumption and production
- Assessed Impacts:
  - Economic modelling applied to Ethiopia shows that every USD 1 invested in Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) with local procurement brings an economic return of USD 7.2, including value to farmers (USD 3.1 for regular school feeding programmes).
  - Local Economic-Wide Impact Evaluation (LEWIE) of HGSF programmes in Kenya assessed that:
    - an increase of 10% of direct purchase from local farmers equals a 7% increase on Total Real Income (TRI) at local level
    - 10% expanded food basket = 38% increase on TRI
    - increase in 10% funding to sustainable food nutrition + interventions to raise farm productivity by 10% = 917% of increase on TRI

- These demonstrate the multiplier effect of strategic school food procurement and importance/ need of cross-sector coordination, especially with agriculture sector.
- Lessons learned:
  - Despite its great potential, the implementation of sustainable public food procurement is not a simple or straightforward task. PFP requires a series of conditions that must be coordinated and matched together. Those conditions are linked to policy and institutions, and additional factors on the demand and supply sides.
  - Supply side: there is the needs to address smallholders' constraints to produce sufficient volumes complying with quality and safety requirement, adapt to new demand (e.g. new products, new production practices), aggregate and engage in collective markets and access financing. FAO's work:
    - Impact evaluations conducted by FAO in Zambia and Ethiopia show that PFP and HGSF initiatives could be detrimental to smallholder farmers without support to farmers.
  - FAO' work:
    - Technical support
      - on production, post-harvest, storage, processing, organizational and marketing skills,
      - for market diversification/nutrition sensitive value chain development and
      - for the development of an enabling food safety control environment and capacity to enhance compliance (of stakeholders) along the value chain.
  - Demand side: There is the need to address barriers, i.e. inadequate funds, non-adapted and excluding procurement procedures and practices, insufficient local institutional capacities (e.g. procuring entities).
  - FAO's work:
    - Guidance on design and implementation of smallholder-friendly procurement mechanisms
    - Capacity-needs assessment
    - Capacity development and knowledge exchanges at national and local level
  - Policy, institutional and legal frameworks: There is the need to promote multisector approaches and inter-ministerial collaboration, to support national policies and align policy and legal frameworks.
  - FAO's work:
    - Advocacy and guidance on development/review of food procurement related policies and legal frameworks
    - Supporting cross-sector coordination and governance instruments
    - Impact Evaluation
    - Capacity building
- Key messages:
  - Public Food procurement is an important instrument to achieve multiple development objectives and trigger local food systems transformation.
  - Implementation requires a holistic approach and interventions at supply, demand, policy, institutional and legal levels.
  - Cross-sector coordination and synergies between agriculture, nutrition, health, education, and public procurement is crucial for implementation.

- FAO, together with partners, is engaged in supporting countries in building these synergies and in designing and implementing effective sustainable PFP initiatives.

## **Presentation by Leticia Baird**

### Main takeaways:

- Main elements of Bahia region School Feeding initiative: “Escola sustentavel” :
  - Food security
  - Public health, malnutrition and childhood obesity
  - Healthy school meals
  - Nutritional education
  - Environmental education
  - Public procurement poverty eradication
  - Sustainability
- Local challenges (2017 survey findings):
  - Health disorders within school population
  - Need for improvement in school menus
  - Smallholder farmers substandard conditions
  - Non-compliance of local government with legal purchase obligations for small farmers
  - Disregard of sustainability requirements in public procurement of school feeding
  - Insufficient funding provided by Federal Government to municipalities for school lunches (0.07–0.39USD per student per day\*)
  - Inadequate public structure (poor conditions of school kitchen)
  - Water scarcity
- Pilot project in Bahia, Brazil (2018-2020):
  - Strategy:
    - Nutritious plant-rich school menus
    - Local smallholder farmers empowerment
    - Sustainable Public Food Procurement
  - Systemic course of action:
    - Public hearings and technical meetings with variety of stakeholders
    - Fostering actions e.g., educational activities, sustainable menu tasting, school cooks trainings, training in business practice for smallholder famers.
    - Evaluation of results; school meal quality, students’ health conditions, social aspects, environmental sustainability
  - Numbers (4 cities in the Bahia region)
    - 32,000 students
    - 400 school cooks
    - 150 school units
    - 200 smallholder farmers
    - Sustainable menus twice a week

### Results:

- Improvement of nutritional parameters, reduction in the prevalence of thinness and anaemia and significant reduction in cardiovascular risk markers

- Increased awareness through nutritional and environmental education programmes, school cooks and teacher trainings, school fairs with school community & producers, educational booklets and social hearings with sustainable school menu tastings
- 17% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions for secondary education and 15% for nursery in 2019
- Public procurement growth for food sourced locally, added value to local products, strengthening of rural women (heads of households), trainings for smallholder farmers on public procurement, business practices, good manufacturing practices and culinary techniques and education on agro-ecological practices, and inter-sector articulation

## **Presentation by Fatou Ndoye**

### Main takeaways:

- Due to its geographical position, fishing, agriculture and the artisanal processing sector represent the main sources of income for the population in Rufisque.
- From January 2016 to present, CDR and its technical partners GRDR and Cicodev are implementing a resilience programme based on the Territorial Food System approach with the purpose of (1) setting up a consultation and coordination body (governance body), (2) promoting local products with high nutritional value, (3) carrying out a diagnosis of the food system in Rufisque and (4) drawing up a territorial food plan.
- Main issues:
  1. Rapid urbanisation combined with strong demographic pressure and agricultural land gets dispersed.
  2. Lack of access of quality food for population, resulting from the absence of canteens, a combination of local and imported products and changes in eating habits
  3. An agri-food sector to be adapted and developed through artisanal agri-food processing that mobilises women and agro-industrial processing under development
- The territorial food plan (TAP), validated by a wide range of stakeholders in November 2018, is built around four axes:
  1. Securing family farms and promoting sustainable agriculture
  2. Support the structuring of the agri-food processing sector
  3. Ensure that the population has access to quality food
  4. Strengthen the food governance body

Rufisque is the first department in Senegal to have a territorial food plan.

- Support is offered to the agri-food sector through:
  - Training of POs in agro-ecology
  - Training of women processors
  - Advocacy for the preservation of agricultural land (Lendeng 56h, presidential directive and prefectural decree)
  - A consumer awareness campaign for local consumption
  - The implementation of a resource mobilisation strategy (CSR, Patron, parents, local authorities, etc.)
  - Setting up a new school canteen system that promotes a short circuit of local products
  - Training of elected representatives on SAT/PAT for political support
- Adapting the system to favour institutional purchases by setting up a canteen management and monitoring committee with diverse actors (e.g. representative of the local authorities, the

parents' association and the school inspectorate) that is autonomous and transparent. The latter is done by ensuring the coordination and management of the canteens, including an accounting system, signing of purchase contracts with POs/IEGs and relaxation of procedures.

- Two fundamental actions concerning the two central kitchens are (1) to enable POs to have a single point of contact and (2) find a solution to the issue of funding/perpetuity
- The cost of a meal is estimated at 300 FCFA, broken down as follows:
  - 1/3 from the parents' contribution
  - 2/3 from local authorities and partners (CSR, State, sponsors, etc.)

## Discussion round with Q&A

Main discussion points:

- **Q:** @Leticia; there has been a lot of media coverage of the project in Brazil and quite some negative feedback from some stakeholders (e.g., Minister of Education), who have been trying to re-evaluate the project and to block initiatives. How should we deal with that?  
**A:** Practically, it is not easy to try to build something aligned with socially vulnerable groups, enforce human rights, replace processed food and to include local smallholder farmers. Sustainability is a parameter in Brazilian law, though not very clear. We try to bring the scientific perspective to national school feeding projects and align them with the SDGs. In the local context of Brazil, Bahia State, the citizens and mayors are very satisfied with the initiative and results. If we talk about transformative ideas, it is not easy in practical terms, we have to be resilient, create dialogue and explain that the tool of school feeding public policy can manage many issues (especially those related to poverty eradication and food security).
- **Q:** @Florence; the government provides low incentives to vulnerable groups (e.g., smallholder farmers), but rather big incentives to monocultures. There is unfortunately a big gap between the law and reality. Although sustainability is featured in the law, there are no clear parameters accepted by officials for the procurement of sustainable food. Would it be possible to set up a global sustainable public food procurement agreement (with clear social and environmental goals), as we have with respect to the climate crisis with the Paris Agreement?  
**A:** It is not an easy question, as each country has its own regulations and own ways of working. What we are doing and what we can do is to provide guidance, so that people can implement procurement in their own way. For instance, the school meal coalition is a new initiative with countries, but also research consortia working on indicators, monitoring and evaluations. It takes time to organise this dialogue, but our hope is to be able to propose global guidance on ways and methodologies for countries to monitor programmes, set goals etc.
- **Comment from Fatou:** As far as the management of public contracts in Senegal is concerned, they do their best to benefit small producers. We know the laws, but they need to be contextualised. We need to do our best to have a link between all the actors, we need to ensure that the actors coordinate in a framework of very lively interaction.
- **Q:** @Fatou; in Senegal, there is a national plan for public procurement at local level. However, there are budgetary restrictions, as the plan is not funded by the national government. How can we finance locally? Because local funding at the municipal level is needed to support the school canteen programme.  
**A:** an operating mechanism was created with contributions from parents, cooperatives and large companies in the department. During the first year, we had 80% of our own funds. While we try to follow administrative procedures, the laws did not allow us to interact directly with local producers. Our management committee has allowed us to work autonomously.



- **Q:** @Fatou; How do you see funding at the local level, could the programme help change the situation in Senegal so that the government takes the decision to change? (Instead of needing private funding)

**A:** the state intervenes, that year, with a modest budget, but it is from this mechanism that we get little by little.

Questions & remarks in the chat:

- **Q:** @Florence, do you have the same economic impact calculations for other countries (other than Kenya and Senegal)?

**A:** as mentioned, we developed a methodology for measuring impacts of HGSF on the food security of small farmers. Unfortunately, we were not able to implement the methodology fully, due to the COVID pandemic and schools closure. First, we would need these programmes to be re-established for at least one year to be able to have meaningful data.

Resources:

- FAO publications: <https://www.fao.org/nutrition/markets/sustainable-public-food-procurement/en/#c858497>  
Link to the methodological guidelines for conducting impact evaluation of Home Grown School Feeding (HGSF) programmes:  
<https://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CB8970EN/>
- Paper on the Sustainable School Meals Programme in Bahia region, Brazil:  
<https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/14/7/1519>
- GRDR The Rufisque Territorial Food Plan, economic leverage and dialogue between stakeholders: <https://youtu.be/J5zmO3twxZk>
- ICLEI's podcast "the Power of the Plate" with the example of Bahia region in Brazil:  
<https://youtu.be/vJ5gntELLf8>

## City exchange – Kisumu, Kenya & Copenhagen, Denmark

*Moderator: Evelien Fiselier, IDOS*

*Speakers: Erick Ogadho, County Liaison Officer for Integrated Action for Innovative Food Systems at Kisumu County*

*Betina Bergmann Madsen, Chief Procurement Officer Municipality of Copenhagen, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Denmark*

At the start of this year, the FAO and IDOS bundled forces and started collaborating on a project on sustainable public food procurement. One of the main components of this project was the organisation of city exchanges between three European cities and three cities in Latin America and Africa. The idea behind these exchanges was to match cities and have two online exchanges, where they could present their sustainable public food procurement practices and school feeding initiatives. They exchanged about similarities, but more importantly about challenges they might be facing when implementing such practices and initiatives. The aim was to foster mutual exchange and learning between the cities. For this session, the focus was on the city of Kisumu and the city of Copenhagen, which already had their online exchanges a month ago.

## **Presentation by Kisumu**

Main takeaways:

- Kisumu County has a project that integrates conical gardens in school feeding programmes in primary schools. FAO is a partner of the municipality and supports the programme. Children pay a daily fee, which the school administration buys the meals from.
- The current education system is based on a competency-based curriculum, which entails that children learn how to do things, rather than know things. It is learner-based, skills-oriented and teachers act as guides and learning accelerators.
- The 4K club approach has been used in training the pupils in establishment of conical gardens. The 4K's stands for "Kuungana, Kufanya, Kusaidia Kenya" in Kiswahili, which translates to coming together, to act, to help Kenya. It is focused on learning-by-doing, creating awareness and a positive mind-set towards agriculture and developing skills for agricultural entrepreneurship. Pupils who are members of 4K clubs (259 in total) have been trained best practices in vegetable production i.e. through site identification, soil preparation, planting, watering, fertilizer application, crop protection and harvesting of crops.
- Some of the Indigenous African Leafy Vegetables planted in schools are the nightshade, amaranth and spider plant.
- The programme is reducing the school costs of food, as well as providing fresh and available food. Other public institutions have benefited from this programme too, including hospitals and churches.
- Kisumu County is also part of the FAO Green Cities Initiative, which focuses on improving the urban environment, strengthening urban-rural linkages and the resilience of urban systems, services and populations to external shocks. Under the Green Cities, 1500 seedlings were planted, including fruit trees and orchards were established in four schools. This is a long-term intervention in providing fruits in the diets of the pupils.

## **Presentation by Copenhagen**

Main takeaways:

- A key point of SPFP is translating policies into actions, demanding collaboration between buyers, potential suppliers, kitchen staff and other stakeholders.
- SPFP requires a multidisciplinary approach.
- The protein transition was supported by an assessment of the climate weight of the food to be procured.
- The municipality is incorporating teaching in school food procurement in that pupils learn about the food that is served on their plates.
- A main tender (wholesaler) is the basis of the procurement model, but other smaller tenders are complementing the main one and including more sustainability issues.
- One example of a complementary tender is the potato tender, which includes not only sustainable production requirements, but also an educational project including a visit to the farm, teaching material on how to grow and cook potatoes, etc.

## **Discussion round with Q&A**

Main discussion points:

- The conical gardens are efficient in terms of land used, which can be replicated in children's homes with a positive spillover effect on fighting food vulnerability.
- Different structures for using minimal space are being used in the school feeding programme of Kisumu, such as reused car tyres.
- The Kisumu conical gardens initiative has a lot of local demand for replicating the model.
- A Senegal micro gardens initiative is similar to the Kisumu conical gardens, including training children on the technology and allowing replication at home.
- The role of the procurement officers' network is relevant for the success of SPFP initiatives, as is knowledge sharing.
- The incorporation of the kitchen staff in SPFP (gathering inputs, training) is relevant to the school food initiatives.
- SPFP processes are not standardised, but maybe some parts of them should be, as in the case of the European Union.

#### Session 4: Overcoming challenges – Public procurement regulation

*Moderator: Luana Swensson, FAO*

*Speakers: Gustavo Piga, Professor at the Department of Economics and Finance at the University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy*

*Sope Williams-Elegbe, Professor at the Faculty of Law at Stellenbosch University, South Africa*

*Baye Samba Diop, Director of Regulations and Legal Affairs at the Public Procurement Regulatory Agency, Senegal*

*Geo Quinot, Professor at the Department of Law at Stellenbosch University, South Africa*

The idea of this session was to explore linkages between sustainable public food procurement initiatives and the general legislation on public procurement, highlighting recent developments, challenges that it traditionally imposes and, in particular, strategies (at global, regional and local level) that have been developed to overcome these challenges. While the session first provided a more global/regional perspective, it continued with a concrete example of strategies adopted and changes made to overcome legislative challenges to implement sustainable PFP initiatives in Senegal. The final presentation for this session covered the topic of the inclusion of women in public procurement initiatives, highlighting the role and challenges imposed by legislation and how this has been addressed in various African countries.

#### **Presentation by Gustavo Piga**

Main takeaways:

- There is a discussion on the objectives of public procurement (primary vs. secondary). The primary objectives have focused traditionally on so-called "primary" transactional dimensions of economy and efficiency, in which time and cost savings are optimised. Over time, however, wider strategic policy objectives have become increasingly central to the calibration of value for money, depending on country context. Such socioeconomic policy imperatives may include the promotion of environmental sustainability, development of local industries, facilitation of trade, and inclusion of disadvantaged groups, among others. To balance these diverse

considerations, it is necessary to start with a country's strategic objectives (and related priorities) and then build out to encompass the wider trade and international lens.

- Value for money is contextual and, therefore, potentially subject to wide divergence between and among countries depending on the relative mix of national socioeconomic priorities in each country. It is a relevant concept in sustainable public procurement, but the multiplicity of stakeholders on this subject results in a hard conceptualisation of value. This makes it hard to provide global solutions or even rules of thumb and legal procurement teams have to deal with this complex context.
- General implications of SPP that result from this are the following:
  1. It is hard to include social and environmental considerations for any given regulation. Regulation can help (e.g., policy for standards) or hamper good procurement (therefore there is the need of a good legislator). SPP requires an interdisciplinary procurement team that interacts with different stakeholders (e.g. kitchen staff) beyond the suppliers and that makes sure policy goals are incorporated in the tender specification. This implies resources, organisation and cooperation. An evolution that is yet to appear in some countries.
  2. Sustainable Procurement is usually hardly standardised. This implies confrontation with market players (and stakeholders). This requires a regulation based on trust that allows it, but this is not enough. This can be seen in the case of competitive dialogue experiences in different countries (some use the competitive dialogue procedure and others avoid it). Trust is generated with competence, attractiveness, autonomy, accountability and rewards of public procurement staff. The role of scoring rules is essential to reward quality. It requires competence and an interdisciplinary team.
  3. Sustainable Procurement is often local (zero-km) and for small actors. Certain regulations allow direct support (e.g., set-asides, price preferences) for specific actors to allow their victory. In other countries regulatory support is indirect (e.g., smaller lots, e-procurement, more transparency and temporary consortia). Small firms suffer particularly from bureaucratic red tape and participation requirements on tenders. Capacity building with joint meetings/cooperation between procurers and (small) firms is critical.
- Specific SPFP implications:
  1. Impact  
*"PFP has the possibility to deliver multiple social, economic, and environmental benefits towards sustainable food systems for healthy diets." (WHO Europe, 2022)* Its large impact makes the mentioned general issues even more relevant and in need of a solution.
  2. Tender relevance  
*"Small changes written into tender documents may be the decisive factor that contributes to the food chain starting to move in a more sustainable direction, which can then create noticeable changes in primary production, even in distant countries." (WHO Europe, 2022)*
  3. Outcomes and waste  
Food Procurement is potentially wasteful. There is a need to embed outcome verifiability (as quality in scoring rules is only a promise) and waste avoidance (e.g. value retention and food donation) in tender specifications (and scoring rules) and in contract clauses.

- Food for thought: competence building, organisation around performance and reward, autonomy and a team are more than ever needed for food procurement, also to get an even better regulation.

### Presentation by Sope Williams-Elegbe

#### Main takeaways:

- Gender-responsive procurement (GRP) can advance women’s economic empowerment. Gender-responsive public procurement is *“the introduction of gender requirements and considerations into public procurement policies and practices, in order to use public procurement as an instrument to advance gender equality.”* (OECD)
- There are two forms of GRP: 1) the inclusion of women-owned businesses in procurement or 2) buying from gender-responsive companies, which meet criteria for integrating gender equality and women’s empowerment principles in their policies and practices in alignment with international norms and standards.
- Women obtain 1-3% of public contracts, despite being +50% of the population and owning 41% of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in some African countries. 41.2% of households in South Africa are headed by women, and 42% of children are raised by single mothers. In the United States of America, there are 11 million single parents of which 80% are women.
- Economies do better when women fully participate. Gender equality is important to poverty reduction and there is a link between economic growth and women’s economic empowerment.
- Many barriers to women’s economic empowerment are based on patriarchal or cultural assumptions.
- Barriers to GRP:
  1. Structural and systemic barriers include disaggregated gender data, a lack of GRP planning, an uneven distribution, technology and complexity and demand aggregation
  2. Legal and policy barriers include an absence of legal framework and opacity and lack of integration between gender and procurement policy
  3. Cultural and social barriers include gender-based discrimination by procurement officials, discriminatory customary and inheritance practices and household dynamics
  4. Financial barriers include a hard access to finance and unfavourable financial terms
  5. Corruption, which includes practices i.e. bribery and sextortion
- Strategies to change the status quo:
  - address the structural and systemic barriers
  - address legal framework and policy misalignment
  - dismantle societal and cultural biases
  - address financial barriers
  - Address corruption
  - create an enabling environment with capacity building, fighting institutional gender disparities and advocacy and awareness
- Ethiopia has a successful case on GRP linked to SPFP. Ethiopian universities are required to purchase bread known as injera from women-owned businesses based in the university town. This measure was intended to ensure that women, who are the primary producers of injera, could at least benefit from university procurement spend in this area. This approach, although ad-hoc supports women-owned businesses, reduces transport costs and impacts and ensures business sustainability.

## Presentation by Baye Samba Diop

### Main takeaways:

- The Public Procurement Regulatory Agency in Senegal (ARMP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the FAO to develop a guideline on SPFP. The protocol aimed to provide strategic support to government-led food procurement for school nutrition initiatives based on local products. As part of this, the ARMP has produced a local public procurement guide to guide and encourage contracting authorities in the implementation of links between school feeding programmes and local smallholder agricultural production. Under this protocol, ARMP also organised a two-day training workshop to build capacity and raise awareness among thirty people representing contracting authorities and local suppliers (municipalities, schools, local administrations, etc.). The training focused on the appropriation and acceptance of the simplified guide on local public procurement in relation to school feeding.
- The MoU is in line with the FAO's strategic objective 4 "Fostering inclusive and efficient food systems" and 3 "Reducing rural poverty", in particular the organisational outcomes that should flow from these, namely:
  - Strengthening the capacity of countries and their regional economic communities to engage more effectively in the formulation of international agreements and voluntary guidelines that promote transparent markets, improved market opportunities and more efficient food and agricultural systems.
  - strengthening the capacity of public sector bodies to design and implement national policies, strategies, regulatory frameworks and investment plans.
- After this successful experience, and as part of another FAO project (FMM 132), the ARMP signed a new MoU with FAO. Within this MoU the ARMP conducted a survey among producer organisations and contracting authorities in the two municipalities targeted by the project and provide four training workshops to build the capacity of public officials to set up more inclusive food supply mechanisms for local producers and to build the capacity of producer organisations to access public food procurement programmes.

More specifically, the trainings aimed to enable participants to:

  - learn about the principles and rules of public procurement in Senegal
  - become familiar with the procedures used for local public procurement
  - identify sources of information for accessing food markets
  - know how to prepare a contract file and the prerequisites
  - know how to bid for a public food procurement contract
  - become familiar with the remedies available in the event of a dispute; etc.
- The survey conducted in Bambilor
  - The survey revealed that all suppliers are male. However, the GOROM food processing centre has several female processors, but it is run by a man. The data showed that 69.2% of the buyers are men and 30.8% are women. In general, suppliers over 36 years of age represent 84.2% of the supplier population, while only 15.8% are in the 26-35 age group.
  - The survey also revealed that most suppliers are unfamiliar with the procedure for bidding on products for school canteens. This situation can be explained by the insufficient number of food contracts launched by the commune. Half of the respondents had never participated in public procurement processes. However, it should be noted that during COVID-19, the state adopted a decree that allowed contracts to be awarded to producers that did not know the procedures.

- All the contracts used by local producers in the framework of the contracts are short-term contracts. This is due to ad hoc orders in the form of requests for information and prices.
- According to the survey results, only a small proportion of buyers (21.1%) responded that the procedures for public procurement are not complex, whereas the majority of suppliers (94%) think that they are (78.9%). Respondents highlighted that food markets face several obstacles. 46.2% said that they were faced with a lack of technical assistance and other constraints that were major obstacles to accessing markets in this sector.
- The survey conducted in Koungheul:
  - The survey revealed that all suppliers and buyers surveyed are men over 26 years of age. In general, suppliers over 36 years of age represent 84.2% of the supplier population, while the 26-35 age group represents only 15.8%.
  - Only (33.3%) of the respondents answered about the existence and relevance of public procurement processes, while the majority (66.7%) admitted to being unfamiliar with public procurement procedures.
  - Regarding the obstacles related to public procurement in this sector, some suppliers (50%) said that the difficulties were in the preparation and submission of the contract proposal, while 50% said that they had more difficulties in obtaining the required quality and quantity of products.
  - The survey revealed several benefits of participating in food markets:
    - Support of local agricultural production and smallholders
    - Reduces investment risk
    - Provides a means of increasing income
    - Provides a means of formalising markets and moving out of informality
    - Improves farmers' ability to access markets
    - Encourages farmers to increase and diversify their production
  - The obstacles revealed by the survey are:
    - Procurement procedures are too complex and cumbersome
    - Price as the main award criterion goes to the detriment of quality and other socio-economic values
    - Conditions for participation are disproportionate and onerous
    - Duration of contracts is incompatible with the supply capacity of small local producers
    - There is limited access to information on business opportunities and contract award notices
    - Delays and payment conditions are unfavourable to small producers
- As next steps, it is recommended to continue the collaboration between FAO and ARMP, to enhance the adoption of the local public procurement guide at national level, its translation in local languages and to build the capacity of both public officials and local producers in other regions.

### **Presentation by Geo Quinot**

#### **Main takeaways:**

- The law is lagging behind policy on SPP.
- The importance of the legal framework for implementation of developmental procurement is often overlooked.

- There are several examples, where procurement law and SPFP implementation are linked, i.e. Brazil, South Africa, Ethiopia, etc. However, the success of initiatives is despite the law, not because of it.
- The Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA) is a World Trade Organization agreement that can limit SPFP. This agreement is mainly signed by developed countries, but developing countries act as observers and Brazil is working to sign it. There is a high threshold on procurements that are directly influenced by GPA, but countries may choose to incorporate its principles in their internal regulations to reach a larger number of procurement processes.
- Examples of national regulations for food procurement:
  - in the United States of America there are specific instruments for school food procurement that allows procurement authorities to give preferences in favour of local food producers;
  - In France, despite the lack of specific instruments for food procurement, there are general ones that support the link between public procurement and sustainable development. They include contract lotting, participation requirements, alternative procurement methods and evaluation criteria. They are supported by a National Food Plan.
- To conclude:
  - There are still limited explicit legal provisions on SPFP.
  - There is the need for specific mandate.
  - A change from global to local supply chains can benefit the link between public procurement and sustainable development.

### Discussion round with Q&A

Main discussion points:

- The combination of SPFP initiatives with taxes on unhealthy and subsidies on healthy food is an interesting approach, although effects on market regulation are unclear.
- There is a habit formation in eating in school canteens leading to positive externalities, i.e. raising demand for bio products, which can lead to developing the market of sustainable products.
- Many informative case studies on SPFP are published on the FAO website.
- If the law is lagging behind, there can be a combination between a top-bottom approach for regulating and a bottom-up approach to incorporate lessons learned into regulation.
- There is a need to develop global regulatory instruments or guidelines to align discourse on SPP, focused on development, not on trade.
- The inclusion of a gender dimension in procurement practices can start overcoming the disconnection between gender policy and procurement policies.

Resources:

WHO Europe, 2022: <https://www.who.int/europe/publications/i/item/WHO-EURO-2022-6178-45943-66333>

Book chapter on the role of the regulatory framework for using food procurement as a development tool. De Schutter, O., Quinot, G. and Swensson, L.F. J: 2021 (chapter 2): <http://www.fao.org/3/cb7960en/cb7960en.pdf>



## Forum Day 3 – 27 October 2022

### Session 5: Overcoming challenges – The inclusion of vulnerable groups

*Moderator: Felipe Vilaça Loureiro Santos, University of Gävle, Sweden*

*Speakers: Vivian Valencia, Professor at the Department of Plant Sciences at Wageningen University in the Netherlands*

*Sergio Schneider, Professor of Sociology of Rural Development and Food Studies at Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil*

*Santiago De la Cadena Becerra, Human Development Economist at the World Bank Group in Colombia*

The idea of this session was to explore the potential of public food procurement initiatives to support vulnerable producer groups, such as women and family farmers presenting concrete examples of benefits, challenges and strategies adopted for proper implementation. The first two presentations had a focus on the experience of Brazil, whilst the last presentation was about the experience of Colombia.

#### **Presentation by Santiago De La Cadena Becerra**

Main takeaways:

- Colombian School Feeding Program (PAE) is one of the oldest and largest social programs in Colombia; created in 1936 and reaches six million children daily (around 80% of total) in 44.000 schools. It invests USD 565 million annually, demands 6000 tons of food per week and provides employment to 73.000 women.
- By 2018, PAE procurement failed to include local economies and vulnerable groups, because:
  - legal barriers hindered direct food purchases to local rural communities
  - there was a lack of a pertinent operational models for indigenous communities
  - rural families and communities were not involved directly in PAE operation
- How Columbia PAE managed to include vulnerable, rural and indigenous people:
  - In 2020, Colombia removed legal barriers and a new rural SFP model was created. Amidst the pandemic, Colombian Congress issued a Law institutionalising Public Food Procurement with a focus on supporting family farmers /smallholder farmers (Law 2046/2020). Key requirements:
    - minimum 30% of total food purchased from family/smallholder farmers (FSF)
    - In public competitive procurement processes, 10% of the bidder's final evaluation score is awarded if they purchase more than 30% from FSF.
    - The nutritional structure and menus must be adjusted to local food purchases.
    - Procurement processes and payments to FSF must be simple and expedite.
  - World Bank has promoted inclusive local food procurement by:
    - Supporting adaptation of procurement procedures and practices to increase the participation of family and smallholder farmers.
    - Displaying impacts of local food purchases in the quality of the meals and the pedagogical processes of food consumption.
    - Directly involving rural communities into the PAE management
  - As a result, the government created a new model for rural areas:
    1. Administered by parents
    2. Almost 100% locally sourced

3. Has a robust pedagogical component for rural parents
  4. Provides flexible procurement and payment to foster purchases from family/ smallholder farmers
- In 2018, Indigenous communities started implementing their own PAE.
    - Administered directly by indigenous service providers and reaches around 350.000 children each day (82% of total). It is mostly locally sourced and promotes recovery of traditional seeds, food preparations and cultural practices.
    - Three main results:
      1. Parents and beneficiaries were 46% more likely to report higher satisfaction with quality of the meals.
      2. The parent's positive perception of PAE being a definitive factor to promote academic achievement of children is 2.5 times higher in indigenous PAE.
      3. Indigenous leaders believe PAE fosters rural production by direct and steady purchasing of their products.
  - Next:
    - Rural PAE will be piloted and evaluated in 2022-2023, to measure the impact on education, food security, rural household incomes, and quality of the meals.
    - A comprehensive toolbox will be launched early 2023 to train parents and other members of the communities on healthy nutrition and the benefits of consuming freshly produced ingredients. It will include guidelines on local purchases.
    - An IT system will be launched November 2022 to start monitoring the results of PAE, including the inclusion of rural and indigenous communities; and the compliance with the new law on public food procurement.

## **Presentation by Sergio Schneider**

### Main takeaways:

- Evolution of approaches to school feeding:
  1. First wave (70s to 90s); strong focus on nutrition for education and school food as instrument to tackle undernutrition and stunt growth disease. School food is under the umbrella of national food aid (especially in developing countries).
  2. Second wave (1995 to 2010); strong focus on improving quality of school food and connecting to local production (smallholder/ family farmers). Division in scientific literature; European view: inefficient to buy school food directly from farms, Latin American & African view: linking schools to farms improves quality of food.
  3. Third wave (2010 to now); acknowledgement of the power of the public plate. The public budget for food purchases (education etc.) becomes an important source of resources to support local farmers and family farmers. Discussions about farm to fork, school food growing initiatives etc. started.
  4. Now: Food public health is connected with sustainable development. How can we organise a system to channel the food from local/small-scale farmers to schools? There are issues of governance and accountability, which need to be overcome.
- Lessons learned from cases in Brazil and Ecuador; mere strategies do not suffice one needs organising schemes of school food procurement connected to a broader organisation of the state. In the case of Ecuador for example, the state is not prepared, nor does it have the human

resources or legal tools (laws, capacities etc.). Furthermore, the inclusion of civil society organisations in the policy-making process is essential for making the policies more accountable and less prone to corruption. As for the market, there is a two-fold relation: between suppliers – farmers AND consumers – schools. The market needs to be socially constructed and a specific market with specific regulations (among suppliers and buyers) needs to be established.

- Lesson learned: scholars and technicians tend to approach public procurement by focussing on the value chain. In practice, it does not work like that.
- Important questions: how do we include vulnerable groups (small-scale farmers, indigenous people and women)? How can we create the institutional framework so that it could stay stable in politically unstable regions? To move forward, there needs to be a review of our assumptions (what is the state, the civil society and the market we are building for).

### **Presentation by Vivian Valencia**

Vivian shared insights about Brazil's flagship National School Lunch Program (PNAE) and her research and field work in the south of Brazil.

Main takeaways:

- Targeted public food procurement (TPFP) and transitions towards more sustainable food systems can enhance sustainability across various components of the system by determining:
  - What type of food will be purchased (e.g., local, diverse)
  - From whom (e.g., small-scale farmers, women) (connect with idea of helping vulnerable groups by giving them privileged access)
  - Production systems from which it will be purchased (e.g., meeting nature inclusive, climate friendly practices) (certified food)
- TPFP can offer:
  1. a large, predictable, and reliable demand for agricultural products that reduces risks and uncertainties associated with commodity markets.
    - *Procurement from governments, large institutions (WFP, universities), make commitments toward farmers by setting the price beforehand. All these commitments remove volatility (via a structured demand), which is one of the ways small-scale farmers benefit.*
    - *Demand for diversified food products*
  2. A reliable source of income generation through the creation of favourable market conditions, particularly for smallholder farmers.
    - *By procuring in this type of way, uncertainties that are associated with free international commodity market can be reduced.*
  3. Price stabilisation through establishment and negotiation of prices.
  4. Incentives or requirements for meeting sustainability standards in production (e.g., organic) and value chain governance (e.g., Fair Trade)
    - *By setting standards, risks and vulnerabilities might be removed for the (vulnerable) producing groups*
    - *This is also helping in shifting production systems, favouring producers of this type of production*
- Emblematic example: Brazil's School Lunch Program (PNAE)
  - In 2009, there was a redesign of public procurement policies to link across multiple development objectives based on creation of new markets.
  - Goals of bringing small-scale farmers on board, rural development etc.

- Particular innovation: linking public nutrition programs and investments in family farming sector
- 30 % of budget for procurement from family farmers
- 30% price premium for organic production
- Facilitated access to small-scale farmers
  - Waved bidding process; “positive discrimination”
  - *Meet their challenges and limitations, otherwise they cannot compete with other procurers via tenders*
- How/ why did Brazil redesign its public procurement policies? Political will was fundamental to modify legal framework to enable innovations in public procurement.
  - Waiving bidding process to create a direct procurement mechanism
- Political mobilization by social movements played a central role in triggering the redesign of PNAE to also benefit family farmers. Working in tandem. Local NGOs were key in providing technical assistance and support with certification. Local farmers’ organizations also facilitated farmers’ response to institutional market.
  - *Access to certification schemes by small-scale farmers proves very difficult*
- Lessons learned: Political or legal framework does often not allow for positive discrimination. Redesigning is key. How can we change something that is not working? Get actors to think about this.
- Challenges for vulnerable farmers:
  - Often stuck in commodity market (soy, maize for cattle consumption)
  - On stable markets to sell legumes, very vulnerable and small
  - Most households decided to produce stable crops extra to secure income
  - Because of PAE, possible to switch to diversified production with a stable market providing a consistent basis for selling products
- Implications for gender equity:
  - Investigated links between farm diversification and women’s empowerment
  - Small property: better off selling vegetables, legumes etc.
  - Women are often involved in the production of vegetables
  - With PAE, not anymore exclusively household consumption, know-how of women became very relevant for this “new” economic activity. Women’s expertise and involvement improved and their involvement in decision-making increased as well as the control of resources.
- Structured demand for diversified food products
  - Resulted in economically-viable diversified farming systems
  - Enabled small-scale farmers to transition from monocultures to diversified farming systems
  - Benefitted women’s empowerment by creating the conditions for women to pursue productive activities (e.g., growing diversified food products for PNAE) and make strategic choices (e.g., decision-making regarding productive activities and control over income)
  - Women were identified as the social fabric. When the social fabric was stronger, the impacts of policies were amplified.
- Conclusion: TFPF supports the inclusion of vulnerable groups
  - By targeting them (removing barriers for participation)
  - Creating structured demand (reduces risk and vulnerability; offers stable and reliable markets for smallholder farmers)
  - In combination with social movements, public procurement is a promising policy mechanism for enhancing women’s empowerment in agriculture

- This is key in the redesign and implementation, there is the need to have a strong cohesive social fabric!
- TFPF may support women's empowerment by creating new markets for diversified food products, thereby valuing diversified production systems which are more inclusive of women

## Discussion round with Q&A

Main discussion points:

- Q: @Santiago; in Colombia, what is the role of civil society and how is it involved? Are there any challenges related to this involvement?

A: Initially, it was not civil society (at least for some regions). The quality of school feeding programmes in rural areas was really low (as it required logistics). For indigenous people, quality plays a central role. Based on that and the power of civil society (in terms of small farmers, etc.), there was increasing pressure on the government to start engaging with local economies. That is why the law came to life. School-feeding programmes were one of the easier ways to implement it. Right now, the aim is to find a comprehensive way of linking people from the community to oversee what is happening (e.g., audits), an own ecosystem that is sustainable and has its own flexible ways of operating.

- Q: @Vivian; did you witness the barrier of the government paying the farmers too late?

A: In Brazil, farmers did not complain, but in Guatemala, farmers had to wait for six months until receiving payment. Consequently, farmers did not want to participate anymore.

- Q: @Santiago, how do we go about it when there is a will from municipalities? Often, the main limiting factor, as articulated by the procurement side, is the organisation of small-scale farmers. How can we safeguard food safety? Do you have an example of the start of this transition?

A: Columbia is exactly at that point; the rural model just started and it involves a lot of risks. Parents cook meals, purchase food in places where food safety is not safeguarded and do not meet standards. The state provided the community with a comprehensive toolbox and training session (with basic knowledge about food safety, nutritional value of food etc.). Challenge: get all standards into a language that school parents can understand. Such a training is complicated to design. It requires a dialogue with education, the health sector, etc. to create enabling rules (includes finding out how the contextual setting is and what the minimum enforcement aspects are). First, we need a differential approach (e.g., indigenous women do not like to dress according to food safety and hygiene standards). Second, good communication and education at implementation level is key.

Comment from Sergio: the pandemic was a bad experience, but also a learning moment. Schools closed, which was a major disruption to the public procurement system in Brazil. Farmers made huge losses. Research was done on how farmers responded and adapted. They used WhatsApp to contact the consumers and did home deliveries. It shows that every school needs good internet service (or radio connection). Local farmers could use the internet to connect the school or municipality. First investments should be in developing areas, vulnerable areas in logistics and infrastructure using digitalisation. To address this systematically, a typology is needed (small municipality <10.000, medium=100.000, big), because of the issue of access to logistics. From that basis, one can implement different procurement schemes. With 42-43 million students in schools, Brazil has a huge market. Schemes need to take this into account. This constitutes a difference for the organisation of policies and systems.

Questions & remarks from the chat:

- The Government of Ghana has currently the National Builders Corp, which constitutes mostly new graduates and those who are Agricultural Scientists are encouraged to assist the local people to do modernised farming to increase food production locally.
- This is a noble discussion with lots of valuable issues to attend and change lives of vulnerable children, youths and women in particular. This can be realised by collaborating and putting our solutions into practice. Most children and women in developing countries are food insecure. Food procurement and distribution is highly politicised and skewed. I hope the organisers can spearhead the process of knowledge gathering and sharing.
- Q: I would like to learn more from Santiago on the tools used to measure the different impacts of the pilot PAE and on the IT system to monitor compliance with the new law.  
A: The IT system is equipped with some standardised tools to measure compliance with food quantity and quality. It has a comprehensive registry for providers that works both on- and offline; has a platform for capacity building and training for citizens ([www.paestardialdia.gov.co](http://www.paestardialdia.gov.co)); and it interoperates with other systems, i.e. the enrolment system and the learning assessments. So merging all these data sources, we will be able to track impacts of the pilot in educational outcomes, local food purchases, and quality and acceptability of meals.

Resources:

- Videos on the Colombian School Feeding Programme for indigenous communities. Videos 7 to 13 in the playlist have English subtitles:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NYtZbm30Gb4&list=PLfYBMcouzhGBon1GV1rMZIXSjN23S8RUk&index=7>
- FAO Publication: Public food procurement for sustainable food systems and healthy diets - Volume 1: <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb7960en>

City Exchange – the city of Portoviejo & the region of Manabí, Ecuador, the city of Valencia, Spain & the cities of Rosario & Gualeguaychú, Argentina

*Moderator: Andreas Stamm, German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS)*

*Speakers: Marina Borgatello, representative of the city of Rosario in Argentina*

*Cielo Paola Mendoza Villagomez, representative of the regional government Manabí, Ecuador*

At the start of this year, the FAO and IDOS bundled forces and started collaborating on a project on sustainable public food procurement. One of the main components of this project was the organisation of city exchanges between three European cities and three cities in Latin America and Africa. The idea behind these exchanges was to match cities and have two online exchanges, where they could present their sustainable public food procurement practices and school feeding initiatives. They exchanged about similarities, but more importantly about challenges they might be facing when implementing such practices and initiatives. The aim was to foster mutual exchange and learning between the cities. For this session, the focus was on the exchange between the city of Portoviejo and the region of Manabí in Ecuador, the city of Valencia in Spain and the cities of Rosario and Gualechauchú in Argentina. Due to some unfortunate circumstances, the representative of the region of Manabí, who was supposed to present was unable to attend, so that only the city of Rosario gave a presentation.

## **Presentation by representatives from the city of Rosario**

### Main takeaways:

- In recent years, Rosario gained a lot of experience in developing policies according to the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP). However, policies related to agro-ecology have been around in Rosario for twenty years already.
- Many policies were built in a participatory way in articulation with different sectors of the population, which is a slower process, but one that will generate greater consensus. The focus is on networking with civil society, academia and farmers, which makes public policies sustainable over time.
- The municipality has been training municipal officials and staff since 2015 to incorporate sustainability in their processes and to motivate suppliers.
- Municipal procurement is done mainly by two secretariats: Public Health (nine public hospitals) and Human Development and Habitat (34 institutions). They provide 1300 boxes to families and have an agreement with the local food bank to provide assistance to 300.000 people.
- SPFP is carried out at the local government level through tendering processes. However, during the pandemic, direct purchasing was often used by the Secretariat of Human Development.
- Quality is a criterion that scores 50% in tender contracts.
- Next challenges: the inclusion of a percentage of agro-ecological vegetables into the tendering contracts, which the supplier that wins the bidding process has to comply with. One option Rosario is exploring is to hire a distributor (intermediary) to collaborate with the supplier and thus guarantee the continuity of the service over the whole contract.
- There is a focus on generating normative instruments that can support the changes beyond political parties.

## **Discussion round with Q&A**

### Main discussion points:

- SPFP can support producers and help them diversify their production in a way that is not often possible when large buyers purchase their products.
- SPFP can help producers planning, achieving larger scales, and diversifying their supply.
- It is important that the demand-side gets better organised and that the role of the state is rethought; the state is not to assist in everything, but to provide tools and instruments that support the suppliers. That way, suppliers do not depend on the state to survive, but the state is just another buyer.
- In Rosario, the assistance to the producers is holistic, aiming to generate opportunities without depending on the state, so that they can work independently. Rosario offers support during production as well as during the commercialisation process through specific programmes.
- In Rosario, there are well-established policies, but the middle managers are the ones who are implementing the changes. A discussion table around SPFP has been created, which is an enabler for all the initiatives to be carried out. The secretariat of Human Development meets other secretariats that support producers to adapt the meal menus in the public institutions to food availability.
- In Manabí, political will and effort were united to develop a SPFP initiative. Manabí engaged in urban-rural articulation with school directors and parents and strengthened organisations in the territory. SPFP has been institutionalised and awareness has been raised, so that improvements can be made and the continuity of the programmes can be ensured beyond political changes (i.e. after elections).

- Not all municipalities have to go through all learning stages to implement SPFP (context-dependent).

Questions & remarks from the chat:

- CERPAC, which is an organisation that supports local development initiatives in Congo, works with professional organisations. We have an incubator and a management centre to support formalisation, submission and management. The big problem is financial inclusion, because all the banks and microfinance are in the big towns and cities. With the telephone companies, the cost of financial transactions is very high. Travelling several kilometres to collect your money is still a problem. What is your experience?
- Without this institutional, organisational and managerial support, small-scale producers, who focus their energies on production, will not be able to take advantage of the opportunities offered by both the public sector and organisations such as WFP.

## Session 6: Overcoming challenges – The role of procurement officers and networks

*Moderator: Felipe Vilaça Loureiro Santos, University of Gävle, Sweden*

*Speakers: Wim Debeuckelaere, Directorate-General for Health and Consumers at the European Commission*

*Betina Bergmann Madsen, Chief Procurement Officer Municipality of Copenhagen, Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Denmark*

*Marisa Siboldi, Sustainable Development and Supply Chain Consultant in Argentina*

The idea of this session was to highlight the importance and role of procurement officers and networks for the implementation of successful sustainable food procurement initiatives (i.e. school food programmes); how they can contribute to this process; the challenges they face and strategies that could be adopted to support them in this important role.

### Presentation by Wim Debeuckelaere

Main takeaways:

- There is a new legislative framework for a sustainable food system across the EU. The overarching objectives are:
  - To set the foundations for the systemic changes that are needed by all actors of the food system, including policy makers, business operators and consumers in order to accelerate the transition to a sustainable EU food system.
  - To promote policy coherence at EU and national level, mainstream sustainability in all food-related policies and strengthen the resilience of food systems.

This new framework is important for EU partnerships in global trade.

- Current problems:
  1. Long-term viability and resilience of the food system is compromised.
  2. Making healthy and sustainable choices remains too difficult.
  3. The EU regulatory structure around PFP is currently not supportive of a sustainable EU food system.
- Drivers of these problems:
  - Long-term viability



- Food system actors are not systemically realising sustainable food operations.
- There is a lack of targeted incentives for actors in the food system to produce/sell sustainable food in the EU market.
- Externalities (i.e. environmental, social and health) are not effectively reflected in the price or cost of foods, creating market distortion favourable for unsustainable food products & related operations
- There are inefficiencies in the food supply chain, also resulting in the generation of food losses and food waste.
- There are imperfect competition and imbalances in market power in the food chain.

#### Healthy sustainable choices

- The food environment predisposes consumers to unsustainable choices.
- Food system actors have biases that prevent sustainable choices.
- There is insufficient transparency on sustainability across the food system.

#### Union regulatory structure

- Food related policies and regulations do not systematically and coherently integrate sustainability objectives / definitions / requirements.
- Different policy options for SPFP constitutes an important building block, because it can introduce sustainability in the food system and is a strategic way to use public money.
- Reasons for the EU to take action on the above mentioned problems:
  - National approaches create incompatible systems of sustainability, fragment the internal market and create confusion and distrust of the consumer.
  - Common requirements at EU level, will ensure a harmonised and well-functioning internal market across all Member States and, a level playing field for businesses
  - Coherent sustainable food systems, recognised all over Europe, will enable economies of scale, reduce costs and create incentives for the food business operators to develop them.
  - A proactive, recognizable and reliable framework will also enhance the credibility of the European Union, towards its citizens as well as towards third countries
- There are three approaches to enhance SPFP:
  1. Voluntary instruments; The Green Public Procurement criteria (GPP), for food and food services can be extended to cover all three dimensions of sustainability, including healthy diets and economic criteria. The Commission can continue to facilitate the process of elaboration of the voluntary approaches based on the EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices. The use of voluntary instruments has already been tried in relation to organic products, but it is difficult to convince procurers, because there is insufficient knowledge or willingness.
  2. Supporting local authorities to procure sustainable food by introduction general provisions and requirements aiming to raise awareness and improve skills and knowledge of SPP and support local authorities in using public procurement strategically. This could be for example: the adoption of guidance for SPP, the establishment of an EU network of food procurement professionals, the creation of centralised Member State focal points, requirements for the Member States to set up national action plans to increase the uptake of SPP and requirements for monitoring and reporting of the uptake of SPP by the Member States. Unfortunately this approach still depends too much on the willingness of the procurer, caterer or responsible politician to introduce sustainability.
  3. Mandatory general and specific requirements; This approach includes the introduction of a general mandatory requirement of procuring sustainably with a clear reference to

the environmental, social-health and economic dimension of sustainability of food products and related operations. The Commission will be empowered to adopt /implement legislation i.e. mandatory criteria established with technical and scientific support of the JRC, that will cover the environmental, social/health and economic dimension of sustainability and monitoring and reporting requirements of the uptake of SPP for the Member States and the European Commission. Choosing this approach maybe necessary to support the food system transformation, but it is important to consider that it could have a negative impact on the market.

- Governance efforts can provide a frame for multi-level cooperation of food system actors through the creation of appropriate processes and arrangements to enhance, and frame multi-level cooperation, engagement and public participation both at EU, MS and regional or local levels. It can also provide a basis for the development of food sustainability strategies in Member States. Examples of efforts could be the introduction of provisions requiring or recommending Member States to develop plans to meet certain identified goals/objectives set out in the FSFS or nationally set (quantified) goals in specific areas, regular reviewing of national strategies or monitoring of Member State performance via a monitoring framework with key indicators for the food system, the main features of which could be laid down in the FSFS.
- There currently are open public consultation activities. When introducing a new legislative framework, the views of organisations (i.e., food service providers) and the public are taken into account.

### Presentation by Betina Bergmann Madsen

Main takeaways:

- Tender lawyers or procurement officers need to be provided with an overview of political decisions to incorporate those political goals in tenders.
- Betina gave an insight into the procurement process that follows the formulation of political goals (by the Commission, or the municipality in Copenhagen for example) and showed a graphic that illustrates this process (see the sketch below).

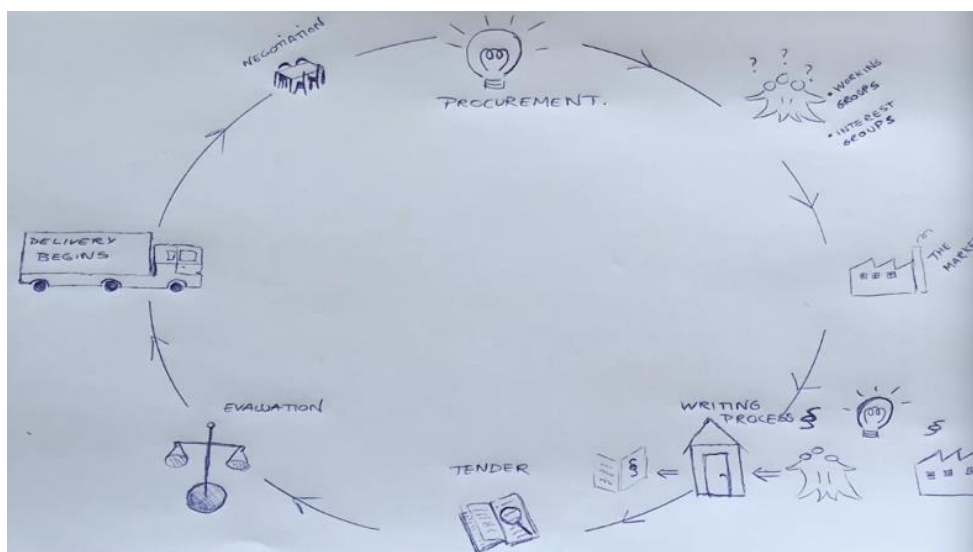


Image 1: Procurement process

- There is a lot of knowledge on how to procure in the form of guidelines, but in practice, it is difficult for the procurement officers to find and read these documents on top of their work of preparing and writing tenders.
- Betina also referred to teaching materials. According to her, it may be useful to be aware of the stages in the preparation of the tender:
  - Conduct an analysis of the policy objectives to which one is subject – locally, nationally and internationally
  - Get statistics on what is usually bought and what demands are important for the end user
  - Find out what the market can deliver and to what extent there can be a transition to becoming more sustainable.
  - Prepare draft tender documents

These teaching materials can also help with things like how to conduct a legal market dialogue meeting, creating a description of the documents, which are most often included in a call for tenders and the characteristics of the various documents, gaining knowledge about sustainability criteria, or to get informed about methods that have been used in procurement and how to incorporate sustainable criteria. These documents can help to better evaluate how it works, what works and what not.

- To make it easier to share knowledge, Denmark decided to create a Public Procurement Officers' Network. It started in 2017 with five partners. Since that, it has and still is growing continuously. The focus is to include regional governments and the overall objective is to share practices.
- The network is hosted by the Danish Ministry of Environment and chaired by the municipality of Copenhagen. It is all about sharing knowledge, encouraging and inspiring each other. The group of procurement officers works together with stakeholders who have specialised knowledge. The strength of the network is that many brains are working on it. That way it is not just the one procurement officer, who needs to be an expert in every type of procurement.
- With the creation of the network: good examples and new mandatory criteria that are being implemented can more easily be spread.
- There also is an EU procurement network. It requires more work to be involved in such networks, but there are also clear benefits. The officers give presentations in the different areas they are working on to find solutions together.
- Betina ended her presentation by prompting the procurement officers in the audience to build a network wherever they are, have a cross-regional exchange and ideally get supported by the FAO.
- Finally, she shared that there is a new document issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) and there are trainings with five countries to measure the situation of SPFP and then test what works and what does not. This document is an Inspiration Catalogue called "How together we can make the world's most healthy and sustainable public food procurement". The intention is that the catalogue will go in depth into different topics and provide inspiration for how these topics can be incorporated into tenders in different ways. The idea is to keep gathering inspiration and add new topics so that the material is continuously updated with "State of the art – for the moment".

### **Presentation by Marisa Siboldi**

Main takeaways:

- Procurement departments have a key role in regions of for example Latin America. This is largely due to the scale but also to the capacity of the market.

- It is important to have crosscutting work, while also supporting local authorities, promoting best practices and working with family farmers or smallholders. Providing these aspects along the supply chain is a task, which should be completed by the government, according to Marisa. There is a need to work with all providers to make them aware of making the appropriate decisions. For example, big cities have big suppliers and they should be made aware of their responsibility and as such their influence on the supply chain. It is not an easy task, especially in contexts like in Latin America, where there often is a lack of political will, related to a lack of information and of skills at the operational level.
- Public buyers at the local as well as national government level are often not experts in food procurement. They tend to have the responsibility of not only buying food, but also textiles, vehicles or other equipment. This creates a serious gap in knowledge and expertise. The question therefore is how to generate opportunities for both the government and the market.
- Additionally, it is importance to have examples of sustainable public (food) procurement to gain strategic vision and not only focus on price. There is an enormous potential to create value and make public policy objectives visible and to support suppliers to be able to send in their bid for tenders.
- In the current context of climate and socio-economic crisis, information is not what denotes power, but rather clarity and being able to understand information. When working in networks, it is easier and faster to understand problems that each locality is facing. This has to do with more transversal and articulated systems, because we cannot treat the problems as watertight compartments.
- The Federal Network of Argentinean Procurement is a group of regional and national governments that came together to join efforts and propose strategies for current problems. Joint procurement processes have not been launched by the network, but the network has helped the subnational governments a lot, as they were more lagging behind. There is electronic platforms, constant training and technical support. This network has no legal status, as it is self-convened. It does not receive any external funding, also not from the national government. The procurement directors and members of the national government participate in three annual meetings. They participated in the Inter-American table on public procurement.
- The network has already served to solve many issues related to SPFP. It highlighted that procurement systems are a way of having access to goods, but also are a way of guaranteeing access to potential supplier groups that currently do not have access.
- Working groups on the topic of food have emerged in Latin America (e.g., Rosario), involving different departments (Economics, Education etc.), sitting together to discuss this timely topic and joining efforts to ensure sustainable public procurement is being implemented.
- A transformation process towards SPFP is what the procurement officers from the network mostly agree on, but it is sometimes not working. Transformation often does not deploy itself via voluntary criteria. Buyers are afraid of moving out of their comfort zones or raise questions. In this respect, there is a need for stronger professionalization and capacity building. Providing self-assessment systems and open data would promote this and enable progress towards a more organised system, where small providers have access to the market. Foremost, providers should be empowered to understand certain requirements. To some extent, public buyers can impose this, as they are able to assess what the market has to offer. They can try to promote sustainability, take advantage, and grow in that sense.

## Discussion round with Q&A

Main discussion points:

- The example of Copenhagen shows the benefits of involving different actors when starting to draft the legal documents for a SPFP process. The objective is to present the political goals and procurement requirements to those, who are going to implement the initiative to contribute to the process. These actors are asked again, once the technical details are finished.
- Management and leadership are key, for which Copenhagen is a great example. However, in Latin America they are dealing with more structural issues. Officials and buyers are afraid of the subject of sustainable procurement, as it seems unmanageable and complex, but it has a lot of potential and has many benefits that the staff has to realise.
- The work of networks and specific actions, i.e. the ones led by the Red Argentina de Municipios frente al Cambio Climático (RAMCC) working on energy issues or green jobs is an example of what can be done. It is a matter of political decision and opportunity and of people's passion for the subject. Once people are committed, these issues are institutionalised and are not dependent on the political agenda.
- Someone has to bring these networks together in a successful way. You need someone who feels obligated to work towards the creation of a network, not just passionate, because procurers have many other tasks to carry out.

Questions from the audience:

- Q: @Betina; you mentioned the link between the technical staff, the nutrition staff and the legal procurement staff. However, sometimes the technical staff does not see itself as being part of the procurement process. How can we change this conception and spread the word that we need everyone to join forces in this process?

A: We need to look into the data and start to look at politics; where do they want to go (nationally, internationally). Then we have to boil all this down to some criteria that have to be included at least. In Copenhagen, for example, the kitchen staff is invited for a meeting where the material of SPFP is discussed. Different aspects (e.g., delivery terms on frequency of food procurement; quantity of vegetables needed or what is more important, price or quality, etc.) are discussed. After this dialogue, a more specific tender material is created by the procurement officer. However, it is the kitchen staff that is ultimately implementing political goals, as they are the ones who cook and prepare the meals. Nonetheless, if technical details are not included in the tender, the specific criteria (e.g., procurement of Fairtrade products) cannot be included in the buying process. A last meeting is then organised to look back at the contract and show how political goals can/could be implemented in practice.

- Q: @Wim; you mentioned that there are currently consultation activities going on where different stakeholders are targeted. Who are those stakeholders and how are the consultations going with different countries? Are there already any results?

A: There are many stakeholders involved, however these are mainly at EU level. The Commission is also in consultation with Member States and it had an open public consultation (which was not specifically about procurement, but on the topic of sustainable food systems in general). The Commission has received feedback from all Member States (around 300 replies). Bigger countries (i.e. France) have delivered more replies, but there were also replies from citizens. Right now, almost all stakeholders would favor to go for mandatory criteria. How will this be done? The Commission needs to be empowered to take certain actions. The elaboration of the legal framework is done in collaboration with colleagues from a joint research center. What is also very important is to talk to the service providers, i.e., whether

criteria are able to be implemented. We have to look at what is feasible. The Commission therefore tries to talk to every stakeholder, but mainly to the Member States and to representatives of cities.

- Q: @Marisa; you mentioned that one of the issues is that procurement officers are often not specialised in food, whereas in Denmark this is more or less the case. In Argentina, what could be strategies to support these linkages, to have people more specialised on food procurement?

A: Copenhagen is a great example of SPFP, which I like to share with others. The management is just so important and crucial. In Latin America, we are generally dealing with more structural issues. Whereas in Europe you talk about sustainable procurement and how to implement this, in Latin America we are a bit far from that. I think it is a cultural issue. However, I do believe that it has great potential for the community, the economy etc., even if it implies more work and putting extra effort into specific topics. The RAMCC is a good example of where SPFP is in progress. If we work in a focused way, then we can have a bigger impact. We can do the same with the food domain. It is always a matter of political will. We can do the same as you Betina, I hope. We need to insist on having a good passionate team that wants to commit!

- Q: Are there also procurement networks in other countries or on other continents?

A: There is a small network in Belgium, which is growing right now and establishing slowly. An important thing has been to appoint a chairperson at municipal level, as it helps to coordinate. There is a food procurer network in Latvia as well.

A: In Latin America, one can witness the participation of national procurement areas, but they are without juridical status. However, there are functions with designated persons (e.g., president, secretary etc.). Argentina is a very big country with a wide range of social and economic realities. Once a year the Argentinian network has a meeting hosted by the regional government. It also includes visits to the territory, in order to get to know the reality of the region. There is also public participation. All procurement agents can participate in the discussion of what is going on in the field. It is a very enriching event. The network needed some support and has some funding. It is the same with Mexico. The potential is amazing.

A: We have not done a survey with the Member States. Some Member States are starting to work on this, but some have nothing. This has to be done in a structured way. We need more than a network, maybe imposed by law? Only that way it can make a difference, it might be difficult otherwise. Of course, something very important is to consider this together with Member States, whether such an approach is necessary.

- Q: At European level, is there also consultation, to take into account the side of the producers?

A: In Copenhagen, the suppliers are always gathered for public consultation and the municipality listens to their ideas. Copenhagen also has an organisation that links wholesalers, so they can share common problems. An example is packaging: how do we deal with this growing problem? It is a concern for both sides! There has been a policy in Copenhagen on this. It is a strict rule, which affects the whole chain, but the market is not ready yet. Thanks to evaluation criteria, the market is beginning to slowly change. The municipality also takes care that a neutral party is involved, so that farmers and producers do not meet alone.

A: It is important to have an inter-country network with a good structure and a high level of participation.

A: The Commission clearly needs to take into account vulnerable groups. When we talk about children without meals, we have to not only talk about the environment, but also about social sustainability and education!

Questions & remarks in the chat:

- In Costa Rica, there is a network of suppliers where they share experiences and practices for improvement and training. There are certain procurements that they carry out together and coordinate with each other. Their integration and participation is not mandatory, but was initiated as a practice of the Procurement Unit of the Comptroller General of the Republic. A law has just been passed, which comes into force in December 2022 creating a Public Procurement Directorate of the Ministry of Finance. This law must ensure the professionalization of those in charge of purchasing, standardise specifications and contracts, as well as being able to make consolidated purchases for the central sector and in coordination with the decentralised public sector.

A: you might be interested in this publication on sustainable procurement in Costa Rica from IDOS: <https://www.idos-research.de/en/studies/article/sustainable-public-procurement-as-a-tool-to-foster-sustainable-development-in-costa-rica-challenges-and-recommendations-for-policy-implementation/>

Resources:

- The summary report on consultant activities of the EU: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13174-Sustainable-EU-food-system-new-initiative\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/13174-Sustainable-EU-food-system-new-initiative_en)
- Technical document by the WHO: [How together we can make the world's most healthy and sustainable public food procurement \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/how-together-we-can-make-the-worlds-most-healthy-and-sustainable-public-food-procurement)