

## FOOD SYSTEMS APPROACHES TO THE PREVENTION OF NCDs

**Date:** September 25<sup>th</sup> 2018

**Time:** 13:15 to 14:30

**Location:** Conference Room 3, United Nations HQ

The Government of Norway and EAT in collaboration with Nordic Council of Ministers and the Governments of Sweden, Finland and Indonesia will co-organize a high-level side event under the auspices of the 73<sup>rd</sup> United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The side event will take place on **September 25<sup>th</sup>** at the sidelines of the Third United Nations High-Level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) on September 27<sup>th</sup>, drawing in key actors from this community to join representatives from other sectors and disciplines who contribute to the prevention of NCDs through actions on food systems.

### BACKGROUND

The burden of malnutrition is two-fold and concurrent with devastating rates of undernutrition and overnutrition across the world – as many as 815 million people are hungry and 2 billion are micronutrient deficient while 1.9 billion are overweight and 600 million are obese. Malnutrition is now a leading cause of NCDs, which have proven devastating socioeconomic impacts on individuals, communities, and entire economies. As global population projections point towards 9.5–10 billion by 2050 alongside shifting trends in nutrition, demography and epidemiology, the disease burdens as well as the direct and indirect costs of NCDs face upward trajectories. In addition, with food production itself being among the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions, thus contributing to climate change and environmental degradation, the food system as it stands is harmful to both population health and planetary health. Unless urgent action is taken to shift both production and consumption patterns, we will be unable to address the defining issue of our generation – providing a growing world population with healthy diets from sustainable food systems.

While current food systems pose tangible threats, food also holds vast potential to support human health and environmental sustainability. In its broadest sense, “global food systems” encompass the production, processing, transportation and consumption of food – a fair and sustainable version thereof that is healthy for people and planet can unlock the potential of food. Shared mandates to effect changes within food systems can cut across disciplines and funding streams to involve key stakeholders and decisionmakers in most sectors. Similarly, approaching the prevention of NCDs through a global food systems approach provides a multitude of entry points for policy to effect action. In countries including the Nordics, existing policies from local to national level already address aspects of the wider food system such as nutrition, food culture and identity, public foods and meals, food waste and sustainable diets. Thus, food system actions provide the opportunity to prevent NCDs through a range of disruptive initiatives across a large cross-sectoral value chain, for example by aligning public and private incentives to produce healthy food in the agricultural sector, and not merely through levers limited to health authorities. Ultimately, such a holistic approach to preventing NCDs will also catalyze progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Climate Accord through co-benefits for all.

### THEMATIC AREAS

#### Panel 1:

- **Food from research and health perspectives:**
  - Science on links between the food system and the prevention of NCDs
  - Country perspectives, growing burdens of NCDs, and importance of sustainable and healthy food systems
- **Food from development, climate and sustainability perspectives:** links to and importance of agriculture and food security, the environment and oceans
- **Food from economic and business perspectives:** industry investments and accountability

#### Panel 2:

- **Actions with and for children and youth:** Intergenerational equity and long-term investments for planetary health
- **Urban policies and best practices**
- **Chefs and culinary opportunities**
- **Health systems:** prioritizing the food systems agenda and links to Universal Health Coverage
- **WHO High-Level Commission on NCDs:** recommendations on food and nutrition

**AGENDA**  
(1 hour 15 minutes)

**Welcome & Opening of Session** (3 minutes)

**Opening Keynote** (7 minutes)

“Connecting the dots between food systems and NCDs” (TBD)

Dr. Gunhild A. Stordalen, Founder & Executive Chair, EAT

**Panel 1: The importance of healthy and sustainable food systems for NCDs** (25 minutes)

Panel presentations (5 x 3 minutes)

Q&A (10 minutes)

**Panel 2: Tools and practices to take the shared message forward** (30 minutes)

Panel presentations (5 x 3 minutes)

Q&A (15–20 minutes)

**Concluding Keynote** (10 minutes)

“Aligning efforts for joint action to transform the food systems” (TBD)

Dr. David Nabarro, Curator of the Food Systems Dialogues / 4SD