



**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations**

Prepared for delivery

Habitat III

**Informal hearings with representatives of local authorities associations in
preparation for the Habitat III Conference**

Round table 2 on “Planning and managing the urban spatial development”

Remarks by Lucas Tavares, FAO Liaison Officer to the United Nations

May 17, 2016, UNHQ, New York

Thank you Madam Chair.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is honored to address this informal hearing with representatives of local authorities' associations. I would also like to thank the panelists and previous speakers for their remarks.

Participation of local cities, governments and communities are crucial for the successful implementation of the New Urban Agenda and for sustainable development. FAO embraces these partnerships.

I would like to emphasize that food systems are an essential element of sustainable development and should be considered in urban and territorial planning and design.

As mentioned in a previous intervention by the Major Areas Group Eco-Agriculture Partners, last week, an expert group meeting (EGM) discussed the integration of food into urban planning. The EGM brought together representatives from UN Members, local governments, academic institutions, civil society and of the UN system, including UN-Habitat and the Rome-based food and agriculture agencies FAO, IFAD and WFP. It will provide formal inputs to the Habitat 3 process.

Without repeating what has already been said, I would like to highlight that from production to consumption to waste management, food affects all of us. As such, a holistic approach is necessary to address urban food insecurity and malnutrition and to enable food systems to contribute to healthy, sustainable and resilient cities. This must involve different sectors, including civil society and other stakeholders and different levels of government.



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I would like to add that food insecurity and malnutrition in urban settings is linked to poverty. Urban poor families may spend up to 80 percent of their income in buying food and are especially vulnerable to price shocks and employment instability. Poor urban neighborhoods often have fewer food markets, whether formal or informal, limiting access to nutritious, affordable food. The integration of food into urban planning can help make food physically and economically accessible. This must include well-thought executed rural-urban connections, which can also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions including those associated with transport, thus, contributing to address the climate challenge.

Improving the quantity, quality and diversity of the food available to all city dwellers will also contribute in addressing over-nutrition and obesity, a growing concern in many cities. In other words, if urban planning encourages the creation of healthy food environments we can stimulate healthy and sustainable food consumption.

To conclude, urban planning, from neighborhoods to national levels, is a key tool to operationalize the linkage between SDG-2 (food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture), SDG-10 (inequality), SDG-11 (inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities), SDG-13 (climate action) and to reach the 2030 Development Agenda as a whole.

Thank you for your attention.