



2022 High Level Dinner on Data and Science Report

11 October 2022 | 19:00 – 22:00 | Salone di Palazzo Brancaccio, Rome

“We must build an appetite to use data consistently.”

The High-Level Dinner provided a forum for discussions to feed into the CFS Data Workstream and further the policy recommendations for endorsement at CFS51. The 190 enthusiastic guests included Ambassadors and other representatives of Member States, UN agencies, NGOs, and companies, as well as Deputy Director General of FAO, Beth Bechdol. Discussions were lively and set the tone for engagement in the data workstream, following the HLPE report. The HLD showcased the potential for data collection and analysis to strengthen our food systems and the need to respond to the data gaps in agriculture through data-informed and science based policies for food security and better nutrition.

Addressing the data gaps and challenges requires greater investment in high quality data, more actionable data, the use of new sources of data, the creation of an enabling environment, and increased exchange of data to reduce disaster risk. Data was described as having several key steps: **prioritization, production, curation & aggregation, analysis, interpretation, and use.**

We would like to thank the keynote speaker, Dr. Jyotsna Puri, Associate Vice-President, IFAD, all the facilitators, rapporteurs on the tables and guests for the very lively discussions and insights during the dinner. There is certainly an interest in this workstream, and participants provided lots of ideas.

Prioritizing Global Data Collection

- Data should be credible, accurate, accountable, open, anonymous, trustworthy, secure, reliable, valid, and accessible.
- Funding for data is essential. Public funding for data will encourage data neutrality.
- Invest in data infrastructure to support data collectors and network providers (broadband, computer hardware & software).
- Invest in manpower and technologies for data collection.
- Build data analytical capacity. There is more data than can be processed.
- Data should underpin development decisions.
- Data is needed for consumer choices, relating to nutrition, food origin and sustainability.
- Data is needed for farmer decision making, relating to soil health, inputs, forecasting, predicting yield, revenue streams, optimizing investments, targeting leverage points.

Producing data through best practices



- Food systems data along the value chain, food environment, nutrition and consumption is key.
- Prioritize granular data at a local level.
- Focus should be on regions and contexts where data availability is low.
- Small enterprises are a rich source of both consumer and supplier data.
- Supporting innovation, technology will enhance data reliability and accurate information.
- Technology transfer is required.
- Precision technologies – planting, animal health, fisheries stocks offer new sources of data.
- New technologies need to take into account the formal data provision of nation states.

Capacity Development to enable data



- Data literacy & capacity development – involve educators, communication, to interpret and demand data, behaviour change.
- Further capacity of people to gather information on the ground which underpins data.
- Build stronger capacity for data analysis.
- Create demand for data and information and build an appetite to use data consistently.
- Change perceptions of what data can do/relevance to users.
- Bridge digital divide and build national capacity for reliable national data.

Data Collaboration



- Consider a standardization body to validate methodology and data quality, interpretation of data/compatibility. Establish common benchmarks and methodologies.
- A mechanism for donating data, with a guarantee it will be used the right way to inform policy.
- Private sector will need dialogues and incentives to share data.
- Governments should play a lead role in creating a collaborative environment for all stakeholders, PPPs and confidence.
- Political will to is needed build trust to curate and aggregate data. Data should not be subject to political priorities “pressures”.
- National governments want a strong role in curating data.

Analysis is key challenge

- Big data means there is a lot of data and capacity is needed to analyse and use it well.
- Resources are needed to analyse data. More funding should go in this area.
- Set up systems of data collection and dissemination to countries. Prioritize comparability of data across the international system.
- Disaggregation is key to understanding the true impact of the interventions in the food system.
- Nutrition should be included in the analysis of outcomes.
- Independent 3rd party quality assurance e.g. academia or sector experts could assist to check data.

Good data leads to good policies

- Interpreting data should set the direction and priorities for development initiatives. It should carefully guide allocation of scarce resources.
- Validation of data is key for use in policy/decision-making.
- Good data should facilitate trade.
- Standards, reliability, and acceptability of methodology and how data is used is essential.
- It is important to interlink qualitative and quantitative data.

Uses for Data

- Data needs to be used – not just produced. Data should inform decisions.
- Understanding the impacts of the food system on poverty, inequality, nutrition and the environment.
- Countries in food crisis and deficit need real time data.
- Information on soil, certified seeds, and crop insurance data is important.
- Invest in problem-related data collection (climate change, carbon footprint, youth, access to finance).
- Data to help de-risk activities/forecasting. The telecom sector is key for farmer access to forecast data.

PSM will actively contribute to the to the CFS Data Collection and Analysis Workstream to address the current data gaps and challenges that affect farmers and the entire agri-food industry. The dinner clearly showed private sector will be a key partner in data.

We would like to thank the sponsor of this year's event, Bayer, for their generous support.