



KEY TAKE-AWAYS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON FOOD AND NUTRITION: THE IMPACT OF FOOD SYSTEMS AND NUTRITION PATTERNS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

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On Sept. 28, 2018, PPC Executive Director Jody Kass attended the International Forum on Food & Nutrition, hosted by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) and the Barilla Center for Food & Nutrition (BCFN). The focus of the Forum was the impact of food systems and nutrition patterns on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The BCFN and SDSN will present to heads of government a roadmap to achieving the food-related SDGs toward the 2030 Agenda, at the 2019 SDG Summit and at the UN Climate Summit - Sept. 17, 2019 in NYC: <http://sdg.iisd.org/events/un-2019-climate-summit/>. This report reflects Jody's take-aways from the Sept. 2018 Forum.

- **Focus Shift:** There is a growing focus on the importance of food/nutrition at the UN. And, within the discussion at the Food and Agriculture Organization, there is a much greater focus on the F (food) part of the FAO. For years the FAO's primary focus was on Agriculture. There is also more of a focus on non-communicable disease epidemics and how much they are nutrition related.
- **Science:** Even as the focus on nutrition grows, there is growing recognition of the importance of 'good' science and making sure the public understands 'good' science. (The credibility crisis of nutrition science). Moreover, the evidence-based nutrition science has not been translated into policy and that is at the heart of the problem. The transformation of nutrition science took a wrong turn around 1932, when they segregated vitamin C to deal with scurvy. The mistake in our history was applying reductionism to chronic disease - which does not work. It only works for hunger and micro-nutrient deficiency. Very little nutrition science has been translated into policy and that is a big part of the problem.
- **Economics:** We need to fix the economics of the food system. It will be crucial to have the country's and the world's economics reflect priorities - including the financial sector, i.e., lending rates, fiscal policy, subsidies, make sustainable financing available for sustainable action. There should be a focus on investment vehicles - e.g., create a global innovation lab for climate solutions. If we can unlock private investment, it will help get us to scale. We need to mainstream the SDGs, and create incentives for financial institutions to become compliant with SDGs -- make SDGs good for business. Also there is a need to find ways to internalize the true cost of unsustainable food into the point of consumption. And, ideally, we should aim to find common ground with the food industry.
- **Food Paradox:** People are dying of hunger, while others are obese and dying from malnutrition/food borne diseases.
- **It's complicated:** There are important obstacles to progress - the food issue is very complex, and we should not be looking for silver bullet solutions, as they will come at the expense of thoughtful, workable solutions. A lot of interests make a lot of money wrecking the planet and promoting obesity. Our food is addictive -- like cocaine, and the food industry has figured out how to sell it. We shouldn't blame obesity on the individual.
- **It's not too late:** We have to be careful not to lull ourselves into fatalism, nor should we feel like climate is happening to us. Rather, everyone should feel encouraged and responsible to do their part.
- **Communications:** We need to take advantage of the media, and increase engagement via creative and careful communications that speak to people's hearts and souls. It's important to clarify the objectives - or we certainly won't know how to get there. Very little of the science since 2000 has been transferred to policy. We need to stop talking about obesity, as what we need is to increase calories from healthy food.
- **Food Insecurity:** Although there are tens of thousands of plants, just a small percentage of plants feed almost the entire planet, and this adds to food insecurity.

Key Quote Shown on a Slide: "We all know what to do, we just don't know how to get re-elected after we've done it"
- Jean-Claude Juncker (President of the European Commission)

Additional Information:

aBarilla's report on event: <https://www.barillacfn.com/en/magazine/food-and-sustainability/bcfn-strategies-for-sustainable-agriculture/>