

TRANSFORMATION TALKS

South Sudan's Food Systems Governance Opportunity

Discovery & Opportunity session - 9 November 2023

Goals of today

- Validate & refine '**Opportunity Statement**'
- Learn about food systems governance, food systems transformation and how this applies to South Sudan
- Lay the groundwork for the next two sessions:
 - **Deep Dive** - better understand food systems governance through two cases in South Sudan
 - **Insights to Action** - discuss implications and concrete leads to impact (action planning)

Agenda

Session agenda (1h30m):

- Introduction & setting the scene (15m)
 - What is the opportunity in South Sudan's food systems governance?
- Presentation by Prof. Cees Leeuwis, Wageningen University (20m)
 - Under what circumstances can governance interventions deliver positive change for food systems?
- Panel discussion (25m)
 - Dr. Tony Ngalamu, Associate Professor at the College of Natural Resources, University of Juba
 - Dr. Caroline Delgado, Director Food, Peace and Security programme SIPRI
 - Edward Thomas, Research Fellow Rift Valley Institute and X-Border research network
 - Augustino Atillio, Director General Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries, South Sudan
- Group discussion (20m)
- Conclusions & Looking ahead: introduction of the Deep Dive session (10m)

What is food systems governance?

- Food systems are complex networks, actors, dynamics involved in the production, distribution and consumption of food
- Governance of food systems is about:
 - **Trying to manage** the interaction between food production, processing, trade and consumption
 - **While dealing with** relations these areas have to environmental (natural resources, climate change), economic (job creation,), social (...,) drivers
 - **To achieve** beneficial outcomes (food and nutrition security within natural boundaries, realizing economic and social goals)

Who governs food systems?

- Governance of food systems is **not decided by one party, but by many**
- In South Sudan, this includes food producers, processors, traders, companies, government, civil society, **aid organizations, international donors, the UN system** and more..
- **To transform food systems, you have to govern food systems**
 - Ideal governance: fair and inclusive distribution of resources under conditions of security and justice
- Therefore: achieving food systems **transformation** through governance **is about dialogue, changing mindsets and is often political**

Why South Sudan?

- This all seems very complicated, why talk about it in South Sudan which already faces many challenges?
 - Latest IPC analysis (6 Nov/2023): 6 million in Phase 3 (crisis) or higher
 - Main drivers:
 - Economic decline: depreciation of currency, high food prices
 - Conflict & insecurity: displacement, humanitarian access
 - Climatic shocks: floods, dry spells
 - Low agricultural production: drier than average, rainfall deficits

Opportunity statement

- Purpose: to explore new perspective
 - Relatively **large influence** of public sector actors
 - Changing the discussion from technical perspective to **add political dimension**
 - Better food systems governance supports the success of **long-term development** interventions, **beyond immediate relief** efforts
 - Supporting national **food systems pathway** development
 - Identify **transformative action** perspective
- Meant to be challenged & refined

Opportunity statement: problem

Problem: Governance issues are at the root of food insecurity, but are hard to address.

Many of the challenges faced by South Sudan can be related to challenges of governance (fair and inclusive management and distribution of resources, security & justice).

Yet (meta-)evaluation on the effects of development aid between 2008-2021 ([IOB, 2023](#)) shows:

- Very little impact on good governance and rule of law.
- Humanitarian interventions and rural development interventions relatively effective, but only at local level.
- Despite this, consistently worsened food insecurity in past 20 years.

Assumption: Addressing food insecurity requires aid to address governance of the food system

Opportunity statement: impact

Impact: This limits the transformational impact potential of aid

Donors see effective humanitarian interventions and agriculture interventions at small scale, local level, but governance support ineffective. This results in:

- Low donor trust of & investment in government institutions.
- Large amounts of aid funds distributed through parallel systems, substituting government services.
- Parallel aid systems suffer from limited coherence (eg. humanitarian-development-peace nexus coordination challenges).

Assumption: Improved governance of food systems required for transformational results of aid

Opportunity statement: the opportunity

Opportunity: By Leveraging, institutionalizing and scaling successful food systems governance initiatives, aid interventions can help transform food systems to deliver better food security in South Sudan

- Leverage the dynamic of the Food Systems Summit National Pathways - current international focus (+prospect of funding) a unique opportunity.
- Operationalization of these pathways and their integration into programs offers a chance to align and institutionalize successful (food systems) governance innovation.
- Identify strategic food systems governance initiatives delivering improved food security and resilience - organize support via FSS pathways.

Assumption: It is possible to identify and support food systems governance initiatives that lead to transformative impact of aid in South Sudan