WEBINAR: UNRAVELLING THE FOOD-HEALTH NEXUS

ADDRESSING PRACTICES, POLITICAL ECONOMY, AND POWER RELATIONS TO BUILD HEALTHIER FOOD SYSTEMS

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#FOODSYSTEMS4HEALTH
WEBINAR: UNRAVELLING THE FOOD-HEALTH NEXUS
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Agenda
11:00 Welcome and Introduction
   Scott Hersh, Webcast Pro
   Jennifer Pratt Miles, Meridian Institute
   Ruth Richardson, Global Alliance for the Future of Food

11:10 Presentation of Unravelling the Food-Health Nexus Report
   Cecilia Rocha, IPES-Food/Ryerson University

11:25 Discussants
   Roberto Ciati, Barilla Group
   Simon Poole, True Health Initiative
   Olivia Yambi, IPES-Food

11:40 Q+A

12:00 Conclusion
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Ruth Richardson
Cecilia Rocha
Roberto Ciati
Simon Poole
Olivia Yambi
Questions

• How do food systems impact human health?
• How much do we know about these impacts and how well are these food-health linkages understood?
• What challenges do we face in terms of building a comprehensive understanding of these impacts?
• What are key leverage points for consolidating the knowledge base on food-health linkages, improving our understanding of the risks generated by food systems, and building healthier food systems?
Our industrial food systems are making people sick.

HOW WE PRODUCE, DISTRIBUTE, MARKET, PREPARE, EAT AND DISPOSE OF FOOD HAS A SIGNIFICANT AND GROWING COST TO PUBLIC HEALTH
Grouping the Evidence: 5 CHANNELS OF IMPACT

- OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS
- ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION
- CONTAMINATED, UNSAFE & ALTERED FOODS
- UNHEALTHY DIETARY PATTERNS
- FOOD INSECURITY
Impact Channel 1: OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS

People get sick because they work under unhealthy conditions.

Pesticides are responsible for an estimated 200,000 acute poisoning deaths each year – 99% of those in developing countries.
Impact Channel 2: ENVIRONMENTAL CONTAMINATION

People get sick because of contaminants in the water, soil or air.

Up to 30% of global GHG emissions have been attributed to food systems.
Impact Channel 3: CONTAMINATED, UNSAFE & ALTERED FOODS

People get sick because specific foods they eat are unsafe for consumption.

In 2010, there were an estimated 600 million cases of food-borne illnesses and 420,000 deaths.
Impact Channel 4: UNHEALTHY DIETARY PATTERNS

People get sick because they have unhealthy diets.

According to one study, obesity has roughly the same economic impact ($2 trillion USD) as smoking or the combined costs of armed violence, wars and terrorism.
Impact Channel 5: FOOD INSECURITY

People get sick because they can’t access adequate food at all times.

2 billion people worldwide suffer from micronutrient deficiencies and nearly 800 million suffer from calorie deficiency.
THE HUMAN AND ECONOMIC COSTS ARE SEVERE AND GROWING

THE BALLOONING COSTS OF HEALTH IMPACTS IN FOOD SYSTEMS

@IPESfood

@futureoffoodorg
WE KNOW WHAT’S LEADING TO THESE HEALTH IMPACTS

- Chemical-intensive monocropping
- Intensive livestock production
- Mass production and marketing of ultra-processed foods
- Development of deregulated and dangerous supply chains
WHAT IS PREVENTING ACTION?
7 Main Challenges

1. **Systemic blind spots in the evidence-base:** What we know about food systems impacts tends to reflect the relative power and visibility of those affected.

2. **Reclaiming research for the public good:** The general framing of the scientific debate on food-health linkages reflects the differential power of actors to set the terms of discussion.

3. **Bridging the divide between food and agriculture:** The physical and cultural disconnect from agriculture undermines awareness of impacts to which people are themselves exposed.
4. **Broadening the frame of the nutrition problem:** Some framings obscure key connections and undermine the basis for comprehensive understanding and systematic action.

5. **The food-health-climate nexus:** Food systems are a major driver of climate change. In turn, climate change exacerbates a range of health risks associated with food systems.

6. **The food-health-poverty nexus:** Poverty is perpetuated by the low-cost commodity production underpinning modern food systems. In turn, poverty exacerbates diet-related diseases, food insecurity and other health risks in food systems.
WHAT IS PREVENTING ACTION?
7 Main Challenges

7. Communicating complexity at the science-policy interface
Evidence gaps, incomplete transmission of scientific evidence, misleading narratives, and non-interacting discourses converge to create a climate in which the general ability to grasp the functioning of food systems is undermined.
It is the collective strength, consistency, plausibility, and coherence of the evidence brought about by many studies that establish the basis for action.
FIVE LEVERAGE POINTS FOR CHANGE

1. Promoting food systems thinking
2. Reasserting scientific integrity and research as a public good
3. Bringing the alternatives to light
4. Adopting the precautionary principle
5. Building integrated food policies under participatory governance
Building healthier food systems requires ambitious and wide-ranging actions.

The challenge is to keep the whole picture in view, and to bring health alongside environmental integrity and social equity as the common requirements of the sustainable food systems of the future.
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Thank you for attending the webinar.

For more information or to download the full report visit
www.futureoffood.org
or email
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