Let’s get real
How insights in interests and incentives can make the SDG machinery more effective

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Outline

1. Setting the scene
2. Inclusive and sustainable food systems
3. The ECDPM-FAO study on SDGs
4. Getting real; interests & incentives
Setting the scene
Introducing ECDPM

- European Centre for Development Policy Management
- Independent Dutch think tank
- Policies and processes related to different themes, including food security and business
- Research, advise and facilitate dialogue
ECDPM expertise related to food

- Expertise on trade and policy coherence
- Special focus on political economy and regional organisations, e.g. PEDRO
- Private sector engagement
- African policy processes like the African Union’s Agricultural Programme (CAADP) and sustainable food systems
ECDPM expertise related to M&E

- Evaluations for the European Commission eg for DEVCO on research and innovation in food and nutrition security and agriculture

- Private sector engagement eg CSO-business partnerships
Inclusive and sustainable food systems
From food security and value chains...

- From a focus on increasing production
- ...to the four pillars of food security
- and value chain approaches
- Putting consumption in a more central place
... to a food systems approach

- Systems outcomes, drivers and actors
- It’s about the interactions between the elements in the system
- Trade offs and entry points
Van Berkum et al. 2018
Narratives and pathways for solutions

- Decisions on sustainability are political – weighing impacts on different outcome areas
- How sustainability is framed matters for envisaging solutions
- Often narrow definition of sustainability, social dimension under-researched
Who is working on/with food systems

- Last year, adoption of food systems seemed limited to the agricultural domain
- Food systems used as an assessment tool and as an approach
Audience survey

What is the top 3 of development partners doing a good job in embedding the food system approach in their thinking (and practice)?
The ECDPM-FAO study on SDGs
The context
Sustainable Development Goals and sustainable development

- Universal and interrelated
- Not only aid/government but multiple actors
- Leave no one behind – inclusive by principle
Food and agriculture and the SDG

- Food and agriculture have a special role in achieving other goals and targets

- And the other way around: without action in other sectors, sustainable food systems cannot be achieved

- Captured in different targets within SDG2
Food and agriculture and the SDGs
SDGs and monitoring

- SDGs emphasize importance of results framework
- Technical limitations: statistical capacity of countries
- But also at UN level big efforts to develop indicators
The ECDPM-FAO study on SDGs
Emerging findings
Our approach and conceptual framework

- Vertical integration, horizontal integration and stakeholder engagement
- Political economy angle
- Desk study including Voluntary National Reviews and Nationally Determined Contributions, key references
- Survey and interviews with FAO regional representatives and other experts
Our findings

Horizontal integration

- Lessons to be learned from policy coherence
- Useful to adopt a food systems approach also in other sectors like trade or natural resource management

Vertical integration

- Importance of local actors such as local governments is increasingly acknowledged
- Useful to adopt a territorial approach
Our findings (continued)

Stakeholder engagement
- Some innovations in engaging with new stakeholders..
- But also a lot of criticism

M&E (and L?) for SDG implementation
- Much on measuring progress, less on learning and feedback loops between M&E and implementation
Political aspects of monitoring

- Currently efforts towards ‘easy’ indicators
- Choice to invest in measuring is political
- Choice of what to measure is political
- But also: better (accessible) data can spur political will
Monitoring SDGs and governance

Is tracking progress on SDGs changing policy makers behavior?

- SDGs for accountability
- Institutionalisation of SDG accountability to withstand electoral cycles
- Monitoring SDGs chance to engage other stakeholders like civil society organisations and private sector
Deep dive Colombia

- Colombia shows the different faces of SDG

- Story of Medellín: from participatory scenario building to adopting a city food region and integrating an SDG dashboard on the city website

- At the same time, SDG agenda is too weak to influence tensions in fragile regions such as Nariño around trade offs
FAO and the role of the UN

- Despite ‘One UN’ still interests and incentives to work in siloes
- Competition for scarce resources
Getting real; interests & incentives
Political economy and trade-offs

- Trade-offs are unavoidable and need to be navigated more explicitly.
- Actor mapping to understand how ideas, interests and incentives shape behaviour.
- Build coalitions and take advantage of windows of opportunity.
Navigating
Key messages

● Lobby for a broad adoption of food systems thinking

● Include a more systematic political economy analysis

● Understand what drives policy makers change behaviour
Thank you!

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