

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Thursday, 1 April 2021 08:30 GMT +07:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	A commune perspective on factors that shape local food systems
CONVENED BY	HE Sok Silo, Secretary General, the Council for Agricultural and Rural Development
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/10252/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Cambodia

The outcomes from a Food Systems Summit Dialogue will be of use in developing the pathway to sustainable food systems within the locality in which they take place. They will be a valuable contribution to the national pathways and also of interest to the different workstreams preparing for the Summit: the Action Tracks, Scientific Groups and Champions as well as for other Dialogues.

1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

17

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

19-30

11 31-50

5 51-65

1 66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

5 Male

12 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

3 Agriculture/crops
Fish and aquaculture
Livestock
Agro-forestry
Environment and ecology
Trade and commerce

2 Education
Communication
Food processing
4 Food retail, markets
Food industry
Financial Services

Health care
Nutrition
6 National or local government
Utilities
Industrial
2 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

3 Small/medium enterprise/artisan
Large national business
Multi-national corporation
3 Small-scale farmer
Medium-scale farmer
Large-scale farmer
Local Non-Governmental Organization
International Non-Governmental Organization
Indigenous People
Science and academia

Workers and trade union
Member of Parliament
6 Local authority
Government and national institution
Regional economic community
United Nations
International financial institution
Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
3 Consumer group
2 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

HOW DID YOU ORGANIZE THE DIALOGUE SO THAT THE PRINCIPLES WERE INCORPORATED, REINFORCED AND ENHANCED?

The dialogue comprised of two small group discussions in two communes in Kampong Thom province, convened by HE Sok Silo, National Food Systems Convenor, in collaboration with the GIZ Multi-Sectoral Food Security and Nutrition (MUSEFO) project. Both communes participate in the MUSEFO project and therefore, participant invitations were based on already existing trust relationships and the topic of shaping local food systems was complementing MUSEFO's work. Because of the COVID-19 situation, all Stage 2 dialogues are conducted online. Therefore, it was in an act of urgency to include subnational voices into the Stage 2 dialogue process by carrying out physical small group discussions at commune level in a safe way to prevent COVID-19 infections (e.g. open space, social distancing, temperature check, mask wearing and use of hand sanitizer). The participants were purposefully invited, acknowledging the complexity of local food system challenges, and including perspectives from different local stakeholders, such as local authorities, mothers, health staff and workers, farmers, local vendors and teachers. Facilitators were trained to establish an atmosphere during the group discussions where all stakeholders were respectful to each other and hierarchical procedures respecting social norms were followed.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Embrace multi-stakeholder inclusivity: The focus of the event was to include the voices of a variety of local stakeholders. The dialogue embraced the local knowledge and the viewpoints of local stakeholders who are an embedded part of local food systems. To include these local insights is central in supporting the national dialogue process towards the vision and roadmap for "Strengthening food systems for sustainable development in Cambodia."

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT?

Because of the COVID-19 crisis, many countries have shifted their national dialogues to be conducted online. While this ensures the continuation of this urgent dialogue process, the digital divide poses an additional barrier for inclusivity as many villagers or commune representatives lack the equipment, knowledge and connectivity to part-take in online discussions. Even though these local dialogues are carried out in much lower numbers and with less participants, they are essential in confirming the points raised during the high-level stakeholders' discussions. These local dialogues empower local people's voices to underpin the national policy environment or even identify gaps based on the locally experienced real-life challenges and solutions.

3. METHOD

The outcomes of a Dialogue are influenced by the method that is used.

DID YOU USE THE SAME METHOD AS RECOMMENDED BY THE CONVENORS REFERENCE MANUAL?

Yes

No

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

The dialogue aimed to engage different stakeholders from communes to share their views and experiences regarding local food systems. Options for sustainable local food systems were explored and solutions were identified to counteract experienced challenges within the local food systems. Different factors that shape local food systems were discussed such as environmental, infrastructure and technology, food governance, socio-economic and demographic factors.

ACTION TRACKS

- Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
- Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
- Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
- Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
- Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

- Finance
- Innovation
- Human rights
- Women & Youth Empowerment
- Policy
- Data & Evidence
- Governance
- Trade-offs
- Environment and Climate

MAIN FINDINGS

Local food systems are fundamental to livelihoods, economic development, and availability of and access to healthy and safe food. In Cambodia, chronic undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies remain critical, revealing that local food systems may not deliver to their full potential.

The in-depth dialogue highlighted that local food systems face multiple challenges. First, local production of nutritious and safe food is low. Second, producers have challenges to access lucrative markets and to link with distributors. Third, high rural indebtedness, low employment opportunities result in job migration and in a demographic shift towards an older population living in rural areas. Fourth, environmental and climate concerns affecting food production but also community health.

Solutions produced during the discussions encompassed capacity development, access to ICT and digitization. Further, investment in food processing and organization of producer groups was proposed to counteract some of the local food systems' challenges.

Local people have an in-depth knowledge of the aspects that shape local food systems, not only in terms of identifying challenges but also to propose local solutions. It is of utmost importance to include local experiences of daily lived realities in shaping the vision and roadmap for sustainable food systems in Cambodia.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

1. Food production and market access

Local production of nutritious food, such as vegetables, fruits and meat, is low. Especially, small family farms are not able to produce enough nutritious foods to supply the local markets. Communes rely on food imports for nutritious food. The usage of pesticides and fertilizers is high and not controlled, making consumers concerned about food safety when buying at local markets or vendors. Local producers face difficult access to markets and price volatility (prices drop) during harvest season and have difficulties to adjust to the seasonal market dynamics.

Proposed actions:

- Promote household production of nutritious food for own consumption
- The organization of farmers in producer groups or the development of large-scale farms for nutritious food production to increase nutritious food supply
- Establishment of a commune market that can buy from local producers
- Diversification of food production to mitigate seasonal price volatility
- Encourage and build skills for the use of modern technology for agricultural production to increase yield and enable constant market supply
- Capacity building of local plant and animal food producers for food safety
- Use digital platforms and strengthen digital skills to broker business and communication between producers and distributors. Social media, such as YouTube and Facebook can serve as possible broker platforms but also for local producers/processors to create demand for their products.

2. Environmental and climate concerns

Communes experience decreased yields caused by climate change, natural disaster and degraded soil.

Water is a major concern for food producers. During the dry season, rainwater is not sufficient and costs of buying water too high to enable successful and profitable production of nutritious food. During rainy season, flooding is the biggest challenge for food producers.

Communes experience an increased amount of plastic waste, affecting soil and water quality.

Proposed solutions:

- Investment in irrigation systems
- Commune waste management: Installation of garbage bins, collect waste, recycling
- Commune administration to encourage people to use less plastic and to use plant-based packaging such as banana or lotus leaves

3. Socio-economic concerns

Many households in communes rely on remittances and indebtedness is high. Because of low income earning opportunities, people, especially young, are migrating to earn an income elsewhere, leaving mainly elderly people behind. The job migration but also the unattractiveness of the sector to young people, leaves only a limited labour force available for the agricultural sector.

Possible solutions

- Investments in food processing businesses to increase employment opportunities for rural population especially the young
- Investments in modernized agriculture and large-scale production (horticulture and animal husbandry) to create jobs

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KEYWORDS

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	Human rights		Governance
✓	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

During the discussions, no areas of divergence emerged between the participants. The discussions about shaping local sustainable food systems emphasized the importance of food production of nutritious and safe food and promoting food processing businesses for a stable food supply and job creation. It may be due to the time constraints of the discussions that environmentally friendly production in the context of already perceived climate change and environmental concerns were not addressed. In addition, consideration about local governance, traditional food systems, consumer demand and preferences for healthy diets were not part of the discussion but are deemed crucial for shaping local food systems.

ACTION TRACKS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
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KEYWORDS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Policy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Data & Evidence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Human rights	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Governance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Women & Youth Empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trade-offs
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate