

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Thursday, 27 May 2021 11:00 GMT -04:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Faith + Food: Food and Farm Workers
CONVENED BY	Andrew Schwartz, Center for Earth Ethics
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/12773/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Brazil, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Senegal, United States of America

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

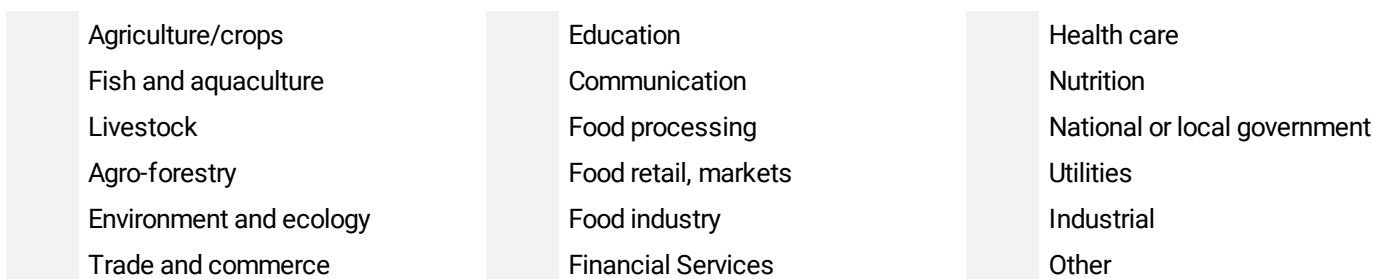
PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE



PARTICIPATION BY GENDER



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR



NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP



2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

These dialogues are organized by a coalition of Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) who agreed upon an internal set of principles. Those principles included respect for one another's beliefs and traditions. Commitment to elevating human rights. Being open to difference. Resolving conflict through mediated dialogue. Amplifying underrepresented voices.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

We consciously chose speakers committed to community development and principles of justice and equity in their work. We committed to multi-stakeholder inclusivity and highlighting the complexity of problems and the solutions. Our dialogues are globally diverse, bring together multiple stakeholders, have multi-faith representation, feature Indigenous voices throughout, and privilege the voices of front line communities.

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

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

We created a hybrid dialogue that took the core elements of multi- stakeholder, global participants and thought provoking questions and scaled it down . Rather than focus on a single action track, we created dialogues for each of the 5 Action Tracks. The scaled down dialogues allowed for robust conversation amongst the participants. We designed them so that there would be opportunities for different points of view, points of divergence and of course emergence. We, in our way, hopefully created a platform for dialogue where people come from different traditions, religious belongings, countries, industries, and ultimately points of view for how the food system needs to transform. There was no disagreement that things must change but the why and how of that change differed for all of the participants. This we believe to be the most important part - that there is no single solution and that any solutions that are created must be culturally and geographically appropriate, and meet people as people rather than as commodities or numbers on a page. True change happens in a society due to shifts in values and worldview. The world is on the precipice of such a shift as more and more are becoming acutely aware of the climate crisis and the impacts of adding another 3 billion people to our population by 2050. Tensions are rising and violence is happening but so too are efforts for collaboration and peacemaking. In cultivating this hybrid dialogue, we have created spaces for the grassroots to be in conversation with the grasstops. Change can only happen when we listen and learn from one another in spaces that are egalitarian and democratic so we have tried to create such a space in our dialogues.

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

There were three primary focus areas for this dialogue:

The first focus area was the human relationship to land and farming, and why that relationship has become strained. The majority of the speakers in our session were from countries that had been colonized by Europeans who exploited the land and people of the colonized territories for the benefit of the colonizing nation. In the words of one of the presenters, Dr. Louis Petersen, "After so many years of colonization and slavery, they look at the land as the scene of the crime." This sentiment was shared strongly by the speakers from Senegal, Dr. Aliou Niang, and Dr. Meera Baidur from India, both of whom spoke to the exploitation of land and people alike by colonizing agents. Prior to colonization by the French, the Diola people of Senegal held a sacred relationship with the land and especially with the rice. They did not produce more than they needed and relied upon bartering and generosity to meet the community's needs. When the French introduced peanuts and currency the traditional farming and societal structure of the Diola was broken and led to inequality and oppression from internal and external agents. Much like the practices of modern day agro-corporations, workers and the land are needlessly exploited and the benefit of their outcomes are funneled away from the community into the agents who exploit them.

The Second focus area was the role of spirituality, religion, and ritual in reorienting people to the land. There was a point of emphasis put on how we value and objectify the land (and the people who work it) which causes our relationship to food production to be impersonal and inhumane. Increasingly global supply/value chains are extremely long so that consumers have no relationship with the producers other than a transactional one. Farm and food workers have very little say in what they farm or produce or make or sell which further dehumanizes the relationship between people and the land. An antidote to this broad objectification is to re-engage our spiritual connectedness to the land and recognize the sanctity of the relationship. Dr. Baidur found that her Hindu faith and the practice of praying and giving offerings to the local gods helped center her relationship to the food and land.

A Third focus area was on smallholders and localization. Our food systems have become overly commodified and industrialized placing major emphasis, reliance, and money in large argo-corporate producers. This model is driven by profit and metrics on a spreadsheet that give little accord to the health of the land that produces the food nor to the workers who harvest it nor to community based farmers and food workers. The system is unbalanced and this imbalance systematically disadvantages smallholders.

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 type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods
<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS

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

MAIN FINDINGS

Sanctity of human - land relationship

- In order to create change within our food systems our food systems must pivot away from a purely consumptive model of production and distribution towards one that take into account the intrinsic value of nature and the people who produce and distribute food.

- Land must be recognized as essential and in its own way sanctified and full of meaning beyond that which the markets give it

- Land and soil must be protected

- The people who work the land and serve food must be treated with dignity and respect, and not as industrialized things to be used and abused.

Worker justice -

- People and the land cannot be seen as objects to be exploited for profit

- Workers will not treat the land with dignity if they are not treated with dignity

- Farm and food workers need to be provided a living wage. Too many farmers don't earn enough to adequately provide for their families

- Support place based, cultural and ecologically appropriate food growing that empowers local growers to provide for themselves and their communities

- Incentivize development funders to invest in community based food systems

- Incentive growing models that produce diverse crops that are bioregionally appropriate

- For communities reliant on tourism, create ties between tourist boards and indigenous foods and cuisine

- Encourage cooperatives and farm collectives to support local growers.

- End neocolonial practices of land grabs and worker exploitation that are tacitly given license through international trade agreements

- End practices that cause people to disassociate from the land;

- End practices that extract without replenishing;

- End practices that exploit without regard for people or planet

- Put an end to the violence of the food system that exploits people and the planet

- Put an end to child labor

- Even out systemic imbalances built into food systems that disempower smallholder farmers, - workers, women

- Move development money away from mega-growers

- Create and enforce international regulations to discourage the exploitation of farm workers

- Mandate living wages for farm workers

- Change worker conditions and pay structures that incentive a reliance on migratory workers and working conditions that allow for abuse and exploitation

- Break down socio-cultural mores that disempower and exploits women's labor

- Provide education and early support for women and mothers who are the first to introduce and educate the young about food.

- Provide education and support to mothers and families about the benefits of breastfeeding.

- Women empowerment and women farmers are discriminated against. Gender based violence.

- Social norms that don't recognize their work or rights. Food systems are mainly run by women yet they are deeply disempowered.

- Women are often paid less and are more likely to be farm workers. Must create egalitarian working structures

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- 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

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/4

How can we advance equitable livelihoods for farm and food workers?

- Provide protections for farm and food workers through policy.
- Reorient the value-chain to bring protections and living wages to workers
- Provide incentive and protection structures for smallholder farmers.
- Regulate the land and the people who protect the environment and the people in leadership who need to help secure the livelihoods of those who work
- Establish cooperatives and collectives to give workers ownership of the lands they work
- Engage and empower women. Women compose a majority of the farming workforce and yet have a limited voice due to cultural and religious mores.
- Install mechanisms to redistribute the monopoly of power held by major agro-corporations and other big businesses to workers and smallholders
- Provide education and opportunities to young people so that they can farm their own land or land help by co-ops to encourage a new generation of healthy, community farms

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/4

How can faith, religious, spiritual, or Indigenous traditions support farm and food workers?

- Revive traditional agriculture and cultural practices around land management and farming to help inform modern practices
- Engage spiritual traditions to recover earth and worker honoring rituals to repair the relationship between land and workers.
- Emphasize spirituality over religion. Religion too often has been used as a tool of division. Spirituality, however, is deeply personal as well as communal and can be used as a tool to build community bonding based on personal experience
- Utilize eco-feminism and eco-theology to empower women and educate men in order to break power structures used to oppress women
- Leverage spiritual and Indigenous wisdom about the sanctity of the earth and what we harvest from it.
- Use religious and spiritual and Indigenous traditions to break from the Cartesian relationship between humans and non-humans
- Provide education in religious institutions to show the integral relationship between human health and environmental health
- Leverage religious institutions and power structures to advocate for workers and promote egalitarian ways of farming, working, and being together in community
- Spirituality is a major driver for individuals and communities in our food systems. We need to emphasize spirituality more in our systems
- Religious, faith, Indigenous and spiritual leaders need to call arbiters of power in our food systems to account for failing food and farm workers due to systemic imbalances that oppress people and planet alike

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/4

How is climate change impacting workers?

- From the highlands of Guatemala to the island of Puerto Rico, increased storms and droughts and floods devastate crops. There must be increased safety nets for farm and food workers when-and-if their crops fail
- Collectives and cooperatives need be expanded to provide support structures to provide resilience in the face of climate disasters
- Protect and preserve and regenerate soil
- Plant indigenous and bioregionally appropriate foods to encourage ecosystem health, resilience, and the regeneration of flora and fauna key to local ecosystem vitality

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/4

How do our systems need to change to better support workers?

- We must reform land tenure and land ownership models.
- We need to account for externalities within value chains and not pass them off to the workers, communities, and ecosystems that are negatively impacted
- There need to be regulations to support living wages for workers as well as meaningful penalties for employers who exploit workers
- Women must be guaranteed equal pay and equal protections.
Invest in education for children and rural communities about the importance of soil, crop diversification, and kitchen gardens
- We have to break the narrative that food is an economic activity. It is culture. It is who we are. It is spiritual.
- Food systems must prioritize the needs of the communities who supply the food.
- Cooperative, unions, and collectives can help break the imbalance built into the food system
- We must shorten value chains so that people have a closer relationship to the food they are consuming.
- We must create safety nets to account for shocks. These safety nets should be funded by governments, agro-corporations, and built into trade deals to protect the workers.
- Eradicate child labor
- Food systems are mainly run by women yet they are deeply disempowered. We must shift social norms and worker regulations to protect and empower women in the workforce

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

n/a

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

RELEVANT LINKS

- **Farm and Food Workers Rights**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psU0UU7S-rg&t=2s>