

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Friday, 23 April 2021 11:00 GMT -04:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	Sustainable Agri-Food Value Chains / Durabilité des chaînes de valeur alimentaires
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Natasha Kim, Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy Branch / Sous-ministre adjointe, Direction générale des politiques stratégiques, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada / Agriculture et agroalimentaire Canada
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/13613/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/13613/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Member State
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	Canada

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

49

## PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

19-30

31-50

51-65

66-80

80+

## PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

Male

Female

Prefer not to say or Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

Agriculture/crops

Fish and aquaculture

Livestock

Agro-forestry

Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

Education

Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

Financial Services

Health care

Nutrition

National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

Other

## NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

4 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

3 Multi-national corporation

1 Small-scale farmer

1 Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

7 Local Non-Governmental Organization

16 International Non-Governmental Organization

1 Indigenous People

9 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

3 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

United Nations

International financial institution

2 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

2 Other

## 2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

We embraced multi-stakeholder inclusivity by inviting diverse participants from various sectors, locations and stakeholder groups. We used a gender-based analysis plus lens to also consider diversity in the composition of individual participants. All facilitators and note-takers were briefed on the Summit principles and provided guidance on how to ensure they are addressed and promoted in discussion groups. This included ensuring respect among participants, abiding by Chatham House Rule to establish trust and encouraging participants to recognize complexity in conversations. We will circulate the report to all participants to ensure transparency. We invited an independent non-profit research stakeholder to give a short presentation before the discussion groups to help contextualize the dialogue.

### HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

It included diverse participants from multiple stakeholder groups. The topics chosen were complex and participants frequently noted the need to move beyond siloed thinking. Outcomes of the dialogue will help to inform Canadian positions and actions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to commit to action at the Summit. Connections between stakeholders during the Dialogue can contribute to future multi-stakeholder processes in Canada.

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

N/A

# 3. METHOD

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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

This dialogue engaged Canadian actors on actions to improve how Canadian involvement in global agri-food value chains can drive positive change in the food systems of developing countries, especially for women. The discussions were framed by the Sustainable Development Goals to consider the environment, social and economic implications of Canadian actions. The focus of the Dialogue was on links to developing country food systems through agri-food imports into Canada from developing countries, Official Development Assistance (ODA) and international trade rules.

The discussion topics were:

1. By 2030, Canadian actors will better support smallholder farmers, especially women, in developing countries to retain a greater value for agri-food products in local and global value chains, while also promoting women's rights, empowerment and nutrition.
2. By 2030, import market for agri-food products into Canada are responsive to concerns about tropical deforestation and biodiversity loss and are consistent with Canada's priorities to advance gender equality.
3. By 2030, more agri-food imports from developing countries into Canada are certified under voluntary sustainability initiatives that consider environmental, social and economic sustainability.
4. By 2030, transparent agri-food trade, based on science and international rules, has contributed to the achievement of SDG2 and promotes positive social and environmental outcomes.
5. By 2030, Canada is a leader in supporting inclusive markets for and consumption of nutritious neglected, indigenous and underutilised crops and livestock in developing countries.

### 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
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## MAIN FINDINGS

- Greater coherence is needed between Canada's domestic and international agendas, including in relation to agriculture, climate, trade, Indigenous food systems, and ODA. This was brought up in multiple discussion groups.
- Improved access to financing and control over resources (land, labour) by women smallholder farmers is key to increased production and ensuring a greater value is retained for agri-food products. This will also contribute to women's empowerment and improved nutrition.
- Solutions, including investments, research and programming support, should be context-specific and developed in coordination with local communities, especially women and Indigenous Peoples who are often left out of decision-making processes. The idea of using a participatory approach was also raised in discussions of developing standards (voluntary or not) so as to include all supply chain actors in the design of standards, including those at the farm level, and to share resourcing and benefits along the supply chain as well.
- Participants across multiple discussion groups agreed on the need to redefine value across food systems to encompass social and environmental dimensions which are often overshadowed by economic ones.
- Social and environmental sustainability in international agri-food value chains should be supported by dedicated provisions in trade agreements. These agreements should seek to be relevant in local contexts as well as global, though this is difficult in practice, and be supported by evidence-based international standard setting.
- Supply chain traceability and due diligence is necessary to capture sustainable food systems impacts and outcomes, especially at the farm level. However, these types of initiatives are not simple to implement.
- There were divergent views surrounding how and to what extent global food systems/supply chains positively or negatively impact local food systems through effects on things like farmer livelihoods, food security or environmental outcomes.

### ACTION TRACKS

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/6

Topic 1: By 2030, Canadian actors will better support smallholder farmers, especially women, in developing countries to retain a greater value for agri-food products in local and global value chains, while also promoting women's rights, empowerment and nutrition.

Participants' views on actions that are urgently needed:

- Power dynamics must shift from international civil society organisations to empowering local organizations, as they are better positioned to implement programs.
- Access to financing would be a game changing solution for small-scale (female) farmers and organizations such as women led cooperatives. This would require the mobilization of significant international financing (for instance through a global investment matching fund).
- Identification of the root causes of gender inequality in each area is needed prior to investing.
- Women's access and control over resources and infrastructure, including land tenure, water access, labour (some people won't work for women run businesses) and access to affordable finance and financial literacy programs.
- Better supply chain traceability that reaches to farm level and measures social as well as productive performance.
- Research on the value women bring to their communities, especially Indigenous women that do not participate in long value chains yet feed their communities.
- Shift towards shortening of the supply chain to more regional and national needs, promoting the role of women. Not all farmers want to be a part of a global agenda.

Who should take these actions?

- Systems approach: a value chain analysis can identify the correct actors and areas to maximize effectiveness of interventions. Information, communication, and governance issues are crucial in selecting appropriate, rather than just flashy, investments such as products and technology.
- Women: Women around the world know what approach is right for their own communities. Development projects should allow them to lead and develop programs themselves. They hold the techniques to transform food systems and their knowledge is crucial to changing the nature of the game.
- Farmers: In a food systems approach, farmers should be first and have the decision-making power. All food systems interventions should start with supply side issues to value and incentivize indigenous knowledge and practices and localize food systems as much as possible.
- Governments: Historically they have adopted a top-down approach assuming that farmers need direction. Governments must walk beside local communities and ask what policies are needed to provide context-specific support for infrastructure and investment. Once goals have been identified, collaboration and iterative programming across industries is key
- Private Sector: Businesses need to understand why women's participation is important. Often they do want to involve women but are not always sure how to do so.
- Male champions: Some programs run the risk of a push back from men and all precautions must be taken to mitigate potential for violence. It is important to actively engage men and pay attention to drivers of violence within food systems.

Ways in which progress could be assessed?

- Three pillars toward equitable food systems: agency, control of resources and opportunity structures (institutions and policies).
- Gender is a cross cutting issue: it runs through many of the other SDGs. It can be a means to achieve other objectives such as climate adaptation or deforestation issues, as well as an end in itself.
- Value is not only monetary. There is an enormous social return on investments in gender equality – societal and economic value are both important.
- Quantitative and qualitative data are needed to understand barriers to women's participation, including discrimination.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/6

[Topic 1 continued...]

Challenges that might be anticipated as actions are implemented:

- Must take care not to shoehorn women into economic systems that are biased against them. Beyond support to smallholder farmers, other rights can help such as right to food and right to work.
- Scientific evidence should be more contextualized. Most research is of no use for smallholder farmers, as it adheres to a Eurocentric farming model.
- There are no one size fits all solutions for investments in gender equity.
- Women farmers know what is needed and have the expertise to increase production and retain greater value but they often lack the required financial resources. Mentorships can help.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/6

Topic 2: By 2030, import market for agri-food products into Canada are responsive to concerns about tropical deforestation and biodiversity loss and are consistent with Canada's priorities to advance gender equality.

Participants' views on actions that are urgently needed:

- Build environment into trade agreements (e.g., Mercosur) which should have legally binding environmental clauses.
- Provide incentives to farmers in developing countries to adopt more sustainable production practices. This can include funding through ODA or payments for ecosystem services.
- Support education or subsidies for consumers to shift demand for food commodities domestically.
- Align domestic and international agendas, including ODA, trade.
- Monitor along the value chain including through traceability and due diligence.
- Investments in new digital technologies can help make step-wise changes to traceability and structuring of the food supply chain.
- Explore national standards/legislation. Effort to develop national sustainability index going on now in Canada. This could be leveraged to go out and inform. Start at home to get our story and evidence in line, and then globally promote.

Who should take these actions?

- Government of Canada with greater coherence of actions across government departments.
- Agri-food private sector, including Canadian companies involved in food import or food transformation.

Challenges that might be anticipated as actions are implemented:

- Trade offs are very difficult – food, forest, biodiversity, income, governance. It is a challenge to balance these, but all interconnected.
- On traceability and enforcement – agreement on importance, but very difficult to do. Available technology is lacking in order to enable and invest in traceability as much as we can.
- Locally developed and implemented solutions are needed. Developing countries should not be forced into positions by developed countries when they cannot or do not want to comply. Incentives are needed.

### ACTION TRACKS

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/6

Topic 3: By 2030, more agri-food imports from developing countries into Canada are certified under voluntary sustainability initiatives that consider environmental, social and economic sustainability.

Participants' views on actions that are urgently needed:

- A more participatory approach to standards development: development and use of voluntary standards must include all supply chain actors, including at the farm level.
- Sharing of benefits and costs: Benefits of standards (price premiums) and costs of adherence/implementation must be shared along the supply chain. Too often, costs are borne by farmers and benefits are seen at retail level.
- Tools to facilitate adherence: A digital solution that would enable a farmer to demonstrate adherence to multiple standards and reduce paperwork would be a major help.
- Alignment: Coherence between Canada's trade policy, domestic agricultural and climate policy and ODA is required, as is alignment between commodities and across the supply chain.
- There are currently multiple sustainability standards in play, as well as some existing efforts to harmonize standards, which could be aligned to share capacity and reduce burden on farmers.

Who should take these actions?

- The Government of Canada, donors and other investment actors, supply chain participants

Ways in which progress could be assessed?

- Government policy changes and ODA spending
- Import statistics
- Creation of new tools to support use of standards and verification

Challenges that might be anticipated as actions are implemented:

- Projects may fail when new obligations are placed on farmers without adequate compensation.
- Standards could continue to be imposed on farmers, rather than co-developed.
- Costs of implementation might continue to be a major barrier, and/or keep the most marginalized farmers out of the system.
- When brands undertake a process to improve sustainability of supply chain, they may worry about being guilty by association (or guilty by omission). A culture of transparency must be built.
- Can be difficult to avoid "gatekeepers" and be able to access the farm level.
- Lack of public trust stemming from redundancy/proliferation of standards that do not become harmonized or equivalent.
- "Green-washing" or "block-chain washing".

### ACTION TRACKS

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/6

Topic 4: By 2030, transparent agri-food trade, based on science and international rules, has contributed to the achievement of SDG2 and promotes positive social and environmental outcomes.

Participants' views on actions that are urgently needed:

- Must work to break down silos between trade, environment, food security and health, including in relation to discussions of international trade rules.
- Trade policy needs to be able to be discussed outside of the WTO and the WTO needs to allow other voices to be heard to ensure that discussions are not solely focused on economic point of view. This recommendation links to calls for WTO reform.
- Need to look at expanding avenues of solutions through novel provisions in trade agreements like health and environment chapters.
- Regulatory environments should be streamlined in order to improve economic efficiency and ensure that regulations can keep up with the pace of innovations related to improving food security (e.g., precision agriculture, sustainable intensification).
- Global standards development is important to support coherent approaches to ensuring the economic, social and environmental sustainability of agri-food products.

Who should take these actions?

- Government of Canada to set domestic regulations.
- Government of Canada, other UN member states, International Standard-Setting Bodies to agree on evidence-based international standards to guide regulatory frameworks.

Challenges that might be anticipated as actions are implemented:

- Difficult for global trade rules or international standards to be sensitive to local context while still being globally relevant.
- Domestic and international markets can be complementary, but it's not easy to address the trade-offs.
- Difficult to have trade conversations outside of the WTO.
- Must acknowledge the role that investment and finance play in creating certain outcomes, especially in trade flows between developed and developing countries, which can contradict environmental sustainability initiatives and create negative consequences for food security outcomes in developing countries.

### ACTION TRACKS

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 6/6

Topic 5: By 2030, Canada is a leader in supporting inclusive markets for and consumption of nutritious neglected, indigenous and underutilised crops and livestock in developing countries.

Participants' views on actions that are urgently needed:

- Additional investments in research on production, innovation, and use of nutritious neglected, indigenous and underutilised crops and livestock.
- Increasing knowledge and demand for these products, through support for inclusive markets and national procurement policies, such as school food programs and educational campaigns to promote the nutritional and environmental value of these crops and livestock.
- Engaging with local stakeholder groups such as local farmers, Indigenous groups and women farmer groups to establish context-specific needs.
- Eliminating agricultural dumping which can threaten and disrupt local diversity.
- Rethinking the value of agricultural products beyond an economic perspective to include nutritional, food security, social, cultural and environmental benefits.
- Considering the consequences on the local food systems when trading internationally.
- Offering technical support to local food systems to better mitigate the negative impacts of climate change.
- Offering technical support to local food systems to help with the digitalization of agriculture.
- Inter-institutional coordination in development and research, ensuring that agriculture-for-nutrition programs focus on local priorities.

Who should take these actions?

- The Government of Canada through ODA
- Research institutions like the International Development Research Centre
- Civil Society Organizations and food security networks, women and women's organizations, Indigenous communities and groups need to be central in these conversations

Ways in which progress could be assessed?

- Progress should be based off the needs expressed by the local communities and stakeholder groups.
- Progress should be context-specific.
- Conversations should be brought to the Committee on World Food Security

Challenges that might be anticipated as actions are implemented:

- Canada's domestic and international policies regarding Indigenous food systems and support for traditional crops are sometimes contradictory.
- The current solution statement seems to place value on commercialisation which does not account for many social and environmental benefits of these crops and importance for food security and nutrition.

### ACTION TRACKS

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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

- Some participants placed western science as the basis of developing regulations, standards and trade-rules. Concerns were raised that emotion or philosophy is driving changes in the regulatory environment. Others suggested that scientific knowledge only takes us so far (e.g., we know that chips are unhealthy but we don't tax them). Further comments contested the centrality of western science in defining these rules, highlighting other forms of evidence and knowledge.
- Open trade promoted as the key solution to SDG2 by some actors, for others it is only one of the answers and for others it was seen as having more negative consequences than positive, particularly in how global trade can disrupt local markets in developing countries.
- Participants disagreed on the extent of the role that trade can play in effectively addressing nutritious neglected, indigenous and underutilised crops and livestock. Some believed that the inclusion of trade and markets diluted the conversation away from key issues such as food security. Others argued that exports are critical in some contexts and that there is room for both local and global supply chains.

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# ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

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## RELEVANT LINKS

- **Canada's Member State Dialogues**  
<https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/about-our-department/key-departmental-initiatives/food-policy/leadership-2021-united-nations-food-systems-summit-and-dialogues>
- **Concertations des États membres organisées par le Canada**  
<https://agriculture.canada.ca/fr/propos-notre-ministere/initiatives-ministerielles-importantes/politique-alimentaire/leadership-sommet-systemes-alimentaires-nations-unies-2021-concertations>