

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 25 May 2021 16:00 GMT +10:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Multi-stakeholder Partnerships for Scaling Agricultural Innovation
CONVENED BY	Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research, and Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/15712/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Australia

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

109

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

9

19-30

39

31-50

55

51-65

6

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

64 Male

50 Female

5 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

13 Agriculture/crops

2 Fish and aquaculture

2 Livestock

3 Agro-forestry

Environment and ecology

11 Trade and commerce

Education

Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

Financial Services

Health care

Nutrition

49 National or local government

Utilities

5 Industrial

61 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan

6 Large national business

Multi-national corporation

Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

Local Non-Governmental Organization

8 International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

33 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

49 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

17 United Nations

4 International financial institution

3 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) looks to achieve more productive and sustainable agricultural systems for the benefit of developing countries and Australia by enabling international agricultural research partnerships. This purpose aligns with that of the UN Food Systems Summit as a people's summit – bringing together key actors from diverse sectors – and a solutions summit – creating tangible, actionable changes to the world's food systems. ACIAR, together with the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), convened this Dialogue to reflect the multi-stakeholder inclusivity and system complexity that informs all of Australia's research and development in international agriculture. The Dialogue sought to recognise the contributions of various international partners and Australian stakeholders (including government, industry and academia) in coming together to tackle complex food systems challenges. The Dialogue was organised so that key international and domestic stakeholders could come together for robust discussion about the value of partnership in developing and scaling innovation. By allowing time for small-group discussions under Chatham House rules, the Dialogue encouraged participants to share the experiences and reflections confidently and freely. This resulted in higher levels of trust among these stakeholders, which will allow deeper exploration of complex issues moving forward.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The Dialogue specifically reflected Principle 6 in encouraging partners to 'complement the work of others', as well as being respectful (3), building trust (7), and embracing inclusivity of diverse viewpoints (5). This Dialogue informs the National process being conducted by the National Convenors at the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, and contributes insights collected from participants using the method as recommended by the UN Food Systems Summit process. Informed by short scene-setting presentations, participants had the opportunity to then break into smaller discussion groups of about ~8-10 people, where discussion was facilitated under Chatham House rules. This afforded participants the opportunity to speak freely and constructively about challenges that arise during the process of innovation that will allow us to transform food systems. The Dialogue brought together a wide variety of stakeholders from 29 countries and represented a truly global collaborative effort to explore partnerships in innovation. Representation was from: Australia, Belgium, Cambodia, Canada, Denmark, Fiji, France, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kenya, Kiribati, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States, and Vietnam. Please note that some participants chose to self-select into multiple categories for sector and stakeholder identification, and some did not self-categorise (explaining the discrepancy in participant numbers across sector/stakeholders).

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

The 'Principles of Engagement', as outlined by the Food Systems Summit, provide guidance for National Food Systems Summit Dialogue Convenors, and should be considered as a useful starting point. Dialogue Convenors are encouraged to consider modalities and processes which suit their national circumstances.

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

This Dialogue, convened by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) and the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), focused on the role of partnerships in successful agricultural innovation. This theme of partnership was explored through five suggested foundations of partnership, which are integral to ensuring success at each stage of innovation and scaling out solutions for maximum impact.

As Australia's principal agricultural research for development ACIAR has a long history of building lasting, effective partnerships, which allow for Australia to support collaborative research in local contexts and deliver benefits domestically and abroad. Building on this strong foundation the Dialogue brought together research and development stakeholders from around the world to reflect on the elements of partnership that have allowed Australia to support science and innovation in low and lower-middle-income partner countries.

The key learning from the Dialogue was the five foundations that should be considered in building partnerships as we scale food systems solutions:

- Effectively managing risk
- Promoting inclusivity
- Integrating systems thinking
- Defining impact
- Strengthening capabilities

Through the Dialogue it was demonstrated that strong partnerships require that each of these elements is considered at each stage of innovation. Innovation is a process of creating value by applying knowledge or technology to a complex challenge in a novel way. This process is not linear, but often moves through four general stages of problem definition, options analysis, testing and validation, and scaling. Different stages of innovation require different forms of collaboration, and the scaling stage in particular relies on effective partnerships that help translate and apply innovative solutions to new contexts. With a focus on scaling solutions globally, the UN Food Systems Summit provides an opportunity to codify foundational elements of partnership that will support and govern innovation efforts.

Since the convening of this Dialogue, the UN Food Systems Summit has notably expanded the Action Tracks to include the cross-cutting area of (6) Governance and Planning. Australia supports and funds agricultural research for development with a strong focus on capacity building and collaboration. ACIAR is celebrating a 40-year history of long-term partnerships and collaborative research planning that has laid the groundwork for ongoing research to be taken forward by partner countries and organisations. By supporting governance structures for international research organisations such as the CGIAR, Australia has also contributed to the global pool of knowledge and resources for planning the future of sustainable food systems.

While the theme of this Dialogue was particularly relevant to the Innovation lever of change, partnership is also key to unlocking the other change-levers including gender, human rights and finance. Partnership is the mechanism through which all of these levers will be operationalised in order to create tangible change in the world's food systems.

This Dialogue brought together Australian and international stakeholders to discuss how partnerships are instrumental in scaling solutions across all of the UN FSS Action Tracks. Participants were able to discuss tangible elements and application of partnership through their own examples of innovation, and share best-practices with one another. These learnings will continue to inform progress towards the SDGs through collaborative scaling of game-changing innovations through the next decade.

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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- ✓ Policy
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- ✓ Governance
- ✓ Trade-offs
- ✓ Environment and Climate

MAIN FINDINGS

This report seeks to summarise views and perspectives of Dialogue participants and does not represent the views of the Australian Government.

The main findings that emerged from this Dialogue:

1) In order to successfully scale game-changing innovations and propositions that can transform food systems, we will need robust partnerships that bring together different skill sets and capabilities, as identified through the case studies shared as examples.

2) Participants agreed that there are at least five foundational elements of successful partnership, though this is certainly not an exhaustive list. Participants agreed that to work successfully to scale innovation, partnerships need to reflect on and implement these foundations:

a. **Systems thinking:** integrating systems-thinking into the innovation process opens up partnerships to include more varied and dynamic members than might otherwise be involved.

b. **Inclusivity:** promoting inclusivity creates an explicit focus on bringing together diverse viewpoints that might not organically emerge from all partnerships.

c. **Capability:** partnerships can create a successful platform for sharing knowledge and strengthening capabilities, particularly if these activities are actively prioritised.

d. **Risk:** effective risk management is integral to successful partnership, and means that risk is adequately identified, acknowledged, and appropriately shared by all partners.

e. **Impact:** defining impact is key to long-term change. When partners can work towards clearly defined goals, collective efforts are much more likely to create 'game-changing' impact.

3) While many existing partnerships already informally practice the above foundations that contribute to collaborative and productive work, participants agreed that formal practices that institutionalise these foundations of partnerships would improve partnership arrangements and lead to enhanced, wider and enduring impacts.

4) There is recognition that scalable solutions do not emerge from a linear innovation process. Rather, innovation takes place in a number of stages that can meander back and forth between problem definition, options analysis, validation and testing, and scaling.

5) The type and value of partnership across each of these stages may vary, and it is not always the same partnerships that are needed when scaling an innovation as were integral to the options analysis and testing of that same solution. A key question remains: how to maintain strong, purposeful partnerships that are responsive to the challenges of supporting locally-relevant, globally-impactful solutions.

Introductory keynote presentations shared learnings from diverse case studies of innovative practices that could be taken to scale to transform food systems. These examples were shared to prime the participants to think about partnership in action across a number of disciplines and at different stages of the innovation process. Brief notes are below.

SOLAW-LIVE: The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) State of Land and Water (SOLAW) report that is published every 10 years provides a wealth of information that can be used to improve relevant decision-making. A pilot project in the Philippines – supported by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Griffith University, and the Philippines Government (through Philippine Council for Agriculture, Aquatic and Natural Resources Research and Development (DOST-PCAARRD) and the Bureau of Soils and Waste Management) – is testing a 'living assessment framework' that could shift the decadal report into a tool that collects and shares environmental information more quickly and nimbly. Creating an interactive tool and supportive system for gathering, applying, and sharing land and water data could transform decision-making at every level, with greater ability to examine existing practices and identify co-benefits of other responses. At the validation and testing stage, this 'SOLAW-LIVE' tool has enormous potential impact if scaled successfully through supportive partnerships.

Community-based fisheries management: ACIAR has been supporting research relevant to community-based fisheries management (CBFM) for over a decade. Current research efforts draw on the skills and contributions of several partners, including the Australian government and researchers, the New Zealand government, and numerous organisations within the Pacific region, including government, academia and civil society. CBFM is based on collective knowledge and action that draws on systems-thinking to sustainably manage fisheries in a way that also respects local communities. Notably, CBFM requires different types of partnership at different scales to best share and spread this very successful practice. Island-level scaling from a community requires formal and informal networks, while international forums have helped to share and shape transferable lessons for other islands.

Smallholder irrigation: In an Australian–African collaboration, ACIAR funding contributed to the development of the Virtual Irrigation Academy, which brings together new irrigation monitoring tools with an online communication and learning system. This project is already creating global impact, with the Chameleon Soil Water Sensor tool from the project now semi-

commercialised, available and in-use across Africa and Australia. Expanding the partnership and sharing risks (and benefits) among other public and private actors could encourage further scaling of this transformative innovation

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/5

This section reports in greater detail the discussion participants had around the five foundational elements of partnership that were deemed important to successfully scaling innovation. As participants were split into smaller discussion groups, the commentary on each of the discussion topics has come from a relatively small number of participants. Each group shared key takeaways back with the plenary and there was great enthusiasm to delve more deeply into each of these topics.

Systems-thinking

Participants agreed that systems-thinking is needed to optimise food systems innovation. Key reflections about what systems-thinking entails included:

- People are a dynamic, integral part of the food 'system'. Systems-thinking is different to systems analysis or big-data approaches. While considering environmental and technical elements of a systems is important, a people-centred approach to research and innovation is key if systems-thinking is truly to be operationalised. This means that community engagement must be at the heart of food systems change. One participant noted that change arises from working within a system, by stimulating different parts of a system that naturally interact rather than by forcibly changing any particular part of that system.
 - o This raised a further point that building capabilities and capacity should be part of all innovation, in order to create self-sustaining value. Reserving resources to record, review and reflect on previous successes will allow for greater development impacts.
- Reframing the start and end points of innovation may be helpful in stimulating systems-thinking. Systems-thinking supports an iterative process for developing solutions as there can be many strands of ideas and testing at once.
 - o Considering value propositions from the perspective of numerous potential end-users or adopters could help anticipate co-benefits and prioritise research streams.
- Systems-thinking requires both specialists and connectors, with each player recognising their own place in this 'system' of innovation. The role of enablers or knowledge brokers is key in creating partnership structures that define what each actor contributes at each stage of innovation.
- Because of the complexity of systems, they can often be defined as narrowly or broadly as convenient to each party. For successful partnership, assumptions about systems pathways must be clarified and communicated so that all relevant actors, value-chains, etc. are identified, and constraints are agreed upon. This ties to the foundations of defining impact and inclusivity at various scales.
- While systems-thinking should in theory enable multi-stakeholder, cross-disciplinary partnerships, it can actually be the difficulties of partnering that inhibit successful systems-thinking. Participants discussed many of the challenges associated with operationalising systems thinking in innovation:
 - o Competition for resources often results in narrowly-focused solutions because funding arrangements seldom prioritise systems-thinking over timeliness, cost-effectiveness, etc. In order to demonstrate fast, scalable impact in the competition for resourcing, solutions are often pared back in complexity.
 - o Institutionalised funding structures may prevent systems-thinking. Agriculture historically has not often been prioritised in allocations of funding (domestic or development aid), especially in comparison to sectors such as education, health, and trade. How might the traditional 'zero-sum game' be reframed so that partners across sectors see value in collaboration (e.g. 1+1=3 mindset)?
- Systems exist on a number of spatial scales that require different types of actors to be considered or prioritised throughout the innovation process.
- Practical approaches for encouraging systems-thinking in multi-stakeholder partnerships through the innovation process could include:
 - o Resourcing fore-sighting and reflection activities to build a library of good examples accompanied by contextual information
 - o Formalising mechanisms for integrating various scales of systems and enabling multi-scalar connections

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/5

Inclusivity

Participants agreed that inclusivity must drive each stage of innovation, from problem definition to scaling for impact. Key reflections about inclusivity included:

- It is crucial to consciously consider inclusivity during problem-definition stages of innovation, as this allows us to define a common problem in terms that are accessible and relevant to the greatest number of people. Participants noted importance of gender-inclusivity in agricultural innovation, as women are more likely to undertake agricultural activities without access to information, technology, or markets that would create better outcomes (in empowered decision-making, production, and livelihoods).
 - Participants agreed that successful scaling of food systems solutions relies on community understanding and uptake, which in turn necessitates inclusive practices, at least within that community. A point was raised that during the scaling stage of innovation, principles of inclusivity can be overlooked; this is sometimes justified by the fact that earlier stages of innovation were inclusive, but participants agreed that there must be attentiveness to inclusivity when scaling ideas/technology into new contexts.
 - Questions were raised about the relationship between inclusivity and accessibility. Does one necessarily guarantee the other, or are they unfortunately conflated in matters of innovation and development programs?
 - Participants agreed that including voices and considerations of marginalised groups, including women, youth and persons with disabilities, remains of utmost important in research for development activities.
 - Partnerships are key to sharing information effectively, which can in turn improve inclusivity in innovation. In situations where technologies have already been developed, communicating about the contexts in which these technologies have been successful (e.g. which stakeholders were instrumental to applying it successfully, what institutional capacities are required) can help ensure all relevant stakeholders are involved when scaling the technology into new contexts.
 - Inclusivity necessitates systems-thinking and goes beyond collecting stakeholder's views to consider the nexus between social, environmental and economic issues.
 - Informal partnerships are often as important as formal partnerships, and inclusivity should recognise the value of social capital and networks in supporting action towards shared goals.
 - Inclusivity on a large scale will likely accompanied by conflict, as various groups will likely disagree on certain issues. Participants discussed that lessons from work on including specific marginalised groups (like women or youth) in deliberation processes could be harnessed to create guidelines for generalised inclusion processes.
- o In this way, inclusivity or lack there-of carries some element of risk. Conflict around appropriate levels of inclusion is likely to arise, particularly as existing solutions or technologies are scaled into new contexts. Explicit addressing of these issues in multi-stakeholder partnerships could provide greater structure to principles of inclusivity and therefore alleviate risk associated with scaling innovation.
- o Systems at different spatial scales will likely require a focus on different actors. As an example, at a farm-scale level, farmers and private industry might be prioritised in developing farm-level solutions that maximise smallholder returns, but when considering innovation at the catchment-level, regional or national authorities, water-user associations and other large institutions may set different priorities which may be less inclusive of smallholder participation. What is the responsibility of partnerships across every system-level to include actors from different scales?
- o There was some agreement that scaling innovation at the expense of inclusivity could be one step forward, but two steps backwards in achieving the SDGs and reducing global poverty in a sustainable way.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/5

Risk

Participants agreed that effectively identifying and proactively sharing risk burdens could improve partnerships and collaborations, further optimising the innovation process. Some key discussion outcomes included:

- The process of innovation carries inherent risk-taking, as the process of discovery, validation and application of new solutions will not always result in the impactful changes envisioned and can have unintended system consequences. Reframing innovation as a process of iterative learning may encourage greater risk taking. However, there will always be a tension in research for development, which seeks to iteratively create sustained impact while often needing to address urgent issues. Despite being urged to 'think big', researchers seem to agree that starting small and enhancing solutions is progressive innovation that can eventually achieve the same large impacts but with lower risks.
- Participants discussed that institutional arrangements that fund and support research can sometimes encourage projects that seem to over-promise and under-deliver, as the available resources are limited, and the true expectations of funders are not always communicated. This can lead to risk-aversion in public innovation processes, particularly when there are few resources available for long-term forward planning into future stages that is needed to create sustained value.
 - o This raised reflections on the level of innovation common in public and private sectors, and whether there is sense in adopting private-sector risk levels and approaches. Even if there was value in this strategy, how could it be operationalised given that the drivers and motivations of each sector remain so different? However, if the difference in risk-appetite between public and private is not overcome, it will continue to be difficult to form robust partnerships between sectors, further stifling global innovation.
- Participants identified that a major risk of research and innovation is that the validation and scaling stages will not be properly supported due to constraints such as funding or implementation difficulties in-country. These risks could be managed, but current funding processes don't often encourage planning 5-10 years into the future.
- Effective management of risk is a key part of successful partnerships, as multi-stakeholder relationships will almost certainly bring together different risk appetites and strategies. Participants discussed the benefits of bringing together partners with similar risk profiles yet acknowledged that this attitude would likely lead to lower overall risk-taking in innovation.
- Ideas for funding were discussed and a staged approach was proposed whereby funding comes online at different stages of innovation, dependent on appropriate partners being engaged (somewhat like borrowing money to build a house in evolving stages).
- A need was identified for partnership frameworks that help identify not just similar characteristics and goals on which many partnerships are based, but also assign value to the right combination of dissimilar or 'competing' interests that can more boldly drive transformation.
- Research for development activities are planned to overcome known unknowns as they arise, drawing on previous knowledge and risk management plans to solve problems that are likely to come up. However, translating outputs to outcomes (and creating sustained impact) can be more challenging than anticipated because of numerous unforeseen difficulties (unknown unknowns) that arise. Managing risk means building resilience into the process of innovation itself.
- The greatest risk-holder is often seen to be the funding agency, which can make funder-fundee relationships transactional. Participants agreed that a true partnership is one in which power, and therefore risk, are truly shared. Boundary organisations and brokers must advocate for changed governance structures to change the nature of risk-management in innovation processes

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/5

Capability

Growing capabilities and skills is sometimes conflated with capacity building in research for development. This discussion did not seek to specifically interrogate the topic of capacity building, and therefore centred around the broader language of 'building capabilities' between partners when undertaking innovation.

- Participants debated whether partnerships should be focused on bringing together the right combination of existing capabilities, or whether they should be formed with the intention of strengthening capabilities. The discussion was nuanced and considered various types of partnerships between organisations that have or do not have political power, funding, community influence, etc. While it may seem easier to set up a partnership between organisations that already share similar skills and capability-levels, the long-term benefits of partnership with clear goals of sharing and growing capabilities will likely be greater.
- Participants noted that to grow capabilities through partnership, adequate resourcing and recognition of power are required. The impact of power dynamics on the ability to share and grow capabilities in partnership can be strong, particularly when resourcing disparities between actors are large.
- Communicating in a way that distinguishes between the individual and the collective is very important, even if it is not seen as 'team-spirited' and therefore often discouraged. Making these distinctions clarifies the intentions and expectations of all parties. For example, saying "I will do this" differs from "We will do this" and also from "You will do this and I will contribute". Honesty about strengths and weaknesses in partnerships would create much greater opportunity for building capabilities. Although formal partnership agreements outline legal requirements, it is uncommon that partnership arrangements are governed in a way that operationalises these distinctions in everyday language and interactions.
- Participants noted the skills and capabilities developed in the private sector which allow outputs to become outcomes, and which support scaling of innovation. While the motivations of the private sector may also contribute to this ability, participants agreed these drivers had over time resulted in stronger development of specific skills that are under-represented or under-utilised in public sector innovation.
- A key factor in effectively managing risk is ensuring people have the skills and capabilities needed to fulfil their responsibilities and are supported to be resilient and nimble in continued decision-making. To support all partners and mitigate risks, partnerships might choose to standardize language and share ideas and plans to ensure all stakeholders are confident in their own capabilities .

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/5

Impact

As there are no 'silver bullet' solutions, there are therefore no 'silver bullet' outcomes. Defining impact is a key part of creating impactful change, and participants discussed how to encourage this throughout the innovation process:

- Participants agreed that iterative progress is as important, and often more rewarding than 'big wins', but only when all involved parties have agreed to define and acknowledge impact in smaller steps. Small changes can be empowering and motivating when they are celebrated in partnership.
- This highlights the importance of establishing different partnerships for the different types of impact we seek to create. Just as in systems-thinking, where components are not all directly connected to one another but are still interlinked, so partnerships could be set up and governed in a way that values indirect connections.
- This type of governance arrangement that is less prescriptive creates trade-offs where competing interests may exist, or efforts may be duplicated. However, some participants likened this to any imperfect system in the real world that we deal with as a matter of course. Other participants advocated for clear leadership that is responsible for making the partnership work – this raised further issues related to inclusivity and scale discussed previously.
- Regardless of governance arrangements, partnerships which successfully define and create impact will rely on trust. Methods of building trust will differ according to the nature of relationships and cultural contexts, but leadership and guidance provided through global forums (such as the UN Food Systems Summit) could start to formally engender trust as a critical piece of innovation. Drawing on participatory best-practice could appropriately align levels of consultation needed for different types of partnership.
- While defining impact is critical, so too is measuring it. Participants noted that a seeming lack of impact or change can relate to the measurement and communication of it. Without standardisation – or at least transparency – about the methods used to measure impact, it is difficult to understand and communicate progress. The SDGs provide a starting global framework for progress, yet some indicators continue to lack standard measurements of impact.
- There was some discussion about the role of governments in defining impact. Governments (at all levels, but particularly national governments) are seen to represent their constituents, and therefore hold some weight in defining impact for their people. Participants agreed that all innovation must therefore take place understanding the role of government, the structure of governance and operations, and national contexts and priorities that are constantly evolving.
- Participants also discussed the connection of risk with impact. In partnerships that are risk-averse, it may be more difficult to define, measure, and therefore create impact. Setting ambitious (perhaps risky) goals, can drive innovation and help scale solutions more rapidly. While this has implications for inclusivity and systems-thinking, defining impact in these ambitious terms could help bridge public-private sector divides and strengthen capabilities for those involved.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

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There were certainly areas of divergence across all elements of partnership and innovation discussed during this Dialogue. Many of the participants were self-reflective during conversation and recognised that their views and contributions were influenced by their own experiences. Many points of divergence are presented throughout the Discussion Outcomes sections.

There was robust discussion about trade-offs between various approaches to partnership, and to innovation to transform food systems. Participants debated the benefits of bringing together partners with similar skills and goals versus bringing together diverse partners with the direct goal of strengthening capabilities – which creates greater, sustained value? Wanting to be inclusive of all relevant stakeholders raised similar trade-offs, particularly when considering the many spatial scales of systems which necessitate engagement on many levels. The trade-offs of increased aversion to risk were discussed in the context of innovation speed and impact.

The divergent views that emerged demonstrated that innovation is possible in any number of circumstances. They then converged to establish that if progress is to take place at the great speed and scale necessary to achieve the 2030 agenda and make progress towards the SDGs, then robust and steady partnerships will be needed to integrate and scale solutions globally.

As such, a key practice for achieving food system sustainability will be increased reliance on and resourcing of partnerships. Establishing formal guidelines and processes for working collaboratively across sectors and industries, based on successful models, could encourage greater collaboration and better transformation of intentions into impact.

The diverse geographic spread of participants and corresponding breadth of experiences shared during this Dialogue further highlight the importance of food systems solutions that are locally-contextualised and relevant to the problems faced in specific environments. Ensuring that partnerships are representative of these local contexts will be important in supporting research and innovation that solves relevant problems and can be scaled appropriately.

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