

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Monday, 17 May 2021 15:00 GMT +03:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	East and Southern Africa Dialogue for Strengthening Food Systems Research and Innovation
CONVENED BY	Professor Adipala Ekwamu- Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/16044/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	No borders

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

375

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

138

19-30

147

31-50

74

51-65

16

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

226 Male

147 Female

2 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

97 Agriculture/crops

6 Fish and aquaculture

34 Livestock

5 Agro-forestry

54 Environment and ecology

7 Trade and commerce

43 Education

14 Communication

15 Food processing

1 Food retail, markets

6 Food industry

3 Financial Services

4 Health care

Nutrition

3 National or local government

2 Utilities

2 Industrial

72 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

38 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

7 Large national business

7 Multi-national corporation

50 Small-scale farmer

10 Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

9 Local Non-Governmental Organization

26 International Non-Governmental Organization

3 Indigenous People

137 Science and academia

1 Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

1 Local authority

22 Government and national institution

2 Regional economic community

4 United Nations

3 International financial institution

6 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

2 Consumer group

38 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

This dialogue event covered two AUC regions; Eastern and Southern Africa. It was convened in this manner to enable synergies that facilitate working with others and building on the collaborative work with various organisations that participated in the dialogue. Secondly, it was opportunity for diversity within the regions to be up held and various voices to be heard.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Diversity and multi-stakeholder participation including universities, SROs, RECs, NGOs, youth organisations and private sector participation -Complementary actors within the universities and various entities that often work together reinforcing each other. Breakout sessions focused aon a specific issue for discussion which was further deliberated to gain consensus

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

They need to have a carefully considered selection of speakers with expertise to ensure that the dialogue objectives are fulfilled while upholding the principles of the 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

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

The Eastern and Southern Africa Food Systems Dialogue brought together universities and other food system actors in the two sub-regions including the SROs such as Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA),

Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), Agricultural Research Corporation (ARC), South Africa, Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), South Africa and universities from across the region with participation of university management as well as academia. This dialogue focused on the following:

1. Analysis of current Food Systems in Eastern and Southern Africa
2. Analysis of in-country food systems, drivers and required actions for building resilient food systems
3. Strengthening Food Systems transformation for increased productivity, inclusivity and resilience with a focus on four priority areas:
 - a. Strengthening Food Systems Research and Innovation
 - b. Human capital development for enhanced Sustainable Food Systems Productivity and Resilience
 - c. Fostering inclusivity
 - d. Policies for strengthening Food Systems in Africa

Through the above four focus areas, the dialogue was able to address the action tracks as prioritized by the food systems Summit among these; building resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress; ensuring safe access to safe and nutritious food, advancing equitable livelihoods and value addition and ensuring access to safe and nutritious food for all.

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

1. With regards to the state of food and nutrition, it was observed that amidst apparent plenty, global hunger is increasing, there is wide spread stunting, food production systems are putting biodiversity at greatest threat and by 2050 there will be more 2 billion people that need to be fed amidst increasing constraints in the food systems. Addressing these challenges requires strong political commitment from across the countries and political divide.
2. Transforming Africa's food systems to promote well-being across all sectors from production to consumption is an important imperative that needs to be undertaken. In order to realise this, there is need to: (i) harness Africa's strengths including vibrant cultures, agro and natural biodiversity, youth, growing markets, cooperative, society-driven norms; (ii) harness technological advances to overcome lack of relevant technologies and the lack of economies of size, (iii) build capacity and work together with human capital development for research and innovation being central focus for sustained growth; (iv) exploit the technological advances to aggregate outputs, improve market linkages and make the information rapidly available at scale.
3. Food systems within Eastern and Southern Africa have multiple drivers across the value chain. It is generally sub-divided into two realms; (i) Commercial food system...with formal supply chains e.g. maize has production, distribution with even existing food reserves in some countries. This serves the urban markets, meets the requisite standards and defines the way food is to be delivered; and (ii) the Subsistence food system that is a critical and important for the rural populations upon which they highly depend on. However, the region is under immense strain from climate variabilities and change including droughts and floods, invasive species, limited technology use leading to a huge yield gap, policy constraints among others.
4. Market access for new entrants into farming remains a vital ingredient that will unlock the sustainability of agricultural enterprises in Africa. Within the context of Southern Africa, the agricultural land reform programme focuses partly on this but it requires to be expanded and strengthened. Further, access to financing; for infrastructure, inputs are critical to enable enterprises to become sustainable. Beyond government, private sector needs to take action to bring financial and allied services closer in an affordable manner.
5. Universities and higher education institutions have a critical role to play in food systems transformation. They are the engines for technologies and innovations generations including; crop varieties, vaccines, diagnostic tools for managing risks from biosecurity and climate change. Universities need to be brought to the center of the food systems this enable them play this critical role and help in the delivery of nutritious and safe food, improved financial sustainability of farm enterprises, greater engagement with communities, engagement with policy makers and change their culture of doing business by for example making universities easily accessible and open to the smallholder farmers and communities.
6. African youth are currently one of the missing link in the agricultural sector and their active role in the food systems is limited. In order to attract, retain and meaningfully engage the youth, there is need to appreciate a large number of opportunities for youth exist beyond primary production and these could be more exciting avenues for their full participation. Further youth as new entrants in agriculture are innovative and could provide new models and tools for transforming the science and technology of agriculture through the research and this could offer immense opportunities with clear returns on investment. As youth are more committed to enterprises that provide clear and often immediate returns, it would be good to get youth interested in high value commodity production that often does not require so much labour and less land enterprises.
7. Fostering inclusivity within the food systems is paramount for sustainable livelihoods. This is particularly more important considering that there has been a move towards oligopoly mainly in well performing enterprises this has tended to create exclusion of the less fortunate stakeholders especially the smallholder farmers. Generating inclusive outcomes through integrated value chains requires; (i) strengthening value chain links; (ii) building partnerships that are equitable and fair and transparent; (iii) enable institutional arrangements to work including those that lower the risks for smallholder farmers such as contracting farming; (iv) shift from production oriented agricultural advisory services to market oriented services; and (v) utilise ecosystem approach that enables greater interaction of actors within and among themselves.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

1. Food system in the region is under siege from different conditions; drought/climate change, technology usage, limited deployment of technologies leading to a high yield gap between field trials and farmer gardens, and policy constraints among others
2. Strengthening Food Systems Research and Innovation; innovating through digital technology, utilizing diverse data strata to relay information in the value chain with potential for smooth feedback, market orientation, and coupled with a paradigm shift, will unlock the food systems transformation
3. Human capital development: training for new skills and competencies for delivering agricultural modernization and sustainability is required in the continent. Further, there is need to embrace innovations in technology including in TVET institutions, reconfigure the mentality in terms of human capital development by ensuring customization of skills, quality assurance, continuous retooling and fiscal support from government to enable for value addition. Education should also stem from multi-disciplinary teams and processes.
4. Strengthening Policies for improved food and nutrition security: agriculture is just one component of the food systems but plays a role in food security there is need to strengthen the entire system and make it work together rather than in isolation of each other with feasible tracking of performance.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

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