

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Monday, 24 May 2021 15:00 GMT +06:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Boosting Nature-positive Production in Food Systems of Bangladesh
CONVENED BY	FAO Bangladesh and UNDP Bangladesh
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/16615/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Bangladesh

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

59

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

1

19-30

27

31-50

26

51-65

5

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

44 Male

14 Female

1 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

13 Agriculture/crops

4 Fish and aquaculture

1 Livestock

Agro-forestry

18 Environment and ecology

1 Trade and commerce

1 Education

Communication

5 Food processing

Food retail, markets

1 Food industry

2 Financial Services

Health care

Nutrition

2 National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

11 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan

1 Large national business

Multi-national corporation

6 Small-scale farmer

1 Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

7 Local Non-Governmental Organization

5 International Non-Governmental Organization

1 Indigenous People

3 Science and academia

2 Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

13 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

13 United Nations

3 International financial institution

1 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

1 Consumer group

2 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The principles were included in a concept note sent to participants ahead of the meeting, including a link to learn about them in more detail. At the beginning of the dialogue it was emphasized that the Chatham House Rules would be followed.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

One of the strengths of this dialogue was to involve actors from many different sectors. The group sizes were kept small, less than 10 people, which encourage more trust and commitment to an open environment for sharing opinions.

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

Small group sizes make it easier to adhere to the principles.

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 country strategy for contributing to the Food Systems Summit involved the Government of Bangladesh (GOB) forming a high level National Committee headed by Secretary, Ministry of Food (MoF) to organize Member State Dialogues. Mr. Khaja Andul Hannan (Additional Secretary, MoF) is representing as a National Dialogue Convener. A Working Group was formed to support several sub-national and national dialogues. The outputs of the current Independent Dialogue will be compiled with other independent dialogues, and considered in identification of actions in the National Dialogues.

The current dialogue emphasized solutions to achieve Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production. The focus on AT3 was chosen to fill a gap because this AT was not strongly reflected in other planned dialogues. This dialogue also touched on Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all and Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns.

The overall objective was to leverage contributions from a diverse group of stakeholders for developing a vision for the future of food system considering environment and climate change issues. Specifically, participants were asked to prioritize solutions for the challenges posed into the development agenda of GOB, research institutes, academia, development partners, INGOs/ NGOs, especially towards achieving SDG's. The dialogue is therefore part of a participatory approach to address the environment and climate change issues in the food system today and in the future, where a wide range of participants shared their opinions, visions, and recommendations.

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

All participants recognized the importance of maintaining healthy environments for food production and addressing the impacts of food systems on local environments and atmospheric emissions.

Discussion Topic: The environment/degradation and food systems interface will be sustainably managed

1. River ecosystems must be monitored for agricultural pollution and managed more sustainably.

Industries and urban areas are known major sources of water pollution. However, fertilizer and pesticide application from farms and manufacturing industries are also likely major sources and overlooked. It is unclear the amount and impact of fertilizers from runoff entering canals, ponds, and riverways, but we do know that fishery production is decreasing, possibly the result of the increasing use of chemical fertilizers and other pollutants. More comprehensive monitoring of nitrogen and other fertilizers in waterways is needed. Monitoring and reporting can be initiated in connection with SDG 6.3.2 Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality, which is currently not monitored in Bangladesh. Data sharing between relevant agencies will be critical for monitoring but will need to be formalized (e.g. between Department of Environment (DoE), Soil Resource Development Institute (SRDI), Ministry of Water, Ministry of Industries, etc.).

2. Existing regulations on water pollution from all sources including agricultural must be enforced to protect food systems, in addition to water quality for drinking and irrigation purposes.

More evidence needs to be generated to understand the negative impacts of pollution on food systems, and the negative impacts of food systems on the environment. Farmers and farmer organizations should also be made aware of the negative impact of fertilizers and pesticides. More systematic studies that consider agricultural pollution impacts in major agroecological zones may also be necessary. Ongoing activities that strengthen underpinning conditions, such as women/youth engagement, institutional capacity building, farmer access to finance and markets, should continue to be strengthened because they will provide the platforms and resources for promoting environmentally friendly agricultural practices.

Discussion Topic: Feasible solutions for mitigating climate change are streamlined in the country's food systems

3. To achieve climate mitigation in cropping systems, increased conservation agriculture practices and nature based solutions need to be implemented. For example, improved soil and nutrient management at the farm level will reduce the need for fertilizers and reduce CO₂ emissions. Simple soil management practices are available that have been shown to reduce farm level emissions. In order to expand these and other climate change mitigation initiatives, finance solutions, policy, research and collaboration are needed. There should be more economic evaluations of ecosystem services and natural resources with emphasis on water and the benefits of all actors of the food system needs to be taking into account

4. All actors of the food system need to be further engaged, not leaving behind farmer and producer needs in development planning for climate change mitigation.

One key here, in addition to considering direct and long-term benefit, is capacity building. Multiple sectors need to be included in this area since no one organization or institution can do this alone. Academia needs to be involved in policy making. Private sector can take a leading role in development of new technologies but also need to be supported by laws and regulations. Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations can support policy makers and provide technical assistance.

Discussion Topic: Bangladesh becomes a leader in innovative financing solutions, policy provisions and support mechanisms for "nature-positive production"

5. Higher investment in nature based solutions are needed transform agriculture and food systems.

In particular, crop zoning that recognizes natural resource availability and climate stress, both presently and in the future, can be used to better inform cropping decisions and support to successfully develop value chains. Vermicomposting to replace chemical fertilizers needs to be promoted much more. Single plastic use poses challenges to the food safety and food systems. The uses of plastic needs to be controlled in the farming, packaging, transportation and distribution of foods. Investing in solar for irrigation and food processing has good potential and need more development.

6. Innovative financing solutions are required for farmers and businesses to advance the sustainable agricultural commercialization.

We should have appropriate financial products for different types of food sector actors, i.e. farmers, agro-processors, private sectors. Each year the government is allocating money to support soft agricultural credit but the loan distribution process is slow and not farmer friendly. Agricultural bank's policy needs to be reformed and more farmers needs to be engaged in the banking sector. Opening accounts and processing of the agricultural credit needs to be faster. Co-operatives should be promoted in rural areas for collective farming, processing, marketing and financial services. Digital platform should be better utilized for credit disbursement, collection and agricultural information sharing. An underpinning challenge is ensuring that the resources currently accessed are not wasted.

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KEYWORDS

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data & Evidence
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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

To truly embrace and achieve “nature-positive production”, Bangladesh must sustainably manage the environment, climate change and food systems interface through three pathways. First, an evidence base must be built which demonstrates the impacts of agriculture sector on the environment, especially more extensive and reliable monitoring of river ecosystems. This evidence should then be used to motivate greater enforcement of existing pollution regulations. Second, nature-based solutions that improve soil and water management, reduce pollution, and lower agricultural GHG emissions need to be scaled up. However, scaling up activities must carefully consider trade-offs and harmful consequences towards smallholder farmers and producers. Third, sustainable agriculture approaches that have positive impacts on the environment need innovative financing solutions which make it easier and quicker for farmers and businesses to access finance. Specifically this means strengthening farmer organizations, co-operatives, and digital services that serve as the vehicles for scaling up successful approaches. Finally, women, youth, and the private sector, each play a critical role and need to be engaged for future change. Innovative programs that promote women and youth leadership, behaviour change towards environmental stewardship, and training in job skills should be prioritized. Further dialogues are needed to understand how to effectively engage the private sector in positive environmental changes.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Bangladesh needs to learn from experiences from developed countries to not repeat the same mistakes which led them to degraded agro-ecosystems. So called "modernized" approaches, including increased mechanization and chemical inputs, have not always had positive long-term benefits. Some participants fear the same trajectory will be followed in Bangladesh as it seeks to graduate from its Least Developed Country status, and urged for caution. On the other hand, other participants pointed out that mechanization should continue to be promoted, not limited, as part of the longer-term solution. Agricultural industries have been good for creating new businesses and jobs (spare parts, repairs) in the private sector. Mechanization has therefore done more good than bad and should not be slowed down.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **Detailed Group Notes**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Attachment.docx>