

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Thursday, 27 May 2021 09:00 GMT +07:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Exploring what it means for Cambodia's food system to 'Build Back/Forward Better' from COVID-19
CONVENED BY	His Excellency Sok Silo, Secretary General, CARD
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/16717/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Member State
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Cambodia

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

66

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

6

19-30

46

31-50

14

51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

47 Male

18 Female

1 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

5 Agriculture/crops

2 Fish and aquaculture

1 Livestock

2 Agro-forestry

1 Environment and ecology

1 Trade and commerce

3 Education

2 Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

Financial Services

3 Health care

19 Nutrition

12 National or local government

Utilities

1 Industrial

Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

6 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

9 Local Non-Governmental Organization

10 International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

25 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

8 United Nations

International financial institution

Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

8 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The dialogue was designed in a manner that it should be respectful, complement the work of others and build trust. In the format used, the roles of Convener and Curator are critical for maintaining that environment. Strict control of time is required to respect the other speakers and to allow enough time for audience involvement in the Q&A session. The curator made provision for the sub-national bodies present each to have time to comment and this is helping to build a stronger relationship with the sub-national level for those provinces having the equipment, experience and a multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral Provincial Working Group to participate.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The meeting was curated in a manner that prevented time over runs and also gave opportunities for audience involvement in the Q&A although the limited time was monopolized by some longer questions and responses.

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

Elevator pitches and short (3-7 minute) presentations can help participants extract key take-away messages to better engage in discussion and prioritize issues. The format can help to ensure that there is space for inclusion of specific views, but it must be complemented by a substantial and well-facilitated Q&A session or small group discussions in breakout rooms if there is to be any reasonable chance for diverse views to be heard. This is very important where there are participants from different levels of a hierarchical in a mixed audience.

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

The method involved keynote speeches followed by a series of short presentations intended to trigger discussion about 'game-changing ideas' to transform Cambodia's food system. The dialogue intended to provide opportunities for some speakers who have not been much engaged in the dialogues to present their ideas. Although the intention was to capture general comments from Q&A sessions, there was not sufficient time to gather a wide range of questions and responses. Questions from the audience sometimes take the discussion off-track but it is very challenging to curb this tendency in the country context.

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

The focus of the dialogue was on building food systems back/forward better in the context of COVID-19 recovery.

No country in the world in 2020 was spared the direct (health) and indirect (socio-economic) impacts of COVID-19; the impacts have amplified vulnerabilities including malnutrition and poverty, but also shed light on opportunities within the food system. Learnings from any crisis can be harnessed to improve systems and prepare for future shocks and stresses. Prior to the onset of COVID-19, Cambodia already suffered from high rates of malnutrition and poverty; one in three children are stunted (low height for age) and one in ten are wasted (low weight for height). Looking forward, what does recovery and building back better from COVID-19 mean for Cambodia's food system?

According to FAO's Chief Economist Máximo Torero, "we need to link recovery plans with catalytic investments and investment with significant returns on reduction of undernourishment to achieve SDG 1 (No Poverty), 2 (Zero Hunger) and 10 (Reduced Inequalities)." So what are game changing solutions to ensure that the food system nourishes all, offers resilient livelihoods, and stewards the environment? This is the topic of today's Food Systems Dialogue.

Our task is now to prioritize and phase our support going forward. In the work leading up to the Global Food Systems Summit in September and the pre-summit in July, we have the opportunity to conduct a 'health check' on the food system. COVID-19 has simply accelerated the need for transformation. This dialogue is an opportunity to explore the actions and the levers for change that will be most likely lead recovery efforts in the direction of improving the food system. A simple tool to guide the discussion is the principle of triple wins: economic, social, and environmental. Game changing solutions touch upon all three of these and offer solutions to build upon the past to create a more prosperous future.

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

Priorities for the food system to build back/forward better include ensuring a stronger foundation for the economy and building more resilient systems. It will be necessary to introduce reform measure to respond to compounding vulnerabilities and build these lessons learned into building stronger systems going forward. These include measures to soften impacts on businesses and encourage innovation, vertical and horizontal expansion of social assistance mechanisms, food flows and trade are facilitated, and health systems are more inclusive and prepared for other global threats like the rise of non-communicable diseases. Digitalization is a key avenue for building back better and for being better prepared for a similar situation in the future.

Five key areas providing opportunities for game changing actions include: the promotion of healthy diets; community and value chain approaches to market strengthening in the food system; ongoing development of the social assistance framework to provide a safety net for the most vulnerable and soften future shocks; and ensuring better coordination of efforts between the humanitarian response phase and the ongoing development work.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/2

UN Commitments and Game Changers 1 and 2

The UN stands ready to continue its support to the Royal Government, the Socio-Economic Responses Plan (SERP), and FAO remains committed to support a robust food system that is sustainable, inclusive and healthy and that is prepared to absorb future shocks and stresses. FAO in Cambodia has a broad portfolio that touches upon fisheries, climate smart agriculture, home grown school feeding, and policy assistance. FAO works closely with our UN partners under the umbrella of UN Nutrition – led by WFP, to coordinate our nutrition work. And lastly, the EU-FAO FIRST policy facility remains a flagship program, supporting existing Government frameworks, strengthening partnerships and leveraging actions to address SDG 1 and 2.

As a complement to RGC's cash transfer programmes, FAO is working on "Cash+" interventions to combine cash transfers with the provision of productive assets, inputs, technical training and extension services. This approach is proving an effective tool in providing immediate relief for the livelihoods and productive capacities of the poor and most vulnerable households, while at the same time enhancing their medium and long-term productive capacity, increasing resilience. In 2020, FAO successfully piloted the approach to support 100 IDPoor and vulnerable households in Siem Reap. With funding support from SDC, FAO is scaling up this approach to support around 1500 economically vulnerable households in Siem Reap and Banteay Meanchey. This approach has also been taken up by other UN Partners.

Game changers are not silver bullets but should improve livelihoods, food security and nutrition, and steward the environment. In other words, game changers offer triple wins.

Game changers: 1. importance of healthy diets during pandemics and building back stronger

A healthy diet is one that promotes human health, prevents disease, and protects the planet. A healthy diet is: sufficient and varied enough to provide the right amount of nutrients from foods; and safe and free from harmful substances. A healthy diet should also be affordable, culturally acceptable and sustainably produced.

Why we need a healthy diet:

- Reason 1 – For a healthier population
- Reason 2 – To protect the most vulnerable
- Reason 3 – Because hidden hunger is common
- Reason 4 – For more resilient economies
- Reason 5 – for a healthier planet
- Reason 6 – To protect against COVID and other illnesses

What can we do?

Promote increased production and consumption of vegetables, legumes, fruits, and other healthy foods.

Utilize community-based structures to promote healthy diets and improved food production.

Expand Social Protection programming to increase access to affordable, healthy diets.

Strengthen investment in NCD prevention and treatment through the health system.

Explore regulatory, labeling, and taxation approaches to reduce consumption of unhealthy foods.

Work with food industry to support efforts to improve agricultural biodiversity.

Increase the use of data in analysis, policy and decision-making and improve the availability of data.

Game changers: 2. The social protection system and building back better

Social assistance programs have quickly adapted to address the COVID-19 situation; school meals have shifted to take-home rations and new programs have been added including cash transfers for ID poor, food assistance, and one-off cash transfers and subsidies for COVID-19-impacted families. The way forward, to Build Back Better as we move beyond response and recovery from COVID-19, will involve:

Shock-Responsive Social Protection Framework

Provide more systematic, predictable, timely and effective protection of the poor and vulnerable, to mitigate and adapt to shocks and stresses. GS-NSPC is currently developing a Shock responsive Social Protection mechanisms with assistance from WFP.

Family Package

Integration of cash-based social assistance programs, introducing social assistance single operator supported by an effective management information system.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/2

Game changers: 3. Community and value chain development to nourish consumers and offer resilient livelihoods:

Build a more resilient agriculture sector with risk informed and more connected and inclusive value chains.

Increase investment in collective action such as smallholder farmer's cooperatives and infrastructure, which could include community markets, hygiene stations, processing and cooling facilities.

Promote equitable distribution of incomes and access to inputs, finances, technologies and markets. Work together in full partnership sharing gains and risks (4P Model)

Set up a direct-to-consumer delivery system, using short circuits / localized solutions

Invest in Women smallholder farmers

Build more resilient communities (and not only resilient farmers)

Themes for promoting value chain integration in Cambodia include a focus on poultry, vegetables, fish, beef cattle, cassava and cashew nut value chains; logistics, market infrastructure and transport; applications for technology in value chains (e.g. cold storage and cool chains); farmer-owned agribusinesses; climate smart agriculture and NRM; one health and zoonoses; skills development and employment especially for women and youth; nutrition and food security; and agri-business recovery plans and assistance.

Now more than ever, ending poverty in Cambodia begins with agriculture.

The food system of the future should be resilient and equitable. It should be equitable and inclusive at every link of the chain, particularly the weakest ones, and respectful of the environment.

Game changers: 4 Bridging the humanitarian-development divide

Despite being considered an emergency, COVID-19 underlines major chronic issues that require bridging the humanitarian-development gap. Bridging the gap requires consideration of the following points as we move from humanitarian response to developing stronger systems for the future:

While the initial reaction may be to protect and restrict, food systems need to be kept open to remain robust.

COVID-19 underlines yet again that healthy diets are the first line of defense against disease.

Poverty weakens our ability to bounce back. Compounding vulnerabilities beg for joint targeting.

Systemic change required to prepare for future shocks and stresses: e.g. shock responsive social protection.

Information needed to make decisions in real time and to prevent future 'disruptions' and mitigate impacts.

As Cambodia prepares to graduate from Least Developed Country Status, need to prioritize measures to respond to urgency of the present with needs of the future; the six key topics of the Second NSFSN (2019-2023) offer this framework to accelerate action.

These priorities help us to identify 'best bets for building back better', placing the consumer at the center of our work and ensuring that systems are strengthened and the environment is stewarded.

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KEYWORDS

	Finance	✓	Policy
	Innovation		Data & Evidence
	Human rights	✓	Governance
	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
		✓	Environment and Climate

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **Social Protection Intervention Approaches during COVID-19**
https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/SP_Measures_Response_to_COVID_and_Lockdown_GSNSPC_210525.pdf
- **MUSEFO Nutrition Governance Presentation**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Food-Systems-Dialogue-27-May-2021-MUSEFO-SfC-Nutrition-Governance-Presentation.pdf>
- **Heifer International COVID-19 and the food system**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Heifer-Cambodia-FAO-C19-Food-System-SarethMay-IR-27-Final.pdf>
- **Anna-Lisa Noack FAO Building back\Forward Better**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Build-Back-Forward-Better-Nexus-ALN-002.pdf>
- **Remarks by Antonio Schiavone FAOR a.i.**
https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/FAOR-ai-speech-on-UN-role-in-building-forward-better-Antonio_ALN.docx
- **Presentation by Gwyneth Cotes, HKI: Healthy diets**
https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/A_Diets-presentation-for-Food-Systems-Summit.pdf