

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Thursday, 10 June 2021 15:00 GMT +03:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	University-Policy Dialogue for Strengthening Agric Food Systems in Africa (North Africa 2)
CONVENED BY	Prof. Adipala Ekwamu- Executive Secretary RUFORUM, Prof. Ibrahim El Dukheri, Director General AOAD
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/17858/
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

129

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

28

19-30

64

31-50

30

51-65

6

66-80

1

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

71 Male

54 Female

4 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

29 Agriculture/crops

Fish and aquaculture

3 Livestock

4 Agro-forestry

24 Environment and ecology

4 Trade and commerce

20 Education

8 Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

2 Food industry

2 Financial Services

2 Health care

Nutrition

3 National or local government

1 Utilities

Industrial

22 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

11 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

5 Large national business

7 Multi-national corporation

16 Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

5 Local Non-Governmental Organization

16 International Non-Governmental Organization

1 Indigenous People

34 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

14 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

0 United Nations

3 International financial institution

2 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

1 Consumer group

11 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The co-convened dialogue was widely publicised within the MENA region and targeted participation from a diverse group of food systems actors. MENA based organisations, Universities, Financial institutions and Farmers. The Dialogue provided for sharing lessons from across Africa but mainly from the MENA region.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

Key note speaker presentations and subject specific discussions were made. Participants had a plenary engagement and group discussions based on the core discussion topics for the improvement of food systems in water stressed regions.

DO YOU HAVE ADVICE FOR OTHER DIALOGUE CONVENORS ABOUT APPRECIATING THE PRINCIPLES 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 dialogue was premised on the need to understand if the results from the diverse research topics are effectively reaching the food systems end users notably, policy makers, farmers and consumers.

Strategic alliances between scientific institutions, universities and practitioners (farmers, indigenous groups, women, youth, chefs, etc) to foster transformation and prepare the next generation to have a more holistic and systemic perspective are an important pathway for exploring the inter-linkages for sustainable food systems. Mot especially in arears with both diverse and common contexts such as the MENA region.

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

General Overview

- Despite COVID-19 crisis, it has provided opportunity for FS transformation
 - But the pandemic adds to the MENA additional burden on top of; oil crises, political transitions & food imports
 - Agri-food system in the MENA region has shown some resilience but in a varied manner across countries & across sub-sectors e.g. aromatic plants less affected but fruit sectors heavily affected in case of Jordan
 - The food systems in the MENA and the policies that support them have contributed to poor nutritional outcomes.
 - Agricultural subsidies and food security policies in the region generally favor energy-rich staple food production, without sufficient attention to promoting nutrient-rich foods.
 - The food system has also economic, social, and environmental outcomes
 - Social cash transfers have been used as one of the strategies for mitigating the impacts of the COVID-19 in Egypt, Sudan and Jordan
 - Agriculture & Agri-food systems is well positioned for post-covid 19 recovery but good to learn from successful countries; in terms understanding public investment, policy frameworks..
 - Integrating private sector to lead growth in the agri-food systems
- In order to increase food production in a sustainable and healthy manner, research and innovation is critical

Research and University Engagement

- Research and innovative technologies should target conservation of the food products/system:
- The main issue in processing is product conservation to minimize waste. Simplifying supply chains (connecting consumers to farmers)
- Providing policymakers with data and analytics to better understands supply and demand imbalances
 - The transformation of food systems requires interventions beyond research and technology innovations
- Shift from linear approaches to research in food systems toward more interlinked and interdisciplinary process of food system research and analysis

Implications going forward

- Need to be cautious that improving economic outcomes of FS seems to be the main driver of digitalization..often ignoring aspects such as environmental aspects
- Entrepreneurship innovation as a critical point for valorizing technology and innovation
- Universities are supposed to be drivers of change and innovation but most of the innovations from universities have not been able to create startups but rather there has been a string emphasis on publications
- Need to create entrepreneurship enabling environments at universities
- Working on IT valorization at universities
- Adopt a food systems approach that acknowledges inter-system linkages and the multiple outcomes of the food system.
- Transformation is a shared responsibility that involves partnerships among all sectors of society and transparency is a prerequisite for the success of those partnerships

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC

Strengthening Food Systems Research and Innovations: What new Frontiers are needed?

- Food Systems are inter-linked and run across the value chains.
- Food Systems need to be sustainable in all that we do, there is need for research and capacity development across the Value chain
- Adapt technologies and innovations to local context and need to adopt feasible technologies that make sense from the income perspective of farmers
- Promote partnerships including reverse linkages across countries within financial institutions to promote engagement operations

Target robust solutions which are scaleable and demand driven- consider for example indigenous foods and the scientific solutions must make sense to the indigenous people

Human Capital Development for enhanced sustainable and inclusive Food Systems Productivity and Resilience Interventions

- Efficiency in agriculture: needs to improve the efficiency of our local food production systems
- Encourage and attract young people into agriculture: Our education systems in the universities...previous processes taught simply what was on offer but today, there is a switch to agriculture as business...thus...show youth that agriculture is beyond food production
- Collaboration: need to come together to address the common problems
- Transition of agriculture to food value chains: looking beyond traditional production for household food security (availability)...unlocking the income potential of agriculture is critical in lifting smallholder farmers

Institutional arrangements

- Policy making and financial making should be complementary to those existing at country level
- Policy should focus on improving on the enabling environment including; technology, inputs, and value chains & infrastructure to enable active actor participation
- Take advantage of digital agriculture
- Share the models and piggy back how to address institutional challenges
- Provide a mechanism for lesson sharing and solution building
- Bringing the private sector to in particular enhance the deployment of ICTs to enhance functioning of FS
- Bring on board financial institutions to enhance FS e.g. production processes, support the enabling of credit
- Create harmonization that can enable ease of movement of goods and services across regions

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

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KEYWORDS

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