

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Monday, 17 May 2021 14:00 GMT +03:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Ceres2030 Deep Dives into the Nexus of Food Systems, Climate Change & Nutrition in Ethiopia
CONVENED BY	Francine Picard, Senior Policy Advisor, Lead Partnerships; International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/17917/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Ethiopia

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

44

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

19-30

31-50

51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

Male

Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

Agriculture/crops

Fish and aquaculture

Livestock

Agro-forestry

Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

Education

Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

Financial Services

Health care

Nutrition

National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

Small-scale farmer

Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

Local Non-Governmental Organization

International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

Government and national institution

Regional economic community

United Nations

International financial institution

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 participant list of this Dialogue was organized to ensure that a variety of different stakeholders, including members of government, civil society and donor groups attend in order to maximise multi-stakeholder inclusivity. The diversity of voices was crucial to the aim of this independent dialogue in seeking feedback on the food system policies and interventions that currently exist and work towards promoting healthier diets within an environmentally sustainable and culturally appropriate framework. Not only did this incorporate the Principle of embracing multi-stakeholder inclusivity, but also ensured the Principle of complementing the work of others was reinforced in the organisation of the Dialogue by ensuring the sharing of information, perspectives and experiences amongst a wide variety of stakeholders. Further, this Dialogue was organised to include extensive breakout room sessions to embody the Food Systems Summit principle of recognising complexity as this encouraged dialogue between members of the agriculture, health and nutrition communities in an attempt to create space to recognise the importance of working collaboratively, and not in silos, to achieve sustainable food systems transformation.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

This Dialogue aimed to stimulate dialogue amongst members of the agriculture, climate, and nutrition communities on the best policies and interventions to achieve food systems transformation and move towards healthier diets in a sustainable and climate-friendly manner. In so doing, it reflected the Principles of recognising the complexity of food systems transformation and the principle of complementing the work of others, in attempting to highlight the potential of cross-cutting interventions and policies. Additionally, by facilitating this cross-cutting discussion, the Dialogue reflected the principle of embracing multi-stakeholder inclusivity and the importance of incorporating a range of perspectives into the discussion surrounding sustainable food systems transformation. Ultimately, in its aim of seeking inputs to the most effective roadmaps towards healthier diets and sustainable food systems transformation, this Dialogue reflected a strong commitment to the aims of the UN Food Systems Summit, specifically in striving to be “forward-looking, foster new connections, and enable the emergence of ways to move forward collectively and creatively, embracing the entire scope of opinions”.

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

No

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 an exploration of the nexus of food security, nutrition and climate change in Ethiopia with a specific view to receiving inputs on reasonable steps towards a food system transition pathway to healthier diets in Ethiopia. Specifically, the focus of the Dialogue was to receive inputs and feedback from stakeholders on proposed context-sensitive healthy diets, what they view to be the criteria and consideration for healthier diets and food system transformation, and the possible interventions and policies to achieve this based on their prior experience and opinion on potential opportunities.

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

The main areas of discussion in the Dialogue were the role of interventions that diversify production and increase the production of nutritious foods, the need for an increase in nutrition education and educational awareness of healthier diets, and the role of policy frameworks and legislation in sustainable food system transformation.

The overarching finding from the Dialogue was the need to consider policy interventions as a package rather than just sole programs. For example, supply side interventions to encourage the production of nutritious crops need to be accompanied by interventions which encourage market development and integration in order to overcome issues of affordability and seasonality in Ethiopia. Similarly, the provision of seeds without nutrition education about how to grow and cook the produce will not be effective. Sustainable food system transformation therefore requires a package of interventions and a long-term horizon.

This links to another of the main findings of the Dialogue; that nutrition education is an important step in any policy roadmap that attempts to progress towards sustainable food system transformation. There are many opportunities for this ranging from school curriculum and school feeding programs to the promotion of diverse dietary intakes during the Orthodox Christian fasting period. It is necessary to explore this area further to ensure that interventions are both cost-effective and have an impact beyond caloric increases.

The final main finding of this Dialogue regards the adoption of policy frameworks. Whilst Ethiopia is adopting a Food and Nutrition Strategy 2030, trade-offs will be necessary between these ideal standards and what is feasible. Importantly, it is important to consider the regional and seasonal variations in Ethiopian diets, as well as the affordability of nutritious foods. It is there necessary to ensure that implemented interventions take account of diversity and are context specific.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/2

One of the key areas of discussion of the Dialogue was the possible interventions that could be adopted to progress towards sustainable food system transformation in Ethiopia. One of the major issues that arose out of the Dialogue as hindering Ethiopians from having a healthy and nutritious diet was the affordability and accessibility of food items, with fruit and vegetables tending to be more costly than other food items. In consideration of this issue, two potential areas of intervention were raised; market development and integration so that production and seasonality are separate from consumption, and exploration into Public-Private-Partnerships, particularly as they relate to the growing and selling of nutrition food, which was deemed to be particularly relevant for Ethiopia as a net importer of food. However, in part this challenge is linked to issues of seasonality with certain types of foods, particularly fruits, only being available in certain time periods leading to variation in consumption. This is particularly an issue in rural areas where there is a lower prevalence of imported goods. Therefore, it was highlighted that alongside market development and integration, there is a need for supply-side interventions which boost the production of nutritious and diverse foods. In particular, interventions which scale up the production of wild fruits and plants such as spirulina, moringa and wild berries were mentioned due to their high nutritional value and contribution. Finally, linked to this is overarching need of rural development with many communities, especially in rural areas, lacking water sources, not only to grow the vegetables but also to cook the vegetables, and lack of sources of cooking energy. This elucidated how sustainable food systems transformation cannot occur by working in silos, or merely focusing on food security interventions, but must incorporate cross-cutting policies and adopt a multi-sector approach.

Another major area of challenge and potential intervention that was raised by participants was the role of nutrition education as an entry point to try to address some of the key issues facing the Ethiopian food system. Here, it was noted that a key difficulty is ensuring that nutrition education is cost effective and is communicated to people in an easily comprehensible manner. Several policy interventions were raised as potential game-changing solutions to this problem. Many participants vocalised the possibility of increasing the number of educated nutrition professionals and targeting adolescents to maximise the likelihood of triggering behaviour change. This would overcome one of the key challenges in Ethiopia of the lack of skills to process, cook and preserve food. Alternatively, it was suggested that nutrition education should be more closely linked with the school feeding programs and university feeding programs, as in Ethiopia there is a large public university system which is boarding and so provides food. This offers a potential platform to provide healthier foods and increase nutritional awareness which can affect future consumption patterns and ultimately affect crop choices. A further proposed platform for nutrition education was linked to the Orthodox Christian beliefs and fasting periods. Currently, the fasting period is seen as a constraint to healthier diets, however Dialogue participants raised the possibility of using it as a platform to promote healthier diets.

However, one of the key challenges identified in nutrition education campaigns is that implementation of development programs, especially those concerning nutrition, is often not as good as design. Participants used the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) to illustrate this as despite consciously trying to be nutrition sensitive, it often does not have any significant effect on nutrition outcomes. It was noted that often there is impact in terms of caloric availability and consumption, especially at the household level in terms of quality and diversity, but due to inadequate contact between mothers and health extension workers, there is limited impact on children's diet and nutrition indicators.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/2

Dietary frameworks and policies

A further discussion topic focussed on the application and relevance of dietary policy frameworks in Ethiopia, especially in light of the development of Ethiopia's Food and Nutrition Strategy 2030 which contains a number of policy actions to consider in order to transition towards a more sustainable food system. Here, there were two important outcome points.

The first point regarded a need to identify a method to observe and measure the implementation and adoption of these guidelines. For example, the Strategy proposes to ban the advertising of 'unhealthy' foods, which is a problem in the country at the moment, however it is unclear how this would be implemented and what kind of institutional changes would be needed to meet the requirements of this guideline.

The second outcome of this discussion was an identification that a one size fits all conception of healthy diets is not applicable in Ethiopia. The actual diets of Ethiopians is both affected by culture, for example affected by Orthodox Christian beliefs and fasting periods, and highly resource-driven. It is one thing to recommend policies and interventions for food system transformation, but it is another whether it is feasible and plausible to achieve them. Therefore, there is a need to study communities individually and propose realistic, evidence-based solutions for them. This was further explored in the Dialogue with reference to the Ethiopian value chain; in particular, that the price of vegetables or fruits varies massively depending on the region and season in question which poses a significant accessibility limitation on healthy diets and the applicability of broad policy frameworks.

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Data & Evidence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Human rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	Governance
<input type="checkbox"/>	Women & Youth Empowerment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trade-offs
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

There were no major areas of divergence in this Dialogue. A small area of divergence emerged with regard to the increasing proportion of Ethiopians who are consuming street food or food not produced at home. Whilst some stakeholders proposed this to be an important issue that needed attention, others held that eating out is still not a common feature of consumption for the majority of people and was instead linked to higher income, urban groups. It was agreed that this should be considered as an area of concern, but should not be prioritised compared to other food system challenges and interventions.

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