

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Wednesday, 19 May 2021 10:00 GMT +02:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Farmers and Consumers at the centre of 2021 UN SG Food Systems Summit
CONVENED BY	Consumers International and World Farmers' Organisation (WFO)
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/18372/
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

74

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

19-30

74

31-50

51-65

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

42 Male

32 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

14 Agriculture/crops

7 Fish and aquaculture

7 Livestock

7 Agro-forestry

Environment and ecology

Trade and commerce

Education

Communication

Food processing

Food retail, markets

Food industry

Financial Services

Health care

Nutrition

4 National or local government

Utilities

Industrial

35 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan

Large national business

Multi-national corporation

17 Small-scale farmer

18 Medium-scale farmer

Large-scale farmer

Local Non-Governmental Organization

International Non-Governmental Organization

Indigenous People

4 Science and academia

Workers and trade union

Member of Parliament

Local authority

4 Government and national institution

Regional economic community

United Nations

International financial institution

8 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

Consumer group

4 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

The dialogue was organised in full respect of all the principles on which the Summit is based. The aim was to create an occasion that would give visibility and a voice to those who normally stand on the sidelines of the debate. In particular, this second meeting focused on the development of real actions with which to achieve concrete change in the food systems. The awareness that change is urgent was present in all those who took part and inspired the identification of common priorities. The structure of the dialogue was designed to encourage open and constructive discussion. The questions addressed to the participants concerned expectations and desires from both the production and consumer side. There are interventions and challenges to be addressed, which are unachievable without the commitment of both sides and that is why the encounter between these two categories can be the fuse from which transformation can come.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The premises of this dialogue were to promote inclusive and win-win solutions by adopting a holistic and systemic approach to understanding how to act in a complex system like the food system. In fact, farmers and consumers are the first and last ring in the food value chain and it is essential that they strengthen and reinforce their collaboration, fostering a systems approach to the value chain based on a fairer share of value all along. In doing so, therefore, a multi-stakeholder inclusivity was embraced and it was emphasized that everyone is called upon to play their part. The topics covered were multiple and carefully selected to encourage exchanges and reflect the complexity of food systems. The outcomes identified during the previous dialogue were the starting point and the basis for the discussion and further development of this second dialogue. Throughout the dialogue, a balance was sought in the representativeness of both sides and the involvement of all was ensured. The principle of complexity, respect and trust was embraced by all participants, who appreciated the opportunity for interaction and mutual exchange and hoped that cooperation could continue in the future. The starting point for the dialogue was the recognition of the principle of "acting with urgency". The desire to take common action and issue a joint declaration was expressed, accelerating the pace of change and committing to a shared path.

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

It is important to ensure the representativeness of all relevant categories. Also, it is good to consider that the list of registered participants reduces at the as some do not attend. Another aspect to consider: it is advisable to share in advance the topics on which the debate will develop, so that participants can be more prepared and participate even more actively. In particular, if the topics addressed are specific, it is recommendable to offer the possibility of getting information in order to put the participants at ease during the dialogue. Lastly, in order to cover all regions of the world - in case it is an international online event - it is recommended to organize multiple sessions in different time slots to allow the participation of representatives from different time zones.

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 at stake is the second in a three-dialogue series and is intended to revert to and expand on the topics discussed in the previous one. The structure included a morning and an afternoon session, where the same issues were addressed. Compared to the previous dialogue, the focus was on more specific questions, encouraging debate and the expression of possible differences on controversial points and dig into the issues that are at the heart of the transformation we want to see in the coming years. The aim, in fact, is to develop a vision for the evolution of food systems that takes into account the perspectives and priorities of both sides.

One round of break up sessions was organized under the following themes:

- 1) Transforming consumption patterns
- 2) Delivering food security and nutrition
- 3) Sustainable production practices
- 4) Deconcentration of value in food chains

Each discussion that took place in the various break-up sessions was reported back to the plenary by a representative from each of the two sides. At the end of this discussion, in the plenary session, strategies and visions were developed with respect to future steps that could be leveraged through the process.

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

MAIN FINDINGS

This dialogue was approached in a spirit of partnership and inclusiveness, resulting in a united voice of farmers and consumers. Considerable discussion took place on how to reshape the food chain and make it more sustainable. In doing so, however, attention was paid to the needs of both parties, starting with their expectations and concerns. The key points that emerged relate to the need to redefine the food system and redesign the public policies that support it. While farmers and consumers are the main players and potential drivers of change, they are not the only ones upon whom change can depend. There is a very complex food system that is always evolving. The danger in this area is that food has so many different impacts at national level that often the policies and actions that are taken end up being very diluted, delaying the progress that is needed.

A core area, which sounds very obvious, concerns the promotion of cross-cutting national food policies. Very few countries have actually adopted policies with common priorities at national level covering not only health, environment and agriculture, but also trade policy, economic growth, education, which -although seemingly unrelated- affect the food system. Aligned governmental guidelines are urgently required across countries, regarding effective parental nutrition labelling, regulation of misleading claims or marketing practices, where there is certainly a role for responsible businesses, but also the need for a governmental framework to support these efforts. We're dealing with global supply chains and global companies across many different jurisdictions. It's really crucial, therefore, to harmonize national laws.

Another relevant issue concerns prices and access to affordable food, where the dilemma revolved around being able to produce sustainably at a price that is not prohibitive for consumers. In this respect, the role of technology and digital solutions is crucial.

Thanks to blockchain and QR codes, farmers can ensure more transparent and traceable production and share data with consumers who will be able to make more informed choices, on price as well.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/4

TRANSFORMING CONSUMPTION PATTERNS
In this group, much emphasis was placed on education and the importance of bridging the knowledge gap between farmers and consumers. This begins in schools, including school canteens, and it ends in the supermarket where consumers need more information about the way of production in order to make sustainable choices. Furthermore, participants agreed that governments should create policies to bring consumers and farmers closer together, and especially to close the gap between producer and consumer prices.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/4

DELIVERING FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION
According to the reporting speakers, the discussion developed around the following themes. First of all, once again, education was considered to have a key role to play. Both consumers and farmers need to be well informed about existing initiatives and regulations. Furthermore, it is good that farmers master the tools at their disposal in order to improve their production techniques and are updated on available agricultural best practices. However, technology and innovation can be a double-edged sword. Indeed, it is not always optimally used. Furthermore, it is essential to reduce food losses and ensure a functioning and fair food value chain in which all three sectors - from the producer, through the processor to the consumer - complement each other perfectly. Only in this way will it be possible to ensure a virtuous circle and to eliminate food waste. Hence, cooperatives are the winning solution in this process.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/4

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION PRACTICES

Participants in this session reflected on the possibility that aesthetic and convenience factors often determine consumer choice. Although consumer awareness of sustainability issues has increased, the price and how a food appears can be a determining factor, not realizing that the price does not reflect all externalities and that what comes from the field can appear deformed. At the same time, consumers have expectations regarding access to healthy and nutritious food that are not always met. In this case, enforcement of existing legislation and standards comes into play.

Farmers have expressed frustration at this point because there is not always a levelling of standards which makes production very difficult. However, a positive aspect is that farmers are investing a lot in new technologies and digitalisation. This allows them to increase the quality of what is produced, have more control and reduce the environmental impact.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/4

DECONCENTRATION OF VALUE IN FOOD CHAINS
The debate opened with a mutual recognition of good practices on both sides of the food value chain. There was consensus on the need to maintain transparency throughout the food chain, so that even the price of food could be set fairly. In addition, the pandemic has brought to light that alternative models are possible and feasible and has made it clear that direct sales from producer to consumer are viable. Finally, it is necessary to reshape the chain with sustainability and justice at its core. Participants agreed that a just food system is needed and that it is essential to respect the local production, local crops, local types of animals, and to avoid homologation. Each country, each region has its own personality and the base of the system has to be transparency and trust.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

All panellists and participants agreed on the positions expressed and elaborated during this second dialogue. Although there was an emerging need to establish practices that can enhance trust between producers and consumers in the food systems, globally.

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