OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM



DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 1 June 2021 10:00 GMT +06:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Multi-stakeholder food dialogue, envisioning a sustainable urban food system, Dhaka city
Convened by	Md. Jubaer Rashid, Country Representative, ICLEI South Asia
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/18944/
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.

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1. PARTICIPATION

TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE 19 0-18 19-30 57 31-50 25 51-65 2 66-80 80+ **PARTICIPATION BY GENDER** 65 Male 38 Female Prefer not to say or Other NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR 7 Education Health care 18 Agriculture/crops 3 Fish and aquaculture 2 Communication Nutrition Livestock 3 National or local government 3 Food processing 12 Agro-forestry 2 Food retail, markets Utilities Food industry Industrial 10 Environment and ecology 2 **Financial Services** Other Trade and commerce 1 39

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

5	Small/medium enterprise/artisan		Workers and trade union
3	Large national business		Member of Parliament
3	Multi-national corporation	2	Local authority
4	Small-scale farmer	12	Government and national institution
	Medium-scale farmer	1	Regional economic community
	Large-scale farmer	21	United Nations
16	Local Non-Governmental Organization		International financial institution
22	International Non-Governmental Organization	2	Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance
	Indigenous People		Consumer group
3	Science and academia	8	Other

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2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

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

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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

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4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

A major concern in the food system of Dhaka is the high level of food adulteration and unsafe food handling practices. Dhaka City Corporation in 2004 indicated that more than 76% of food items on the market were found to be adulterated and the level of food adulteration varied from 70% to 90%.

Most of the urban fresh market workers in the city also work under very poor conditions. Studies found, 30% of meat shop workers do not have knowledge of zoonotic diseases, 85% and 90% of them do not wear protective coat/apron and gumboots, and 45% do not know proper duration of washing hands. 27% fish retailers suffer from lesions on hands, fingers, toes, and 10% had diarrhoea due to unhygienic and unsafe handling of fishes.

A recent FAO study on Consumer Behaviour in Dhaka City indicates that 23-52% of urban poor suffer from moderate to severe food insecurity, which reciprocates in reduced meal sizes and poor nutrition intake. It also found that 34% and 27% of low-middle poor and low-poor are suffering from hypertension and respectively, 18% and 14% of them got diabetes, poor diet and low intake of fruits and vegetables play a vital role behind most of the diseases. Poor urban households and and low intake of truits and vegetables play a vital role benind most of the diseases. Poor urban households and disadvantaged groups in the informal low-income settlements particularly suffer from the chronic consequences of hunger and malnutrition . 31.8% of urban slum children under 5 years of age are underweight, whereas 2% are overweight. Urban poor families have also struggled to cope with the food crisis more than health crisis caused by COVID-19 outbreak. The loss of income coupled with increasing price of basic food items due to the lockdown, forced urban poor households to change their diets and eat less . During COVID-19, 42% of urban households suffered severe food insecurity while only 15% of households in the rural area. Around 90% urban households consumed poor quality foods and 60% of them reduced significant quantity of food items. significant quantity of food intake . Keeping the above issues at the forefront, the dialogue focused on examining the cross-linkages between the issues and

their alignment to each of the Action Tracks.

ACTION TRACKS

KEYWORDS



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MAIN FINDINGS

Overall, it was agreed that there is a need for greater coordination among stakeholders (such as Department of Agricultural Marketing, Local Government Engineering Department, Ministry of Food, Ministry of Disaster Management) to work alongside the city corporation, to ensure food safety, nutrition, and equitable access to nutritious food, especially for the urban poor and marginalised communities.

Within the existing monitoring and regulation laws on food safety it was suggested that checks for quality of food items and traces of adulteration should be undertake at all stages of the food value chain. Further, instead of penal punishment being imposed on defaulters, greater emphasis should be given to training and capacity building of street vendors on food handling and safety.

There are currently no programs on nutrition or social safety net for the urban poor, as there are for the rural communities. Hence there is need to re-design the programs to include sections of the urban communities into these programs. Additionally, urban agriculture significantly grew in Dhaka city amidst the lockdown and has become a lifeline for many urban poor communities. It was agreed that the city should promote urban farming and aguaculture on vacant lands or communal water bodies. This can help urban agriculture to serve as a more durable and long-lasting solution to future food security threats for the urban poor.

Actions and commitments (10 year/2030 vision)

The city aims to focus on reducing food adulteration and to ensure greater food safety by providing technical training and building the capacity of food vendors.

Actionable messages to UNFSS

1. Institutionalising capacity building and technical knowledge for safe food to coordinate the activities between the different stages of the food value chain and the food regulatory system.

2. Recognition/ formal identification/ institutionalization, empowerment of informal vendors; Undertake trainings for street vendors for better handling of food and food safety. 3. Regulatory food safety guidelines for assessing the quality of food items all along the value chain of food production,

processing, sale, consumption or disposal. 4. Redesign social security programs to be more inclusive to ensure food security for urban poor, along with rural

communities, establish social protection mechanism poor communities; A mechanism should be developed to ensure that leftover food is safely and hygienically distributed to street children and the urban poor.

5. Awareness generation among schools children and mothers for improved food habits and better diet. 6. Promote urban agriculture in communal lands as a means of livelihood and food security for urban poor; establishment of

a farmer markets in the city with adequate support infrastructure, where local farmers can sell their produce 7. Develop a comprehensive 'urban food policy' involving multiple stakeholders (such as Department of Agricultural Marketing, Local Government Engineering Department, Ministry of Food, Ministry of Disaster Management and the local urban bodies), to coordinate and improve the urban food supply chain and ensure access to safe and affordable food especially for the urban poor and the marginalised communities.

ACTION TRACKS

- Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and / nutritious food for all
- Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable 1 consumption patterns

Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production

- Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods 1
- Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

KEYWORDS



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Group Discussion 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all

The main issue discussed in the group was that food adulteration was taking place at a large scale, especially in the case of food processing conducted by small and medium enterprises both in rural and urban areas. Participants mentioned that while large-scale food production systems had some regulations with respect to nutrition guidelines and hygiene, these did not apply to small and medium-sized enterprises. Another concern that was raised was the lack of adequate knowledge among the farmers on the appropriate use of chemical fertilizers and other contaminations. Actions to be taken included:

A Standard Operating Procedure for food regulations especially for SMEs need to be developed along with clear guidelines on monitoring of food quality. It is still to be decided whether this should be brought under the purview of the Bangladesh Standards Testing Institute or the local municipality.
However, this would require also greater support through capacity building and technical knowledge. It was suggested that

• However, this would require also greater support through capacity building and technical knowledge. It was suggested that a safe food foundation, titled 'Nirapod Khaddo Foundation' should be formed to coordinate the activities between the different stages of the food value chain and the food regulatory system.

• The nutrition gap also needs to be addressed. The group recommended that an assessment should be conducted to identify nutrient dense local food items and encourage this production to address the current nutrition gap in the national agricultural policy.

• A key concern that was highlighted was the unsanitary conditions of the local markets and adulterated food items that are sold at street food stalls. The current regulatory mechanism in place is that of a 'Mobile Court' that conducts trials based on complaints made to the Mobile Court under the Food Safety Act 2013, and takes legal action against the food safety offenders on the spot. While this regulation is commendable, its implementation and the desired results of such a stringent regulation was questioned by the group. They suggested that the approach to food adulteration and safety should take a more systemic approach, whereby advisory and guidelines are given to the vendors on food safety in the first instance, rather than immediate legal actions. It was suggested that the street food vendors should be registered and provided a license by the city municipality. Further it is the role of the city corporation to identify the relevant stakeholders such as the Bangladesh Society for Safe Food, Department of Fisheries, Department of Agricultural Extension, who could provide the necessary training to street food vendors on safe food. The authorities should not only check for food safety (i.e. checking expiry dates) but also the nutritional value of food items.

• The International Centre for Diarrheal Disease Research, Bangladesh and the Institute of Public Health, Bangladesh should generate more consumer awareness on food adulteration and safe food via electronic media.

• Overall, it was agreed that there was a need to regulate the quality of food items all along the value chain of food production, processing, sale, consumption or disposal.

ACTION TRACKS

KEYWORDS

1	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all		Finance	1	Policy
	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns		Innovation		Data & Evidence
	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production	1	Human rights	1	Governance
	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods	1	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress			1	Environment and Climate

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Group 2: Ensuring sustainable consumption patterns

The major concern raised by the group was the increasing consumption of fast-food and processed food, especially by the younger generation. The consumption of wheat flour had increased drastically, as is reflected in the increase in import to 4-5 times in the last 10-15 years.

The level of trans fatty acids in food also is a concern. The Bangladesh Food Safety Authority (BFSA) has developed a draft policy limiting the level of trans fatt in foods to 2%. The draft regulations state that, 'any fat emulsions, oils and fats that are used individually or intended for processed foods or any food or to be used as raw material for food production for retail business, catering business, restaurants, institutions, bakeries or any food establishment, and processed food, packaged food, ready-to-eat food or any type of foodstuffs cannot be sold, distributed, stored, produced, processed, marketed or imported if those contain more than 2% Trans Fatty Acids or 2gm Trans Fatty Acids per 100gm fat.'- Limited Trans Fatty Acid in Food Products Regulations 2021. However, its effective implementation and regulation especially with respect to SMEs will continue to be a challenge. will continue to be a challenge.

Additionally, a social trend that has been observed, especially among the urban poor and the lower-middle class is to consume more packaged/processed food and food from restaurants, as it is seen as an indication of a better social status. Food habits are also dependent on the availability of food, such as street food or restaurants near their workplace. On the other hand, the urban marginal poor are not fortunate enough to assess the quality of food, but rather purchase food that is cheap and provides them a basic meal.

In respect to food wastage, the issue of food wastage at social gatherings and ceremonies was highlighted. This was considered a major cause for concern, as it is an easily avoidable issue and did not seem to require major government interventions

The cause for food loss was directed towards the monoculture approach adopted by farmers, which leads to massive production of a certain crop/cereal that often exceeds the market demand. A further challenge is inadequate storage facilities along the food value chain that results in large food losses. Actions to be taken:

• To address some of these issues and target more sustainable consumption patterns, the group agreed that the BSFA should authorise a higher price on unhealthy food through the application of Fat and Sugar taxes as against more healthier food options.

• The Ministry of Health, Institute of Public Health, the Bangladesh National Nutrition Council should increase and diversify their campaigns to increase more consumer awareness on healthy dietary habits, especially among those sections of society that can have a multiplier effect- such as school children and mothers. A good example is the Healthy Food Plate - a nutrition counselling tool for pregnant women to promote dietary diversity through a healthy and balanced diet.
Perishable food items should be sold at lower prices after a couple of days to avoid food wastage and provide access to

poorer sections to buy nutritious food.

• Overall food producers and manufacturers are advised to focus more on ensuring national health, and not only on making profits.

ACTION TRACKS

KEYWORDS

Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all		Finance	1	Policy
Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns		Innovation		Data & Evidence
Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production	1	Human rights	1	Governance
Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods	1	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress			1	Environment and Climate

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Group 3: Advance Equitable Livelihoods

Group 3: Advance Equitable Liveinoods This group particularly focused on promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all actors along the food value chain which shall eventually contribute to the elimination of poverty. Key issues that were highlighted was the degree of challenges and vulnerability faced by the people occupied in and around the food sector in urban areas including those in food production, processing, handling, transporting, vending or trading, and food waste management. The street food vendors often do not have a legal status and thus are at the risk of being evicted as well as victims of theft. These vendors are often left at the mercy of local police or political syndicates that take bribes from the vendors, in order to secure vending spots.

As their stalls are usually make-shift structures, they are subjected to extreme weather conditions, air and noise pollution, affecting not only their health but also the freshness of the food they serve. Due to their temporary status, access to potable water, sanitation and waste disposal is also a challenge. This also leads to poor personal hygiene condition for food vendors. Most fresh market workers and food vendors work for long hours without breaks or weekly off-days. They often get very low or below subsistence wage or income. There is also significant discrimination in the working conditions of male and female workers. Further, there are no nutrition or social safety net programs for the urban poor such as those of the Bangladesh Integrated Nutrition Programme (BINP) that are available for rural communities.

Informal actors in the urban food value chain play a vital role in feeding the large urban population. However, they do not have access or opportunities to join agencies such as business owners' associations. Most of the food sector workers live in slum areas.

The urban food system is also playing a vital role in creating and widening livelihood opportunities in the rural areas. The businesses and livelihoods of rural food system actors are thus heavily dependent on their urban counterparts. Online food purchase and delivery services have opened up new market opportunities for rural producers to sell their products directly to the urban distributors of consumers, including employment opportunities in delivery and distribution services.

Actions to be taken:

• Enabling and supportive environment is required for women.

 Infrastructural improvements are required to enhance food vendors' access to water and sanitation facilities and to improve their personal hygiene condition

• City Corporations and Directorate of National Consumers Right Protection should work together to protect both the rights of food sector workers and consumers. Regulations should be developed to set and enforce a minimum wage rate for the food sector workers.

• Proper policies and implementation system should be in place to allocate specific areas for street food vending. Thus, city governments will not need to evict them and acknowledge the informal vendors. Quality control measures should be set. Furthermore, a mechanism should be developed so that the wastes generated from the food vending stalls reach out up to the solid waste transfer stations of the city. • People working along the food value chain in urban areas can be made involved in urban farming which can serve as an alternative source of food security and income generation for them.

• City governments should develop initiatives to protect rights of people employed in different e-commerce based food businesses and related services, as this is an emerging and rapidly growing sector.

• Micro and small traders should be empowered through their inclusion in the private sector based procurement channels.

• Elimination of influence of local politics and syndicates, and give rights to agency/ union/ cooperatives.

ACTION TRACKS KEYWORDS Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and Finance Policy nutritious food for all Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable Innovation Data & Evidence consumption patterns Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive Human rights Governance production Women & Youth Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods Trade-offs 1 Empowerment Action Track 5: Build resilience to Environment vulnerabilities, shocks and stress and Climate

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Group 4: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress

The key concern that was highlighted by the group was the food crisis that was faced during the national lockdown in 2020 to contain the COVID-19 in the country. There were instances of hoarding that had led to increase in food prices, as the transport system was hampered during the lockdown. This was also a time when the vulnerability of the urban poor/migrant labourers was exposed, as without a government-sponsored social safety net program, they are subjected to both food and livelihood insecurity.

However, the Ministry of Food under its various programs has been working towards providing the food at subsidised rates, especially during the pandemic, such as the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) truck sales, in which sugar, lentils, rice, wheat, soybean oil and other essential items were sold at lower rates. However, these interventions are established at the national or the sub-regional level and the local governments do not have the power to provide these subsidies or the mandate to provide affordable and nutritious food to its citizens. In certain instances, the city mayor has provided support through their own personal funds.

Actions to be taken:

It was suggested that greater agricultural land should be integrated into the city plans (this could include conversion of vacant land, rooftop gardening, allotment of specific agricultural land in the City Master Plans etc.) which would help in shortening the food supply chain and also provide for a source of subsistence to the urban poor.
 The City Corporation would need to work with the Agricultural Extension department and the local community to pilot

• The City Corporation would need to work with the Agricultural Extension department and the local community to pilot interventions such as rooftop farming and promote farming techniques such as hydroponics and aquaponics. The group suggested that the pilots for rooftop farming should begin on Government residential buildings.

• The city corporation should ensure the establishment of more farmer markets in the city with adequate support infrastructure, where local farmers can sell their produce.

• Overall, there is a need for a comprehensive 'urban food policy' involving multiple stakeholders (such as Department of Agricultural Marketing, Local Government Engineering Department, Ministry of Food, Ministry of Disaster Management and the local urban bodies), wherein they coordinate and improve the urban food supply chain and ensure access to safe and affordable food especially for the urban poor and the marginalised communities.

ACTION TRACKS		KEYWORDS			
	Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all		Finance	1	Policy
	Action Track 2: Shift to sustainable consumption patterns		Innovation		Data & Evidence
	Action Track 3: Boost nature-positive production	1	Human rights	1	Governance
	Action Track 4: Advance equitable livelihoods	1	Women & Youth Empowerment		Trade-offs
1	Action Track 5: Build resilience to vulnerabilities, shocks and stress			1	Environment and Climate

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Group 5: Urban Poverty and Food Security

Ensuring food security for the urban poor requires to adopt a more holistic approach that looks at community and regional level empowerment. The group reiterated that the urban poor were significantly more vulnerable to the food management issues such as food adulteration, access to nutritious food and occupational hazards related to food handling. The urban poor lack awareness about nutrition and food value. Besides, living expenses are generally higher in urban areas, including prices of foods.

Food adulteration is harming the health of city-dwellers irrespective of their income level. However, the poor suffer more, as they can barely afford the expenses of treatments required to recover from diseases caused by intake of adulterated foods. Food adulteration is also causing many chronic diseases, treatment costs of which are making an entire family destitute. Actions to be taken:

· Balanced development among rural and urban areas and decentralization of services and opportunities are required to be enhanced. Necessary extensions services and facilities of a good standard should be ensured at all levels for decentralization.

• Further research and studies are required to be conducted to know the food system, consumption pattern, and consumer behaviour of urban areas including the poor in greater depth, which will help inform policy and program interventions. • Information centres (also remotely accessible) can be established to satisfy the inquiries of urban consumers about food safety, hygiene, standards, sources, and authenticity.

• The infrastructural development has built a convenient and quick connection among rural, peri-urban, and urban areas during the last decade. Thus, the rural and urban food systems are not isolated anymore, rather they are closely connected Urban people, including the urban poor, can be engaged better in food production through rooftop gardening. City governments can support them with necessary inputs and know-hows initially. Organizations like FAO, Practical Action, and

Department of Agricultural Extension of the government are working to promote urban farming and can join forces to enhance it further.

• The Department of Fisheries can work together with FAO and other development partners to develop policies for safe food handling in the markets.

• Development partners, NGOs, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) wings of private sector can partner with volunteer organizations (such as Biddyanando Foundation) to reach food aids to urban poor communities in an efficient manner during crisis.

• A mechanism should be developed to ensure that leftover foods from restaurants, community halls, and social ceremonies are safely and hygienically distributed to street children and the urban poor. Some volunteers are conducting these drives; however it is in an ad hoc manner. Private sector can come forward to develop such mechanism. Middle and higher income groups should be made aware of not wasting food.

• Women-specific program interventions should be taken up widely, as they are one of the most vulnerable and food insecure groups. Food security should be assessed through a gender lens and women's participation should be ensured at all levels of decision-making and implementation.

• The nutrition value and the quality of food should not be compromised based on the cost of food items. Hence it is responsibility of the Ministry of Food and the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh to ensure that safe and nutritious food is affordable by all.

 Mass Awareness campaigns on sustainable food consumption should be conducted among all economic classes. • Overall, job opportunities need to be created and investment needs to be made in the agricultural and food sector to promote safe and affordable food to all along the food value chain. Creating alternative income generation opportunities in the rural areas will help to subside the rates of migration from rural to urban areas.

ACTION TRACKS

Action Track 1: Ensure access to safe and 1 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



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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

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

ss to safe and	Finance	Policy
ainable	Innovation	Data & Evidence
-positive	Human rights	Governance
itable livelihoods	Women & Youth Empowerment	Trade-offs
ce to tress		Environment and Climate

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Dialogue title

Multi-stakeholder food dialogue, envisioning a sustainable urban food system, Dhaka Date published