

# OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

<b>DIALOGUE DATE</b>	Monday, 24 May 2021 14:00 GMT +02:00
<b>DIALOGUE TITLE</b>	Ceres2030 Deep Dives into the Nexus of Food Systems, Climate Change & Nutrition in Malawi
<b>CONVENED BY</b>	Dr. Felix Phiri, Director of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS DNHA Ministry of Health
<b>DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE</b>	<a href="https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/20093/">https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/20093/</a>
<b>DIALOGUE TYPE</b>	Independent
<b>GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS</b>	Malawi

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

26

## 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 dialogue was organised in collaboration with the Department of Nutrition, HIV and AIDS in Malawi and invited a variety of different stakeholders, including members of government, civil society and donor groups to 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, perspective 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?

# 3. METHOD

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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 Malawi with a specific view to receiving inputs on reasonable steps towards a food system transition pathway to healthier diets in Malawi. 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.

One of the main findings of the Dialogue was the need to explore the nexus of food security, nutrition and climate change in greater depth so that food system transformation and the policies to bring it about are cross-cutting and not considered in silos. Other findings included an identification of the need to start the process of constructing Food-Based Dietary Guidelines for Malawi which can be implemented consistently across the government, and an awareness of a lack of resources for implementation of existing policies and interventions that could bring about sustainable food system transformation. Specifically, in Malawi there are lots of policies and strategy plans, and a lot of support, especially from donors, focuses on the production of these documents, as opposed to their implementation. Focus needs to be given to the translation of these frameworks into policy.

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## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/2

One of the key issues that emerged from the discussions was the affordability and accessibility of nutritious foods in Malawi. Some participants noted the continued need for supply-side interventions, especially those with a focus on improving the production and preservation of foods. These would have nutritional benefits by covering seasonal gaps and covering micro-nutrient gaps. In particular, nutritional benefits have been observed from orange-fleshed sweet potatoes and biofortified foods such as pro-vitamin A maize and iron-fortified beans. However, there are several anticipated challenges to achieving increased production and diversification. For example, the increasing shift of the fertiliser subsidy programme towards increasing maize production, which although beneficial from a production perspective, is nutritionally problematic as relatively cheap staples increase compared to more nutritionally beneficial foods. To overcome these challenges, there is a need for incentives or financing mechanisms to create an enabling environment for start-ups and entrepreneurship which would encourage farmers to take risks and diversify their production, and potentially explore commercial productions.

Other participants highlighted the fortification program in Malawi which was deemed to be fairly good. Alternatively, the key issue identified was whether it was affordable to the people that needed it. Here, subsidies or community level fortification were identified as actions that could be taken to make biofortified foods more accessible to the communities that require them.

### ACTION TRACKS

<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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### KEYWORDS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Policy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Climate

## OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/2

With regard to the discussion regarding healthier diets, participants highlighted that nutrition education and greater policy frameworks are needed to promote the awareness, and utilisation, of the existing body of knowledge on nutritious foods and food safety. Even with increased production, education in terms of end products that can be created from the diversified crops is required. Currently, there is a lack of knowledge on the uses of certain nutritious crops. In this sense, progress towards healthier diets could be achieved by the sharing of recipes around the use of nutritious crops, such as orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, to increase their consumption and utilisation.

Alternatively, there are opportunities for increasing nutritional outcomes through the introduction dietary guidelines in school feeding or in improvements to the provision of food in boarding schools. Such curriculum changes would work towards addressing the nutritional challenges and stereotypes that emerge at an early age. However, it was raised that it is unclear how effective knowledge dissemination is in triggering behaviour changes, especially of ingrained actions and beliefs.

A second intervention that emerged strongly from the Dialogue was the role of nutrition frontline workers. In this regard, it was considered that the provisions for frontline workers are available in Malawi, but implementation is lacking. Indeed, implementation challenges emerged strongly from the Dialogue as a key bottleneck for Malawian food system transformation as opposed to an absence of policy frameworks. However, on the other hand, additional policy frameworks are still needed on the taxation of unhealthy foods, so people find healthy foods affordable and better to access cost-wise. Finally, whilst Malawi has food groups, there is a need to establish creating Food-Based Dietary Guidelines and their consistent implementation across the government.

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## AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

The central area of divergence in the Dialogue was whether the key challenge facing food system transformation in Malawi is the lack of implementation or policy gaps. On the one hand, some stakeholders felt that there are a lot of policies and strategy plans in Malawi, but what is lacking is implementation and the translation of these policies into policy. Donors often focus their support on the production of policy documents and frameworks, but less on their implementation. From this perspective, what is lacking is the will and support to bring policies together to the extent that they are funded and operationalised. Specifically, in Malawi, institutional and resource capacities are not necessarily the issue, but the lack of tools and funding to implement programmes.

However, on the other hand some stakeholders felt that whilst there are implementation problems in Malawi, this does not negate the remaining challenges regarding policy frameworks and capacity challenges. Importantly, there is a need for consistency across ministries. There are often good policies but they are isolated and do not talk to each other, operating instead in silos. For example, there are nutrition education guidance strategic policies that indicate the importance of nutritional frontline workers but at the moment most people are volunteers who lack support. Such transformative policies need to be emphasised more both so that other policies align with their priorities but also so that more is invested into their implementation.

The second issue of divergence was over the extent to which sustainability should be considered in the food systems transformation in Malawi. It was fairly unanimously expressed that sustainability is a concerning issue and investments should be directed towards this, but divergence occurred over the extent to which sustainability should be prioritised compared to other pressing issues, such as malnutrition and poverty. For example, it was questioned whether as emissions from Malawi are quite low compared to other countries, it was unfair to ask Malawi to grow its agricultural economy without increasing its emissions. However, other stakeholders felt that it was not a simple issue of emissions and GHGs. They felt that whilst emissions and GHGs are important issues, there are other issues of soil degradation and lack of water (especially at the end of the dry season) that must be considered. Importantly, production is context specific and different levels need to be considered, which is often understated in the dialogues. For example, solar-related community level technologies or the use of firewood offer innovative opportunities to addressing the nexus of food security, nutrition and climate change, but they require more articulation and awareness. In particular, the visibility of climate change issues in nutrition spaces is often very low. Ultimately, there is a need to better understand trade-offs between nutrition, equity, and climate outcomes at both the micro and macro level.

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		✓	Environment and Climate