

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 13 July 2021 10:00 GMT +01:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	How Can We Feed All Children Better?
CONVENED BY	Omved Gardens and Chefs' Manifesto
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/23555/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

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

18

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18

4 19-30

11 31-50

2 51-65

1 66-80

0 80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

8 Male

10 Female

0 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

0 Agriculture/crops

0 Fish and aquaculture

0 Livestock

0 Agro-forestry

2 Environment and ecology

0 Trade and commerce

4 Education

3 Communication

1 Food processing

0 Food retail, markets

4 Food industry

0 Financial Services

0 Health care

3 Nutrition

0 National or local government

0 Utilities

0 Industrial

1 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

2 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

1 Large national business

0 Multi-national corporation

1 Small-scale farmer

0 Medium-scale farmer

0 Large-scale farmer

5 Local Non-Governmental Organization

2 International Non-Governmental Organization

0 Indigenous People

2 Science and academia

0 Workers and trade union

0 Member of Parliament

0 Local authority

0 Government and national institution

0 Regional economic community

1 United Nations

0 International financial institution

1 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

1 Consumer group

2 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

Prior to the Dialogue, the principles of engagement were sent in an email to all registered participants and the link to them was pasted into the chat at the start of the Dialogue to ensure that everyone had read them.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

We invited a wide range of stakeholders from different sectors and different parts of the world so that there was some country specific information but also a wide perspective from stakeholders from all over the world which were also relevant for each country represented. Some of the organisations present at the Dialogue already have some of the principles of engagement underpinning their mission statements such as recognising the complexity of food systems therefore there was already an understanding between the participants that they are striving towards a common goal and the spirit of community and listening to each other intently was present.

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

Of the 40 people invited, we had 35 sign-ups and as we run online events quite often, we were aware that actual turnout can be as low as 50%. We therefore had two possible schedules for the day, one was the same method as the Convenors Manual, dividing people into facilitated groups of between 8-10 people if every person who signed up turned up and the other plan was to keep everyone together in one large group if not everyone turned up. Having previously been a facilitator for 2 other Dialogues, our Curator was quite keen on the latter set up as although facilitators would feedback to everyone after their groups, he said it would have been quite nice to hear what everyone had to say. This also gave us the opportunity to include the voices of the planned facilitators most of whom were chefs from our network but who we were keen to have their voices in the conversation. So on the day when 18 participants gathered in total, we asked them how they felt about keeping it as one large group and they liked the idea. We had enough time, so everyone had the opportunity to have their voices heard and I helped the Curator to ensure that everyone had their chance to speak. It worked well as you could visibly see that people were bouncing off what other people were saying, some people had to sign off early but most stayed until the end and we had ample opportunity to go through our 3 discussion topics.

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

The triple burden of malnutrition – undernutrition, hidden hunger and overweight – threatens the survival, growth and development of children and young people worldwide. Well-nourished children are better able to grow, learn, participate in their communities and be resilient in the face of adversity.

Having read the scientific paper for Action Track 1 and with the recent controversy around schools meals throughout Covid-19, especially - but not limited to - the UK, we decided to look deeper into how we can feed all children better.

The following areas were identified by the scientific group for Action Track 1 in order to put children's nutrition rights first: Empower families, children, young people and women to demand affordable nutritious food; Drive food supplies to do the right thing for children; Build healthy food environments for all children; Mobilise supportive systems to scale up nutrition results for every child; Collect, analyse and use good-quality data and evidence regularly to guide action and track progress. Through the Dialogue, we wanted to expand on these points and encourage collaboration among the different stakeholders invited as well as across sectors in different countries.

Key statistics:

- In the UK, 1 in 4 school pupils aged 11-15 are obese
- Teenagers consume on average 8 times the recommended daily sugar allowance
- Only 1 in 12 young people aged 11-18 eat five portions of fruit and vegetables every day
- Approximately 36,000 children and young people under 19 have diabetes in the UK
- London has more overweight and obese children than any other global city
- Poor children are more likely than better off children to suffer from poor health as a result of food insecurity.
- Worldwide, 38.2 million children under the age of 5 years were overweight or obese in 2019 and the prevalence of overweight among children and adolescents aged 5-19 has risen dramatically from just 4% in 1975 to just over 18% in 2016.

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
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MAIN FINDINGS

The origins of the health crisis we are currently facing in the west and certainly in the UK of obesity and overweight, has its origins in the education of children, youth and parents which should be prioritised and given financial support by the government. Nutrition needs to be prioritised for the first 21 years of life as non-communicable and chronic disease has its origins in the cells of our young people. We need to see the investment in the learner ages 0-21 as investments in the future to prevent illness and lifestyle diseases.

Teachers can play a key role in this education. If they were trained about the importance of diet in their PGCEs, they would be less likely to accept poor food systems in their schools. (see discussion topic 3)

Community can also play a key role in this; encouraging everyone to be active members in their food system and use their voices for change. Schools could be at the centre of urban growing initiatives (example given in discussion topic 2) in support of their community and vice versa. We need to be a part of nature's ecosystem again and show children how to be part of that ecosystem rather than detached from it.

It is important to listen to the voice of children, empower them with the knowledge to recognise healthy and nutritious food, how they identify with it culturally and understand how the food they eat affects them. Children intuitively know what is good for them when we connect them to nature.

Supply chains should be shortened wherever possible - the closer children are to food growing or growing it themselves either in a school or community garden the more likely they are to be interested in it and appreciate it.

Not only can Chefs play a key role in school ecosystems but they are also key in communicating what good, whole food is and how we can cook it and make it taste good.

In many countries in Africa, malnutrition and obesity lives side by side. This is a direct result of urbanisation and the glamorisation of fast food. In these countries, effort needs to be made to eliminate the stigma around growing your own food so that is no longer seen as poverty but community initiatives could come together to create urban gardens and remove the stigma. Chefs can play a major role in removing this stigma and teaching people how to cook with indigenous varieties of crops.

Indigenous and heritage varieties of food should be prioritised for subsidies by governments when they are more nutritious than rice and wheat. Indigenous food should also be included in school feeding program meals and communities should have a say in what food is used for these meals & be able to shorten supply chains using locally grown food giving children nutrient dense food and not empty calories just to fill their bellies. Providing school meals and school feeding programs is good, but the food also has to be nutritious as this has a direct impact on learning & concentration.

Food literacy i.e -the skills and knowledge for how to be healthy for life needs to be prioritised as part of school curriculums. Cooking and Nutrition was introduced into the English national curriculum for all 5-14 year olds in 2014, but no study or evaluation has since taken place on how it is being delivered. Food education and learning should be managed by an official body such as Ofsted. Where food literacy is not yet part of the curriculum, it should not be forgotten how relevant food is in so many subjects at school from languages, to history, to geography, there is no subject into which food cannot be incorporated and be used as an enriched learning tool.

Food literacy needs to happen in tandem at school and at home and we can use innovative ideas to help teach parents how to cook such as mobile teaching kitchens which have already been shown to be successful in India and funding chefs to give community cooking classes.

Exercise and teaching the importance of staying active needs to be a compulsory part of the curriculum worldwide.

Governments should actively fund advertising to promote healthy foods, healthy, sustainable consumption habits and the importance of movement and exercise and follow up with a school roll out around the campaigns. Social media platforms should give free advertising for healthy food and lifestyle adverts.

Governments need to intervene to stop the commercialisation of food in schools, hospitals and universities. The importance of chefs in these settings needs to be recognised.

Ultra processed foods should be taxed by the government and additives in food should be reduced and some banned in order to prevent compulsive consumption. Some artificial colours and preservatives that should be banned worldwide are E-numbers tartrazine (E102), quinoline yellow (E104), sunset yellow (E110), carmoisine (E122), ponceau 4R (E124) and allura red (E129); the dangers of which are well known and are known to cause hyperactivity, are linked to stomach upsets and swelling of skin.

Power needs to be taken away from the pharmaceutical industry in controlling the approach to public health and placed back into the hands of the individual. We need to move from disease care to preventive health care. Nutritionists should be available for appointments at GP surgeries and new parents should see a nutritionist as part of their baby care lessons. People do not realise the power that they do have over their own health and the earlier food literacy is taught, the earlier connection to nature is realised, the more we will have populations that are able to take care of their own health.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/3

Improving health and nutrition for children and youths relies on prioritising good food, reducing advertising for processed and junk food and connecting children to local, sustainable, nutritious and affordable whole food from a young age:

Currently in the UK less than 2% of Food and Drink advertising goes towards advertising healthy food. Therefore not only should advertising be reduced for processed food but governments should actively fund advertising to promote healthy food and consumption habits and be matched by in-school campaigns that have shown to be hugely successful in engaging youth and encouraging them to be active citizens in developing their food system. Children naturally know what is good for them if they are not misled. Advertising which glamorises unhealthy food should be banned and in places such as petrol stations unhealthy snacks should not be on display so much as children are attracted by the bright packaging.

Bring back school cooking lessons - food literacy should be prioritised as part of the curriculum. There are many wonderful schemes and charities working with schools but they are usually one-off events. We need food education to be embedded in schools to help shift the public preferences and behaviours: eg in the UK, Food For Life initiatives should be supported in schools by the government.

Connection to nature is fundamental for children to learn about food and it is also very good for their mental health. The closer children are to growing food, and knowing where it comes from, the more excited they are likely to get about it and there is evidence to suggest that when children do these activities at school, they are more likely to eat their 5 a day at home.

Food literacy needs to happen both at school and at home. Drawing parallels between Africa and Ireland, sometimes even when children are educated at school, they go home and all the effort is lost as the parents either do not understand or cannot afford to eat more nutritious food. We have to take a holistic approach looking at the whole picture.

As a society we have lost the skills to use affordable nutritious food at home. In order to support parents in providing good nutrition regardless of budget and background, not only do we need to look to schools where parents can be invited in to take part in cooking, but also in less obvious places such as Sure Start centres in the UK which could positively benefit families who are struggling. In India, mobile teaching kitchens have been used to teach parents how to cook and would be a great initiative in other countries

As suggested in the report by the Jamie Oliver Food Foundation, schools should be 'healthy zones'. Unhealthy food environments, particularly in secondary schools, compromises pupils' ability to make good food choices. We should protect children from advertising, ultra processed foods and counter it with education and good quality food available at school. Schools should be hubs for health within communities to ensure young people are receiving appropriate food education. More support should be given to the school workforce; improvements in food education qualifications and resources are needed and stronger reporting and evaluation needs to be in place.

Chefs in particular can play a major role in this food education especially when chefs are incorporated into the school ecosystem - giving cooking lessons and engaging the children in what they eat. School cooks have a huge opportunity to influence children's diet. Chefs need to be paid a living wage to do this. The wider Chef community are an important voice for communicating what good and whole food is, can explain to people how to eat the rainbow and its benefits. There also needs to be much more interaction between chefs and those who are providing school meals.

Governments especially in parts of India and Africa need to look at subsidising and championing indigenous varieties of food such as millet and fonio which are more nutritious than traditionally subsidised wheat and rice crops. This would make the nutritious food more affordable and would support women who are often the smaller scale farmers.

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KEYWORDS

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			Environment and Climate

OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/3

The reduction/elimination of chronic disease in adults is founded in healthy and nutritious food for children and youth - building healthy lifestyle and positive food habits:

Food education in schools and initiatives highlighted in the previous discussion topic such as school gardens and school cooking classes that also teach parents should be prioritised and given financial support by the government in order to eliminate the health crisis we are facing long term. The money spent on chronic illness could be prevented by ensuring people eat real food. Children need a broad and comprehensive food education to be able to navigate the food system and be healthy consumers of sustainable diets. Parents need to know that they have the power to demand change over school food systems and school meals decisions.

Emphasis should be placed on the importance of community in this. Educating parents and children is important but if building healthy lifestyle and positive food habits can be embedded into a community, everyone benefits. E.g there is a school feeding program in Benin where the community created the school garden and tends to the school garden, growing the food which feeds the school children and has food left over to go to the community living in proximity to the school. The parents therefore know exactly what their children are eating and the close proximity of the growing food means that the meals are fresh and nutritious. The benefits of projects like this are tangible but they also need financial support. The government has a responsibility to provide funding for initiatives like this when there is so much evidence to support how successful they can be. Rural schools are often space-rich and should be empowered to start these initiatives; inner-city should be encouraged to look at installing roof top vegetable beds to bring students closer to real whole food. Furthermore, India's school feeding program feeds 100,000,000 children every day and a paper recently released showed evidence that this mid-day meal had a significant positive impact on the health of the children of the children who grew up eating this meal every day. Now that we know how successful this is, the nutritional content of the meal needs scrutinised and power given back to communities to decide what goes into these mid-day meals from their local vicinity including indigenous crops.

To promote healthy eating habits in communities, fund chefs to run community cooking workshops whether online or in person to help teach parents and other members of the public how to cook. This could also be done in a community supermarket if it has its own kitchen.

Since doctors only receive 8 hours of nutrition training in their degree and there is an ever growing base of evidence to support the connection between diet and mind and body health, nutritionist and dieticians should be a larger part of the health service. Each GP should have a nutritionist where patients who would benefit from lifestyle and diet changes can go and have a longer appointment. There are initiatives such as Culinary Medicine UK which provide training to doctors in nutrition with a chef and a dietician. Interdisciplinary work such as this can play a key role in connecting the missing dots between diet and poor health outcomes.

Power needs to be taken away from the pharmaceutical industry in controlling the approach to public health and be placed back into the hands of the individual. We need to move from disease care and to preventive health care universally but also to prevent children from damaging their microbiome through antibiotics at a young age. Access to good food is a right for everyone and there needs to be resources for new parents to learn not just about breastfeeding but also about nutrition for their children.

Spices and herbs have been used for millennia to heal and promote good health within the human body, the active ingredients of which are in many pharmaceutical drugs. The link between food and medicine needs to be taught to young people so it empowers them to be interested in these powerful, healing foods.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/3

Driving food supplies to do the right thing for children and empowering families to demand affordable nutritious food for all children and youth are two of the most important outcomes for the next 10 years in a country's development:

Driving food supplies to do the right thing for children is certainly needed but the change needs to come from policy level. Government intervention is urgently needed to stop the commercialisation of food in schools and universities. Many catering companies pay schools and universities to be able to serve their food there resulting in the catering companies searching to make a profit elsewhere by either taking out contracts with processed food companies and/or using cheap food in their catering. This needs to stop and kitchens need to be brought back to all schools

As well as driving food supplies to do the right thing for children, supply chains should be shortened wherever possible - the closer children are to food growing or growing it themselves either in school or community garden the more likely they are to be interested in and appreciate it.

One of the most effective things a country could do over the next 10 years would be to train teachers in their PGCE the importance of good, real, whole, nutritious food for children. In their training, teachers should be taught the physiological implications of poor diet and the negative effect of obesity on IQ and cortex development as well as the link between food and behaviour/concentration in class. If children do not have access to their fundamental right to good food, - nutrient dense food and not just calories - they are also less likely to partake in academic learning so it is in the teachers interest to make sure children and youth are fed properly. If teachers were taught the importance of this in training, they would be less likely to accept unhealthy or cheap food in the schools they work in.

Food can bring context to teaching in many subjects - Food for Life provides resources and lesson plans to do just this. Sometimes, messaging, teaching and advertising around healthy food can be quite dry - fun needs to be brought back into teaching healthy food and lifestyle habits. TastEd uses an evidence based approach using the senses - as applied in Finland for the early years curriculum- to help children to learn to like and enjoy eating healthy foods. The early years are so important for shaping dietary preferences and using the senses to explore food is a great tool for teachers and is great for giving kids the opportunity to explore and experience veg and fruit in a non-pressured way, away from meal times with their peers. This also takes some pressure off parents to instigate healthy eating habits.

In Food for Life initiatives, schools have a School Nutrition Action Group which is pupil led and so empowers children to look after their own health.

Teachers also need to be taught the link between food and climate change - if we changed our food systems, this could have a massively positive effect on climate change. If food supplies did the right thing for children, it would also have a positive effect on the climate and environment.

Student exchanges from urban to rural schools and vice versa is a great idea. The Wheel of the year should be celebrated to give children a sense of connection to the changing seasons and school trips to see food growing should also be common place at schools.

In some parts of the UK, there are local schemes to plant fruit trees in parks. not only is this a fantastic idea, but it brings children and the community closer to food, especially in urban areas but it also makes way for community initiatives to get together to look after the trees and furthermore can provide food for the homeless.

Empowering communities is as important as empowering families. When we talk to people, we need to talk about real issues & not just small talk. We will use our voices to instigate change, get politicians involved and lobby them for change. It is not right that we still have hungry people worldwide and this needs to change. We can use social media for good to raise awareness about nutrition for school children.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

It was brilliant and quite fascinating to see that although our participants came from many different places in the world, there were similar core challenges no matter where they came from and innovative solutions taking place.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

RELEVANT LINKS

- **Pre-Dialogue Webinar Event - How Can We Feed All Children Better?**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPpgwMF4ioY>
- **SMILE trial promoting the link between diet and mental health**
<https://bmcmmedicine.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12916-017-0791-y>
- **Videos about TastEd- an evidence based senses approach to learning about food**
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAWNR-liPW9YXRDIAYUdoyQ>
- **Food for Life - an initiative that should be supported by the government**
<https://www.foodforlife.org.uk/>
- **Give families cash to feed their children – there's overwhelming evidence it works**
<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/commentisfree/2021/jan/16/give-families-cash-to-feed-their-children-there-s-overwhelming-evidence-it-works>
- **Chefs in Schools initiative**
<https://www.chefsinschools.org.uk/>
- **Previous action track event - Shifting to Sustainable Consumption Patterns**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=erF75Jla7-M>
- **Previous action track event - Shifting to Sustainable Consumption Patterns**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WeNF2zhN7SQ&t=396s>
- **Previous action track event - Shifting to Sustainable Consumption Patterns**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ACtHwwNr60&t=18s>
- **Previous action track event - Shifting to Sustainable Consumption Patterns**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1P7PRloj_sc