

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 18 May 2021 04:00 GMT -04:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Unleashing innovation to transform local food systems
CONVENED BY	CropLife International
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/23881/
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

146

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0 0-18

20 19-30

77 31-50

38 51-65

11 66-80

0 80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

76 Male

70 Female

0 Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

85 Agriculture/crops

1 Fish and aquaculture

3 Livestock

0 Agro-forestry

1 Environment and ecology

0 Trade and commerce

7 Education

20 Communication

2 Food processing

0 Food retail, markets

3 Food industry

1 Financial Services

1 Health care

3 Nutrition

1 National or local government

1 Utilities

4 Industrial

13 Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

9 Small/medium enterprise/artisan

0 Large national business

20 Multi-national corporation

12 Small-scale farmer

19 Medium-scale farmer

2 Large-scale farmer

20 Local Non-Governmental Organization

19 International Non-Governmental Organization

1 Indigenous People

15 Science and academia

1 Workers and trade union

0 Member of Parliament

1 Local authority

1 Government and national institution

0 Regional economic community

0 United Nations

1 International financial institution

6 Private Foundation / Partnership / Alliance

0 Consumer group

19 Other

2. PRINCIPLES OF ENGAGEMENT

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

CropLife International ensured that the Principles were reflected in every aspect of the Independent Food Systems Dialogue that it hosted. CropLife International aims to support the Food Systems Summit by creating opportunities for dialogue and reflection on the role of innovation in agriculture to deliver sustainable food systems. It is for this reason that the Dialogue was centered around opportunities for unleashing innovation in local food systems. It was expected that the Dialogue would help to identify some common global priorities for food systems innovation while also encouraging various regional nuances to come to the surface. With this in mind, the Dialogue's breakout sessions were organized around six major regions: North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa and the Middle East, North Asia and South Asia. This dynamic recognizes the complexity both within and between different systems while also allowing for the possibility of a common path forward – based on shared goals, beliefs and experiences. In terms of embracing multi-stakeholder inclusivity, CropLife International partnered with five organizations (representing diverse stakeholder groups and regions) to enhance the convening power of the Dialogue. These included the Agriculture and Food Systems Institute, Cornell Alliance for Science, Global Farmer Network, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA), and Thought for Food. Each of the partners acted as a facilitator for the regional breakout sessions. Having a strong farmer voice in the Dialogue was also very important for the discussion. Lastly, the Dialogue was held under the Chatham House rule in order to encourage lively and candid discussions amongst the participants and to build trust.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

In line with the Summit itself, CropLife International sees innovation as a key “lever of change” in sustainable food systems. By convening a broad set of stakeholders as partners and participants in the Dialogue, our hope was to understand more fully the role that innovation can play in delivering future food systems that continue to meet society's expectations while sustaining the livelihoods of agri-food chain actors and respecting planetary boundaries. The Dialogue was structured into two separate sessions to accommodate the various time zones of various participants around the world. Two farmers were selected to act as the curator with the goal of putting farmers at the center of the discussion.

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

We found it valuable to set a sufficiently broad theme for the discussion so that many stakeholders could contribute meaningfully. We wanted to convene and hear from a broad group of key stakeholders representing as much as possible a cross-section of the agri-food value chain -- from farmers, researchers and private sector representatives to nutritionists, youth and NGOs, with a diverse geographical representation.

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 theme of the CropLife International Independent Food Systems Dialogue was “Unleashing Innovation to Transform Local Food Systems”. It was organized around six major agricultural regions, which allowed us to identify the challenges, opportunities, synergies and areas of divergence that exist across these regions – in other words to identify both the common global needs as well as region-specific foci.

Each of the regional breakouts discussed all of the Action Tracks, with some key insights summarized below. Participants were invited to participate based on their regional and professional focus. Facilitators first invited participants to introduce themselves, then to present the specific challenges and solutions they see from their individual perspective, and finally to discuss broader regional priorities, successes and lessons learnt.

Innovation was defined in a broad way to not only include new technologies but also new approaches, including through novel forms of collaboration and by harnessing new digital tools.

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

Some key areas of consensus from the Dialogues included:

- Food systems are not a zero sum game: Innovation can create win-win opportunities for people and planet.
- There is an urgent need for more innovation to help future food systems meet the ever more complex set of expectations that society places on them – from food security and nutrition to livelihoods, ecosystem services and climate mitigation.
- Farmers are the foundation of our food systems and have demonstrated time and again that they can rise to the challenge if they are equipped and supported to do so.
- Innovation can take many forms – from researching new technologies, to scaling up of existing approaches and applying new ways of working, partnerships and practices.
- Facilitating a better connection between farmers and consumers is essential in order to better understand innovative approaches in the food system.
- Young people need to be supported to go into careers in agriculture and get engaged with new technologies and approaches, especially given rural youth unemployment and the ageing population of farmers across many regions.
- Scaling existing innovation is as important and will require better communication with farmers and other agri-food chain actors to accomplish, for instance conservation agriculture to improve soil fertility and capture carbon. “Success is contagious so when farmers see the results on the ground, they will adopt it also.”

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/6

North America:

- Farming has made great improvements over the past decades – “We have a success story to tell.”
- Innovation needs to reach the whole agri-food chain.
- The gap between innovation and regulation needs to be bridged.
- Consumers need to be brought back into the conversation so that they feel connected to where their food comes from.
- Focusing on agricultural transformations will help trigger further innovations all along the food chain.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/6

Latin America:

- Farmers must be supported and capacitated to adopt new technologies.
- Innovation should also focus on ways of collaborating more effectively and widely.
- New digital platforms can help connect farmers to markets and to other agri-food chain actors more easily.
- Proper legislation and regulation are important to create an enabling environment for innovation. "If that's right, the investment will follow."

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/6

Europe:

- Information on food systems is often currently sensationalized, and farmers struggle to keep up. "I'm a farmer, I can't spend 10 hours on communicating every day."
- Consumer perceptions need to be addressed head-on with more science-based communication.
- Educating consumers from a young age about food systems (including farming practices, diets and nutrition) can help them be more informed into adulthood.
- Retailers' marketing efforts to consumers is highly competitive, and different issues can be portrayed as "the enemy" as a way of creating differentiation.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 4/6

Africa and the Middle East:

- The yield gap in Africa remains high, which continues to put pressure on food security on the continent.
- There is a need for stronger farmer voices from the field. They need to be better organized to do so.
- Training and extension materials are often unavailable in all languages nor “translated” to make complex concepts like climate change understandable. Farmers learn best from other farmers.
- Farmers need to be supported as business people and their work treated as such. Uptake of innovation cannot happen if farmers cannot make a profit from doing so.
- Researchers need to work more closely with farmers, not in isolation, in order to align their work with farmer needs.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 5/6

North Asia:

- "Communication is just as important as innovation." Consumers need to better understand the benefits, trade-offs and synergies of different innovations.
- Behavioral changes are needed both for consumers and producers.
- Producers need to engage more with policymakers and the general public.
- Digital agriculture is helping educate young farmers and help them to problem solve issues in real time.
- Artificial intelligence is guiding new systems for farming, observing many factors simultaneously like climate controls, water etc. all remotely.
- E-commerce is redefining agri-food value chains (accelerated by Covid-19) and is helping more farmers to cut out the middle man.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 6/6

South Asia:

- Innovation needs to be focused around farmers' needs. "There is still a huge gap between the lab and the land."
- There is still a lack of post-harvest processing and storage, lack of access to advanced agricultural science, lack of access to equipment and infrastructure, and poor access to market for many farmers.
- Trade barriers need to be further broken down and regulatory environments harmonized.
- The private sector needs to be mobilized to rise to the challenge of delivering on the transformations required.
- Covid-19 accelerated the use of digital platforms for farmer extension and diagnostics.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> | Policy |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Women & Youth Empowerment | <input type="checkbox"/> | Trade-offs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | | ✓ | Environment and Climate |

AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

For the most part, participants aligned around the priorities that exist around innovation; however, they flagged a number of nuances based on the context within which these innovations need to take place. For instance:

- Several regional breakouts flagged the disconnect that exists between consumers' stated preferences and their actual behavior. (Most consumers still purchase based on affordability, access and habit more than any other factor.)
- Different breakouts discussed where the locus of decision-making actually existed within the agri-food chain, but many flagged both consumers and farmers are the most important stakeholders.
- Several breakouts discussed the need for regulation to keep up with innovation, especially around topics like plant biotechnology.
- Innovations must also reflect both the socioeconomic and agroecological contexts of the food system to which they are being applied. "As a farmer, what I need is a motorcycle but you give me an airplane."
- More developed markets tended to talk more about sustainability issues (such as water use, soil fertility and carbon mitigation) whereas less developed markets prioritized the need to boost yields (consistently), support farmer livelihoods and improve consumers' access to affordable, diverse, safe food.

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ATTACHMENTS AND RELEVANT LINKS

ATTACHMENTS

- **CropLife International Dialogue Europe visual card**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CropLife-International-Dialogue-Visual-Card-Europe.jpg>
- **CropLife International Dialogue Latin America region visual card**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CropLife-International-Dialogue-Visual-Card-Latin-America.jpg>
- **CropLife International Dialogue North America region visual card**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CropLife-International-Dialogue-Visual-Card-North-America.jpg>
- **CropLife International Dialogue North Asia region visual card**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CropLife-International-Dialogue-Visual-Card-North-Asia.jpg>
- **CropLife International Dialogue South Asia region visual card**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CropLife-International-Dialogue-Visual-Card-South-Asia.jpg>
- **CropLife International Dialogue Africa and the Middle East region visual card**
<https://summitdialogues.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CropLife-International-Dialogue-Visual-Card-Africa-Middle-East.jpg>

RELEVANT LINKS

- **CropLife International assets page**
<https://croplife.org/news-views/united-nations-food-systems-summit-2021/>