

OFFICIAL FEEDBACK FORM

DIALOGUE DATE	Tuesday, 8 June 2021 10:00 GMT +08:00
DIALOGUE TITLE	Indigenous Peoples' Food Systems
CONVENED BY	Tebtebba - Convenor; Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact and the Steering Committee of the Indigenous Peoples' Forum at IFAD - Co-Convenors
DIALOGUE EVENT PAGE	https://summitdialogues.org/dialogue/24071/
DIALOGUE TYPE	Independent
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Thailand, Viet Nam

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

78

PARTICIPATION BY AGE RANGE

0-18

7

19-30

48

31-50

18

51-65

5

66-80

80+

PARTICIPATION BY GENDER

34 Male

44 Female

Prefer not to say or Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN EACH SECTOR

12 Agriculture/crops
Fish and aquaculture
Livestock
Agro-forestry
Environment and ecology
Trade and commerce

6 Education
Communication
Food processing
3 Food retail, markets
1 Food industry
Financial Services

Health care
Nutrition
4 National or local government
Utilities
Industrial
Other

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS FROM EACH STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Small/medium enterprise/artisan
Large national business
Multi-national corporation
0 Small-scale farmer
Medium-scale farmer
Large-scale farmer
4 Local Non-Governmental Organization
1 International Non-Governmental Organization
69 Indigenous People
4 Science and academia

Workers and trade union
Member of Parliament
Local authority
0 Government and national institution
Regional economic community
United Nations
International financial institution
0 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?

Acknowledging that food is a basic right and that Indigenous Peoples are major players in conserving and sustaining their food systems, therefore, the importance of bringing regional Indigenous Peoples' voices to the UNFSS, the dialogue was organized in about 2 weeks. A team was assembled from Tebtebba to address technical, logistics and coordination with the regional coordinating group. Participants were invited through an open invitation posted on social media and emailed to networks and organizations of indigenous peoples, women and youth in the region including CSO's working with indigenous peoples communities or organizations. A link to the concept of the dialogue, including the workgroup guidelines were also shared with with the online invitations to provide participants advance information. Aside from the zoom platform, the dialogue was broadcasted live on Tebtebba's facebook page to allow access by other participants who have not registered on or have difficulties with the platform. Comments and questions were encouraged using the chat box and facebook comments which was monitored, aside from the oral interventions during the Q&A sessions. Three polls were conducted to get the views from participants. Presentations were shared to the the participants through the chatbox . The dialogue was documented and recorded.

HOW DID YOUR DIALOGUE REFLECT SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE PRINCIPLES?

The dialogue started at 11:00 a.m Philippine time in consideration of the time differences within the region vis the convenience of the participants and speakers. With the diversity of IPs and languages in the region, English was the medium of dialogue but interpreters were provided for Bahasa, Nepali, Vietnamese, Khmer and Thai language speakers. Participants come from 39 indigenous communities in 11 countries with various age groups and walks of life. There are also participants from support/advocacy groups. There were 633 reported viewers of the event through the facebook livestream. Speakers were chosen based on their expertise, work and experiences from different perspectives in relation to indigenous food systems to steer the discussions of the 3 subregional workgroups. The dialogue was aimed at analyzing issues and problems towards identifying specific and game-changing solutions , guidelines and strategies for human rights-based actions to transform to a more sustainable, healthy and just food systems for Indigenous Peoples. Participants were divided into the respective subregional workgroups i.e. Mekong, South Asia and Southeast Asia to discuss the status, challenges and risks associated with production, processing, distribution, consumption, waste management and the roles of stakeholders and proposed solutions to sustain indigenous food systems. They introduced themselves through the chatbox. Speakers were invited based on their expertise and work experiences in different aspects related to indigenous food systems. Speakers' presentation were shared to all participants through the chatbox. Facilitators were assigned from the members the regional coordinating group to guide the workgroups and ensure participation of members. The discussions were documented, synthesized and presented in the plenary with some time given for clarifications and further discussions. All participants expressed satisfaction with the recommendations shared and synthesized from the workgroups at the end of the dialogue.

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

4. DIALOGUE FOCUS & OUTCOMES

MAJOR FOCUS

The dialogue's major focus was on the integrity of Indigenous Peoples of rights to their food systems and its links to the broader aspects of their lives, identities, culture and environment within and outside their communities. Speakers and participants through the workgroups reiterated the primacy of the recognition of their collective rights to their territories as a lever for change that the UNFSS should advance. How this is intricately linked to resource and biodiversity conservation and the sustained well-being of people and planet cannot be overemphasized.

The workgroups revolved around the major factors in agricultural production, production method and inputs (Action Track 3); variety, quantity and quality of produce (Action Track 1); and coping with climatic changes in indigenous food systems (Action Track 5). Participants also described how food processing is done, how their products fared in the market (Action Track 4) and consumers' feedback on the processed foods and on indigenous foods in general (Action Track 2). These surfaced the divergence between IP food systems and the broader food system and the recommendations advanced herewith.

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

Transforming the current food systems to reach the SDGs requires an approach that responds to the fulfillment of the basic human right to safe and nutritious food. For IPs, this translates to the formal recognition of their rights to their lands, territories, resources and the practice of their culture, traditional knowledge and to determine their development, including food systems. The recognition of these rights is an indispensable instrument for evolving equitable and sustainable food systems.

The discussions were underpinned by Indigenous Peoples' right to food and food systems and revolved around elements such as production, processing, distribution and consumption and cross cutting issues like waste management and the roles and contributions of women, youth, elders, government, the private sector, NGOs/Indigenous Peoples' Organizations (IPOs) and donors/financial institutions. It included status, risks, challenges and opportunities along the food systems and proposals to ensure protection and resilience.

Based on the Poll results, participants regard land (83%) and water (58%) as most important factors of production. In rotational farming, inputs include seeds, traditional knowledge and practices, values and stable climate conditions. The main challenge in sustaining indigenous food production is the absence of formal recognition by countries of IPs' rights to their lands, territories, resources and the practice of their culture, traditional knowledge and to determine their development, including food systems.

Other challenges are diminishing labor supply, loss of seeds, erratic climate and disintegrating traditional knowledge, values and practices; and discrimination of rotational farming as backward, problematic, illegal and even criminalized in some Asian countries. Fish, wild edibles and other non-timber forest products are disappearing due to the entry of extractive industries and monocrop plantations, among others. Such progressive disruption of Indigenous Peoples' food systems and livelihoods are resulting to insecurity and vulnerability to shocks especially in times of emergency like the impacts of climate change (La Niña, El Niño) and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moreover, challenges in food processing and marketing, in general, such as lack of post-harvest infrastructure, processing facilities, processing technologies, product development and problems related to marketing and transportation affect IP initiatives and innovations. There is also a general lack of basic social services in most IP communities to enable their access to information, services and support to their agencies.

Food preference have changed in favor of convenience/fast foods especially among the young generation. The high regard traditionally held for food is deteriorating due to unsustainable production and consumption patterns resulting from influences of migration, media and other external factors. This also includes discrimination where indigenous children and youth refrain from traditional food lest be despised and bullied by their non-IP peer group.

Women possess and apply important indigenous knowledge, systems and practices in the food systems including on wild edible plants, seeds, etc. but they have limited access to the other means of production, processing and distribution. There is an increasing feminization of indigenous food systems due to migration of males in search of paid labor/jobs coupled by the declining interest of the youth in the food systems.

Their roles and contributions in the food systems are not recognized and are not included in decision-making processes. Sadly, they continue to be sexually harassed.

Elders continue to perform traditional rituals related to food production and IPs' relationship with lands/forests and nature/environment but there are cases of censorship by government affecting its vitality and could lead to disintegration.

With the progressive impact of the broader system and other factors, however, IPs cannot do this alone. It requires partnership among women, men, youth, elders and persons with disabilities and appropriate financial, technical and technological support of governments, the private sector, NGOs/Indigenous Peoples' Organizations (IPOs) and donors/financial institutions. The recommendations advanced from this dialogue are proposals by Indigenous Peoples to enable effective response not only to the goal of ending hunger but also of sustaining the planet for the next generation.

The UNFSS should clearly repudiate the marginalization of indigenous food systems. Consistent to its principles of engagement, it should champion the promotion and advancement of indigenous food systems as an equitable and sustainable solution while creating opportunities to strengthen these not only for food security but also because of its intersecting function in biodiversity and resource conservation, and climate change mitigation and resilience.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 1/3

1. Indigenous Peoples commit to continue and/or revive their food systems and transfer associated traditional knowledge and practices to the next generation and broader society if conditions allow. These enabling conditions are enumerated in the following recommendations below. Further, at the community level, the dialogue recommends that Indigenous Peoples :

- Develop, disseminate and implement community protocols to ensure that their food systems are protected and sustained; this includes documentation and establishing mechanisms to prevent theft and patenting of indigenous food materials and knowledge/intellectual property but without prejudice to IPs who are inclined to such, provided, they are fully and effectively informed and their consent provided;
- In cooperation with NGOs/IPOs, establish strong partnerships and networks with all stakeholders in the food systems such as but not limited to other IPs, governments/relevant agencies and institutions (health, trade, education/trainings), the private sector, academe/science.
- In partnerships with IPOs, colleges/universities, governments and donors, (i) undertake research and documentation of indigenous foods, including wild/uncultivated, and food systems (production, processing, distribution and consumption) and associated knowledge and practices; (ii) conduct nutrition analysis; and (iii) prepare educational materials in popular forms.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 2/3

2. For States/Governments to formally recognize the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands, territories, natural resources including customary rights, traditional knowledge and cultures including practices. In countries where there is formal recognition to i) fully, effective and immediate implementation of the laws (i.e. Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act, 1997 in the Philippines; Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord, 1997 in Bangladesh); and ii) amend existing laws that do not fully recognize these rights (i.e. Forest Act 1927 as amended, Bangladesh). Where formal recognition is absent, to enact laws respecting these rights (i.e. A law based on a Ministry of Culture's Cabinet Resolution of 3 August 2010 providing guidance for the restoration of traditional livelihoods in conjunction with Articles 43 and 70 of the 2019 Constitution (Kingdom of Thailand)).

Specifically, such recognition should translate, but not limited to :

- State investment on the provision of infrastructure, financial and technical /expert support for IPs to innovate and increase production, improve food processing and marketing.
 - o To establish community seed banks to be managed in partnership with IPs and provide relevant trainings to enhance their knowledge and practices on indigenous seed preservation, regeneration and seed exchange/sharing among and between IPs to increase varieties and volume of stocks.
 - o Construct and maintain appropriate irrigation systems, farm to market roads, post-harvest facilities such as but not limited to cold storages and warehouses in IPs' farms.
 - o Provide relevant extension services and experts related to post harvest management, processing and marketing, and trainings on indigenous resource management and social enterprise development for IPs.
- States should also invest on the strengthening of the roles and contributions of indigenous women, youth, elders and persons with disabilities and their agencies. States should provide an enabling environment for them to fully contribute to end hunger and malnutrition through capacity building activities to leverage informed and effective decision making; financial support and other logistics for their participation at village, local, national and international processes; recognize women's right to own property, including land and find ways to fulfill these without prejudice to the collective right to land and territories.
- State as Models in Food Governance - For government agencies to integrate the promotion of healthy and safe indigenous food in their programs/projects and daily activities i.e. :
 - o indigenous foods in the meal/feeding components; and
 - o discussions on the nutrient/safe properties of indigenous foods in the education components in conditional cash transfers to poor families to improve health, nutrition and education of children;
 - o to require school canteen operators to serve/sell indigenous foods and totally ban unhealthy (junk/fast food and sugar-laden drinks) food including in government functions and activities;
 - o develop and include in their school curriculum, subjects/lessons on indigenous foods, food systems, and nutrition and responsible consumption from pre-school to universities/colleges, including tapping into IP knowledge holders and experts as teachers/lecturers..
 - o refrain from processed commodities and instead prioritize procurement of locally available resources, including indigenous food in disaster/emergency/humanitarian response; promote and support self-help initiatives such as those that emerged from the COVID – 19 pandemic i.e. community pantries, food exchange and collective gardens, among others.

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OUTCOMES FOR EACH DISCUSSION TOPIC - 3/3

3. For all other stakeholders including governments and the private, donors and financial sectors to refrain from commodifying everything from land, natural resources, knowledge, labor, culture, values, etc. and discriminating indigenous food systems as backward and problematic. These contribute tremendously to the erosion of indigenous food systems, specifically, and ultimately, IPs' identities and rights. Moreover, changing mindsets entails commitments to collaborative actions from all stakeholders to address the divergences above.

- Ensure that programs/projects to be implemented partly or entirely in indigenous peoples' lands/territories or those that will impact on indigenous peoples' lives
 - o undertake full and effective consultations with IPs to be affected consistent to the rights of Indigenous Peoples to free, prior and informed consent;
 - o respect community protocols;
 - o institutionalize/require the following as programs/projects standard components in all initiatives : define, with IPs i) a benefit-sharing scheme and mechanisms for implementation in partnership with IPs themselves and/or organizations/institutions endorsed by IPs; ii) accessible grievance mechanism; and iii) waste segregation and recycling policies ensuring allotment of resources for implementation, monitoring and exit strategies;
 - o take into account gender disparities and other factors of marginalization of other members of IP communities in the above processes;

- To fund and/or include the above recommendations in their programs/projects as appropriate.

- Support the strengthening of indigenous food systems by supporting community initiatives and linking them to various experts for capacity building towards social enterprise development, support/organize meaningful food festivals in schools/colleges, urban centers and in communities where they operate including creating champions for indigenous food and food systems. Indigenous community social enterprise can influence the reversion of migration for income purposes, especially among the youth; women and youth collectives and initiatives should also be encouraged to facilitate knowledge transfer noting also the roles and capacities of the youth to influence transformation towards gender equality.

- Instill the value of proper waste management as consumers and participants in the food systems. Include proper waste management such as but not limited to composting (i.e. establishing community composting facilities in support of community gardens); stop the use of plastics in packaging and give rewards to communities/institutions/organizations that reach zero-plastic use; and develop and support waste to energy initiatives.

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AREAS OF DIVERGENCE

Based on the IP perspective of food and food systems, there were not much divergence of views among participants. The divergence, however, as stressed by participants, results from the 'other' (i.e. government/policy, science and academe) perspective as observed in practice. Addressing these divergences is the only way to food security, at least for some 370-500 million of the world's population and the protection of the last remaining biodiversity frontiers critical to sustain the people and the planet.

IP Perspective vs. "other"

- 1) Food and health are basic rights vs. Food and health are becoming commodities and a privilege which IPs, generally, cannot afford.
- 2) IPs maintain a sacred relationship with nature because it supports their lives and wellbeing. IP territories are the primary factors in food production. This includes not only the land but all the resources and the services they provide that supports food production and regeneration vs. Land and resources are economic commodities that can be procured for profit-oriented development and/or best interest of the state/majority like extractive industries and monocrop palm oil plantations, etc. in the name of addressing local employment and poverty among others.
- 3) Land is a community property for the common good vs. Land is an individual/private property.
- 4) IP food and food systems are safe, nutritious and sustainable vs. Indigenous food systems are backward, are against resource conservation and negligible in the context of mass production/ commercial scale therefore promotion of hybrid/HYVs, fast growing agricultural stocks and technology closely related to heavy use of chemical inputs for large-scale production which is considered the 'best option' to address hunger;
- 5) IP traditional agriculture (i.e. Jhum/rotational) respect resource regeneration, biodiversity conservation and the rights to food and livelihoods of the future generation vs Prohibited or criminalized in state forest, protected area and conservation policies;
- 6) IP food systems developed from collective indigenous knowledge and practice based on principles of reciprocity and equitability vs Knowledge can be isolated and patented for individual profit.
- 7) Respect IPs who want to preserve and develop their food systems or prefer not to engage/link with the broader food systems (i.e. hunters-gatherers/IPs in voluntary isolation) vs. Communities are target markets

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